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**Cultivating Continuity and Change:
The Domestic Garden Tradition of the
Italian Community in Island Bay, Wellington, New Zealand**



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Abstract

In Island Bay, Wellington, there is a small community of New Zealanders of Italian descent who appear to maintain traditions of Italian life within a contemporary suburban landscape. This cultural distinction is manifest from a century of chain migration from Italy to New Zealand. Some individuals in the community identify themselves as Italian and others describe themselves as Italian albeit being born and raised in New Zealand.

Being 'Italian', is an expression of their identity as individuals and affiliation to a group. This concept warrants further inquiry as to how participants see themselves as being 'Italian' and how this is constructed. From casual observation, the material culture of contemporary suburban garden space captures concepts of cultural identity. This thesis examines what it means to be Italian for the older and younger generations of this community and the distinctions between these generations, through an ethnographic analysis of their gardens and gardening practice. For the purpose of this thesis, the term 'Italians' will describe the participants in this research.

The practice of gardening and the 'stuff' it contains, whether conceptual, physical or emotional, will provide a better understanding of the 'cultural sense' of being a first, second and third-generation Italian living in New Zealand. It is clear the Italians bridge two cultures in everyday life. The everyday for this community is tinged with familiar landscapes and memory from another country. However, this familiarity is real to some as opposed to imagined by others.

Cultural memory through gardening practice is the mechanism in which Italian gardeners embrace their customs and traditions. The processes engaged by Italians to help maintain garden traditions assert their cultural identity and display aspects of continuity and adaptive changes. Christopher Tilley's volume of anthropological work on understanding the materiality of the garden and its connection to people is drawn on to help make sense of identity constructions. Daniel Miller's anthropological concepts identifies that through things we are capable of developing relationships, which nurtures the care of the self. Sociologist, Phillip

Vannini's work is also drawn on to make succinct sense of ethnographic work within an everyday environment, which is significant to the people that live within them. Multidisciplinary in its character, this thesis is grounded in Pierre Bourdieu's philosophical theoretical work on distinction and the concept of *habitus*. Italian identity places difference from the other and the learning of certain dispositions which constitutes being Italian. Bourdieu's *habitus* thus provides a theoretical framework on which to critically analyse social practices around the materiality of gardens. The thesis will, in particular, examine the critical social role of the contemporary suburban garden within this community. The study of the material culture of the Italian garden space in a contemporary New Zealand suburb provides a lens into the experience and nature of a small, close-knit community who see themselves as being 'Italian'.

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Approval for the research has been obtained from the appropriate University ethics committee for the research outlined in the thesis.

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Cover Image. The blessing of the boats, Island Bay, Wellington.

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Introduction

Island Bay¹ is a suburb on the south coast of Wellington, New Zealand. There is a group of New Zealanders of Italian descent, whose presence is largely the result of one hundred years of chain migration² from four southern localities of Italy; Sorrento, Massa Lubrense, Stromboli and Capri³.



Figure 1. Map of Italy showing region of origin of Italian migrants (Google Maps 2013).

Outwardly, this group appears to maintain some traditions practised by first generation Italian immigrants in New Zealand. Moreover, observation of the material culture of the suburban garden spaces of this group reveals a ‘different’ way of life to surrounding garden spaces within the same area. Other gardens within the southern suburb locale of Island Bay are on casual observation

¹ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/wellington-places/page-2> (accessed 3/12/13)

² See Lochore (1951, p.24) and Burnley (1972, p.9, 18-25) on the special characteristics that epitomised the chain migration of Italians from different geographic regions in Italy to Island Bay.

³ Burnley (1972) illustrates the Italian settlement of Island Bay in the migration and settlement study on Greek and Italian communities in New Zealand. In particular, Burnley discusses the settlement process, the day-to-day nature of the settlement, economic activity of the migrants and family stories.

presented as like any other New Zealand suburban garden⁴. This thesis examines the identity of the different generations through an ethnographic analysis of gardens and gardening⁵.

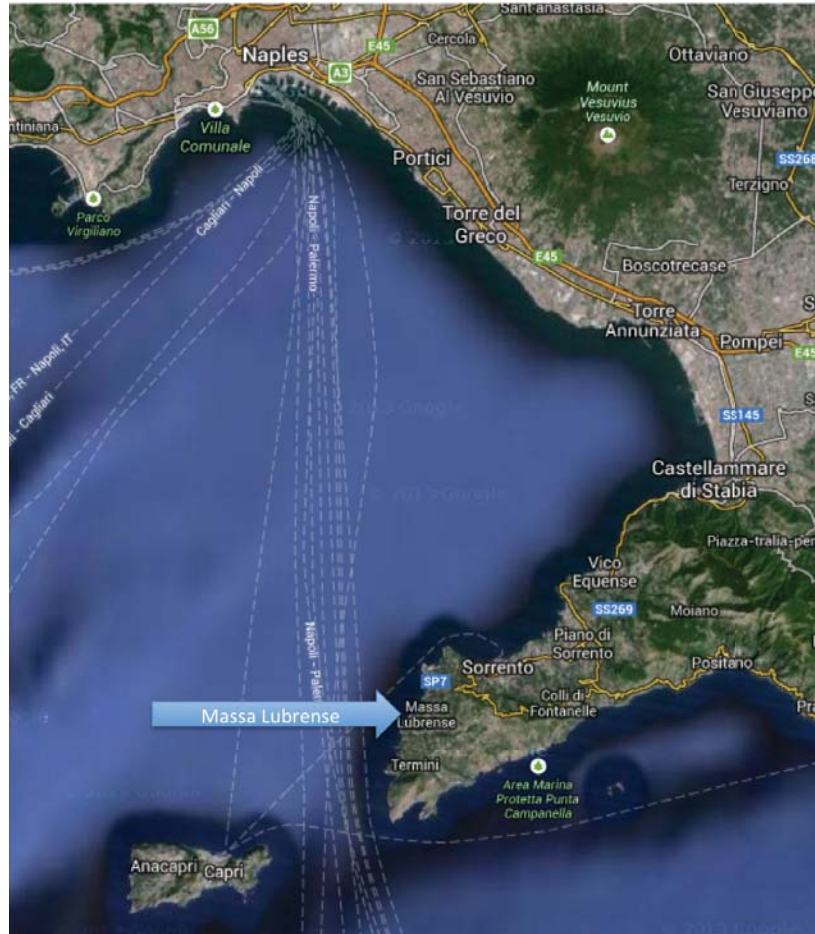


Figure 2. Map of The Bay of Naples showing Massa Lubrese, Sorrento and Capri (Google Maps 2013).

The thesis will demonstrate a landscape of social practice through the investigation of garden activities, which will define ‘Italian’ identity and illustrate the processes in which cultural memory is expressed generationally. It will also consider the ways in which participants actively counteract cultural forgetting by transferring and acquiring knowledge through garden practices and associated activities. Continuing from recent scholarship and realising the value of the study of gardens in a number of humanities disciplines - archaeology, human geography, sociology, and

⁴ “...most urban gardens are designed as retreats, enclosed by high walls or barriers to protect them from public view. Lawns are often absent and large trees are uncommon. Courtyards or patios are common, as they provide a space for entertainment or general relaxation.” <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/gardens/page-6> (accessed 3/12/13)

⁵ All participant names have been changed.

anthropology - this thesis will examine the critical social role of the contemporary, suburban garden within a small, ethnic community.

An ethnographic reflection on garden practice with selected participants, considers their gardens as a physical place, which is a channel in considering emotive thought. These reflections have encouraged participants to consider their 'cultural status' and to express ethnic identity of being first, second, and third-generation Italian-New Zealanders⁶. It is clear this group, bridge two cultures in everyday life⁷ as is the case for many New Zealanders, being a nation largely comprised of recent immigrants and descendants of other cultures from many countries around the world. The everyday for 'Italians' is tinged with familiar landscapes and memories from another country. This familiarity is an indelible memory for some and imagined through the process of inculcation by those that remember, for others. Anthropological archaeologist, Ann Brower Stahl, contends that, "culture emerges as much through mundane, embodied action in the world as through formalised moments" (Stahl, 2010 p.156). As a second generation New Zealander of Polish descent, I am familiar with Stahl's position in that through the everyday practice of 'Polish food' preparation or the speaking of the Polish language at my childhood home, my cultural identity is rooted to a heritage which feels intrinsically a part of me and I a part of it –even though I am simultaneously living my everyday as a New Zealander.

It is from this privileged position that I arrive at this particular research. Living in a country where the mainstream culture is that of being a New Zealander or 'Kiwi'⁸, the constant placing of oneself in alternate cultural spheres has equipped me with a cultural interface to dealing with being 'in two places at one time'.

Participants frequently perceive themselves as outsiders and different to other 'New Zealanders' or 'Kiwis'. The terms appear abstract and nuanced. The Italians see strength in the connection to their homeland and build identity constructions around strong family ties, local and distant, as well as social relationships with

⁶ I will refer to this Italian-New Zealand community as 'Italians' for the purpose of this thesis

⁷ Burnley (1972) reflects on the dual nature of being "anchored..." to the "social networks of the Island Bay Italian neighbourhood..." and having "adopted many New Zealand ways and habits" (p.93).

⁸ The term 'Kiwi' is thought to have originated to describe New Zealand soldiers in World War 1 as a symbol of being distinct and unique. The term has continued as a colloquial expression of being a New Zealander <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/kiwi/page-4> (accessed 3/12/13); <http://glossary.immigration.govt.nz/Kiwis.htm> (accessed 3/12/13)

others in the Italian community, due to the commonality of historic links with chain migration. Manifestations of their history is clearly valued and a source of their identity. Distinctions based on stories of migration, alienation and acceptance within the community⁹ as well as descriptions of the family unit system are used to distinguish themselves from being ‘Kiwis’.

Gardening practices by Italian immigrants over the course of chain migration settlement were borne out of a need to be self-sufficient and to grow food, which they were accustomed to in Italy. On arrival to New Zealand many Italians were faced with the prospect of a limited supply of foods, which they were not used to. Incorporating garden practice remembered from the homeland, created a distinctive cuisine voice which differentiated the Italian suburban living and lifestyle – from planting crops with seeds brought over from Italy to making tomato-sauce outdoors at harvest. Italian gardens today are quite distinct at growing season, such as the use of fishing nets to stabilise plants, large copper bowls which were used for tomato sauce-making, glasshouses full of plantings – tomatoes, grapes, grape vines, rows of artichoke plantings occasionally in the front yard and ceramic plaques depicting Italy displayed on outdoor wall spaces. Despite living in Island Bay for several generations, these distinctions remain a strong perception of identity differences to ‘Kiwis’.

⁹ Participants talked of alienation in New Zealand in World War II felt by past family members who were interred by New Zealand authorities at Matiu/Somes Island in Wellington Harbour, due to government concerns they could have subverted New Zealand’s war effort; <http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-visit/wellington-kapiti/wellington/matiu-somes-island/> (accessed 4/12/13); <http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/historic/by-region/wellington-kapiti/wellington/matiu-somes-island/defence-history/> (accessed 4/12/13); <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/945/enemy-aliens-on-somes-island> (accessed 4/12/13); See Elenio (2012, p. 59), on the impact the incarceration had on future generations; Angela, a first generation participant who came to New Zealand as a young toddler, talks of her father being interred for up to four years at two different camps in New Zealand during the war. Her father’s incarceration holds resentment to her in that no apology has been given to the present day; Teresa, a second generation participant talks about the mistrust of Italians in the war years and how language was also a barrier in understanding implications of this mistrust. Being labelled “enemy aliens” (Elenio, 2012, p.63) was also a source of feeling like an outsider and a foreigner and restrictions on fishing which were a main source of income was felt to be a prejudice action against their community as a group (Elenio, 2012, p.64).

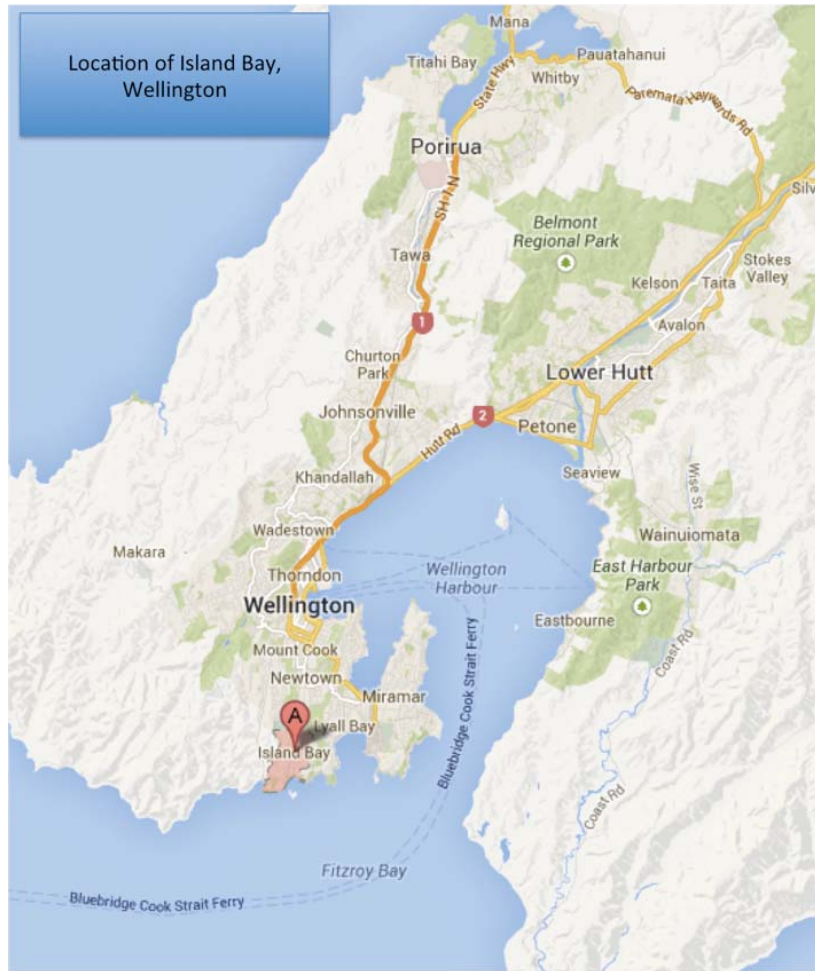


Figure 3. Location of Island Bay, Wellington. (Google Maps 2013).

Italian settlement of Island Bay

Settlement of Island Bay by the Italian community¹⁰ reflects characteristics of the regions of southern Italy. Many of the migrants came from the Campania regions of Massa Lubrense, Capri, Stromboli and Sorrento which were small ‘communes’¹¹ localised geographically which “are attributes of peasant or folk society, centred on the village or district (Burnley, 1972, p. 6). They were not accustomed to urban life and most had come from self-sufficient horticultural or/and agricultural farms or smallholdings and others from fishing families. As Burnley (1972) explains that the migration pattern, which centred on chain migration had a dominant theme of

¹⁰ See Burnley (1972 Fig. 6. p. 44), on the settlement patterns of Italian immigrants to Island Bay. It is noted that some streets in Island Bay are settled along the lines of which Italian geographic locale families originated. Commonality of geographic origins determines the clusters of housing and street settlements accordingly.

¹¹ Burnley (1972, p.6) also discusses regionalism in a unified Italy, although this unification was felt mainly in urban regions and cities of Italy as opposed to the rural areas, where Burnley supposes has been the main source of chain migration.

“rural-urban transition involving occupational and social readjustment with some change in life style” (p. 26).

Italian migrants to Island Bay tended to settle and live close to where the previous migrant had settled. This chain migration explains the microcosmic nature of the settlement and established the community as close-knit in nature. The proximity of dwellings of first and second generation Italians is evident today in the many descendants who still reside in Island Bay. The reasons are more due to family proximity as opposed to the necessity to be close to the fishing grounds of the Cook Strait, which was the main source of income for the early Italians¹².



Figure 4. A print of the fishing village of Massa Lubrense on the living-room wall belonging to a first generation participant.

Italian food

Equipped with agrarian experience and the need to be somewhat self-sufficient in their new homeland, many Italian migrants started to make familiar garden landscapes within the boundaries of their new homes in Island Bay (Elenio, 2012,

¹² <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/italians/page-3> (accessed 25/11/13); Burnley (1972, pp.44-45, 63); Elenio (2012, pp.13-37), illustrates the history of the fishing industry in Island Bay from the perspectives of Italian fishermen, through a collection of biographical accounts. Elenio remarks on the demise of the physical labour of fishing as a source of income for future generations, citing greater opportunities in education, as well as large-scale fish wholesale and retail operations. The latter could be a reflection on the change to the fishing industry in New Zealand in general with the introduction of the ‘Quota Management System’, in 1986, which meant that fishers were allocated quotas on the basis of catch history, which some Italian fishers benefited. <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/fishing-industry/page-6> (accessed 25/11/13).

p. 96). Gardening, for first generation settlers was a way of producing familiar foods and making their way within an unfamiliar land. For migrants, “Italian foods” from their homeland required mechanisms to source and make products, i.e., fresh mozzarella (Elenio, 2012, p.95), which effectually promoted self-sufficiency and in the process formed part of their ‘Italian’ identity in New Zealand. Foods and food practices that were brought with Italian migrants became familiar to New Zealanders generations later as a form of Italian-New Zealand cuisine. The ‘Italian’ agrarian origins together with the popularity of the Mediterranean diet¹³ has changed the status of Italian food from staple to commodity, both within the Italian community and also in the wider community, which is “admired and respected” (Elenio, 2012, p.97).

The garden and food

Gardens belonging to Italian participants have become sites of Italian cultural practice particularly reflecting the agrarian economy of regions and villages in southern Italy. Their gardens produce intergenerational exchange of ideas and knowledge which younger generation Italians embrace. The patterns of intensive horticultural backyard gardening are discussed by participants in this research; what and why things are planted and practised, and the relationship between these practices and what is transplanted, remembered, and reconstructed. First generation participants who remember smallholdings from Italy, transform their personal experiences of living off the land into intensive ‘backyard smallholdings’, in that, “It is here that they carve out a space between the village and the suburb; where they interweave elements of residual and emergent forms...” (Holmes, Martin and Mirmohamadi, 2008, p. 94). As is with this Australian viewpoint, it is in the spaces of a New Zealand suburb that this thesis focuses on intergenerational attitudes to garden practice and the difference and continuities of gardening activity between generations.

¹³ <http://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/wellbeing/8352578/Med-diet-has-been-proven-healthy> (accessed 25/11/13); <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/nourish/201011/mediterranean-diet-gets-uns-vote> (accessed 25/11/13).



Figure 5. The side and back garden of a first generation participant.

The gardens of first generation Italians - the migrants - are places of creative ‘work’, which reflect connections to the homeland, as well as demonstrate the making of beginnings in New Zealand. The thesis asks whether these connections and demonstrations of belonging to the new country are continued with subsequent generations. It also asks whether these ideas are diluted or modified and questions the nature of authenticity which marks something or someone as being ‘Italian’ - by evolving intergenerational change.

Intergenerational differences are demonstrated through the lens of each participant’s domestic garden, which is both physical space and place of practice seen as a distinctive entity from the domestic abode. Bhatti and Church (2000), define the contemporary garden as:

an area of enclosed ground cultivated or not, within the boundaries of the owned or rented dwelling, where plants are grown and other materials arranged spatially (p.183).

The garden according to Bhatti can be a site of many actions, “leisure, production and consumption”, and the practice of gardening is an activity “literally mixing

with the earth” (Bhatti and Church, 2000, p.183-184). The garden to some participants, as this research suggests, is a source of pleasure and aesthetic satisfaction, which is experienced in the ‘working garden’ as well.

This explanation of garden as place, action and thought can also materialise ideas of cultural identity: How can the materiality of garden as a site of place, action and thought materialise notions of generational cultural identity of being ‘Italian’, and also to that of being a ‘New Zealander’? Throughout this research, insights into the idea of being ‘Italian’ has prompted different responses from generation to generation based on origin of birthplace and life ways; yet, being ‘Italian’ retains the same notion of unbroken bonds. It is evident that traditional practice mechanisms, in this instance the practice of gardening, is instrumental in contributing to a shared and united generational and cultural bond of being ‘Italian’, yet paradoxically being a New Zealander :

Many cross-cutting identities and interests beyond a sense of national identity... are also materialised in the context of the garden and the garden both reflects and helps to constitute these often changing, entangled, and sometimes contradictory identities over time (Tilley, 2008, p. 238).

Chapter one will explore the materiality of culture, with emphasis on garden objects and structures, the garden environment and practice, and cultivation. Discussion will centre on the objectification of the garden, how the garden can act as mediator between cultural practice, the self and the other, in maintaining heritage.

Chapter two looks at identity constructions through garden practice. Notions of traditions, memory and nostalgia are discussed by looking at gardening practice, which considers whether they are continuous acts of cultural identity reminders for participants. The garden will be discussed as a living and material embodiment of traditional practices and whether gardens are used mnemonically to maintain Italian identity, and whether these acts of memory are generationally sustainable.

Chapter three examines the role of faith for participants and how through their gardens, faith-based practices are maintained. Discussion on the unifying aspect of ritual and ceremony will be examined as a means to acquaint and re-affirm cultural

identity. Knowledge based garden and food practices will also be discussed, applying Bourdieu's theoretical framework on the *habitus* and applying these principles to question identity continuity or change.

Although gardening signifies a somewhat unspecific practice of everyday life, this research will demonstrate that suburban gardens are landscapes of cultural change and continuity, offering identity signifiers, which can determine distinctions between generations.

Literature Review

Gardens, I maintain, are small places that are a source for contemplation on big issues (Christopher Tilley, 2009, p. 173).

The suburban domestic garden and its intrinsic value to contemporary society is reflected in the amount of literature and media available to gardeners, garden enthusiasts, and home dwellers. Cultural shifts in the use of the garden are reflected in gardening media in New Zealand, as diverse as publications, editorials, blogs, television and the growth of garden centres and garden shows. Historical shifts in gardening throughout the nineteenth, twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century is written extensively by anthropologist/archaeologist Helen Leach (1984, 1994, 1996, 2000a, 2000b, cited in Gruner, 2005); and even the placement of garden furniture or utilities, i.e. sheds have determined cultural meanings and shifts in the use of the New Zealand garden¹⁴. What becomes evident in this research is that gardening for Italian second generation participants seems to be on the decline due to time constraints. The decrease of gardening shows in New Zealand, which were popular a decade ago, could be symptomatic in that people could have less time to cultivate and maintain plants due to financial, leisure and time commitments. However, statistical research by Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ), conducted in 2007/2008 and released in October 2009¹⁵, state that walking, gardening and swimming are the most popular activities in which adults participate, gardening the second highest activity. 43.2% of all adults participated in gardening, compared with 60% in 1997-2001 (by Sport and Recreation (SPARC))¹⁶.

The evidence collected for this thesis suggests that gardening participation by second and third generation Italians is not practiced as intensively as with first generation gardeners. This may be indicative of a change in the pace of life in the wider community, which most probably has an impact on the second-generation participants.

¹⁴ The shed as a cultural site for New Zealand males, see *Blokes & Sheds*, (Hopkins & Riley 1998).

¹⁵ <http://www.activenzsurvey.org.nz/Documents/sport-profiles/Gardening.pdf> (accessed 3/12/13). This is the most recent national data on sport and recreation participation by New Zealand adults (aged 16 and over).

¹⁶ <http://www.activenzsurvey.org.nz/Documents/sparc-facts-1997-2001.pdf> (accessed 3/12/13)

Material culture and gardens

The study of gardens within the material culture framework is based on sociological and philosophical underpinnings that place the garden in its context for the purpose of this thesis, as a place to understand people-object relations and studying these relations as 'culture'. The materiality of gardens and garden practice requires an understanding of material culture as critical thought. Specifically, critical thought analyses the object – in this instance, the garden – as everyday existence. However, the object placed in human context can provide us with meanings and the capacity to understand human needs, wants, purpose, anxieties and aspirations.

French ethnologist and anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss's seminal work *Totemism*, (1962), attempts to understand the role of objects in the context of human cultural relations and hence a strong theoretical underpinning to material culture study. It supports the idea that objects provide a way to understand meanings within our universe, and objects are not just used as mere purpose-built tools as Anthropologist, Ian Woodward describes:

In fact, the more important, symbolic role of objects is to allow humans to construct and assign meanings within their cultural universe. Such a proposition is a - possibly *the* – bedrock assumption within material culture studies (Woodward, 2007, p. 67).

The theoretical work of sociologist, anthropologist and philosopher, Pierre Bourdieu is influenced by Levi-Strauss's ideas on structuralism. In particular, Bourdieu's important work on objects and class, taste and distinction, and Bourdieu's anthropological theory of practice, defines that culture is the dynamic outcome of interactions (Moore, 2004, p. 325). Bourdieu (1977) proposes a theory of practice – praxis - with a central concept of *habitus* – “...a set of dispositions, for use in practice, that orientates individuals in their relations with people and objects in the social world” (Woodward, 2007, p.122). It is with others and things, which individuals negotiate and engage in from a given society. Bourdieu's ethnographic research in rural Algeria on the Kabyle house was the genesis of his study on fields of practice, which looks at culture-making, accomplished through practice which in turn constructs meaning to overall practice. Moore (2004)

explains Bourdieu's theory in that "culture is the exclusive product of neither free will nor of underlying principles but is actively constructed by social actors from cultural dispositions and structured by previous events" (p.321).¹⁷ Hence Bourdieu's *habitus* is the product of history, acted out in its interactions with other agents.

Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984) provides a discourse of sociological human relations which Woodward (2007) asserts, is characterised by " 'taste indicators' ", in that "where quotients of cultural capital are linked to specific cultural objects", and subsequently "promotes the realisation of broader social structures"(p.131).

Researching garden practice through the discipline of material culture studies allows this research to approach an everyday practice through the perspective of looking at things (materiality) in the garden, and studying how these things are encountered by its agents (human and non-human) through the theoretical framework of Bourdieu (Vannini 2009, p.8). Anthropologist, Daniel Miller's (1998) introduction to his volume of research on material worlds, suggests that material culture studies is a "highly effective means to enquire into the fundamental questions of what it is to be human within the diversity of culture." (p.20). Contemporary material culture studies as Vannini (2009) asserts:

is an open discipline, both theoretically and methodologically, with a common concern: processes of objectification, through which humans shape, and are shaped by the materiality of life (p.2).

There is a small body of contemporary work on the material culture of gardens, seeking to understand the "everyday as well as the extraordinary", (Tilley, 2006, p.70), and through understanding of an "objectification perspective" (Tilley 2006, p.8), which provides a clearer picture of what things are and do in our world. Tilley's *What Gardens Mean* (2009) is an ethnographic study based in contemporary England, which investigates the significance of gardening and provides a view into the cultural psyche of gardeners. Emphasis, while not on the visual stimuli of the garden and its objects and placement thereof, is on the 'doing' of garden practice

¹⁷ Moore (2004) provides an elegant analogy of Bourdieu's theory of *habitus*, "like a thematic riff that jazz musicians improvise on...but is not a precoded musical score." "...the music is the jazz – it is the practice – created by a group of musicians who elaborate on a theme (*habitus*), known to all and thus available for modification." (p.329).

itself. The thoughts, attitudes, and emotional output of Tilley's participants tell a story of the self as well as national identity. One of the practices of everyday life is through the "practice of gardening", according to Tilley, and that is where English identity is placed as part of a "long cultural tradition" (2009, p.189).

Sophie Chevalier's comparative anthropological study, *From Woollen Carpet to Grass Carpet* (1998), records French and English attitudes to material culture in the domestic space extending from the kitchen to the garden. The study highlights 'passions' of both nationalities through attitudes to cooking and gardening. Chevalier's study found that British garden practice had more impact on couple relations and affections compared to cooking for French participants.

Chevalier studies the garden, "as mediator linked to the natural, social and cultural environment...the garden will be considered as place, practice and idea" (1998, p. 48). Through examining the everyday practices associated with the garden, the study confirms that relationships to nature and the historical meanings and practice of the garden still exist in contemporary thought (Chevalier, 1998, p. 63). Most importantly for this thesis, Chevalier also asks the question, "does "land" bridge people through generations" (Chevalier, 1998, p.63). Through analysing French and English generational land ownership and the use of the land, Chevalier concludes that British relationship to land is made through their gardens, in appropriating the land through practice and renewed with each generation as opposed to the French 'ancestral' relationship to land manifest in 'ancestral' objects (Chevalier, 1998, p.67).

In essence Chevalier contributes ideas on lineage, identity, cultural intentionality and awareness, which highlight subtle notions of French and British passions.

Material culture and generational change

Miller's (2008) work on ordinary people leading ordinary lives in central London, considers the way people use things to express meaning in their lives and that through things, generational relationships can be explained. Miller observes that the accumulation of human interactions, experience and expertise provides a setting, a theatre, and a performance of the relationships to people as well as to things. It is this setting that flows instinctively yet not obviously. His portrait in 'Full' (Miller, 2008, p.18), provides insight into generational relationships and

things in particular focusing on a festivity, 'Christmas', in that the scene he observes within a person's private house is a "century or more of accumulation". In particular, Miller's insight on connection to devotion or things, is observed as natural, as 'being there at all', which asserts the care of objects to the care of people. Miller uses the relationship to things as an analogy (Miller, 2008, pp. 24-25) based on social moral principles.

Chevalier's (1998) identification of French attachments to their family homes and land as "the symbolic anchorage of lineage in a materialised space", in that lineage is embodied in the use of land in France (Chevalier 1998, p.66-67), has a familiar nuance to participants. Italian immigrants to Island Bay have determined their 'anchorage' on their domestic space, in that their gardens have anchored roots for them and their offspring, securing their lineage on new land, which echoes old homeland practices. Gardening practices have been one of several ways in which participants talk about achieving this 'anchorage'. As Head Muir and Hampel (2004), comment, gardens are "places where immigrant people and plants have carried on traditions from their homelands and have worked out an accommodation with new social and biophysical environments" (p. 326).

Multi-disciplinary literature on the garden

There is extensive geographical literature, on the suburban contemporary garden, which explores socio-cultural understandings. Geographer, Russell Hitchings (2003) examines the changing ways in which people and plants live together in the domestic gardens of London. The paper hints at the amount of capital required to 'materially organise the garden' in a modern society, but less time to dwell among it and explore and experience it as in past practices. Relationships between 'people, plants and performance' offer insights into actor-network theory (ANT), a social theory approach of material things and concepts, which treats objects as part of human social networks.

An Australian study into distinction and conformity within a garden environment to determine water-use management (Askew and McGuirk 2004), draws on Bourdieu's theories on cultural capital; its aim to examine the relationship of consumption practices with suburban homes and the influence of suburban lifestyles and social status.

Geographer, Robyn Longhurst's (2006) paper on contemporary domestic gardens also examines the changing nature of gardening in New Zealand. Longhurst's reflection that "...many New Zealanders have inherited through the process of colonization British gardening traditions"(p.583), based on Bhatti's (1999) notion of 'Britain as a nation of gardeners' (Bhatti, 1999. p.185 as cited in Longhurst 2006), heralds a shift to the study of domestic gardens in New Zealand. Longhurst (2006) surmises that through sheer survival, many immigrants to New Zealand have found it necessary to practice gardening (p. 583).

Archaeologist and landscape architect, Kathryn Gleason's work on garden archaeology acknowledges the need to study gardens and fields as cultural landscapes, as a subject of investigation in its own right. Gleason (1998) defines the study of landscape archaeology as:

The definition of this area of archaeology marks a shift in focus from land as a contextual setting for artefacts and buildings to landscape as a subject of investigation in its own right (Miller & Gleason, 1998, p. 1).

Gleason's notion that gardens and agricultural land or, fields, are human constructions that are bounded and cultivated is relevant to this thesis. She posits that gardens for one culture are fields for another and that the distinction of utility and ornament should not be differentiated. Gardens and fields, according to Gleason, can be analysed within the context of the culture and time in which they are tended with a view to understanding its cultural landscape. The qualities of land and landscape are familiar in that "social meaning too, exhibits, continuity and change..." (Miller & Gleason 1998, p.1). Gleason makes reference to her own investigation with ancient gardens in the Roman world drawing on archaeologist, Wilhelmina Jashemski's (1979) seminal work on vineyards and market gardens, to inform how an ancient garden worked as a functional and social space (Gleason 1998, p.2).

Bhatti and Church (2009) have analysed pleasures and enchanting encounters of the garden that are "revealed through multi-sensorial engagements and emotional attachments within the social/natural world" (p. 61). The paper examines the domestic garden as an intimate place in everyday life, which focuses on the

observations of body, place, memory, and the sensory cultivation of the spirit with garden practice and thought. The study draws on Foucault's concept of contradictory sites (Foucault 1986) in that there are private moments in a garden but simultaneously fixed in the "ecological, spatial, material and the social" (Bhatti and Church 2009, p.73), that make an enchanted encounter.

Themes of culture and migration in relation to garden practice are represented by studies conducted in Australia and New Zealand, although this area of study seems to be more prolific in Australia. Longhurst (2006), examines two studies (Wekerle 2001, cited in Longhurst 2006 and Lima 2001) on first-generation immigrants who practise gardening and "transmit their cultures to second and third generations through gardening practices" (Longhurst 2006 p. 584). Wekerle's study focuses on first-generation Toronto immigrants and Lima's on Samoan immigrants to New Zealand, where cultural identities are found among gardening practices, specifically the importance of growing flowers and sharing them within their own community. Lima's study inspired the beginnings of this thesis in that an object as tangible as a plant or a practice that is part of the everyday as gardening, can help forge and better understand ethnic identity apart from the host society or dominant culture. The Office of Ethnic Affairs, Te Tari Matawaka in New Zealand defines ethnic as:

The term 'ethnic' (matawaka), in the context of the mandate for the Office of Ethnic Affairs, refers to any segment of the population within New Zealand society with cultural values, customs, beliefs, languages, traditions and characteristics that differ from the wider society (<http://ethnicaffairs.govt.nz/story/about-us>(accessed 7/5/13).

According to the Office of Ethnic Affairs, it is this point of difference of being 'ethnic' that promotes understanding, tolerance and benefits of ethnic identities. However, as this thesis demonstrates, being 'ethnic' - or in this case 'Italian' - has had its drawbacks for some of the participants in this study, in that being Italian, did not necessarily promote the attributes laid out in contemporary New Zealand Ministry thinking. What some first generation Italians experienced was a society, which although accepting, found practices 'foreign' and government decisions (see p.14) incomprehensible and as a result made 'Italians' feel they were not like the 'wider society'.

Head, Muir and Hampel's (2004) comparative study on migrants and backyard gardens focuses on the garden as a site where migrants carry on traditions in their new social and biophysical environments. The study focuses on different gardening practices according to cultural background - Vietnamese, Macedonian and British-born - and records generational change from first generation immigrants. This study draws on the idea of 'landscape' in that the migration process is identified through the food-producing activities of these immigrants in a particular suburban landscape. What Head et al., (2004) conclude is that the contemporary garden of second generation families reflects a remnant of tradition little to do with adaptation to the environment and more to do with contemporary suburban life, which is also relevant to second generation Italian participants. The study also acknowledges Ingold's (2000) notion that:

nature is not a surface of materiality upon which human history is inscribed; rather history is the process wherein both people and their environments are continually bringing each other into being... . Human actions in the environment are better seen as incorporative rather than inscriptive, in the sense that they are built or enfolded into the forms of the landscape and its living inhabitants by way of their own processes of growth" (Ingold, 2000, p.87).

As Bhatti and Church (2000) commented, contemporary domestic gardens have been largely ignored. Tilley (2006) laments the absence of studies of material culture "in relation to movement and loss" (Tilley 2006, p. 70) and lists the objectifications of transnational and diasporic communities as a gap, which needs to be studied.

Representation and media stories of the Italian community in New Zealand

A comprehensive historical study (Burnley 1972) of Italian immigration to New Zealand focuses on the 'great tide' of immigrants from the old worlds within the Mediterranean to the new worlds and, in particular, New Zealand. Burnley examines the 'chain-migration' of these communities over a century to understand the uprooting of individuals from a time-honoured familiar culture to the new world of antipodean communities. Focus is on the multifaceted adjustments of

such migrants as both a group and individuals within the new environment using statistics and oral history.

Television, online sources and radio have introduced New Zealanders to the Italian story. A full-length documentary called *An Immigrant Nation – The Unbroken Thread*, focused on the Island Bay Italian community and screened on TV One [New Zealand] in 1994¹⁸. The documentary was part of a series of stories from migrants who settled in New Zealand. The segment on the Italian community in Island Bay was based on interviews with Italian migrants and their children. It summarised the Italian migrant experience and what legacies were created for the next generation.

In 2010, Television New Zealand (TVNZ) broadcast an eight-part series called *How the Other Half Lives*, based on diverse communities in New Zealand. A one-hour episode as part of the series followed the lives of Italian migrants and their families in Island Bay¹⁹. The aim of the series was to focus on “New Zealanders who have chosen to live a lifestyle outside the mainstream”, and to “discover some of the diverse communities that make up New Zealand, breaking down a few preconceived stereotypes along the way”.²⁰ The episode’s premise in which the Italian community were featured, is explained on the TVNZ website as: “they came here to catch fish in the Cook Strait and never left.”²¹

There have also been programmes on Radio New Zealand (RNZ), exploring the Italian immigrant story to New Zealand shores.²²

An exhibition held at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongawera in 2004, *Qui Tutto Bene: The Italians in New Zealand*, celebrated New Zealand’s immigrant Italian community as part of Te Papa’s “Community Gallery” exhibitions. The exhibition showcased Italian experiences through photographs, audio-visual interviews, and objects to highlight historical stories and the influences the community has on

¹⁸ <http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/an-immigrant-nation---the-unbroken-thread-1994> (accessed 23/8/13); <http://www.topshelfproductions.co.nz/Shows/an-immigrant-nation/> (accessed 23/8/13)

¹⁹ Produced by Chico Productions

²⁰ www.tvnz.co.nz/how-the-other-half-lives/about-2255298 (accessed 23/8/13)

²¹ <http://www.filmarchive.org.nz/the-catalogue/media/how-the-other-half-lives-island-bay-italians-f203481> (accessed 23/8/13)

²² RNZ: Spectrum 1030 - Village by the Strait. Jack Perkins explores the history of Island Bay, its immigrant past and its fishing industry. 25/10/98 <http://collections.soundarchives.co.nz/search.do?id=341273&db=object&page=1&view=detail> accessed 23/8/12; RNZ: The Italian community. Unedited interview about the Italian community 15/3/95 <http://collections.soundarchives.co.nz/search.do?id=331483&db=object&page=1&view=detail> (accessed 23/8/13)

contemporary New Zealand society. Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand²³ provides an archive of information of migration chains from rural Italy to New Zealand.

Garden history scholarship

Gardening scholarship in New Zealand is focused on past gardening practices of pre-European settlers (J. Davidson 2007, F. Leach 2004), or in the realm of botany, biology or geography. Post-World War II gardens are catalogued in encyclopaedic publications as a part of our overall New Zealand history. The cultural and social significance of gardening is lacking in scholarship although interest in this field is appearing in New Zealand (Longhurst 2006, Gruner 2005, Morris 2006, Lima 2001).

Literature on garden history is prolific globally and in New Zealand. New Zealand anthropologist Helen Leach's published works on gardening in New Zealand (Leach, 1984, 1996, 2000) encompasses significant works from a historical and anthropological perspective. Matthew Bradbury's edited collection of essays on the history of the New Zealand garden (Bradbury 1995), provides inter-disciplinary accounts of the domestic garden; its aim is to understand the reasons and history behind our New Zealand garden 'identity'. Identity and gardens are further examined from a number of sources. Morris's (2006) anthropological paper, *A history of Christchurch home gardening from colonisation to the Queen's visit: gardening culture in a particular society and environment*, examines home gardening and its relation to ideas about social and cultural order. Longhurst's (2006) geographical paper *Plots, plants and paradoxes: contemporary domestic gardens in Aotearoa/New Zealand*, is an investigation into New Zealand's cultural and social life through understanding the domestic garden and its paradoxical use of space.

²³ <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/italians> (accessed 24/8/13)

Conclusion

A study of material culture in relation to gardens, migration and immigrant communities embodies concepts of the temporality of cultural identity within inter-generational communities. Preliminary work in this area has been recorded to some extent on the socio-cultural factors employed in the study of gardens. However, where human geographers have undertaken studies concerned with spatiality of the garden in a suburban environment, there is not a sufficient body of work to enable a better understanding of ethnic and migrant gardens within suburban domestic outdoor spaces.

The analysis for this research will be formed by the influence of Bourdieu's theoretical work on the 'theory of society' and in particular the central concept of *habitus*, where individuals employ a set of relations or tendencies with people and objects that guide thinking and behaviour. Together with other contemporary anthropologists whose work defines the parameter on material culture scholarship and in particular this research – Daniel Miller, Christopher Tilley and Phillip Vannini– this thesis will seek to better understand the materiality of cultural identity within the context of an everyday environment – the garden. Miller, Tilley and Vannini offer contemporary insight into the materiality of society and life, and it is with the guidance of their approach, that the structure of this thesis is set, with particular reference to the garden and what the garden means to participants in this research.

This thesis contributes to material culture scholarship in gaining further understanding of the everyday practice of gardening within a specific community, through intergenerational experiences, observations and practice. In particular, it is hoped that engagement with participants in this thesis will provide insights into the lives of those living within a contemporary ethnic community who have created and nurtured personal and cultural significance to their gardens and in doing so maintain a distinct identity as Italian-New Zealanders.

Methodology

The research was conducted through digitally recorded semi-structured interviews, observations, visual records of gardens (photographs) and face-to-face dialogue with participants.

The focus on continuity and change required finding participants from different generations living within the Italian community in Island Bay. These participants were required to share their gardens for the research, as this was paramount in gaining primary source information. The research was collected through ethnographic methods, interviewing participants from first, second, and third generation Italian-New Zealanders. Multiple methods of data collection enabled a personal approach when interviewing participants. This aided in developing a comprehensive insight into garden practice and to what extent the garden holds meaning for participants. The data contributed to the analysis of similarities and differences, which created a springboard to focus on each participant's identity as an Italian-New Zealander.

Participants for the research are residents who live in the suburb of Island Bay, Wellington. A small number of participants were initially identified as a group who were knowledgeable and familiar with, and represented the movements and shifts of living in the Island Bay Italian community. These participants identified others within the community, both friends and family, a chain sampling approach, which enabled a more cohesive and contained investigation.

Eleven gardens were studied and a total of thirteen interviews were conducted - some involved couples - resulting in twenty-four participants being interviewed for this research (See Appendix: Table of Participants). Eleven of the interviews were with married couples maintaining the same garden. One interview was with an individual participant - a third generation single, young, adult male living at his parents' home. Another was a combined interview with a married, adult woman with her first generation parents.

It would have been ideal to have a sample size of six families (twelve individuals) representing the younger and the older generation as an even generational sampling. This was not possible as the sample available was limited due to some

extended families living outside of Island Bay and interviewing them would not have provided an accurate picture for this study, as the research was based on the locale of a specific area. Out of thirteen interviews, seven were related (three families). Gender was evenly balanced with fifty per cent female and male. Participants' ages ranged from 22-86 years.

Location

The research focused on the study of eleven suburban domestic gardens. Nine gardens were situated on the flat southern area of Island Bay, which historically housed many first Italian migrants (Burnley 1972, Fig 6). One garden was situated on a slightly elevated south-east facing position and another located on a west-facing hillside with a wide view overlooking Island Bay and other southern suburbs²⁴.

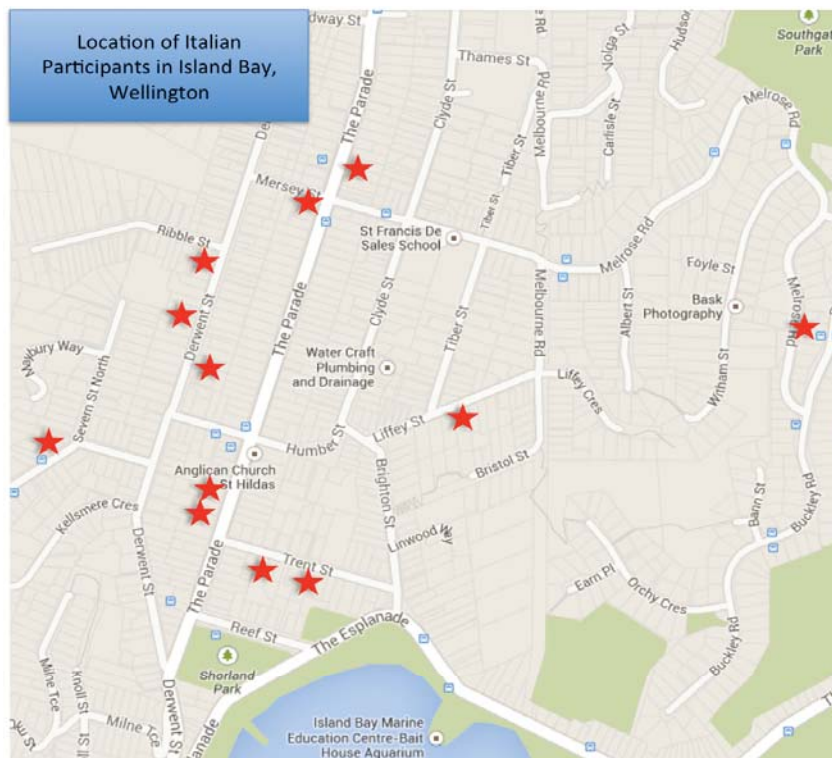


Figure 6. Location of Italian participants in Island Bay, Wellington (Google Maps 2013)

²⁴ The suburb of Island Bay is one of the most outermost southern suburbs in Wellington. The beach or 'bay', as the locals call it opens out to the Cook Strait, which is the channel that runs between the North and the South Island of New Zealand. Lying south of the equator, New Zealand houses that are south facing tend to have less sun than north facing houses. The prevailing wind in Wellington is gusty northwesterlies that is felt mainly in spring and summer alternating with southerly winds in the winter. <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/wellington-region/page-3> (accessed 3/12/13).

Country of birth

Six interviews were with married couples (12 individuals) that were born in Italy. Five interviews were with participants born in New Zealand, of which three were married couples (six individuals). Two interviews were with couples, one of each who was born in Italy and New Zealand. In total out of 24 participants, 12 were born in Italy and 10 were born in New Zealand. There were two couples that were 'mixed' couples i.e. Italian and New Zealander.

Occupations

First generation immigrants tended to have occupations focused on trades and mercantile activities (fishermen, fish shop proprietors, a seamstress, cleaners, tailors and homemakers), but occupations for the second and third generation were wide-ranging: tailors (male and female), fishermen, a teacher-aide, housewives, a seamstress, fish and chip shop proprietors, fish shop proprietors, builders, administration managers, cleaners, caterers, a tertiary student, a pizza shop manager, a taxi driver, and a home help nurse.

Garden knowledge

Approximately 50% of participants were 'elite gardeners', a term borrowed from Tilley (2009). Tilley's definition is adapted from Bourdieu (1984) in that:

persons who possessed high "garden capital"... meaning gardeners with a high knowledge, interest, and expertise in gardening. (Tilley, 2009, n. 1. p.191).

Italian gardeners demonstrated prowess in matters related to gardening, often stating their acquired knowledge from recollections of their past. Most of these 'elite gardeners' were born in Italy. As with Tilley's study, this sample represented a mix of 'economic capital', occupational status, and gender. Therefore, people with high garden capital can mean participants have a mix of traits with no commonality that determines whether or not they are 'elite gardeners', other than ethnicity and cultural background

Timeframe

The interviews were conducted between May 2010 and September 2011. Some of the participants' gardens were visited to take photos and discuss previous research questions and answers, which were needed for clarification. It was saddening that two of the elderly participants passed away during the course of this project, however, permission was granted by families to use the data acquired for this thesis. All names have been changed in the thesis to retain privacy.

Multi-method data collection

Research was conducted using a multi-method approach. Interviews were all informal and semi-structured, and approximately two hours in length. Interviews were conducted either in the participants' gardens or their homes. Sometimes participants offered refreshments,²⁵ and twice the researcher was invited to share a meal at the conclusion of the visit. Although not anticipated, 'these off-the-record' encounters yielded further insights in relation to the research, and provided 'normality' to the research.

Interviews were digitally recorded and notes were written as prompts to later analysis. The interviews were a combination of prepared and impromptu questions. Follow-up was undertaken with six participants.

The interviews used a four-stage approach. Each interview commenced by inviting participants to talk about their garden through visual representation. Together with the participant, garden details were drawn up by the interviewer from a copy of a Google™ map of their home, noting garden structures, plants, and other objects of interest, which the participant felt, they wanted to include. The idea was to make the participant feel at ease at the beginning of the interview through discussing familiar things and for the researcher to develop an understanding of their outside use of space. In hindsight, it would have been better to allow the participants to sketch their own space, as it would have been "ideal ethnographically" (Laviolette

²⁵ During the course of all interviews, coffee was offered as refreshment together with a few biscuits. What was particularly apparent was that almost all first generation participants offered coffee made in a stovetop espresso machine as well as homemade biscuits. Second generation participants would offer instant coffee and bought biscuits. As this is by no means a reflection on taste, the distinctiveness made an impact on the research enough so that it needed to be recorded in note form. The question was whether the distinct use of 'espresso' brewed coffee as opposed to instant reflected tradition or custom or was it simply an act on the level of time needed by second-generation participants to prepare home baking and to have ground coffee on hand to make stovetop espresso?

2009, p. 214), to tell about how they ‘view’ their garden space²⁶. However, the method chosen provided both interviewer and participants with the ability to talk in an impromptu manner about their gardens and family relations to the gardens, i.e., who uses what, who planted what and why - which created a valid and informative springboard for the rest of the interview. This was followed by prepared questions. At times, other family members, in particular, children were present, which provided insight into the family dynamic in the use of gardens.

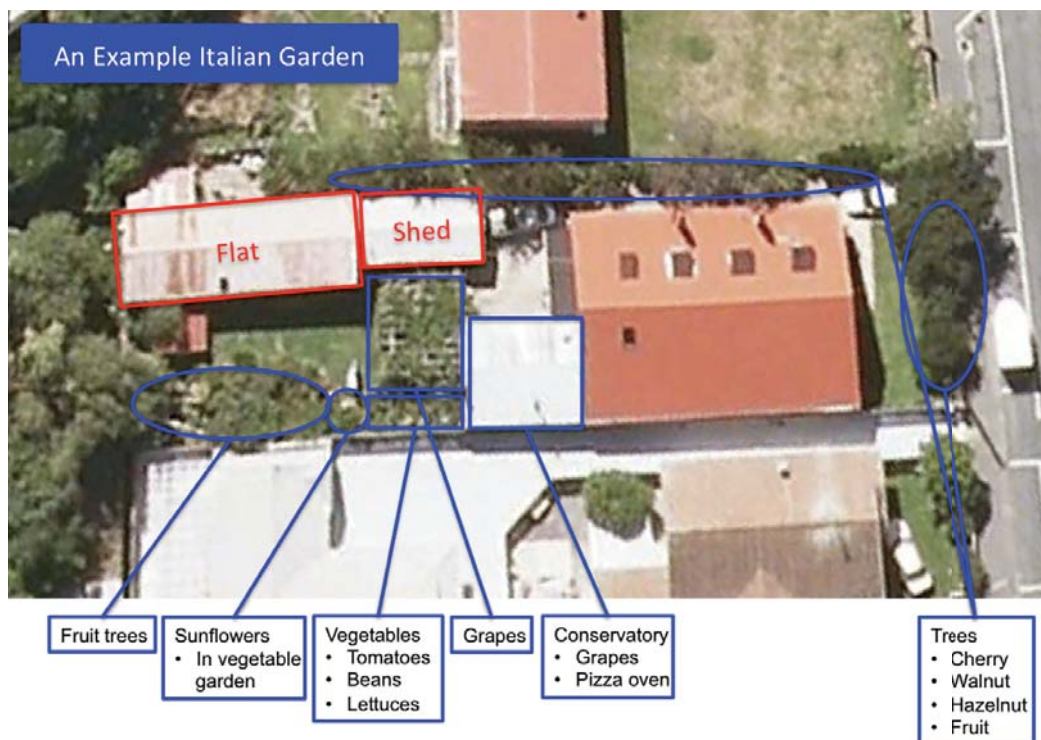


Figure 7. An example of an Italian garden map (Google Maps 2011) (for original see Appendix, Figure 29).

Participant observation in its classic form, spending a certain amount of time living among these people, was not practical in this situation, so interviews paired with garden observation within a specified time frame was more suitable. After the question interview, participants gave a guided tour of their gardens. This marked a demarcation of the semi-structured question and interviewing. Participants’ attitudes changed and they became more animated in their approach. This shift in attitude was noted and could probably be interpreted as a change in movement from a seated ‘abstract’ interview, to the garden, which ‘embodied’ the interview

²⁶ In hindsight, this method might have been revealing of emphasis and importance but also spatially challenging for those unfamiliar with illustrating 3 and 2D space.

activity. This movement positively affected the interviewer/interviewee relationship, which represented unstructured freedom of thought and action.

Once outside participants would freely share personal information, i.e., childhood anecdotes, what each individual plant meant to them, why they planted and family decisions or indecisions related to the garden. In many of these outdoor garden visits the proposed interview schema lost its structured approach and conversations became more fluid, animated and informal.

Digital photos recorded images of their gardens ‘things’²⁷ and ‘stuff’²⁸ of interest. Finding out information through the process of visual imagery, questioning, observing and impromptu dialogue, together with digital recording, created a multi-faceted approach to the research.

Through open dialogue and observing participants’ interaction with the garden, the research took on a new meaning. It became apparent that Italian gardeners not only fulfil a role in their gardens as ‘gardeners’ but that gardens were a conduit to sharing their lives and stories.

²⁷ ‘Things’ is a term used in material culture studies to denote a “concrete and real material existence (Woodward, 2007, p.15).

²⁸ ‘Stuff’ is a term that has been borrowed from Daniel Miller (2010). The definition of this term as Miller discusses (2010, p.1) is that ‘stuff’ can be “a variety of things that we might term stuff”, and also to understand material culture studies “that are principally concerned with stuff”. The stuff in the garden is just that, a plethora of materiality with specific qualities that can be analysed and discussed (Miller 2010, p.2).

CHAPTER 1

The materiality of culture: the object in garden structures, the garden, cultivation and environment

Objects need symbolic framings, storylines and human spokespersons in order to acquire social lives; social relationships and practices in turn need to be materially grounded in order to gain temporal and spatial endurance (Pels et al., 2002, p.11).

Objects within a contemporary suburban garden setting present a visual and material reference point to domesticity and represent everyday materiality within a residential landscape. Diversity of objects within the garden space - garden sheds, pot plants and garden plots - are indicative of garden practice, yet quite unremarkable elements of outdoor domestic space. The ubiquitous nature of the New Zealand suburban garden can often be viewed as ordinary, yet the material objects within them have the potential to mean something to someone.

The investigation of materiality within the domestic garden of the Italian community challenges the 'everyday' notions of garden space in the suburban environment of Island Bay. What constitutes materiality in the garden, both inanimate and animate objects, provides this research with accounts of garden use by Italian migrants and successive generations. The research argues that gardens are extensions of the self, in that gardening is a means to understand people. The gardens in this research constitute what Armstrong (1997) describes as 'migrant gardens' – a living cultural practice that has significance as an aspect of intangible heritage. The garden exemplifies this cultural interface in that it constitutes notions of place for the migrant and successive generations; a new place in which the migrant has settled and thoughts and practice of the old place left behind in the homeland (Armstrong, 1997, p.51).

Objects within the Italian domestic garden suggest activity that connects cultural garden practice to participants and hence a link to their heritage. Relational qualities of the participants' self to the objects they interact with, and obverse to the self again (self-object-self), indicate continuity and change within the social context of the Italian community.

Tilley's (2006) concept of objectification provides a framework for the study of the Italian garden. In essence, Tilley explains that things in the social world have a role to play "in which objects or material forms are embedded in the life worlds of individuals, groups, institutions or, more broadly, culture and society" (Tilley, 2006, p.60). The Italian-New Zealanders in this study who practice gardening are actively creating, doing, making and understanding their 'garden world' and 'objectifying' this world in which they 'do'. They create personal significance through the process of doing and living within their garden environment and reassert their sociality and culture.

Woodward's tenet that objects need *performances* and *narratives* for cultural efficacy (Woodward, 2007, p.151), is vital to understanding the meaning of the garden object within a domestic garden space and gardening practice to participants. The process of gardening as performance (the interaction and activities associated with gardening and garden objects) emphasises that objects have an ability to transcend an inert, invisible role to assume a position demanding a significant part of social performance. An example of this is in evaluating the role of the garden shed as providing a place of performance and shelter for the planting and nurturing of acid-free tomato seedlings. Most participants in this research had performative involvement in the 'womb' of the shed. The shed was a place where they could grow and nurture plants and store objects. Often the shed was used to shelter Italian acid-free tomato seeds and seedlings, and to store tomato sauce jars and bottling paraphernalia. Because of the nature of the Wellington climate, having a shed to 'shelter' young tomato seedlings was an important step in the process of growing their own heirloom tomatoes. Many participants told stories of failed crops on arrival to New Zealand due to unaccustomed fluctuations in weather patterns and temperatures, and this is where the shed has become useful as an important performative tool to successfully cultivate familiar foods.

The narrative of the garden and gardening practice defines ways participants speak about objects of value to them in their gardens. Woodward (2007), defines narrative as the way people speak of objects as a means of talking about their lives, values and experiences: "it is stories and narratives that hold an object together, giving it cultural meaning" (Woodward, p.152). When talking about objects in the garden and garden practice, participants conveyed notions of their own lives; their

narratives spoke of themselves, their past and their futures. It is through their narratives that an object has the ability to transmute from an inert form as a ‘thing’ to having its own place in the world and becoming an object held together by the stories it is associated with and, in effect, providing cultural meaning (Woodward, 2007, p.152).



Figure 8. A back wall courtyard of a first generation participant.

Gardening and the things in a garden are conduits to the ‘other life’ – the suggested ‘old’ place left behind by members of the migrant generation who remember life in Italy, and, for successive generations, a link to what is one or two generations removed. Objects provide this conduit even though practices are different due to changed situations as, for example, geographic, climactic and cultural influences. Garden practices, for example, the cultivation of heirloom tomatoes from seeds brought over from Italy, and the making of tomato sauces from re-invented appliances and objects, maintain connections to the old world where family and traditions are based. Interaction with objects in support of familiar food production allows migrants to be ‘at home’ in a new place, whilst maintaining an accustomed link to their heritage. It is the process of gardening that provides meaning of what it is to be ‘Italian’; to practise one’s culture through the

use of objects and to be able to conduct social interactions with others. This practice is able to exercise memory of a history and tradition in a way that is as Armstrong suggests, the “value of intangible heritage” (Armstrong, 1997, p. 51).

Perceptions of the ‘old country’ can also be distorted. New immigrants are able to pick and choose what is suited to them when finding their role in a new place, and often participants would talk of both the negative effects of living in the old country together with the positive aspects, which tends to drive the ‘anchoring’ of roots. Gardening practice for participants offers social communality with others in the immediate family or with friends within the community. The experiences and expressions of interactions with the garden and garden objects, tell a story, of one’s relationship to the ‘over there’ (Italy), the ‘here and now’ (Island Bay), and the future. First, second and third generation stories are told through the narrative of objects, in that the way people talk about objects is an expression of themselves and that of the future generations:

The way objects acquire their cultural meaning is within local settings where participants confer objects a social life through offering active, creative accounts or narratives (Woodward, 2007 p.152).

Object-person relations can also provide answers to how garden objects convey identities. Psychoanalytic theory provides clues as to why people attach to animate and inanimate objects, and what drives and motivates them to do so. Sociologist and psychoanalyst, Nancy Chodorow (2004, cited in Woodward, 2007), provides a psychodynamic perspective on how people are connected:

People create and experience social processes and cultural meanings psychodynamically – in unconscious, affect-laden, non-linguistic, immediately felt images and fantasies that everyone creates from birth, about self, self and other, body, and the world – as well as linguistically, discursively, in terms of a cultural lexicon. Social processes are given, and they may lead to some patterns of experiencing in common, but this experiencing will be as much affective and non-linguistic as cognitive (Chodorow, 2004 p.26, cited in Woodward 2007).

Object-people theories extend to the idea that attachments to objects are explained in that people's relations with objects are "incorporated into a sense of self, becoming integral parts of maturing personhood" (Woodward, 2007, p.139). On entering the homes of the participants for interviews, it would become clear that for the older generation, the first generation migrants, the home was a setting for object attachments from the old life. These included collections of old family photos showing the family lines from Italy; prints of 'childhood' villages displayed on the wall, a poetry book with a poem lamenting the absence of family and familiarity.²⁹ These objects provide participants with a sense of self by the telling of stories of their identity of whom they are, where they are from and to determine where they are heading. We progressed through the participant's garden, where their plants and other structures conferred notions of self, through multi-sensory and memory-induced experiences.

The garden as object provides a powerful medium for materialising and objectifying the self as Tilley (2009) suggests. The relationality of personal lifecycles and the lifecycles of a garden constitutes the garden as a "powerful material metaphor" (Tilley, p.177).

Tilley suggests that garden changes are often interconnected with personal circumstance change and the meeting of both creates "significant stories, memories and its biographical associations" (Tilley, 2009, p.176). The Italian garden as a material object represents other things or other social meanings "on behalf of, or more precisely along with people" (Woodward, 2007, p.134). Every gardener interviewed about their garden, spoke through issues of identity and themselves, from where they came, where they fitted in and where they were heading. The garden in this context is placed on a sub-conscious level to understand the complexity of relations with others and the society within which they live; the church, the schools and the larger community, as well as where they see themselves in relation to 'Italians' (family and friends) back in Italy. Garden practice also establishes broader contexts of their position in contemporary Island

²⁹ Woodward's (2007) discusses the importance of home in that "material objects in the home are crucially linked to human psychological development" and that objects are "perceived according to human-generated meanings through processes of appropriation, attachment and identity investment" (p.157).

Bay, and how past 'Italians' of the community have historically referenced their lives, to how they see themselves.

Halton (2009), explains, "that there are any numbers of other ways through which to view the meaning of things..." (p. xii). To understand how people garden and interact with the garden, one needs to understand gardens in broader terms, questioning their usage and how they are seen in a cultural construct. The suburban garden has its purposes in the cycle of human domestication.

Surrounding oneself with edible and ornamental plants is a seasonal practice by domestic gardeners, with historical roots for participants who mostly come from the Campania region of Italy, where volcanic soil has provided fertile land.³⁰

Today's Italian garden is a product of its own evolutionary process with identifiable codes and practices. Cultivating active past forms of negotiation from the old country to the new, creates the Italian garden of today.

The idea of 'Italianness' represented through garden practice and garden objects, is approached cautiously in this study. Fetishising the visible and invisible signifiers of 'Italian' representation in the garden can easily form an essentialised notion of being 'Italian'. Carla Da Tona's (2005) discourse on 'Italianness' focusing on the chain migration of Italians from the Apennines areas of the Frosinone province, who became involved in the business of fish and chips shops, discusses the "unitary idea" around the commonality of the Italian migration experience and the influence on representations of being Italian in Ireland. It is these representations that are embedded with notions of a "fixed, homogenous, clear-cut Italianness" which reinforces "primordial notions on identity politics" (Da Tona, 2005, p.37). Da Tona deconstructs Italian identity and demonstrates the juxtaposition of visible and invisible 'Italianness', which, although visually prominent, can often be used as a stereotypical and superficial determinant of what it is to be Italian.

³⁰ Classicist, Katherine von Stackelberg (2009), investigates ancient Roman gardens to address the Roman garden as a "cultural construct". von Stackelberg suggests that these spaces can contribute to the greater comprehension of Roman society, "A garden was not just a place, it was an idea of a place, experienced on both a societal and an individual level" (p. 3); Ancient historian and archaeologist, Wilhelmina Jashemski's work on the site of Pompeii and Herculaneum, pioneered garden archaeology which placed relict gardens as important sites to consider for design, content and ultimately the social history of ancient Roman life. Through her work on the gardens of Pompeii and Herculaneum, Jashemski was able to understand how average Romans cultivated the land, how they stored tools and lived their life on an 'everyday' basis. Of importance, her work identified practices and pastimes similar to today (Jashemski 1979, 1999); an ancient text on the fertility of the Campania region in Italy describes the land, sea, harbours and mountains for wine cultivation: H1 Florus, *Epitome* 1.16 and two ancient texts on the types of vines: Columella, *On Agriculture* 3.2.27, H5 Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 14.35 (from Cooley & Cooley 2004, pp.158-159).

Armstrong (1997) perceives that migrant gardening is a “mutually altering process of interactive exchange rather than a stereotypic display of difference” (p.51).

Gardening for participants in this study is an active strategy in which to enhance interpretations of local cultural diversity. Although seen as different by some, this study will show that objectification of the ‘cultural’ garden, in physical appearance and in thought can provide its own process of interactive exchange within the Italian and wider community.

Garden structures and the materiality of culture

The suburban garden is a site filled with notions of privacy and offers an embodied encounter with nature for those who work and spend leisure-time within them (Bhatti & Church 2004, p. 38)³¹. Gardeners tend to create the garden to suit their needs and manipulate its uses, through cultivating, making paths, and other garden structures and, in so doing, through their own creations show the love for themselves and the caring of others. Tilley (2009), cites Foucault (1987) in that gardening“ is a way in which people care for and cultivate themselves, a technology of the self in contemporary modernity (Tilley 2009, p.177). The material culture of the suburban garden identifies cultural continuities and change through the continuous making and re-making of the self. Armstrong (2009) suggests gardens made by migrants and their stories create “transitory cultural expressions”. First-generation Italians on settlement in New Zealand have, through the process of garden-making, created their own cultural expression. This migrant gardening stems from the desire to sustain their homeland links and to establish bonds with the new land. Although, as Armstrong suggests, migrant gardens are not made to be passed on as inheritance (Armstrong, 2009, p. 3), it is suggested that the garden construct and its associated craft and enriching rewards of gardening are passed on to the second generation as idea and practice. However, some ideas and practices are being adapted, and the continuation of Italian identity by successive generations is being diluted. This thesis coins this as identity fragility, meaning the waning of ‘Italian’ practices. This also questions Italian authenticity – what is Italian and what is being adapted and this chapter will discuss these issues.

³¹ Nature within a domestic environment means for this research an interaction with ‘cultivated’ nature. That is, the nature encountered through the gardener’s choice of plants chosen, placed, tended, fed, cultivated and harvested.

There is a distinct difference in the gardens of the first and second-generation gardeners visited. The first generation gardens seemed to be ‘full’, physically and metaphorically, of cultivated plants and intermixed with glasshouses, herb gardens, fruit trees, large sheds and garages for storage. The ‘metaphorical’, is an idea borrowed from Daniel Miller’s (2008) approach in that people become objects of care and objects become subjects of relationships (p.31). This defines the Italian garden and attitude of the first generation participants and their relationships with the garden and how it blends the relational and emotionally entwined aspect of subject and object. For this group, the garden and its objects is a place to pragmatically create, imagine, and share historically transmitted cultivation and cuisine practices. Douglas (1984), in the study of Italian-American food patterning suggests that traditional and distinctive ethnic food patterns maintain identity and set boundaries and control (p.157). The garden, as a mediator to these practices, provides the first generation with a sense of continuity, and also a site in which they share and impart their knowledge and skills to their offspring and grandchildren. The garden plays a “central role of their material culture”(Miller 2008, p.31).

First generation gardeners, who were migrants to New Zealand, recall the time when first arriving in Island Bay and how they changed existing garden space to suit what they were used to back home. The garden was a place to provide food for the family and to create familiar tastes to the cuisine of which they were accustomed. These migrants built and used structures within the garden to accommodate these preferences. Some of the gardens visited, and tended by first generation gardeners had similar garden layouts; a front yard with ornamental flowers and a back yard dedicated to cultivated vegetable and fruit gardens. The majority had some kind of ‘growing’ shelter for plants, sometimes a glasshouse, a conservatory or at other times a mix of recycled structures made from old window frames, walls and supports.



Figure 9. A mix of recycled materials as weather shelter.

Each participant had a garage and a shed. The garage often had a dual purpose: to shelter the car, and to also store garden items, empty tomato sauce bottles and homemade sauce and to protect young tomato seedlings and jars of seeds waiting to be planted. The shed was also used to store garden objects. Flora and John, talking about their growing household when they were younger, showed me their large accommodation-like garage and put it this way:

When the kids were growing up we had lots of parties in the garage, and people from Italy would stay here. We used to make a lot of food here when the children were growing up...our own Italian sausage that I used to dry in the garage.

Similarly, Silvio and his wife, Lidia, recall building glasshouses and garages when they also had a growing family. Silvio thinks back to a time when he had a large glasshouse which his father-in-law built on a former property (which he still owns) and where he grew 100-200 plants, but has since been pulled down. He now has a smaller glasshouse and a garage, built by him. He currently grows tomatoes on the former property but transfers them to his “mini” glasshouse ready for saucing when matured. His current garage and garden were built on land where a tennis

court used to be, but for both Silvio and Lidia, a more productive garden space was desired. Lidia laments on how old age affects abilities to garden and with it a sense of accomplishment and the means to produce food is lost with the coming of age:

We wanted a garden. We wanted to do gardening as much as we could. But you change your mind when you get old. You do little by little. I don't mind a little work because I know if I don't do it no one will.

Another first generation participant, Peter, married to a second generation Italian-New Zealander, built a conservatory/glasshouse twenty years ago, attached to the house with easy access to the garden. Its multiple uses are to grow a variety of fruits and vegetables, to cook food in a pizza oven and a place to eat and entertain. This structure, unlike those of any other first generation participants, was also a space to grow and practice traditional cuisine practices:

Inside the conservatory we grow grapes, basil, chillies and rockmelons in summer. It's a summer thing. We grow in the conservatory because there is no room outside! We use the [pizza] oven a lot to make bread and pizzas. At Christmas time if we have a large group of people our food gets cooked in it. It's totally delicious!

The conservatory is used throughout the year to prepare traditional cuisine, which is cultivated within the conservatory with ingredients brought in to be prepared within the building. A few times over the course of a year the pizza oven would be used to make up to 20 loaves of Italian 'fennel and cornmeal' bread and left overnight in the oven to dry out. Pancetta is also prepared in the conservatory where it would be left for months to cure. The conservatory also has a large grapevine planted outside in the garden and trails inside through an opening in the conservatory wall:

We got the idea from back in Italy. A lot of Italians do this. They plant outside and have the vines running through inside. I have a table outside and a table in here. That's a little bit of Italy that I bring with me.



Figure 10. The conservatory used as a glasshouse and pizza oven cooking.

The structures within these garden spaces - although utilitarian at most times - were, places of immense satisfaction and pleasurable spaces to work in for these participants, which gave them a sense of purpose. Many of the first generation participants placed their shed or garage or glasshouse as paramount to their garden and house design. These buildings were constructed additions close to their cultivated garden but were also extensions of themselves³² within their domestic space. Their garden objects were about the provision of food and the need to 'feel at home'. Some first generation Italians talked of their childhood homes as spaces of home and work. The idea of having a home with close proximity to a utilitarian space like a glasshouse for the growing of plants presents for many first generation gardeners a place similar to what they remember, growing up in a village with their own small farm-holding allotment.

³² See Noy, (2009, p.103) on the domesticated car as an extension of the home and how the enclosed space of the domestic car extends the residential space.

In contrast to such attitudes, for most second generation gardens, although ‘full’ with outdoor equipment (tables, chairs, pizza ovens and barbecues), the narratives associated with these garden objects were contemporary reflections grounded in a New Zealand setting. These garden object choices are perhaps reflected in the change and influence in the tastes of the broader community environment a pragmatism in transformation; the nature of working life, the fast pace of living and outside community influences, which transformed the idea of garden into something more utilitarian, easier to maintain and more social. A reconnection to the past, nostalgia and necessity were not features in these gardens. Rather, it was the ‘lack of’ objects from their childhood, which defined their gardens. Childhood memories played a large role in determining what they would not want in their garden; glasshouses, recycled palings, old sheds, concrete. The gardens reflected a more social outdoor space, less productive and easier to maintain.

The role of the garden changed from the ‘traditional’ sense of tending a garden of the first generation. The objects in their garden told a more ‘non-Italian’ story of unboundedness and free of control of Italian ethnic boundaries and limitations. It also reflects the modern desire to have indoor/outdoor flow and entertainment areas common to many outdoor spaces, and promoted by real estate and building agencies in suburban New Zealand³³. Some second generation participants had travelled to Italy to stay and work on relatives’ orchards, experiencing living off the land first-hand. The emphasis and ideas placed on these gardens were based on social and leisure concepts of the garden with ‘Italian’ influences, for example, outdoor ovens that make them feel Italian.

The desire to cultivate did not seem to have the same importance as with first generation participants. There was more importance placed on the need to have relaxation and social space, and somewhere for the children to play as opposed to their childhood ‘restrictions’. Some second generation participants also mentioned creating a space so that the children needn’t have the inclination to find places to play outside of the family home as they used to as children. Chevalier (1998)

³³ <http://www.consumerbuild.org.nz/publish/materials/materials-outdoor.php> (accessed 20/11/12); http://www..co.nz/cms_show_download.php?id=ddb12ba121c186a1a718206ba12d5d4626061a4d (accessed 20/11/12)

suggests that “most young people have little interest in gardening... it comes with age and through which a project related to the house becomes extended” (p.67).³⁴

However for second generation Joseph, the fluidity of home ownership and the transitory lifecycle of garden structures have determined cultural continuity.

Having to sell his parents home, the glasshouse required demolition for selling purposes, to ‘open up’ the outdoor space, so that potential buyers could see the outdoor space without obstruction.

We tried to sell the house with the glasshouses. But because it was all closed in the buyers couldn't potentially see the backyard there. There was a backyard there but they just couldn't see past these glasshouses. So we ended up knocking it down. These are the ones Dad built. We ended up having to landscape it and after that was done the house sold. Because they could see there was a back yard there.

Joseph's childhood garden in its physical form has changed forever, and its identity as a glasshouse-laden back yard has moved on from this place physically. Yet for him, the materiality of his childhood garden lives in memory and has been transmitted through thought and action into another landscape.

I said, you know, I'm going to build a porch thing over here [in Joseph's current dwelling]. It was a glasshouse but it wasn't. And then I persuaded Lisa, [Joseph's wife], to build a pergola, and then we built this deck. Then I said to Lisa [wife], 'I really would like to build another pergola here', which you let me do eh, so it was almost like I was my Dad, closing it [the garden] in here closing it in there, and I almost wanted to close it in right here to there [pointing to the whole outdoor space]. I was actually doing the same thing as what my Dad used to do.

³⁴ Chevalier (1998, p.69, n. 16), discusses the transmission of objects dematerialised due to lineage, comparing English and French differences in individualism. The settlement of New Zealand and urban planning of early suburbs constitutes English ideas in the early part of the 20th century (<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/city-planning>) (accessed 25/1/13) and further ideas were adopted around the need for state housing, satellite cities and suburban sprawl (<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/city-planning/page-4>) (accessed 25/1/13) which compartmentalised dwellings in grid formats which promoted independence within communities. Historic suburban and town planning, and the impact people have on these dwelling patterns in suburbs like Island Bay, demonstrate both host country and migrant practices embodied in the material culture of ‘two cultures’. This could also explain the duality of cultural identity that second generation Italians discuss and their desire to create a garden from ideas borrowed from two cultures.

Recycling

Reuse and recycling is part of the chain of an artefact's life history (Schiffer 1972, cited in Hollenback & Schiffer 2010 p. 320). The transformative role of garden artefacts is noticeable in first generation Italian gardens. Objects as varied as fishing nets, fishing weights, buoys, anchors and wooden palings have progressed from a technological role (in a number of cases - a working fishing artefact) part of the gardener's own life story (as fisherman), to a passive player, re-purposed as material culture technology in the garden. The production and consumption of these recycled tools are objects that continue their pathway as an extension of Italian self-identity.

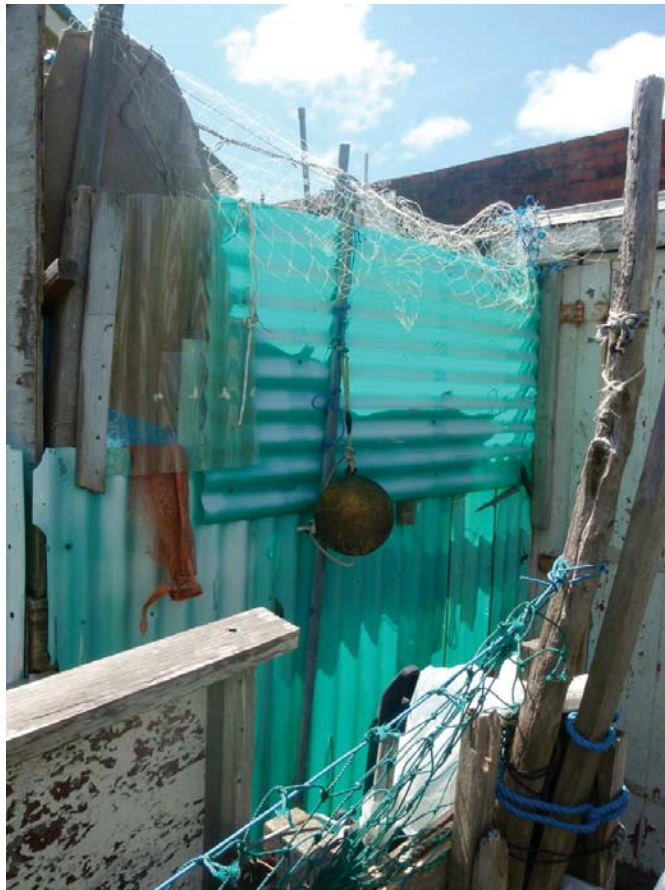


Figure 11. Recycled boat materials sheltering a garden.

The placement of recycled items is also indicative of the nature of settlers to New Zealand, necessity common to immigrants with limited resources, having to make

do, and adapt and transform existing spaces which could also be part of the fabric of New Zealand's 'Number 8 wire mentality'³⁵, which is part of the reality of settlement in this country. Even so, these predominant recycled items from commercial fishing practices define their previous livelihoods and indicate how they are used by participants as props, shelter and containing in the performative capacity of a working cultural garden. Knappett, Malafouris and Tomkins (2010), suggest the idea of 'containing and containment' by humans, offers a more human perspective of the lifecycle of an artefact. The artefact and its constitution are less an issue than what the human interaction is with the artefact. The use of recycled artefacts in the Italian garden provides a viewpoint of a specific material culture of participants in this study and to understand the migrant's garden as adaptable and continuous through its own lifecycle.



Figure 12. Fishing nets used as support for plants.

First generation Italian gardeners are constantly reworking and rebuilding garden structures with recycled material. Second generation Ada, describes this practice in regards to an elderly first generation gardener down the road from where she lives:

³⁵ "This tradition of Kiwi ingenuity is often known as the 'no.8 wire' attitude, a reference to a gauge of fencing wire that has been adapted for countless other uses in New Zealand farms, factories and homes" <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/inventions-patents-and-trademarks/page-1> (accessed 3/12/13).

He has a great garden. [For a wind shelter] He gets pieces of four-by-two with steel around it and wraps it in plastic and every couple of weeks he places old bricks underneath so that it will rise as the tomatoes grow. He has tomatoes as tall as that!

The garden space

Anderson's (1972) study of the domestic garden as folklore, argues that utility and aesthetics are façades to the true "concealment" of gardening practice in the domestic realm in that the gardens provide "communicative function" about the "social situations of their owners" (Anderson, 1973, p.181). Using Levi-Strauss's premise that human beings assert "binary oppositions" on the biological environment, and drawing on Goffman's (1959, cited in Gruner, 2005) association with front and back regions on the theatre, Anderson explains the differences in the front and back regions of a domestic garden (Gruner, p. 43 and Anderson, p.182). The front area is formalised, and less intimate. The back region is informal, friendly, food plants are cultivated and it is open to social contact. The Italian gardens visited during the research outwardly displayed these binary differences; the house was usually facing onto a road with a garden path and ornamental garden leading up to the front door; to the side of the house another path or driveway led to the backyard where most gardening and social practice took place.

On further analysis, the Italian garden presented practices and their own 'social situations', with specific cultural commonalities found in objects, interwoven with garden knowledge, i.e., ceramic painted plaques with depictions of Italy, terracotta pot planters, tomato seedlings in the shed ready to be planted or already planted in the garden. The materiality of Italian culture was pervasive and as such the garden communicated this distinction of ethnic affiliation as Anderson (1972) was also able to establish concerning traditional Mexican-American, Japanese-American gardens and the variation of Anglo garden style between southern, mid-west and northern states (p.185). The ethnic commonality of Italian participants in Island Bay was especially evident with first generation participants and the objects within their gardens created a functional space for their gardening practice. Second and third generation individuals had extensive cultural knowledge of gardening practice even if the objects in their garden do not reflect that knowledge. This group tended to possess objects which reflected a more 'social' garden, filled with garden

objects, which indicated socialisation with others and the garden being less utilitarian in nature. This type of garden communicated relaxation and leisure as opposed to a functional garden of the first generation.

The glasshouse

The majority of participants made explicit reference to the glasshouse. For first generation participants, the glasshouse enabled the cultivation of acid-free tomatoes and grapes in the variable climate of Wellington. For this group most had glasshouses of their own or had access to one through other Italian friends or family connections. For them the glasshouse was ‘a lifesaver’ when it came to the cultivation of vegetable and fruit requiring a warmer and stable climate as found in the southern Italian summer. For second and third generation participants the glasshouse was a reminder of a time in their childhood, when precious ‘play’ space was over-run by these structures in the backyard. Joseph remembers from his childhood, living with most of their backyard covered in glasshouses:

There was a glasshouse there and then he [Dad] would have a bumper crop. Then he would build another glasshouse and between the two glasshouses he would roof that off. They would grow the grapes in one and in another glasshouse he'll grow more tomatoes and then between the glasshouses and the back of the house he'd close that in so walking at the back of the house you'd be walking under cover.

The incompatibility of play in a functional backyard also reminds Joseph of the outcome:

We used to break the glass in the glasshouses because I used to play with the ball. We used to break the glass a lot. Seven kids and glasshouses! Yeah, we used to kick the ball and “oh no, not another glass!”

Teresa, also a second generation Italian, spoke of the glasshouse as a functional structure but its form was compromised within the garden. Although they have a very small and compact ‘glasshouse’ made from corrugated plastic and netting in the narrow space behind her house - ‘hidden’ as Teresa points out, she finds glasshouses to be unsightly:

They are good as far as growing things but they are ugly... But it's the glass when they break. It's practical...that's why it's hidden away. We had a big one [from her childhood garden]. When a southerly came it would break the glass and then you'd have to fix them. I mean look at that (pointing to the neighbours broken-paned glasshouse). You know, sheds and all that are eyesores, but [glasshouses] they are pretty ugly. Unless someone looks after them nicely.

In contrast to the second and third generation attitudes, the first generation participants often had more pragmatic reasons for having a glasshouse. This group made use of glasshouses and made reference to its necessity in the garden.

Francesco, an octogenarian first generation New Zealander, and his wife Emily, have a large glasshouse at the back of their house, which takes up a substantial space in their outdoor area. Ropes were hanging from floor to ceiling in the glasshouse ready for the newly planted acid-free tomatoes to climb. On asking why the ropes were there, Francesco explained with child-like enthusiasm that the tomatoes reach and grow to the top of the roof.

If we make a lot this year, we will bottle them. I spend a lot of money on the glasshouse, but I don't mind the cost. It's a lot of work [growing tomatoes] but if you keep it under control, it's not much work, you know.

Silvio, another octogenarian and his wife Lidia, have had a glasshouse since arriving in Island Bay. They now have a small glasshouse in the corner of their back section, used primarily for cultivating tomato seeds. They have been living in their current property for over thirty years and they acknowledge the small size of the glasshouse and talk of the large glasshouse built by Silvio's father on their previous property (which they still own). The large glasshouse required demolition and hence the smaller one built for ease of use. Silvio manages to plant between 100-200 plants in their glasshouse and then when established plants them out into his garden and that of his last property. They reminisce of the many plants cultivated in the large glasshouse and the ease of doing so within a large structure, and contemplate with the passing of time how this has become different with a 'mini' glasshouse:

Sylvio: It's a lot of work, as I don't have much room in the glasshouse, you know.

Lydia: If we put it under plastic it will blow away.

Sylvio: That's the trouble. It's OK though, it passes the time.

Lydia: It's something to do.

Lydia: We could make a bigger one but it's too late now.

Sylvio: Too old now.

Lydia: We bring them [tomatoes transplanted and grown in the old property] here, then make the sauce

Sylvio: Making the sauce there [in the old property] was much better you know, because I grew all the plants there, starting and finishing in the glasshouse you know, but now...



Figure 13. A glasshouse built from recycled materials, with tomato plants and grapes.

Carolina, first generation, and Enrico, second generation, are a middle-aged couple who have a new glasshouse built out of new and recycled materials from an old glasshouse, which used to be on Enrico's uncle's back garden. They use it to grow primarily tomatoes and other small amounts of vegetables. They also use a north-facing glasshouse on a terraced garden, which was owned by Enrico's parents a few blocks away from where they live. The glasshouse built by Enrico's brother-in-law is a shared garden structure within their extended family. Enrico explains it was originally built to grow a grapevine, which used to be grown outside. Enrico's father thought it would be a better place to grow the grapes, as it would be more sheltered from the prevailing wind. The grapevine flourished and his father also planted tomatoes, figs, and artichokes. The grapevine continues to provide grapes for the extended family.

Robert, a first generation gardener, has a large garden where he cultivates acid-free tomatoes, artichokes, and many other vegetables. However, he also maintains and grows acid-free tomatoes in a glasshouse, six houses away in the backyard of a property, which was once tended by his deceased cousin. For Robert, the glasshouse is a connection to his loved cousin, "we came here [to New Zealand] in the same year, worked and lived together" and "he was more of a brother to me than a cousin". In the glasshouse, Robert grows tomatoes for his cousin's widow, for himself, his own extended family, and also for a number of people within the Italian community:

The tomatoes are for everybody; for me, Mrs... She gives a few to everyone. They go to the nuns, to friends, everybody, just like her husband used to give a few to friends so they can try the tomatoes, which are mostly acid-free.

Robert takes pride in and is humble talking about the glasshouse and what he grows:

I just planted 80 plants in the glasshouse. And I look after them. Quite a number. We make sauce in the summer from the Roma tomatoes I grow in the garden not the glasshouse ones. Outside tomatoes are better if the weather is good. Even when you eat them. There is difference in taste. You grow more quickly [in the glasshouse], especially in Island Bay.

By using objects like the glasshouse, Italian gardeners adapt their outside environment to yield cultural sustenance. The practice of gardening centred activities through the use of glasshouses to grow ethnically specific foods but - within a 'hothouse' environment - can be seen as cultural metaphor; the glasshouse is a place, which embodies the social and cultural practices of being 'Italian'. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981), state that the domestic home is transformed by human interaction within that environment by using "communicative signs" by the inhabitants.

Although we live in physical environments, we create cultural environments within them (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981 p.122).

By personalising and adapting the garden by the use of large glasshouses to cultivate crucial elements of their ethnic cuisine, most of the first generation Italian New Zealanders have made a place in the garden to retain their ethnic link to food. Although the upkeep of the glasshouse is troublesome for some first generation participants, and 'ugly' or 'loud' to second generation participants, these garden structures have a role to play. Borne out of necessity, the ubiquitous glasshouse has acted as 'techno culture', a technological counterbalance to the temperamental climate of the Island Bay region. In so doing, it has provided the Italian gardeners with the ability to cultivate familiar food for themselves, their families and community. The glasshouse matters to Italian gardeners and it is in the use of this structure they carry out a garden practice that leads to a means of living, a continuity of their 'Italianness', which as Halton (2009) in the preface To Vannini (2009) states, "A device, when correctly used, is a means to human purposes, ultimately a pragmatic means to a good life." (Halton 2009, p.xi).

The 'copper'

Another item all participants casually remarked upon was the 'copper'. The 'copper', refers to the once ubiquitous New Zealand laundry copper tub that was found in most home laundries at the turn of the twentieth century and beyond.³⁶ It

³⁶ The copper was a permanently concrete-encased container capable of holding 60 litres of water to launder clothing by hand. The water was heated underneath by a wood or coal fire and the clothes "boiled" with soap and agitated by using a length of wood or stone. It was found in most laundries in New Zealand at the turn of the twentieth century and for a few decades after. (Isaacs, N. BUILD April/May 2007); For the use of the copper in domesticated New Zealand life see Brookes,

has been recycled and reused by the first generation Italians as a means to maintain traditional Italian cuisine and practices, performed within their backyard gardens.

The 'copper' was mentioned by first and second generation participants but was not evident in the gardens visited. The visibly concealed nature of the 'copper' was of interest as the object had a lot of significance in the narratives offered by participants, yet was not able to be spotted on garden visits. As the research moved forward it was evident, the 'copper' had evolved into a third stage of its own biography. The 'copper' now had a role as cosmetic and ornamental decoration in the garden. The once recycled object used in the production of sauces cultivated from Italian acid-free tomatoes in the garden had been transformed into an inert performance role as an outdoor plant pot, which on one occasion was centre stage for prized orchid and lily cultivation. It is through copper 'stories' by participants, that it became clear it formed a part of the participant's identity. The copper had a lifecycle of its own and was also part of a 'cultural' lifecycle it for participants.



Figure 14. The 'copper' bowl, now decorated and used as a plant pot or container.

The 'copper' was recycled and used as a tool for a particular home-style bottling technique, practised towards the end of summer in the participants' backyard

B. (2003). Hygiene, Health, And Bodily Knowledge, 1880-1940: A New Zealand Case Study. *Journal of Family History* April 2003 vol. 28 no. 2, 297-313).

A further investigation on the 'copper' would be of interest in the research of the banal and everyday in New Zealand. Its primary use as a laundry tool, the 'copper' once the mainstay of most laundry facilities in households, is now as an obsolete but perhaps decorative form. While this research was taking place, it was noted that the 'copper' has been casually observed in many other uses throughout New Zealand; as a firewood container, an outdoor brazier as well as from countless observations being used as planters.

gardens. The ‘copper’ was used in the heating process to preserve large quantities (sometimes up to 700 bottles a time) of glass-jarred tomato sauce made from the summer tomato harvest. Although all participants talked about the ‘copper’, only the first-generation actively put it to use. The majority of second and third generation participants remember the manual operation of the ‘copper’ through childhood observation. It is a prominent feature in their recollections of preparing traditional cuisine from cultivated and bought tomatoes, within the garden environment.

The copper pot narratives, particularly those of first generation participants, seemed to be a conduit for sharing stories of a time in their lives when communal activity with family and friends would take place. The copper pot symbolised many good things to first generation participants: togetherness, summer, a successful harvested bounty, as well as the demise of those ‘good times’: health and safety issues which meant open fires were banned in the suburb, family moving away, the fear that tradition will be lost. Second-generation participants discussing tomato sauce making, always conjured up memories of the copper pot playing a big part in the summer ritual. Recollections would be nostalgic: the merits of homemade as opposed to mass-produced products; children running around squirting each other with hoses; being together with cousins and friends. However, the copper was also a reminder of the time when the “whole place would smell of tomatoes”; when they all had a job to do; and sometimes the bottled tomatoes burst when being sterilised in the pot and make a big mess. The tomato-sauce making process was to second generation participants a recognition that this way of preserving was for the family to have sauce ‘all year round’. But this generation were more pragmatic in the economic evaluation of this practice and noted the huge time and labour-intensive focus needed to make the sauce. One remarked at the expense involved with tomato sauce making in the past ‘en masse’.

The process of home made sauce making is similar today for participants, however, instead of a copper being used to sterilise the bottled tomatoes, the kitchen oven has usurped the copper for this process. The use of the ‘kitchen’ object - the oven, has limited the yields considerably. It is now common among participants to only do small yields at a time, 2-6 bottles as opposed to up to 400 and sometimes even 700 bottles in the copper in one day. Two first-generation participants said in the

past few years they used a copper, but this is becoming a rarity due to increased vigilance of inner suburb fire regulations³⁷ and the desire and energy, especially among the older first generation participants. Second generation participants, because of time and access to cultivated tomatoes, saw this tradition to be diminishing within their generation.

The tomato-sauce making process with the copper

Most participants' accounts were similar with slight variations relating to the addition of particular herbs and different amounts of salt. All participants were very clear on what variety of tomatoes were used as well as selecting the freshest available produce for making tomato sauce. Acid-free, ripe 'saucing' tomatoes; Napoli, Roma, Capri or San Marzano, were identified as the best to use as these tomatoes are known to have thin skins, and 'fleshy' pulp, ideal for making the sweet tomato sauce. The tomatoes are an heirloom variety³⁸ cultivated in Island Bay and sometimes supplemented from other sources³⁹.

Once the tomatoes were washed they were then boiled whole and drained. They were put through a type of 'mouli'⁴⁰ puree maker to leave skin and seeds behind and salt was added. Basil was usually placed in sterilised bottles by the children as they "had smaller fingers", and the jars were then filled with the hot tomato sauce and a drop of olive oil. Some participants used their own family embellishments and additions to the sauce at this time of the process and this was usually according to taste. Some prefer a spicier sauce while others want a more herbaceous sauce. A special 'capper', usually in the form of a traditional beer bottle seal, was used to seal the jars or bottles. Participants also talked about the prized 'capper', which only came out for the annual ritual of tomato sauce making. Second generation participants, talk with nostalgia on observing their fathers use

³⁷ Wellington City Council bylaws restrict "lighting a fire within 3m of any building, fence, road, public place or adjoining premises" and can also impose total fire bans in the summer. http://wellington.govt.nz/your-council/plans-policies-and-bylaws/bylaws/wellington-consolidated-by-law-2008/part-3_-fire-prevention (accessed 2/12/13)

³⁸ Tomatoes cultivated are heirloom varieties, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heirloom_plant, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/heirloom+plant>, (accessed 23/11/13) inherited from seeds brought over from Italy many years prior. Tomato seed origins will be discussed under 'Cultivation' in next sub-heading.

³⁹ Participants made reference to sourcing supplementary tomatoes from further afield due to a bad season for the local tomato crop or if the family wanted to make an increase in the preserved yield for a years supply. This was done less in the past but more are sourcing tomatoes from outside of Island Bay. Sources for tomatoes which participants indicated were from Otaki and Nelson orchards, which are townships north (Otaki) and south (Nelson in the South Island) of Wellington.

⁴⁰ 'Mouli' is a French brand name used before the company changed the name to 'Moulinex' in 1957 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mouli_grater. (accessed 23/11/13). To 'mouli' something tended to be the preferred linguistic expression of the puree process. All participants when talking about pureeing tomatoes mentioned this action as part of the process. It is likely a type of food mill was used, operated by hand.

the capper to seal the bottles. The bottles or jars would then be stacked inside the copper, layered with either newspapers and/or hessian to stop the bottles from breaking through rubbing against the other whilst sealing.



Figure 15. Beer bottles stored in the garden shed, waiting to be used for another tomato puree making session.

The copper was often placed in the backyard garden somewhere away from fences and other potential fire risks. Water from the garden hose would then be added to the copper and a second boil, fuelled by a wooden fire under the copper would seal the preserving process. The jars would then be processed for up to an hour on a steady boil and left to cool in the water to finish the process of sealing. Once cooled down, often late at night, the jars and bottles would be lifted out of the copper, wiped down and placed in storage, usually in the outside garage or shed, ready to eat for the coming year.

The object in cultivation

The value people place on objects can suggest how people see themselves. In a

1981 study of the transactional process between people and objects within homes and how they were valued across the life-course⁴¹, plants came out ninth in a list of 10 personal objects most important to people within their own dwelling. Reasons for this were explained as,

plants provide an opportunity for people to care for something, growing healthy plants represents a personal accomplishment and refer to people's sense of connection with the environment (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981).

The intensively horticultural suburban garden, specifically with first generation participants from the Italian community, emphasised the transactional value placed on culturally specific plants. Plants are chosen for specific characteristics whether they be temperamental and delicate, steady or strong. Plants also hold meaning as to why they were cultivated in the first instance. The manifestation of this attention to the plant as object can lead to self-satisfaction and a connection to nature. The care of the plant, therefore, is a care of the self. It is the self that nurtures the plant, which, in turn, gives meaning to the self (Woodward 2007 p. 147, Miller 2010). The 'self' for first generation participants is a trope to explain the bridging of two worlds for first generation Italians. Plants, as an extension of the self, are made manifest in Italian gardens; the Italian garden is a bridge between the world of the homeland and the new world, etching space between their home village and the suburb, creating a hybrid of real, imagined and transmitted cultivated space (Morgan, Rocha and Poynting, 2005, p. 94). It is this space, which participants interact with their garden, not as 'material culture' but a place to think about the world through the garden, and for it to "feel right" (Miller 2010, p.41)⁴²

By choosing to grow traditional forms of cultivated plants within their suburban garden, participants create a continuity of cultural practice. Settling into a new land and culture for first generation participants was difficult for Italian migrants⁴³.

⁴¹ Woodward's citing of a study by Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) (Woodward p.146), regarding the people and their objects within homes categorises and explains in detail, the things most important to them found in their homes.

⁴² Miller's (2010), chapter on '*Why Clothing is not Superficial*', (Miller, p. 12-41), examines people's relationship to clothing in understanding the inner self. Through clothing, Miller argues, "for most peoples, systems of thinking about the world also have to *feel right*", (Miller, p.41). That clothing as clothing is not material culture, but the wearing of clothing is, and sensory interactions of clothing demonstrate what it is to feel about the self. The same premise is also relevant to the interactions with the garden.

⁴³ Elenio (2012 p.84-98), documents the experiences of new Italian migrants on their first taste of living in New Zealand.

Flora recalls garden spaces devoid of any familiar cultivated foods and still thinks of the gardens she left behind 50 years prior:

When I came here there was a small garden, no garage, a washhouse and toilet. Near the concrete there I planted beans. I made 24 kg in one pick and we took them to market to sell. If I had a choice I would plant everything, my fruit trees. I miss my cherry trees. I miss my apple trees, I miss my pear trees [from Italy]... sometimes, when I go to Otaki, [a town located 75 km north of Island Bay] I love seeing all that grows there because it reminds me of home because they are growing all or most of the trees. It's just a different climate.

The choice of garden plants by the first generation participants has also been influenced by their family's lifestyle in their former homeland, often coming from small rural farms. Migrants transplanted these practices within the suburban garden construct, albeit thousands of miles away from 'home'. Backyards can be "microcosms of their family holdings" (Morgan, Rocha and Poynting, 2005, p.96) and the Italian migrants who came to seek a better life, brought with them a slice of their rural, semi-subsistence farms into an unfamiliar urban environment ⁴⁴. Small domestic gardens steeped in rural history still exist and many first generation participants still grow culturally specific produce in their suburban gardens, even when similar foods are now available in many produce outlets.

For Flora, her childhood experiences of living on her parent's semi-subsistence farm and orchard-holding in Italy, influenced her garden practices. Her stories come from a time when, although she remembers not having running water or electricity, life for her and her siblings seemed idyllic. The farm was self-sufficient for the whole family and they only bought produce when they couldn't grow and process certain foods.

On the farm we had everything. We used to make bread from our own wheat. We used to make everything when I grew up. We had cows, pigs, chickens, ducks, olives, olive oil, wine, lemons...the only thing we used to buy was the pasta, I think, when we didn't have the time.

⁴⁴ See Burnley (1972, p.39) on tomato growing by Italian immigrant's from Massa Lubrense to Nelson, New Zealand. Burnley comments on tomato growing in this region by migrants from Massa Lubrense saying, "The family enterprise has been a transference of a fundamental component of peasant society from source areas."

Her experiences of her parent's farm also cemented her value system: family cohesion, respect for the land, and good communal relations.

We [siblings] used to be like monkeys going from one [olive] tree to the other with nets underneath, then one by one in sacks then to the press. We also had a lot of wine you know. We used to have a press for the wine. We also brought the olive oil back in a wooden barrel from the press. My father had a small room with a stainless steel tank where the olive oil was stored. In wintertime these people used to come inside and just buy it. And the same with the wine. My father used to grow in summertime big watermelon, rockmelon, everything, everything. The weather was just nice and we had all kinds of fruit: cherries, peaches, all kinds, everything... .

When Flora came to Island Bay, along with her husband she continued these values by setting up the family home and garden so it was conducive to the familial and community relations experienced when she was younger. Her daughter, Rita, remembers roosters and other animals running through their garden and having a garden brimful with 'cultivated' activity.

We had chickens, picked all the eggs and rabbits, which were killed and we ate. There were always things growing in the garden. I mean we didn't learn to speak English until we were at school because all the other Italians spoke that [Italian] at home.

Flora and Rita also talked about their roosters and what impact it had on their family and community:

Flora: Aah we had roosters. The most beautiful roosters. Every morning at 6am they would crow and neighbours started to complain and [the] council came around and we had to get rid of them.

Rita: Yes, he [the rooster] would come into the house!

Flora: You know what he used to do? He would knock at the door in the morning to be let in, he would go around the beds to the children where they were sleeping, wake them and also after school he would wait for them at the gate, and all the kids passed by and patted him...we had him for a few years but them

everyone started to complain so we got rid of him and after the kids would come home from school waiting for him at the gate, oh, you know...

Rita: This is how we grew up.

Silvio and his wife, Lidia, recall settling in Island Bay, when familiar foods were unattainable:

Lidia: We were thinking of staying over there [following a visit to Italy] after 20 years but the children were here back at school. 60 years we are still here!

Sylvio: And now we don't miss anything because we have everything now. But 60 years ago there was nothing. There was the olive oil but the rest, there was nothing.

Lidia: Some people had no garden just a house and not much room to grow anything.

Planting accustomed foods and ornamental plants, and creating a garden familiar to past experiences is a form of expression reconnecting with the homeland through taste, sight and smells. As Morgan et al. (2005) state, people continue to symbolise their homelands not as a nostalgic action but as “strategic ways in which migrants engage with the present” (p. 104), performed within the safety of a home base. It does not necessarily indicate homesickness. Ghassan Hage (1997) suggests that home building by migrants is propelled by future possibilities, in that ‘intimations of lost homelands’ and the prospect of the new homeland make migrants “feel at home where they actually are” (p.104). It is the actions of these migrants in home creation that enabled the first generation Italians to reconnect to their past. While cultivation of familiar plants and an intensively horticultural garden for the first generation was important, second generation participants do not place the same emphasis in their gardens. Rita, who lives a few blocks away from her parents, has a lemon tree and grows a number of different herbs in her garden. She is married to a non-Italian New Zealander and although they have tried vegetable gardening, their attempts do not match her parents’ garden. She says that because of different soil composition and other variants it is more difficult to cultivate plants, although she does grow herbs:

I would do a garden if soil was better... our backyard gets really hot in the summer and everything burns. It gets so hot.

Rita acknowledges that although there have been good intentions, both she and her husband have realised that keeping a garden requires constant maintenance and they don't have the time to do this. However, her parents help and provide Rita's family vegetables from their garden - Italian broccoli and artichokes, which, Rita acknowledges, is gratefully accepted.

Anna and John admit they are not 'big gardeners' and commented they have not been interested in making a vegetable garden mainly because of the ability to purchase produce from supermarkets:

Anna: I don't have an interest in gardening or making tomato sauce.

John: Well, now you know you can buy a can [and] rip it open so the hard work has gone for you hasn't it?

Anna: Yeah, we put flavours in it.

John: It was definitely hard work [how it used to be done].

Anna: It was a totally different lifestyle.

Their garden is tidy with ornamental plants in the front yard and herb and flowerpots placed thoughtfully throughout, but edible plants haven't been a priority compared to their first generation parents. Their son, Matthew, is a third generation Italian, and has taken more of an interest in gardening, inspired by his maternal grandparents. Matthew has planted a number of tomato and vegetable plants in his parents backyard garden and he and his father have actively managed, tended, and eventually preserved, the vegetables they have cultivated together:

John: The oldest one [Matthew] is showing an interest in it. We've prepped a patch in the backyard, because he is into his food... he wants to grow his own vegetables and obviously the basic Italian vegetable is the [acid-free] tomato plant, which all the older generation would start off with. Very meaty; there is not so much water as the other ones. Beautiful in a salad. So he's showing interest,

although him working, he hasn't found the time - and myself, but eventually we'll get it up and running. It will be interesting.

These participants, Rita, John and Anna have parents who still garden and are often 'gifted' vegetables and fruit. It is likely these participants are still recipients of cultivated vegetables and fruit from their parents, which doesn't necessitate the immediate need to garden intensively for food production. Gifting of produce between families and friends with the Italian community is an activity based on, as Strathern (1988) recognises, "a form of sociality and a mode of societal integration", (p.xi). Strathern's anthropological work in Papua New Guinea, illuminates domesticated reciprocity in that,

Interdependence may be thought of in terms of reciprocity embodied first and foremost in successful domestic relations (p.78).

Cultivated goods gifted by and within families by first and second generation participants is a mutually beneficial system in that it connects families, retains 'successful domestic relations' which represents a reciprocity that maintain cultural connections and a link to heritage. The relational link exemplifies the interaction of self-object-self which in this case promotes a sense of cultural continuity.

Attention to plants and the gifting of them is an opportunity for people to care about something and themselves and participants unconsciously use this system to secure domestic relations and to pass on cultural continuities.

Food, necessity and luxury

Many first generation Italians tell stories of the role of food in their new lives in New Zealand and how the lack of ingredients impacted on everyday living.

Limitations of what was available, necessitated growing a productive garden to cultivate and prepare traditional food (Elenio, 2012, p.95). There were many stories of the need to improvise and find resourceful ways to fill the void.

Francesco said that when he started his first fish shop in Wellington in the mid-1950s, he decided to sell olive oil, as there was hardly anywhere where one could buy it. Similarly, Angela recalls many times when traditional foods were unavailable and resourcefulness was the key:

We even made our own coffee years ago! We roasted our own from raw white beans bought from a shop in town called 'Fagg's'... I remember when I was a little girl in Trent Street. I used to sit down on the seat and turn the beans over in a half gallon tin; it was a round thing and you turned it over and there was a little slide door to put your coffee beans in. And you used to light the fire underneath, and then Dad would check it.

Her husband, Robert, also remembers being told of the difficulty previous generations had in having access to certain staple goods they were used to in Italy:

Even before us [before coming to NZ], the people [Italians] had nothing. They used to have a club and they had an import licence to get pasta and olive oil and other things from Italy. Otherwise there was nothing.

Second generation participants were also familiar with the first generation's lack of customary foods. However, for their own generation the path to finding 'Italian' foods has been straightforward as there are many outlets supplying Italian foods. Anna and John say the convenience of purchasing means they can enjoy the types of vegetables or produced foods that were unavailable to their parents. Hence there is no need to practice intensive domestic gardening. Teresa, another second-generation participant, summed up this attitude by reflecting on what it was like growing up and the difference in attitudes today:

We [herself and friends] were always outside at the beach with our friends. Our parents were always inside cooking, in the garden, talking to friends inside...they had a huge garden but my parents didn't entertain. The visitors were inside but not in the garden. Here [her own garden], a lot of people come here, we open up [the double doors], kids playing, and we eat over there [outdoor dining area] that sort of thing. It's a different upbringing, totally.

Teresa's reflections, although framed within a culturally enriched environment, could also be viewed as a contemporary meaning as to how the urban garden is used today. Bhatti and Church (2010) in their study of gender, leisure, and homemaking in UK gardens, suggest that the use of gardens as relaxation areas or 'outdoor rooms' is indicative of the different pace of life within a contemporary urban environment. They argue that dual-worker households and the demanding

workplace, requires a more structured and minimalist garden environment with an increase in time spent where “individuals seek to relax, children play and the washing is hung out to dry” (p. 188). The emphasis is on the garden as a place to be gazed upon, and used as a “leisure-site” rather than “worked in”. (Mintel, 1997 cited in Bhatti and Church 2010, p.188). For Anna and Teresa, ease of purchasing cultural food choices means they can have more time and energy to spend with their families or entertain with others in their garden. There is no need for intensive horticultural practices. In contrast, Matthew, a third generation participant and son of Anna, spoke of his desire to learn about gardening and master the techniques of homemade Italian cuisine. This was borne out of a desire to learn traditions he observed in his childhood and wanting the taste of home-grown heirloom Italian tomatoes, just like his grandparents:

Yeah, you can't buy tomatoes like that. We went up north to pick the tomatoes and they look like the Italian ones here but they are not the same. The shape's different, the taste is different.

The tomato plants to him were a connection to a heritage he is removed from and doesn't want to see lost. Planting the tomatoes from the seeds his grandparents gave him has given him the sense of continuation and tradition.

Second generation Teresa has vivid recollections of growing up within an immigrant household in the 1970s and 1980s. Her family's self-sufficient practices had manifested into the fabric of familial living:

Look, we had chickens, and we'd have the eggs I used to pick in the mornings and we'd have eggnog with milk and coffee. And with our vegetables, they bottled; beans and aubergines. You know, sandwiches with beans, sandwiches with artichokes, sandwiches with aubergines, because that was our diet.

Teresa's husband, Richard, who is descended from generations of orchardists in Massa Lubrense, Italy, has a small garden plot of his own, which he says “gets him out of the house”. He said the difference in his garden practice compared to his parents and other first generation gardeners is that the latter did so out of necessity. They didn't have enough income to buy the produce and they couldn't get products they required for their cuisine. He observed that his generation now buys

products so the need to garden is not as important. One of the reasons Richard started his own garden was from a wager he made with his brother, a familiar theme within all generations:

I had a competition with my brother ... and I said, 'I bet you I can grow better tomatoes than you!' And that was my aim and that's what got me started on it. The first year we had some really nice tomatoes but ever since then they've been rubbish. Yep, it was that competitive streak.

Richard also commented on the self-sufficient nature of the first generation immigrants by framing this practice within the geographical nature of living in a village in the south of Naples prior to settlement in New Zealand:

It was difficult to get to Naples, because of the tracks. So they grew [produce], preserved and marinated, so, that tradition carried on here and so they grow them here and preserve them.

Both Teresa and Richard grow produce and follow traditional cooking methods through choice, not necessity. In one conversation both Richard and Teresa expressed their desire for customary foods:

I preserve my own aubergines like Mum does. They are the same. I've carried it on. That's why we grow them, to preserve it so it lasts. Because when they are fresh you couldn't eat them all in one hit.

Richard also added that they practice traditional gardening methods and food preparation willingly, not as an economic obligation:

We don't do it because we need to do it, we do it because we like to do it...it's a real difference to why we do it compared to the older generation; they had no money and we are busy working.

Bourdieu's (1984) work on class, tastes and lifestyles, explores the notion of 'granting' and 'giving' of time to others, "expending such valuable time to no purpose" (p.282). Bourdieu calls this the 'potlatch of time', where the upper social classes "fling into the potlatch of social encounters the time they have spent without thought for immediate profit in exercises as prestigious as they are useless" (Bourdieu, p.282). For Richard and Teresa, as urban, dual-income workers outside

of the family home, emphasis on their need to have more 'leisure time' with family and friends in the garden are markers for the distinction of their garden practice. This is in opposition to the first generation participants where the indicator for their garden practice was cultivated plants for economic need. The value of their time isn't necessarily 'useless', their garden practice and space symbolises values placed on time and leisure and reflects an expression of their changed social situation and status different to that of the previous generation. For the first generation, leisure time was foregone because of economic and customary necessity, and the garden was a place for economic and identity status. It seems, some values have shifted and the second generation of Italian-New Zealanders feel like New Zealanders or 'insiders' as opposed to 'outsiders' of the host country⁴⁵. The emphasis the second generation place on leisure and time, as opposed to first generation gardens as having a tangible use value (the cultivation of plants for economic necessity and customary cuisine), could be problematic for the continuation of traditional garden practices in this community. Although some second generation participants perform "serious leisure" (Rojek, 1995 cited in Bhatti and Church 2010, p.188), by gardening vegetables and other cultivated plants within their somewhat smaller gardens than their first generation parents, it is done out of choice, not necessity.

First generation gardeners who cultivated their gardens out of necessity reflected also the working life of many participants at the time. Most male participants were in the fishing trade either as fishermen or owning fish shops. Their work, while at times sporadic, meant more time could be spent in the garden. The nature of their shift work meant many free afternoons in the garden, mending fishing nets or moorings. Although hard-working and out on the fishing boats on the Cook Strait before dawn, there was enough time in the rest of the day for them to work in the garden. In the gardens visited, usually the first generation male managed the production of the edible garden.

⁴⁵ Jones-Correa, M. 15/11/12 The Markers of Outside Status. *The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/11/15/how-immigrants-come-to-be-seen-as-americans/how-immigrants-are-marked-as-outsiders>; Casey, Marion. R. (15/11/12) How Waves of Irish became Americans. *The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/11/15/how-immigrants-come-to-be-seen-as-americans/how-waves-of-irish-became-americans>

Seeds

Seeds brought over from Italy decades ago, meant that migrants were able to grow traditional produce away from their homeland. A few participants talked of seeds being brought in to New Zealand at a time when border controls were not as rigorous.

First generation participant, Emily, remembers her father bringing back tomato seeds from Capri in the 1960s. It seems the acquisition of these seeds from Italy and the transport of them to New Zealand, established particular varieties of acid-free tomatoes in Italian gardens. Elenio (2012, p.96) noted that many seeds were brought over with southern Italian migrants and varieties included were Roma, Capri or Napoli and other acid-free varieties. Today many of the tomatoes grown in this community are originally from the parent seeds brought in over fifty years ago. The tomatoes are an heirloom variety and are predominantly used for preserving tomato sauce. Some participants mentioned if the season didn't yield enough plump tomatoes that many of the smaller tomatoes grown were good enough to eat as salad additions or eaten plainly rubbed on bread with olive oil and garlic.

Tomato seeds were not the only seeds accompanying travellers. Flora, until recently, grew a type of mimosa tree in the middle of her front yard from an original seed she brought from Italy in 1990. The act of bringing in the seed and growing the tree was one of remembrance and festivity for Flora. The powder-puff-like, heavily scented, yellow flowers are symbolic. In Italy *mimosa* blooms are exchanged on Valentine's Day and on Women's Day or the *Festa della Donna* on 8 March. Flora often gave cuttings to other people but concedes that it is quite difficult to cultivate.

I got the seed from Italy...it's a lovely smell. It used to be a little shrub. It's now over 20 years old. I give the plants to lots of people but only two others managed to grow it. It's really quite popular in Italy.

For Flora, bringing the seed to Island Bay meant that a little bit of Italy resided in the form of a cultivated tree. The action of planting the mimosa seed, for it to germinate and to grow into something tangible is an emblematic response to retaining a traditional system. It could be seen as Flora's annual rebirth of being

Italian. The mimosa tree was indeed an extension of Flora's self and one that retains her traditional ties to Italy. The cultivation of the seed and its eventual growth, which led to many gifts in the community, is Flora's reward. For Flora it was a connection to the past that kept on giving back to her and to her extended community.



Figure 16. The mimosa tree in Flora's front yard.

For most gardeners, the practice of collecting and retaining seeds from cultivated plants in their own gardens is widely acknowledged. To retain seeds from previous harvests is both an economic and self-sufficient practice for the maintenance of an annual garden. For Italian gardeners, retaining seeds is a necessary practice in cultivating true-to-type of the parent crop. Being open-pollinated, non-hybrid varieties, it is guaranteed that the type of tomatoes grown will resemble the same

characteristics as the parent plant. Although some participants do not get the yield as desired due to varying environmental and climatic conditions, in most instances their tomato plants grow and so the gardener has opportunities to retain some seeds for the next year. Participants take care in how they collect, dry and store seeds. The first generation, in particular, tended to do this from years of experience, and viewed this practice as part of the seasonal garden lifecycle adapting its cultivation to the Island Bay environment over decades of trial and error.

First generation gardeners, Francesco and Emily, are diligent in the treatment of seeds they collect and store. Their Italian tomato seed, which originated from Francesco's own father's tomato plants in Capri, are carefully dated to when they were cultivated and collected, and placed in small glass jars. The seeds are discussed with a respect to their origins and presented in little jars. All their seeds are kept in the dining room dresser drawer together with other 'indoor' home items. The dresser also stores other items of personal value and the tomato seeds fit in this category. When discussing the seeds both Emily and Francesco intermittently talk through the process of seed collecting and convey expert knowledge:

Emily: There is an art to getting the good seeds. The seeds number 4 to 5 per tomato.

Francesco: You pick out the first tomato of the season 'the most beautiful one'. You make a sauce with the flesh and take the seeds out to dry.

Emily: The seeds are put into a little dish; the membrane gets cleaned around it and put on the windowsill to dry. It takes a few days to dry, but depends on how much sun is around. When they are dry they we put them in little containers and date them, you know.

Francesco: They keep for 2-4 years.



Figure 17. Tomato seeds drying out on the windowsill.

Similarly for Flora, the process of keeping seeds is just as she says, “second nature”. As with other first generation participants, every tomato plant is propagated from the seed of previous harvests. Flora says she shares the seeds with her family members.

As well as tomato seeds, Flora likes to share her unique broccoli seed. She says that no one she knows has this particular broccoli seed, and cannot recall when she sourced it. “I’ve had it for years and years and I always have enough seed [to propagate]. Her daughter, Rita, exclaims, “People come here to get the seeds!” Flora also provides this particular broccoli to a private business club in Wellington where her son is the head chef and how she says; the broccoli is distinct from other types.⁴⁶ Flora is proud of her broccoli seed that she shares with others. When in the garden while being interviewed, the first plant she showcases is the broccoli. To her the broccoli stands for a specific distinction in her gardening practice. Flora gently touches the plants and explains their role in her cuisine and gifting activity.

⁴⁶ Elenio (2012, p.96-97) mentions the Wellington hillsides and road verges were prolific with wild broccoli and many Italian families used to scour these areas for the bitter vegetable.



Figure 18. Flora's broccoli plant.

Particular seeds, which are significant, create a point of difference for participants and mark distinctions of their specific gardening practices. Francesco and Emily seeds from Capri came from a need for an authentic heritage ingredient. For Flora and Luigi, their seed stories originate from the need for self-sufficiency and necessity. Bourdieu's (1984) notion that necessity imposes a taste for necessity (p.372) corresponds to Flora and Luigi's practice of their seed(s)' distinctiveness. Bourdieu comments 'the taste for necessity',

is most clearly seen when it is, in a sense, operating out of phase, having survived the disappearance of the conditions which produced it (Bourdieu 1984, p.374).

In Flora and Luigi's case the satisfaction of the 'fruits of their labour' borne out of necessity and doing it themselves is an indication of their own agrarian and cultural roots, which they are still attached to in their suburban garden. However, 'doing it themselves' as with Francesco and Emily's practice of retaining and cultivating Capri tomato seeds, provides Flora and Luigi with a certain distinctiveness. Flora's broccoli is a tangible object to highlight this distinction and with it comes a mark of respect and purpose. Rita, Flora and Luigi's daughter, acknowledges this point

of difference on the impact of her parents gardening to her own family's happiness, even when Rita and her husband don't have the time to do their own:

He [husband] appreciates everything. If we get beans or broccoli from Nonna's [Italian for grandmother] garden. And the girls really appreciate it and when we get the mozzarella they really appreciate it!

For these participants, seeds are objects, which fulfill a life history of their own. Brought with migrants for economic necessity and cuisine preference, the seeds today are prized as a way of showing distinctiveness from what they classify as mainstream local garden practices in their neighbourhood, and to what is available in the marketplace. It is through seeds that Flora, Luigi, Francesco and Emily can find their own identity in their garden world and the world outside it. For Rita, this distinctiveness creates a familial and cultural link, which is channeled to other members and third generation members of her family. The seed, although produced prolifically, can have an exclusive quality of its own; it is also an object, which adds value to the owner.

Many second generation participants mention plant cuttings⁴⁷ as a means to propagate. Plant cuttings have been gifted to them or shared through various family connections. Using plant cuttings to increase stocks in the garden can be a quicker and easier method to propagate than seeds. The advantage of plant cuttings is that there is a guaranteed likeness to the 'mother' plant. For some second-generation gardeners who are establishing their own gardens, plant cuttings, provide a means to establish plants in character to what was in already established gardens. Plant cuttings include artichokes, tomatoes, beans and grapes, and having originated from established gardens of other Italian gardeners, create a tangible living link or memory to past gardening practices.

For Joseph, the cuttings in his garden were from plants once tended by his late father whom he said had a prolific garden. In Joseph's front garden there are ornamental shrubs and flowers. A rose plant is from a cutting from his parent's

⁴⁷ A piece cut from a plant for propagation. <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/cutting?q=cuttings>. (accessed 24/11/12)

garden whose property had to be sold once both parents died. Joseph also tried to plant acid-free heirloom tomatoes from a plant given to him by his late father:

We did get a plant from when my Dad was still alive, a tomato plant, I wanted to try...I put it in a pot, put it on one side of the house. The next day there was a southerly, no a northerly. It came through, the plant just shrunk. It was almost on its way out so I put the plant on the other side of the boundary. Then next day the wind changed! Destroyed it. And I thought, 'My god, I can't even grow one tomato plant because of the wind.'

Both Richard and his wife, Teresa, share many stories of grapes being grown prolifically in their childhood gardens. Teresa recalls stories of the abundance of grape crops; there was so much that her father used to send her to other Italian households to share the crop. For their garden they are determined to grow the grapes and it is hoped the plant cuttings from Richard's father will fulfil their desire. A successful crop for Richard has been globe artichokes, which his father provided with seedlings and helped plant with him. Determined to grow plants which they can eat Richard says:

I just work out it's a vegetable that we all eat. I am not going to grow anything that we don't eat.

Carolina, a middle-aged, first generation gardener, who is married to a second-generation Italian-New Zealander, is a provider as well as a recipient of cuttings. Grapes growing in her garden are from a cutting of an old grape plant given to her eight years ago from her husband's retired uncle who owns a prolific garden in the same suburb. It is now well established and grows up a canopy adjacent to the back stairs of the house, 'just like in Italy', she comments. Carolina also provides others around the neighbourhood with tomato seedlings she propagates, as gifts; her immediate neighbours, friends and others that 'pop' by to visit. She mentions that her shed is 'full of them' when she is propagating from seed, and she has so many that there is no room to plant them in her garden.

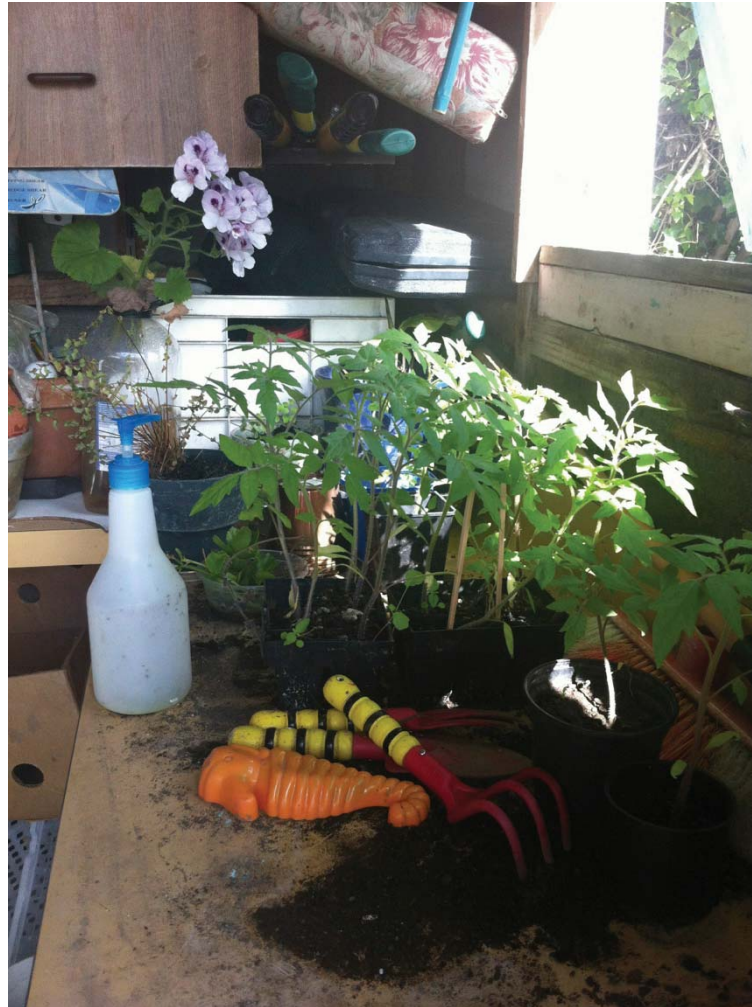


Figure19. Heirloom tomato seedlings in the shed ready for transplanting in the garden - first and second generation garden.

First generation gardeners make meaning by cultivating familiar plants. Gardens can be cultivated as bridges between what is known and what is unknown. Seeds are transported from the familiar gardens of ‘home’ and planted into gardens in a different geographical space which combined with native plantings are a “borderland” bridging the old world with new (Holmes, Martin and Mirmohamadi, 2008, p.3). This action is a means to create ‘a home away from home’ in the form of a garden. Immigrant gardens are spaces, which are melting pots of past lives and emerging beginnings (Morgan, Rocha and Poynting 2006, p.94). The offspring of immigrants are, however, confronted with different challenges as they live within familiar homes yet imagined places. Holmes et al. (2008) propose that cultural identity and experience in gardens for the offspring of immigrants will be altered due to the fixed nature of gardens and culture (p.201). By establishing their own gardens through seed and plant cutting gifts, given to them by members of the first

generation, second generation gardeners are emulating their own cultural notion of 'being Italian'. Seeds and cuttings for them are conduits to their own cultural identity. Although fixed in nature, culture and gardens have opportunities to remain constant although through a different lens and time.

Seed and plant cutting exchanges within the Italian community are part of the communal life in Island Bay for the participants in this study. Often while conducting interviews, participants would mention many other Italians of the same origin in the community who share plants and garden knowledge with many ideas and resources discussed. It is this knowledge or “garden capital” (Tilley 2009, p.186) within this community that forms part of a communal life, similar to experiences in the old country as well as in the new country when migrants first arrived.⁴⁸



Figure 20. Heirloom tomato seedlings almost ready for transplanting - first generation participant.

Garden making for the Italian community with cultivation from seed and plant cuttings gives these plants their own biographies. The seeds, once a food and ornamental plant source in Italy, have evolved into an object of cultural identity in

⁴⁸ See Elenio (2012 pp. 76-98)

the suburbs of New Zealand.⁴⁹ The garden practice of seed collection after cultivation and plant cutting reciprocity of 'Italian' origin by first and second generation gardeners (within and outside the Italian community), means that these objects play a significant part in making 'home' and to help anchor and cement cultural identity. Seeds and plant-cuttings offer a regeneration of authentic heritage practice through the cultivation, harvest and process of these objects.

Conclusion

Cultivated gardens as commonplace spaces can make meaning of things around us. Bhatti and Church explain that garden space and human activity have the ability to give more insight into contemporary human-nature relations,

...gardens, family and friendship relations, real and remembered, can be important dimensions of human agency in everyday life that structure relations with nature (Bhatti and Church 2001 p. 380).

The cultivated gardens belonging to Italians reflect their identity and bridge connections to their heritage.

Plants cultivated by the first Italian migrants to New Zealand were borne out of necessity and the desire to create familiar tastes in their cuisine choices. Longhurst mentions that "sheer survival" was a reason in which immigrants to New Zealand, like the Italian migrants needed to plant gardens (Longhurst 2006, p.583). Yet it is more than this. From the act of self-sufficiency, the intergenerational Italian garden has transformed into a material culture form of cultural identity. The cultivated Italian garden is an emotionally significant reference point that maintains intergenerational heritage. Familiar and traditional plants are part of cultivated heritage and are also a channel for human emotions from the past, present and future. Plants for the Italian gardener provoke the passion for living, remembering the past set within the urban environment of the garden. Plants provide the second generation with a means to preserve their heritage links and within their cross-cultural environment as Italian-New Zealanders.

⁴⁹ Lima (2001), shares ideas of migrant garden distinctions in the study of the gardening practice of Samoans in New Zealand. The paper discusses Samoan migrant's constraints of traditional garden practice in New Zealand. Lima concludes that retention of Samoan identity is firmly rooted in gardening practices and their association within their natural environment (Lima 2001, p.76).

Planting a garden is an act of anticipation. It is also an act of memory and settlement: those who make a garden look back to recollected forms and forward to new growth that will become a special kind of place (Holmes, Martin, Mirmohamadi 2008, p.3).

It is in the process of gardening, which is a somewhat mundane and intimate everyday activity, that race and ethnicity is embedded (Holmes, Martin and Mirmohamadi, p.201). This embeddedness creates garden actions as living and active nostalgic bonds. It is also an expression of 'making home' and bridging between the old and new.

When speaking of cultivated plants from her parent's garden, Flora observes how climate and soil made up the products of her garden:

My father used to grow in springtime summertime big watermelon, rockmelon everything, everything. The weather was just nice and we had all kinds of fruit; cherries, peaches all kinds, everything.

This nostalgia has driven Flora and her husband's prolific cultivated garden practices. Their second generation daughter, Rita, recalls her time spent in Italy staying at her extended family's orchard and farm which has meant that she also has an understanding of traditional gardening cuisine practice:

We picked olives with them and for one month we collected all the hay. It was real hard work putting them in bundles. It took us like weeks and then carrying it on the shoulders, when I was about 16! The other area of the farm was lemons. And they showed me how to make wine. Over those months we learnt a lot. But it's a lot of hard work. I don't think I've worked so hard in my life working there!

Rita now attempts to emulate gardening practice, growing a lemon tree and many herbs, but cites soil problems in her garden, which doesn't allow a prolific garden to be grown as her parents or that of her extended family in Italy. Together with being married to a non-gardener, has meant less incentive in establishing a garden. In the meantime, Rita and her family appreciate the 'garden gifts' given to her family by her parents.

Armstrong's view that migrants' gardens are not made to be passed on as inheritance (Armstrong, 2009 p.3), could ring true in this particular instance. However, the impact of Rita's experiences in Italy and the memory of dwelling and living in her childhood garden environment full of cultivated nostalgic associations, provides Rita with notions of a cultural inheritance that she emulates within her 'smaller' cultivated garden. Her current garden is not the garden of her childhood. Rita tries to imbue a cultural connection in her plant choices, regardless of soil quality, by planting herbs and lemons and using them in her cuisine. The second generation, in observing and taking part in cultural garden practices, gives Rita the 'garden capital' needed if she wishes to pass on cultural garden knowledge to the next generation.

The cultivation of certain plants reconnects people with the past and guides them through the present. Emotionally significant plants are used as mnemonic devices to remember those from the past. First generation, Maria, has a front garden with a number of rose bushes and daisies she remembers from her childhood garden in Italy in remembrance of her mother, brother and niece. Flora's front garden has a mimosa tree from a seed brought over from Italy to remind her of the festivity celebrated in her home-town. Second generation, Joseph, grows a rose bush from a cutting from his late parents' garden and has attempted to grow an acid-free heirloom tomato plant given to him by his late father.

Nature and culture, intersect in contemporary domestic garden space as suggested by Longhurst (2006, p.585). Nature is cultivated or 'tamed', and put into order from that which is wild. A cultivated domestic garden is an extension of the self. The garden creates order from a disordered world outside. For Maria, Flora, Ada and Joseph, cultivating plants that are significant to their cultural roots have become cultivated symbols of order to replace a loss or void in their lives.

Material culture within the Italian garden has capacity to empower cultural identity. Participants engage with plants and structures within the garden space to convey motives and meaning to what these material things represent to them. Accumulating seeds and cuttings from heirloom stocks, growing produce and processing this produce to create specific food preferences, are one of many activities the Italian gardeners perform within their garden space. Through using garden capital, Italian identity is contained and accessible through the visible

material culture of animate plant life and inanimate garden objects. The annual rhythms of garden practice places this identity performance as part of the home building or building blocks of making home in a new environment (Hage et. al, 1997, p.104). Through the life-course of a cultivated domestic garden in the Italian tradition, the practice of gardening is an ordered experience cultivated on an annual calendar as part of the rhythms and variances of life. The Italian garden as cultivated nature intersects with culture in making home and confirming identity.

CHAPTER 2

The Garden as Identity

different ways of identity construction are produced through the medium of living with and through a medium we call ‘material culture’ (Tilley 2006, p, 61).⁵⁰

[The older generation] say it's beautiful. They say it's like a little bit of Europe. The oven, grapes under the pergola.” - Joseph and Lisa, second generation

Cultural identity manifests in everyday life as a response to wanting to belong and to feel grounded⁵¹ “through which we find and see ourselves in relation to others” (Tilley, 2008, p.222). Gardening as everyday practice in contemporary gardens can provide clues to understanding Italian identity in Island Bay. Identity constructions around the garden, has been prompted by anthropologist Christopher Tilley’s concern in his essay on ‘Objectification’ (Tilley 2006) in that gardens are worth studying. Investigation of garden activity from this research demonstrates connections to identity values of Italian people within the community. This chapter argues that the intergenerational Italian garden informs explicitly the correlation of garden materiality with identity – that their gardens are a geographically implicit form of Italian nationality. As everyday practice, gardening activities display continual acts of identity reminders and as a consequence Italian gardeners do not forget their culture. Some of them create gardens that allude to a past, which is remembered nostalgically and practised traditionally to retain a significant way of life that represents their heritage for themselves and for their descendants.

The suburban garden has visible recognisable uses as varied and mundane as the cultivation of plants, an outside space attached to the house, and a space for entertainment and leisure. As this chapter suggests, the garden, although part of

⁵⁰ Tilley’s (2006) chapter on ‘Objectification’ concludes the need to research ‘the banal and the everyday as well as the extraordinary’. He provides an example of the need to further investigate the ‘personal and cultural significance of the garden’, moving away from the numerous academic studies of public gardens of the ‘privileged, the rich and the powerful’. (Tilley, 2006 p, 70-71).

⁵¹ Palmer 1998 discusses the relationship between national identities and the practices of sociality, everyday living and “thoughts of home that we take with us wherever we go” (1998 cited in Tilley 2008).

the everyday, can also be viewed as undiscovered space - an outside frontier yet to be explored . In particular, the study explores notions of the garden as an extension of the self.⁵² As this research will suggest, this entity is a medium, which connects the Italian gardener and their place of belonging. Thinking about and working within the garden, generates ideas of place and thought for most Italians in the research. In the action of this subtle process, thinking and doing through the garden reaps a significant embodiment of cultural traits, which unconsciously promotes awareness of their own identity.

This chapter examines how identity is materialised, and why people actively create within the garden. In particular it examines how object-related gardening practice expresses identity and enquires as to who they are or 'who one is' (Woodward, 2007, p.134). Firstly, it will explore the duality of the garden, as animate and inanimate object and how participants perform in and through it within the concepts of tradition and nostalgia. Inter-generational similarities and differences of gardening practice will be discussed, focusing on what gardening means to each participant with emphasis on their perceived cultural identity and whether the garden holds a special place as part of that identity. The garden is also a place for memory and the chapter will explore how gardening practice is used as a mnemonic device and how this reinforces Italian identity.

Methods used by participants to work through states of cultural differences, misunderstandings, divisions, prejudice and diversity will be considered with particular attention given to the nature of garden practice and whether this practice and its outcomes reinforce these states. The chapter will investigate whether the Italian garden demonstrates inclusion or marks a boundary demarking one world

⁵² "Objects as extensions of self: Belk's essay on possessions and how they 'extend self' makes the point that human beings are more than their physiology – their bodies and their minds (Woodward, 2009, pp.144-145); on the significance of gardening as a craft and something 'they make themselves', (Tilley 2009), explores the idea that gardeners construct identities dissimilar from other constructed identities through the accumulation of things (p.178). The difference being, that the gardener's identity is constructed through the process of gardening by the individual from their own knowledge base and creative input. It is essentially created by the individual and 'made up' according to that individual's invested capital. Woodward's (2007) notion of the object as an extension of the self uses the idea of things we possess and how these things are a part of our self, through the works of Belk (1988). In this account, objects are an extension to 'the self and who we are, through to what is 'mine'. Conclusively, objects are a part of the self. It's all about personal control of the object – "the more we believe we possess, or are possessed by an object, the closer we feel it to be part of ourselves" (Belk, 1988 cited in Woodward p.145). This helps to understand the living experience of the Italian domestic garden. That things in the garden, the plants (animate) and garden structures (inanimate), are embodied senses of the self. The Italian garden is lived in, lived through and lives alongside the lifecycle of those people who tend and have an attachment to the garden. Although the domestic garden has a commonality with many gardeners outside of this particular study, the domestic gardening practice of the Italians provides a link to who they are and what it means to be Italian. It is this diversity or attitudes to this cultural distinction, which provides an insight into intergenerational changes and continuities within the community.

from the other, both physical (Italian - local community) and abstract (inter-generational). If so for the latter, does this divide, encourage or discourage identity both within the Italian community and outside of it.

The first Italian migrants who established their homes and gardens in Island Bay created a sense of their own place as well as belonging to the local community. Being away from their extended families and tight-knit communities in Italy was a difficult experience (Elenio, 2012, p.7). Anthropologists, Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich and Catherine Trundle, show that themes of ‘place-identity’⁵³ and ‘place attachment’⁵⁴ are a significant aspect of modern migration (Bönisch-Brednich & Trundle, 2010, p.7)⁵⁵. Although the essays in their volume are contemporary situations, the same principles could apply in relation to this thesis in that, “Homes *in situ*...are seen as sites chosen by migrants for their ability to express and enable identity” (Bönisch-Brednich & Trundle, 2010, p.8). The ‘making’ of a home embodies expressions of thought and it is with the interaction of material things or objects that creates a means to “objectify their past presence” (Tilley, 2006 p.60). The garden is an object in which Italians demonstrate their “past presence” in their home, which enables them to maintain their place-identity. A [migrant] garden attached to the home can be seen as an identity enabler. Producing a garden and attending to a particular ‘cultural’ gardening practice, seem to be one of the tools employed particularly by first generation participants to retain Italian cultural identity. Alternatively, the garden is a ‘place-attachment’ where participants practice their culture and employ traditions, perhaps deep-rooted, possibly invented, through the act of gardening. It is this point of difference that establishes the Italian-New Zealand migrant as dissimilar from the ‘local’. However, being placed in this environment simultaneously means being part of a larger group as a ‘local’⁵⁶ and this is worthy of further exploration.

⁵³ Place-identity is defined by Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff (1983, cited in Bönisch-Brednich and Trundle 2010) as “a cognitive sub-structure of self-identity consists of an endless variety of cognitions relating to the past, present, and the anticipated physical settings that define and circumscribe the day-to-day existence of the person”.

⁵⁴ Place-attachment defined by Low & Altman and Gustafson (1992, 2001, cited in Bönisch-Brednich and Trundle, 2010) involves “the interplay of affect and emotion, knowledge and beliefs, and behaviours and actions in reference to ‘place’”.

⁵⁶ Bönisch-Brednich and Trundle define local from Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst (2005, cited in Bönisch-Brednich & Trundle , 2010), as belonging and being a local (p.7) based on identity ties to residence, place and sociality.

The garden acts as a metaphor for identity as ‘place’, in as much as home is ‘place’.⁵⁷ Tilley (2006) discusses that migrant communities “care much more about place, about homeland and origin, about who they are, than peoples who are not so displaced” (2006a, p. 13). The garden as ‘place’ as an important role in home-making, is a key feature of Bhatti and Church’s (2000) article on gender, leisure and home-making, and the social construction of ‘home’. Home within a migrant context, in particular within anthropologist Kylie Mirmohamadi’s⁵⁸ study of a Greek migrant’s garden in Australia, explores the garden as a tool to secure self-identity. Mirmohamadi emphasises visual and material duality in the gardens of post-war migrants:

migrants employ the garden to assume a duality of the author’s terms of ‘home’ and ‘not home’, in that the garden is a visual and material form of being culturally different from others from the host country while acting the role as Australian in the wider context (Mirmohamadi, 2007 p. 203).

Chevalier’s (1998) exploration of the home and garden, notes participants engage in and appropriate the garden as everyday domestic practice, just as they would appropriate the domestic space within their home. Chevalier suggests ideas of nationhood identity within the home and garden, and hypothesises that the concept of home (with the garden as extension to the home), is a metaphor to the extensions of self-identity (Chevalier, p.66-67). Woodward (2009) maintains that, “the idea of home exists within broader cultural narratives associated with family, gender roles and partnerships” (2009, p. 69). It is also argued by environmental psychologists, “homes are sites for the application of resources directed toward the maintenance of self-identity and self-esteem, family relations, and notions of insiders/outside” (Laumann and House 1970; Lawrence 1985, 1987; Rapoport 1969, cited in Woodward 2009).

The garden as identity

The garden is an immigrant’s narrative (Kimber 2004, p.272).

⁵⁷ Place is defined here as people’s significance and understanding that certain ‘places’ have for people.

⁵⁸ Mirmohamadi’s 2007 essay is part of a collection of stories in *Reading the Garden: The Settlement of Australia* (2007) on the ongoing “white settlement of Australia in and through the garden”. Mirmohamadi’s ‘Reimagining the Garden’ focuses on migrant gardens by people who have migrated to Australia in which they discuss memory, loss and home.

Gardening, can be considered an activity in which people engage as a form of expressing their self-identity as Chevalier previously suggests. The everyday and ordinary domestic garden, like that of the contemporary suburban garden in Island Bay, can also be a setting for interactions between people and things which reveal values and ideas of those who work in it. It is in the ordinariness of the garden that can yield what is implicitly present. Noy (2009), explains that things that are ordinary hold great value on practices, how they shape us, what they mean to us and how we interact with them (Noy, 2009, p.101). To some participants, interactions with their gardens subconsciously represents the epicentre of their “Italianness”, where everyday practices brought from the homeland are repeated according to the new context of seed availability, climate and space. The Italian garden is one of the really interesting spaces of continuity and change and demonstrates how participants recreate in the new environment in which their values and ideas are reflected and shared with others. However, the relationship of the object of the garden and the practices associated with it affirms their identity. Tilley (2009, p.173) has noted there is “a refusal to accept that there is anything normal about gardens and gardening”. The garden in this outdoor space by its nature can evolve, through human participation or can be left to stand and let nature take its course. This thesis views the ethno-cultural Italian garden as anything but ordinary. The Italian garden is a living embodiment for a particular kind of Italian identity.

The Italian garden holds meaning and becomes a material object to “stand for other things”(Woodward, 2007, p.134) through its materiality and being created and lived through by participants. Garden space embodies objects as both artefact and nature. Borrowing from Chevalier’s (1998) study, the garden has natural elements in which the participants in this study appropriate to maintain their cultural roots and in so doing render the ethno-cultural garden as a “mediator linked to the natural, social and cultural environment” (p.48).



Figure 21. An old grape vine being supported by a shed wall and recycled material.

Tilley (2008) reinforces that the garden practice is a “place-making activity” which creates a “sense of belonging” and embodies a specific cultural identity of what home means:

The garden provides a powerful means of creating a sense of belonging, primarily because it is part and parcel of a concept of the mundane familiarity of the home for millions of people in their everyday lives. It represents a particular cultural identity evoking particular feelings and emotions of what home means as part of an “imagined national community” (Anderson 1991, cited in Tilley 2008).

Tilley’s comparative ethnographic study of Swedish and English gardens determines that national identity is “metaphorically rooted” through the practice of gardening, however mundane. Tilley argues that through gardening, identity is maintained by a belief system in which certain mental concepts, i.e., narrative or fact, although not substantiated, is what shapes an individual’s understanding of a situation and interpretation of reality. His participant’s notion of an unchanged past maintains an imagined ideal away from modernity, “in the country garden we

truly find ourselves” (Tilley, 2008. p.245). The participants in this study also carry these same sentiments in that first generation gardeners maintain a belief system from their past and reference this through gardening practice which is one manifestation of the particular way they see themselves as being Italian.

Moore (2004) says that “a culture consists of a set of knowledge learned and shared by a specific group of humans, and different human groups learn and share different sets of knowledge” (p.286). The early Italian migrants to New Zealand initially made gardens to create ingredients for their traditional cuisine and maintain a diet to which they were accustomed in Italy, but not available in New Zealand (Elenio 2012, p.95). For example, growing vegetables such as acid-free tomatoes for their thin skin and fleshy pulp to be used in preserved tomato sauces. The Italian garden is also a medium through which their cultural identity can be acknowledged and it is apparent from the research that garden practice has played a significant role in what it means to be Italian for first generation as well as their New Zealand-born children and grandchildren.

Recreating traditional gardens also provides immigrants with a cultural inheritance to be passed on to their offspring as well as to the maintenance of self-esteem (Kimber 2004, p.27). As Vojnovic (2001, cited in Kimber, 2004) suggests, practice in gardening provides “mental-health benefits, even for those who immigrated long ago”. Establishing a garden on foreign soil from seeds brought over from Italy, not only provided food sustenance but also provided emotional and sensory support. Immigrants create home-placed foundations in an unknown country, which maintains identity and supports self-esteem.

This chapter argues that memory and knowledge-based garden practice which has created garden legacies is still practiced by later generations of the Italian community. These gardens created by traditional processes are the material embodiments of the gardeners’ Italian identity. On observation, participants demonstrate features which suggest Italian garden practice and provides a sample of domestic material culture, and as Tilley suggests, “on display as signifiers of identities” (Tilley 2008, p.244).

The Italian garden can also be seen as a historic and contemporary ‘place’ where one can come to terms with being different. Participants in this study have their

own narratives, which defines their Italianness, different from others in the wider community. Stories of foreignness or 'being different' whether from the first generation migrant experience or later generations provide a glimpse of wider social attitudes. Bhatti and Church (2000, p.185) suggest the garden is a place where garden practice is key to how people deal with wider social issues such as conflicts and tensions and how this impacts on broader social spectrums of society. "Place-based identity resources", a shared philosophy of 'place' by settled communities and newcomers, are argued to be important elements of contemporary migrant settlement (Bönisch-Brednich & Trundle, 2010). It is suggested by the authors that rather than constraining migrant lives, "place is productive, providing identity resources that migrants often assert and transform in order to craft a sense of emplacement" (p.9). Italian garden practice is an example of this idea in that gardens are created within a productive framework (a reason to make a garden is to make food), and in the process the outside place is changed to reflect their need of establishing stability within an unfamiliar environment. The idea of leaving one place and creating another home through 'making a place' in a foreign environment through memory and invented tradition is a theme in the writings of Antigone Kefala (1998 cited in Zournazi 1998). In writing about her own formation of her community, Kefala indicates that belonging to a community creates an identity, as people rely on the community as a way to link with the past.

the communities were invented on the way, as a way of creating a feeling of home, a reinforcement of language and culture, of the past (Kefala, 1998, p.49).

Kefala's experience mirrors that of the Italian community in Island Bay who have also established their cultural roots and maintained identity through belonging in the community. The community was left behind in Italy by first generation Italians and relocated and reinvented within a community in Island Bay based on memory and an imagined home by later generations. For many first generation participants, garden making was developed due to necessity and in so doing it mirrored the practices of the community left behind in Italy, yet it was a particular reinvention modified by local conditions and choices of what to include and exclude. The use of the garden as 'cultural space' provides a link to the homeland, real and imagined.

The garden as place is rich with ideas of belonging and not belonging, of old verses new and adapted pathways. It is these ideas of cultural identity narratives that can be read in gardens (Kimber, 2004, p.272).

Tradition

There is no such thing as a traditional identity, only forms of constructing identities that might be labelled traditional by some... (Tilley, 2006a, p.12).

I'm writing a journal on my Mum's cooking which my daughter wants to put it into a book. I don't know when, but it will be just for family. So we keep our traditions because we've all not continued." – Ada, second generation

Traditions, assert Hobsbawm and Ranger (2008), are more often a recent construct and sometimes invented, as opposed to being 'old' (p.1). The idea of traditions being old or "masquerading as historical truths" (Leach, 2000, p.9), is to assume that a practice, thought or concept has 'been around' since time immemorial. Leach suggests that a new tradition or practice is started by "finding some link with a suitable historical past" (2000, p.10).

Notions of tradition within the material world of the Italian garden are significant to participants' understanding of who they are as 'Italians'. Tradition, defined by participants as "it's how it's always been done"⁵⁹, was a common response across all generation levels. However, as the study progressed it was made evident, certain garden practices that the participants deemed to be traditional, i.e., the way a tomato plant is supported, were typical garden custom performed by others as well within the wider community. What is seen to be traditional may indeed be something that is merely routine or convention a difference from tradition. However, dressed within a bounded cultural experience, participants observe practices many times over within an intensely embodied environment. Together with language, family relations and the production of food, traditional garden practice achieves a different status and it is this distinction which participants see themselves as being 'Italian'. What most participants see in their gardens is a visible manifestation of an 'Italian' garden or the potential to create a garden "just like

⁵⁹ Examples will be given later in this chapter.

their parents used to”. Their gardens contained cultivated plantings and other material things and also the expectation that the garden can be shared, discussed and worked in from an Italian point of view. It is the combination of these practices that participants call ‘tradition’.



Figure 22. Tomato plants and other vegetables in the garden of a first and second generation participant with fishing nets as protection.

Carolina, a first generation Italian, tends her garden together with her second generation husband Enrico. Half of their backyard is dedicated to a vegetable garden, i.e., tomatoes, zucchini and artichokes, with many plants cultivated mainly in summer. The vegetable selection and an olive tree planted at the back of their section, reflects their Italian heritage. When asked why they keep a vegetable garden, Enrico acknowledges his background, having observed his mother and father cultivating their garden. However, he also realises that growing his own has other benefits:

It is something that when I was younger I didn't think I'd do, but now that I'm older I just do it because it's the satisfaction you've grown something yourself. A tomato that you've grown yourself, or picking a lettuce out of your garden... the

satisfaction where you've seen it grow, you know it's fresh. I don't use spray. You know where its come from and something you own...



Figure 23. Heirloom tomato seedlings placed in the recycled buckets once used on fishing boats, placed in the garden for the cooler spring months.

Carolina wanted to make a vegetable garden after 'having one' when she was a child living with her family on an orchard in Massa Lubrense:

I think for me it's probably because back home [gardening] it's what we did. I do a few [plant tomatoes and make tomato puree]...we grew up with that.

Married couple, Ada and Peter (second and first generation respectively) own a large prolific garden with many vegetable plants and fruit trees dotted around their front and back garden and the neighbouring section belonging to their adult son.



Figure 24. Artichokes being grown in Ada's son's adjacent front yard.

Both Ada and Peter cook traditional Italian foods with produce from their garden and pride themselves on being self-sufficient. They like to maintain a ‘traditional’ garden and keep ‘traditions’ alive for themselves, their children and their grandchildren. When it comes to making tomato puree, Ada is familiar with the process from her childhood and talks about how it was a family affair and how a particular object, the ‘tomato puree maker’, and the old copper to ‘cook’ the puree would work:

I still have my Mum’s old hand machine where the juice comes from one side. My Mum did it when we were kids. The younger ones would slice tomatoes because when we were younger we had the smaller fingers so we could use the tomatoes in the smaller bottles. Mum used to boil them up in the old copper on the hill [a section her father had levelled off]. It took a whole day.

Asked whether her children follow the tradition of tomato puree making, Ada explains that although they don’t produce as many bottles today, and spend as much time on the practice from when they were younger, the tradition is still

passed down, although adapted to use other modern equipment to get the job done quicker. However, the extended family are benefiting from this tradition:

[Daughter's] husband loves it. Because it's an old tradition. She [daughter] still has my mother's things, you know. We only do 3-4 bottles at a time. She [daughter] does enough that carries her through.

Robert and Angela, first-generation New Zealanders, own a big garden plot adjacent to their home. Robert was brought up on his family's orchard in Massa Lubrense and is familiar with traditional garden methods. When asked if his children follow his lead when it comes to traditional garden and related cuisine practice, both Robert and Angela have doubts:

No, not that generation, even non-Italians... I try to [teach them] but they really have no interest. Too much on, like sports interests, busy working, computer...

They help us make it [tomato sauce] and I show them, but I don't think they will carry on if we go.

Hobsbawm and Rogers (2008) state that traditions, custom, routine and convention are distinctive characteristics. 'Tradition', is fixed or invariant, whereas 'custom' "which dominates so-called traditional societies", is "flexible...because even in 'traditional' societies life is not so"(Hobsbawm and Rogers, p.2). In the case of routine and convention, it is characterised by having "no significant ritual or symbolic function as such, though it may acquire it incidentally" (Hobsbawm and Rogers, p.3). It is routine and convention of a process by which repeated social practice is fulfilled that imparts knowledge to others (Hobsbawm and Rogers, 2008, p.3). For Ada and Peter's children the routine and convention of tomato-sauce making as observed from their parents have instilled a 'family tradition', which could be argued is a difference to the wider 'cultural' traditions.

Carolina's recollection of a traditional activity from her infancy - "since I was born"- is reflected in her garden and associated garden activities. Her husband Enrico describes her interest in gardening and how it achieves her cultural status of being Italian:

Because when they were young [Carolina] started off [learning] from her father. He used to take her to pick olives. They all chipped in to sort them out so they could preserve them. So, like I learnt from my mother and father - the process of doing tomatoes... it's something they grow up with.

Carolina adds that what she observed in the garden remains with her:

Since I was born we did tomatoes. And, of course, Dad grew everything. We didn't have to go to market to buy them, because back home summertime was very hot and Dad used to pick the tomatoes and put them in a net, you know, all the bees nets. It took 3-4 days of the week and then we used to make tomato puree for a day. We used to make hundreds of bottles. You know, it was fun, because we all used to be together, wash the bottles and squirt water over each other.

Flora, another first generation New Zealander from Massa Lubrense, remembers the many hours of hard work on her parents' farm, where working the land with family effort was needed. It is through these observed and practised methods as a child that Flora maintains her own garden, which is important to her. It provides a link to her family customs and traditions. While talking about her childhood garden and living her life with her family on her father's orchard, Flora would nostalgically look back to her past remembering the life she once had:

When we were younger we had to carry everything up on our shoulders, but we didn't really think anything else because we didn't know any better. We used to sing a lot. We used to go out only to church on Sunday and a lot of feast days every so often. We didn't know any better. But thinking back now it was a perfect life, just a perfect life.

Flora's description of her childhood growing up on the orchard reinforced that what she was taught and what she did was a natural existence. Her phrases of 'we didn't know any better' assumes that routine and practice is something that is inculcated from an early age. Life for Flora was what was on offer, and it is with nostalgia she looks back on this period with fondness.

When it comes to imparting traditional values, Flora is happy their children have been given an opportunity to understand what it means to be 'Italian' for her:

You know, I'm happy because they've been there [to Italy]. They've seen it, they understand, they knew where we grew up. I mean, they didn't see how we did the older ways because when we grew up the older ways were really ... no roads, no electricity, no water. We used to go around collecting water but we were happy because we didn't know any better.

Bourdieu's theoretical concept of *habitus* helps to understand this order of practice. It defines what it is a group or individual does with specific practices and to distinguish the common origin of those practices shared by members of a particular group (Moore 2004 p.329).

The *habitus* – embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product (Bourdieu, 1990, p.54).

It is a set of dispositions, for use in practice that orientates individuals in their relations with people and objects in the social world. The *habitus* is formed in individuals through historically and socially situated conditions of its production, it is the 'active present of past experiences (Woodward 2007, p.122).

In effect, even though tradition, custom, routine and convention are distinctively characterised, their relational link is significant. What constitutes as tradition is intertwined with custom, which can form a routine or convention. *Habitus* provides the means to grasp social practice through a learned set of dispositions perhaps acquired through traditional practices.

Leach (2000), discusses the idea of myth making by garden-writers to accommodate the gaps of discontinuity left behind by change in a constantly shifting modern world. Inventing new beginnings and, "dressing them in a cloak of historical authenticity" and "to be rooted in the past", means, for some garden writers that "any past will do" (2000, p.11). Although adaptive gardening practices within the Italian community can be seen as invented tradition or custom, 'any past will do' does not resonate with the participants in this study. The source of their traditions seem to come from a culturally ingrained process as first generation Carolina mentioned when asked why she continues to practice gardening. It also

seems to come from a familial process in that, what parents do, so does the child through inculcation, as with the example of Ada and Peter's children. Whatever the source of these traditions, they are deemed legitimate, observed and learned, however rooted they are to the earlier or recent past in a different time and space. Historic Italian settlement of space in Island Bay was stable due to kinship ties from chain migration, occupational specialisation and ecological factors. Burnley (1972, p.149) suggests these factors contributed to the Island Bay settlement of Italians to be "the most segregated Continental European neighbourhood in any New Zealand city". However, as time has shown, these centralised nuclear settlements have been deconstructed to accommodate the changing shift of economic and family ties within this group. Therefore, space and time have contributed to traditional change for many second and third generation Italians. What the second and third generation deem to be traditional is routine and convention with traditional roots passed on by first generation migrants.

Tilley (2006) asks, "why material traditions remain of such significance to people in thinking through and acting through their identities?" (p.12).⁶⁰ Could it be that the use of material traditions acquired, memorised and socially transmitted, are a sub-conscious tool⁶¹ for people to feel grounded as a means of coping with separation from familiarity and to re-affirm their ethnic identity? Collective identities, defined as those sharing historical traditions, with ethnic identities exemplified in this study, are often tied up with ideas of "collective traditions and shared material forms... imagined in a historically and materially specific way" (Tilley 2006, p.12). It seems likely that the cultural identification of being Italian is integral with the support of material traditions. The practice of working with and maintaining specific material traditions in garden practice is argued as one of a number of tools participants use to adapt,⁶² to make sense of where they come from and who they are now.

⁶⁰ Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) provides a somewhat broadly defined answer that "it is the contrast between the constant change and innovation of the modern world and the attempt to structure at least some parts of social life within it as unchanging and invariant, that makes the "invention of tradition" so interesting for historians of the past two centuries" (2008, p.2).

⁶¹ See Boyer (1990, p.8),

⁶² An example of adaptation by this community is tomato sauce making by use of electric equipment indoors as opposed to the old traditions from Italy of manual labour done outdoors which was an old practice and traditional way of producing sustainable produce from an abundant food source. This recent adaptation from an old tradition has meant the change and discontinuity of communal effort in tomato sauce making with Italian families and their community. Although still being made, tomato sauce production has less of a social and communal impact on second and third generation Italian-New Zealanders.

Matthew is a third generation Italian. Although still living at his parents home (both of them second generation New Zealanders of Italian descent), his interest in gardening has been influenced by his first generation grandparents who also live in Island Bay. Matthew sees this interest as influential in preserving and carrying on tradition to maintain his identity as being 'Italian':

Its weird between me and Mum because, I'm more interested in every bit of her [grandmother's] cooking, for example, or gardening, whereas Mum's not as interested... Dad has handed that onto me. He sort of taught me how to do it but I've always talked to my grandparents [about] how to do it. Nothing's written down either. The recipes. It's all in the head and measuring everything goes with touch, it's quite different [from recipe books].

As a kid I just remembered I grew tomatoes just by myself because they [the parents] didn't really grow them like my grandparents... Dad would help me because I was young, but I think this year my brother was more into it. No, we both did it together. My little brother, and we kind of watched over him.

...the seeds we use are from Italy and they've been passed on, and, essentially even other things like my tomato seeds are from my grandparents. They've got heaps of seeds lying around.



Figure 25. A section of Matthew's grandparent's garden.

The definition of being Italian varies between participants, which provokes questions of self and collective identity. Being 'Italian' differs from generation to generation based on origin of birthplace and life ways, yet retains the same notion of unbroken bonds. Traditional practice mechanisms are instrumental in forming these Italian bonds. For Matthew, being Italian doesn't mean he was born in Italy. For him, being 'Italian' is about embracing what is familiar to him and what he has learned within a culturally embodied environment; the interaction of thoughts and things has given Matthew a perspective on how he sees his world. His interest and involvement in garden making and its traditional practices or being in his grandmother's kitchen observing traditional cooking methods over time, provides Matthew with the ability to understand and become familiar with how and why things are done.

As Tilley (2006), discusses, the significance of material traditions of people are in their actions. He argues that members of diasporic communities may typically relate strongly to traditional values and homeland and strongly with where they now reside. Being Italian for Matthew is what he has been taught to be 'Italian' from his familial relationships. But as Tilley (2006) argues, "the relations are complex and manifested through material forms in many different ways" (p.12-13). For Matthew his traditional Italian approach is manifested through the garden, the knowledge imparted by his parents and grandparents and interacting with methods and things he considers to be Italian. For Matthew, the idea of being Italian is an integral part of how he sees himself in the present. Being Italian is something he wants to hold on to and is taking practical steps to retain knowledge and practices:

It's a fear [losing identity of being 'Italian'] I don't know about my brothers but for me it's definitely a fear. That's why I can try and do something about it now before it's too late. Even like learning Italian.

For Matthew, Flora and Carolina, generational relationships, which impart traditional practices and values, can take shape through the material form of garden activities and objects. By acquiring inherent qualities gained from learned traditional practices and experiences in a home garden environment, these participants make their own set of relations and identity through garden practice with others and things. Hence *habitus* is developed and social practice through gardening activities forms their view of what it means to be Italian. The material

world of the Italian garden, gained through traditional practices, is an effectual process of objectification. It is cast by participant's ideas, active thought and creation through the interaction of subjects and objects in that "through making, using, exchanging, consuming, interacting, and living with things people make themselves in the process" (Tilley 2006b, p.61).

The objectification of the Italian garden by participants contextualises the notion that the Italian garden is anything but normal. The contemporary Italian garden and practice is a cultural product of traditional generational social actions. However, within this concept, levels of traditions employed by participants need to be questioned. Are the traditions employed by first, second and third generations habitual or conscious decisions? Specifically, are second generation garden practices habitual and third generation conscious?

Ieti Lima's (2001) paper on changes and continuities within a Samoan diasporic community in New Zealand specifically focuses on traditional gardening practices, which have been adapted within the community.⁶³ According to Lima, first generation Samoan gardeners have made conscious decisions to adapt traditional gardening practices in cultivating fresh flowers for ornamental, festive and medicinal purposes. This is due mainly to climactic conditions, which limits the production of 'Pacific' tropical flowers, which are integral to Pacific identity, to be grown in domestic Auckland gardens. As a result some types of plants to decorate homes and places of worship are only used sparingly (Lima, 2001, p.68) Traditional decorations for community feasts and events centred around the church, i.e., fresh flowers and gardens usually cultivated from domesticated gardens in Samoa, are now interspersed with contemporary usage of the traditional form, i.e., plastic flower garlands. However, the study highlights that although practices have been adapted in New Zealand the conscious decisions to retain the traditional focus of flowers and other fauna is still an integral factor in maintaining cultural identity within this group (Lima, 2001,p.75).

⁶³ Lima's study highlights the transformation of new identities as Samoan New Zealanders, in particular, through their environment, social, economic and cultural spheres. Lima asks, how much 'traditional' gardening practices have been transformed and adapted by the migration of large groups of Samoan people to New Zealand. Lima's findings conclude that the Samoan ethnic identity within the community will stay intact through gardening practices and 'hopefully' the relationship to the natural environment, will be the catalyst to retain identity.

Longhurst (2006) identifies contemporary gardens as spaces to understand social and cultural life that reinforces binary identities, which make up these spaces. Longhurst cites Wekerle's (2001) work on culture and migration in relation to gardens and gardening practices (2001, cited in Longhurst 2006). Of first generation immigrants in Toronto, Canada Wekerle has found that they transmit their cultures to second and third generations through gardening practices. Similar ideas of cultural values and identity expressed by the transmission of traditional creation activities is demonstrated in Mallon's (2003) study of the manufacture of a set of Tokelauan toki (hafted adzes) by a Tokelauan master craftsman and two younger Tokelauan apprentices in New Zealand (Mallon 2003, p11). Mallon found that by making toki, the younger apprentices through making and doing things of cultural value, merge their identity as an outcome of this activity in that "it is through what they do that they create themselves" (Mallon 2003, p.21).⁶⁴

Second generation participants, Anna and John, pragmatically help their son, Matthew, to keep the Italian tradition consciously active. However, thinking about his own identity, Matthew's father, John, recalls his childhood memories of what life was like growing up within an active gardening family with first generation parents. Gardening, for John, is not a conscious decision but an activity learned and performed habitually:

I think of him [Matthew] being so interested in it that I want to help him achieve anything he wants to achieve but I actually don't look at it thinking back to what we did when I was his age. I think we are inclined to grow the vegetables [Italian], because they were the traditional veges in the garden that were grown and it's used in our food every day.

⁶⁴ Head, Muir, Hampel (2004) who write on backyard gardens in Australia, suggest that traditional gardening practices of Macedonian and Vietnamese migrants who come from rural and subsistence backgrounds has been diluted as part of heritage rather than everyday practice among the following second generation. Continuity of their heritage by recreating a continuity of their life in their homeland is one of the reasons why food production and cultivation has taken place in migrant backyards. Their engagement with their gardens maintain past practices and retained traditional ways of life. This was done through ideas of how the garden should be through practices, maintenance and plant varieties. The study also reflected elderly people's concerns on gardening practice tradition on the decline amongst the next generations. According to Head et al. gardens of intensive food production virtually disappear within a generation of migration. Among the first-generation Australian-born they are more likely to be reflected in motifs that echo tradition - pots of herbs, a few tomato plants, an outdoor oven as centrepiece of an entertaining area, favourite flowers. "This has less to do with adapting to unique Australian environments than with the socioeconomic conditions of contemporary urban life." (p. 346).

So is it an Italian tradition or just convention. What makes it tradition? When it is conscious? Otherwise is it routine? For Matthew, he defines himself as an Italian by the way he performs how he knows best to be Italian:

I see myself more as an Italian even though I'm not really that Italian in a way that I have come across as Italian all the way from Italy. It's almost like my perceptions and my thinking is completely different to the way a Kiwi thinks. I just have more interest in this sort of stuff [growing Italian tomatoes and preparing Italian foods]. I don't know whether it's just me or I haven't come across anyone else like that. I'm sure there are other people like me but not sure if we do the same thing. But yeah, I see myself as Italian even though, I don't speak [Italian] properly, that's probably the main thing and I haven't been to Italy, but like, I only know what I've been told and I listen to everything and try and learn it.

As Lima, Wekerle, Mallon and this research demonstrates, what is communicated during and through traditional practices such as gardening is not just 'functional' knowledge but also the transmission of other 'cultural' knowledge.

In understanding the contemporary world and social identity constructs, Tilley (2006), inquires on reflexivity and self-identity, and proposes Giddens' idea of the 'evacuation of tradition' as a key feature of high modernity (Giddens 1991, 1994, cited in Tilley, 2006, p.11). Giddens hypothesises that tradition is used only as a "life-style choice" and not used as a past idea with how to live one's life. This idea of tradition as choice in is used to intermingle with other traditions and ways of interaction with people and objects. Thus, choosing which traditions, when and where one can use them, the relevance of these traditions is diluted in everyday practices. Tilley suggests that 'high modernity' is supposedly the first 'post-traditional society'. It is this 'post-traditional' society, which takes place in the context of this project. Within a 'post-traditional' society there appears to be a degree of imagined collective identity, by second and third generation Italians, adopting material forms of traditions from the first generation but not the same. As opposed to the first generation of Italians who had certainties within established set of solid rules and unchanged embedded tradition (Tilley 2006, p.10) where the concepts of nation-statehood and homogeneity from the homeland in which the first generation had strong ties and affiliations were significant, tradition

and hence cultural identity for following generations where kin are two, maybe three generations removed, meanings of their 'Italianness', has changed through the complexities of geographic and social change (Tilley, 2006, p.12).

When Matthew talks of his way of thinking, experimenting with traditional garden and food practice, which is different to the 'Kiwi way', what he is effectively stating is where and what group he belongs to in contemporary New Zealand society and how he identifies with himself. Although he places himself in a collective ethnic grouping as an 'Italian' he is living within the local environment himself a third generation New Zealander. This blur of neither here or there, is a conscious in-between state in which embodies his own self and cultural identity which he anchors through traditions observed and in which he chooses to follow:

Collective identities are always bound up with notions of collective traditions and shared material forms. That is they are imagined in a historically and materially specific way. But which they imagine, or present to consciousness is not always the same. For example the meaning of being a Muslim or a Hindu, or being Cornish or Breton may change fundamentally through time although use of the same term produces a semblance of continuity (Tilley 2006a, p. 12).

Matthew sees himself as Italian as do second generation participants. In so acting and contemplating their identity of being 'Italian', through the material traditions of garden practice, this practice for them provides a sense of continuity and belonging. Although their being 'Italian' is removed from what Matthew says "*I see myself more as an Italian even though I'm not really that Italian in a way that I have come across as Italian all the way from Italy*", being Italian is what defines Matthew and second generation participants to define who they are in the contemporary New Zealand setting of Island Bay.

Diasporas and transnational communities retain communalities of identity despite displacement through shared memories and representations of lost localities and homeland that may be particularly strong. They may typically care much more about place, about homeland and origin, about who they are, than peoples who are not so displaced (Tilley 2006a, p.13).

CHAPTER 3

Faith and Knowledge

Faith

Spirituality, faith and devotion to the Roman Catholic Church is a constant presence in the lives of most first generation participants. Elenio (2012), says that for many Italian immigrants, the Catholic Church was a source of comfort in unfamiliar territory, “Mass is the same the world over, only the language changes”(p.8).

The church and everyday suburban life are intertwined strands within the Italian community from both its past and for the present. Participants articulate interaction with the local Catholic Church, its clergy and laity, the Catholic school and associated church activities as part of a broadened network of their everyday lives. The local Catholic church, St Francis de Sales, provides a venue for a monthly Mass in the Italian language for those within and outside the Italian community. This Mass is officiated predominantly by priests from the Vatican Nunciature based in Wellington. Many of the children, as third and fourth generation Italian-New Zealanders attend the local Catholic school and are active members of the church as readers, altar servers, and helpers.

Associations with the Catholic Church for first generation Italians come from belief systems from childhood, having been baptised in the faith, actively pursued, observed and brought over with them to New Zealand. This connection with the church reflects the strong belief system from within their family and village life in Italy.

Gardens for some participants have been a place to nurture faith and to provide sustenance for community activities. First generation gardener, Maria, recalls her childhood garden and its connection to the local church:

My mother had a little orchard, which belonged to the church, and they used to live there. My father came from a family of orchard people and he knew everything about gardens and he used to grow a lot of things and he made my

mother a little courtyard of flowers, for the church as well, and on the other side, fruit and vegetables.

First generation Flora recalls with fondness, living and working on an orchard and being busy with family activities. Her specific reference to ‘going to church’ as a once a week outing and family devotion to praying, “*sometimes the rosary was said with my sister*”, were occasions in which she engaged in as part of growing up with her family.

Similarly for Flora’s husband, Luigi, going to church meant a break from work, “*I remember that on Sundays it was church, lunch and no work.*” Church for Luigi meant a relaxed Sunday, a time-out from the rigours of daily physical activity.

Having ties with the church has continued for these participants. For Flora in particular, the church and its related activities are part of her every day activity. She tries to attend church every weekday morning down the road at the local Catholic church as part of her routine. Maria provides cut flowers from her own garden for the altar vases when the appropriate blooms are in season. Flora also gives flowers for the altar and helps to arrange them as well. Both Flora and Luigi provide the parish priest with vegetables from their garden when they are in plentiful supply. For another first generation gardener, Robert, some of the produce cultivated in his late cousin’s glasshouse is shared with Catholic nuns from the local convent down the road from the church. And for another first generation participant, Emily, church going or ‘Mass’ is a time to catch up with friends, to discuss how their tomato growing is progressing. Emily mentions, “*You should bear them all on a Sunday morning after Mass!*”

In contrast, second-generation participants hardly spoke of the connections with the church in their conversations. Even though most second-generation participants send their children to the local Catholic school, and Catholic colleges outside of Island Bay, and most second and third generation children have made their First Communion⁶⁵, church engagements were not discussed as part of their

⁶⁵ ‘First Communion’ is when a person receives the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the Christian faith for the first time
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Eucharist (accessed 8/9/13)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Communion (accessed 8/9/13)
<http://www.chchceo.org.nz/?sid=106> (accessed 8/9/13)
http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/communion#communion__6 (accessed 8/9/13)

sociality. The church was a connection most of this generation saw through their parent's lives. Second generation, Joseph, attends church often and recalls times when he has invited the local priest over for pizzas in his garden made in the pizza oven he handcrafted. However, for the most part, second and third generation participants visibly display their Catholic roots by wearing religious jewellery and displaying religious items on the walls of their home, but few express outwardly the strong connection with the church and its social life as do the first generation participants.

For the latter, their gardens are another mechanism to connect with the church based on past practices from the villages they came from. Gardening practice and connections to their spirituality demonstrates a caring for the other and the self, in that gardening practice together with faith and spiritual practice creates certain values in relational situations. Flora and Maria's action of serving the local church through the provision of their cultivated flowers from their gardens is a "technology of love" (Miller 2006, p.350). This is a transactional appropriation of object, cultivated and brought forward to be shared with the church and others, as a means to express their care and nurture their spiritual self and for others. It also is a visible sign of their own sense of esteem and their standing in the community.

The continuity of religious faith, traditions and rituals is maintained with first generation immigrants in other ways that display connection with the local church in their hometowns in Italy within their new homes in Island Bay. These practices play an important role in the preservation of their belief and faith. Elenio (2012) discusses the feast day of the Assumption on August 15, homage to the 'Madonna', where street processions and special masses are said, and as a particularly important festivity for many Italian immigrants from Massa Lubrense (Elenio, p.94). The feast day simulates the Massa Lubrense traditions, in that the 'Virgin Mary' altar is decorated with flowers in the local Catholic Church, St Francis de Sales in Island Bay by members of the Italian community. Contributions would be sent to Massa Lubrense in the past to help with celebrations, an activity which continues today (Elenio 2012 p. 93-94).

The blessing of the boats ceremony

The most visible continuous sign of religious and communal activity for the Italian community is the celebration of the Blessing of the Boats ceremony. An annual procession and event with its roots in Italy, the procession starts from the Catholic Church and meanders its way through the streets of Island Bay down to the coastline where local fishing boats are moored. The local priest together with other clergy, sprinkle blessed 'holy' water from an anchored boat moored ten metres out from the surf on passing fishing boats owned by Italian families and other fishing boats from the wider community. The ceremony was started in Island Bay in 1933 when a fishing boat 'Santina', sunk off the south coast in the Cook Strait and four Italian immigrant crewmen disappeared presumed drowned⁶⁶.

The Blessing of the Boats ceremony, a performance based on ritual and religious belief, brings the local Italian community from all generations and broader community together⁶⁷. The performance of a religious ritual from the interior of the church to the outside space, the beach, presents a transformation between space, objects and persons (Mitchell, 2006, p.396).



Figure 26. The blessing of the boats ceremony in Island Bay.

⁶⁶ <http://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/1401749> (accessed 3/12/13);
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/29299/catholic-community-life-blessing-the-fishing-boats-island-bay> (accessed 3/12/13).

⁶⁷ The Blessing of the Boats ceremony takes place on the last Sunday of the week long Island Bay Festival, in late February.

This is a performance-based role of clergy and the collective community, taking place from the inside to the outside, which has parallels of the inside-outside performances of the domestic home to outdoor garden space. As with Chevalier's (1998) study as mentioned in previous chapters - the "garden acting as mediator to the natural, social and cultural environment" (Chevalier 1998, p. 48) - the ceremony, in bringing the clergy and spiritual vestments and holy water from the church (inside) to the outside, creates what Mitchell (2006) describes in his ethnographic work on a Maltese feast procession as, "the outside is transformed - from mundane, everyday space into transcendent, ritual space" (p.396). Different generational, familial and other social divisions are brought together in a moment of what Mitchell (2002, cited in Mitchell 2006) calls, "Durkheimian effervescence"⁶⁸, which unifies ceremony participants. As with Mitchell's findings, the Blessing of the Boats is not just a symbolic act, "but a substantive transformation of parish space – and its spiritual rejuvenation" (Mitchell p.397). The ritual is not only a representation, a fickle 'good luck' ceremony; it is a mechanism and opportunity for the Italian community to engage in, and gather as one unified body. The ceremonial act identifies the significance of vessels on this particular stretch of bay, as an embodiment of past, present, and future generational practices. Island Bay beach and the Cook Strait are animated objects appropriated by many immigrants and their families for their livelihoods for over 100 years. The ceremony, which brings the community together year after year, is an acknowledgement of where the Italian community came from and the importance of the sea as a source of income and way of life that established this community. The ritual transforms place as idea in that it enables participants with the ability to be closer to the past and to understand and respect the 'heritage' of belonging to the community. Identifying with this festival is deep-rooted with members of the community and for now it is eagerly awaited as a central event in the lives of third and fourth generation descendants living in Island Bay⁶⁹. Bringing a ritualistic indoor practice of a blessing to the outside unifies and transforms the Italian community. The outdoor space as with the garden (Chevalier 1998, p.67)

⁶⁸ Emile Durkheim's theory on the intensity of collective energy by people at a gathering, in that people act differently in these groupings than in their everyday life. Durkheim introduced the term 'collective consciousness' in the publication, among others, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912).

⁶⁹ Anecdotal conversations while taking part in the Island Bay festival, February 2012

has transformative qualities that enable social and performative encounters that contribute to continuity and belonging.

This ceremony holds on to tradition yet transforms itself into new traditions and meanings. This process is a substantive embodiment of the transference of knowledge, and fosters a cultural identity to the next generation of the Italian community. The potency of this cultural landscape is a powerful 'safeguard' to Italian heritage, which is an outward performance of identity status, which secures who 'Italians' are through the materiality of this interaction. The relationship between persons, things and space is evident in the ritual. As Mitchell states,

material culture focuses not on entities, but on relationships between persons and things, where those things can equally be bodies or spaces as things *stricto facto* (Mitchell 2006, p.399).

Outdoor space, as appropriated by ritual and customary practices, has the ability to sustain identity. As with the first generation participants who practice garden making as part of their spiritual outlook, the Blessing of the Boats ceremony is a spiritual outlet for future generations of the Italian community to maintain faith - in spirit and community and identity. The religious based ceremony is an example of continuity and has the transformative potential to enrich identity. This is a religious practice used as an expression of continuance of culture and identity. As with the festivities of 'Christmas' observed by many, the religious meaning of the Blessing of the Boats is lost in a ceremony, which maintains significant cultural links, but remnants of its origins are still relevant.

Experiences, knowledge and continuity

"It's as though it's built within me. It comes naturally, but also I do think that all the stuff I take for granted might one day disappear, and I don't want it to disappear."

- Matthew – third generation

Gardening heritage can be considered as a living material culture; experienced, observed, lived in and objectified. Participants share their gardening heritage and in so doing demonstrate actions in the preservation of their own cultural identity.

Participants presented personal stories and their experience of their interactions and knowledge pathways with the garden. These discussions demonstrated ways in which the participants understood their cultural identity which asked questions of the temporality of their garden practice. As with Bourdieu's notion of *habitus*, gardening knowledge is sustained by the actions and codes that participants engage in which is manifested through historical, traditional and social actions of its production.

First, second and third generation Italians have similar, yet transformative, applications to their gardening knowledge. Many participants exemplify continuity of garden practice by their discussions of the garden and the knowledge base they have acquired. Second generation gardeners, who do not have the intensive capacity of gardening as first generation gardeners, demonstrate awareness of garden practice. They transmit this knowledge through the production of food products, sometimes grown in their parent's garden, which are shared to the third generation. Transmission of traditional food cuisine from the garden demonstrates *habitus* in that the actions produced by generational knowledge are the product of regular associations and shared conditions of existence (Woodward 2007, p.122).

Matthew – A third generation Italian

Awareness of traditional garden practice and cuisine for Matthew, a third generation Italian, has been influenced by his grandparents (first generation participants), and also by his father who helps him with the practical resources in gardening, *“Dad has handed that [tomato growing] onto me. He sort of taught me how to do it but I've always talked to my grandparents about how to do it”*.

Matthew actively taps into his grandparents 'knowledge bank' of gardening and cooking: he observes, listens and asks questions when visiting their home. He writes down things he has learnt, researches and experiments because to him, if he doesn't there will be information lost after a generation. Matthew's approach to learning about his heritage through garden and cuisine is important to him in preserving Italian cultural practice:

“As I've grown up I've realised. Because as a kid you were just given food but now you just appreciate it more. Or I start to appreciate it more. Because sometimes I come home and there is something in the fridge sent from Nonna

[grandmother], and I start to go 'woah!', one day I may not have that. So I have to learn how to make that so that I can have that still and I can enjoy it or I can pass it on".

His grandparent's way of living, "the Italian way of life", as he describes it, motivates Matthew to seek knowledge and to focus on the need to pass this knowledge onto others and future generations. Matthew defines this way of life in the following comment:

"The Italian way of life is completely different to a Kiwi way of life. My grandparents lead the Italian way of life. It's completely different".

For Matthew, tomato growing as learnt from observation in his grandparent's Island Bay garden and making a small plot in his parent's garden from when he was a young boy, has meant that he has retained authenticity of the "Italian way of life". This, according to him is a safeguard for the continuity of his Italian heritage; continuation or the lack of, is Matthew's main concern in maintaining his Italian identity:

I don't know about my brothers but for me it's definitely a fear, that's why I can try and do something about it now before it's too late. Even like learning Italian.

When Matthew talks about the practice of Italian tomato sauce making he identifies it with having a garden. He has never observed the old process of tomato sauce making in the backyard in copper pots because as he says, *"that's way back. I suppose that was 'hard out' preserving. Putting it into jars and putting it all away. I've never seen that"*.

However, Matthew is acutely aware of the need to have the right ingredients produced from the garden:

"If in season, the tomatoes will come from the garden. Generally, we eat all that my grandparents make. They [make] everything from their garden and they obviously buy other stuff whereas, maybe when I'm older I'd like to do the same sort of thing. I'd like to have my own garden and cook stuff from my garden, but at the moment I [am given] stuff from their garden or go to the supermarket and

make the sauce, everything, and then do it from there. I suppose it's my age and I'm busy so I can't really [make a]garden as such, but yeah they do that."



Figure 27. Matthew's garden with olive tree and tomato plants (under the black cover).

Matthew's cuisine knowledge has grown with his interactions with his extended family. Cultural inculcation from his grandmother, practical advice on tomato growing from his father, and gaining experience from working with Italian cuisine in local restaurants has provided Matthew with a sense of his own Italian identity. Asked what kind of garden he would like in the future, Matthew's focus is on the ability to grow and preserve foods which are familiar to him, and which taste like Italian food:

"If I had a garden like my grandparents, and had time I would probably do the same thing. I preserve beans, artichoke, eggplant, capsicum...but my garden will basically be based on my grandparent's garden because everything belongs in a spot; the tomatoes go in the glasshouse. There will be a glasshouse with the tomatoes, there will be a glasshouse for Italian grapes, and there will be vegetables around and then potatoes will be grown away from the main area...I wouldn't put flowers in it. What do you need flowers for?[laughing]. I would like other things; lawn, sculptures, water feature, and all that stuff, but I don't know

how I would maintain that. It'll be the biggest problem. For that special oregano, I just can't buy that from the supermarket, so if I can have that in my garden, it's something I've got and that I really like and no one else has it, that sort of thing. Not because I can hide it from them but it's just something that you can't get".

For Matthew, his acquisition of cultural knowledge of the garden and the kitchen demonstrate his 'Italianness'. Past and present practices by relatives influence Matthew in shaping his own identity within the 'Italian way of life' framework. Preserving his Italian cultural heritage is important to Matthew and by writing down collective knowledge gained from his grandparents garden and kitchen he is collecting his own material culture or '*habitus identities*' (Rowlands 2006, p.443) in that knowledge helps evolve his 'Italian' identity.

The transmission of culture within the context of knowledge-based generational communication provides insights into biographical material histories. Stahl (2010) examines the nature of material histories and suggests looking at 'biographical' approaches to material culture. This is achieved through the interaction of things and social lives and identifies the transformation of practice over time through generational viewpoints. Knowledge and knowledge-based histories associate objects with practices and therefore provide a resonant and colourful interpretation of cultural continuities and change (Stahl 2010, p.157). In the making of identity or being Italian, Matthew's approach to learning about his heritage places him in an environment of contextually rich objects which aid his need to retain a sense of 'Italianness': a garden, plants, food and practice. His making of objects; tomato plant growing, jars of preserved vegetables, a recipe book, is performed by gaining knowledge through the interaction of people and the materials associated with specific practices.

In inter-generational communication, many first and second-generation participants share information with the aid of material objects and also by doing. These actions are a conduit for transferring knowledge to other generations. Cuisine history is socially important to Matthew. His need to write down recipes - as opposed to just observing and remembering - is paramount to constructing his Italian identity so he can remember how things have been done. Cultural ties to cuisine and regional cooking linked by what "Grandmother did", as Connerton

(2006) argues, is acquired mainly “by observation rather than by reading”, and, as a consequence, easily forgotten (p. 320). For Matthew, his attempt to write down his grandmother’s recipes, which he has observed over time, preserves information to a written medium and in the process transforms this to a material form and hence, remembered. The recipe book in the making contains Matthew’s acquired learning – the knowledge gained by material history through social relationships. Matthew says the recipes gathered will encourage him to one day make a garden to cultivate his own foods to make traditional recipes. It is the recipes themselves that hold the richness and cultural identity exemplified by past material practices and transmitted to future generations. However, as with the building of memorials, these recipes if not being made constantly could equally be forgotten (Rowlands & Tilley, 2006). Once memorials are built, memory of the reason why they were built is easily forgotten and at times designs are reused “as either replication or pastiche” with the problem of these ‘reconstructed’ forms being built “regardless of apparent meaning” (p.512). Matthew is writing down his grandmother’s recipes as a direct symptom of the anxiety of forgetting and retaining authenticity. His confidence in remembering would be in the making of these recipes in which he tries to do on occasions with his grandmother. Recording information and observing as Connerton (2006) suggests, cushions Matthew’s fear and prospect of perhaps going through an autodidactic process of cultural learning.

The ways in which first and second generation Italians promote ‘Italianness’ to successive generations differ with each participant, although there are similarities as to why they choose to transmit their cultural traditions through gardening and cuisine.

Peter and Ada, first and second generation participants, talk about how they taught their children Italian practices by example; they included their children in their tomato growing efforts in the garden for many years when the children were growing up, with the desire to keep their culture alive and pass on skills both Peter and Ada learnt from their parents. Now Peter and Ada’s grandchildren, together with their grown children, visit often and help in the preparation of Italian meals. Peter and Ada always included their children in the tomato sauce-making process and now that their children are older, their daughter’s spouse who is not Italian, takes part and encourages the practice of traditions to their children as third

generation Italian-New Zealanders. As an ‘outsider’ the spouse is enthusiastic as equally or even more so than the second generation or ‘insider’, as Ada remarks,

“[daughter’s] husband loves it because it’s an old tradition. [He] is quite good and he’s taken loads of photos. He likes the old ways. Not Kiwi.”

Ada’s perception of her son-in-law is an indicator of a certain distinctiveness she perceives in him which distinguishes a ‘Kiwi’ life which to her is a new world non-traditional attitude in comparison to being ‘Italian’, the old world. Ada deems the attitude of her son-in-law as a positive attribute for her grandchildren, in which Bourdieu suggests in terms of class distribution that it is a gain in distinction in which benefits are accrued whether social, economic, immediate or deferred (Bourdieu 1984, p.20). Bourdieu’s discussion on seniority, the aristocracy and its embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984, p.70-71), suggests that cultural skills are a “head-start” in that newcomers acquire skills inherently, without the need to be corrected from previous learning. In Ada’s case, although not aristocratic in Bourdieu’s sense, she displays a social distinction and taste, which she sees as higher cultural value, which she has achieved inherently over time and hence the mastering of old traditions, which she sees, are of value. Her pride in her son-in-law who willingly spends time and records her family’s old traditions, *is* acquiring knowledge, which to Ada, will preserve her cultural capital, that is, her family capital which she sees could be preserved over time and be passed on to her grandchildren.

To possess things from the past...can only be acquired in the course of time, by means of time, against time, that is, by inheritance or through dispositions which, like the taste for old things, are likewise only acquired with time and applied by those who can take their time (Bourdieu 1984, p.71-72).

The use of an indoor pizza oven promotes and makes it easier for large family get-togethers, which brings the extended family together and preparation for meals through this medium is done collectively with the help from all family members.



Figure 28. An outdoor pizza oven in Ada and Peter's garden.

Ada is also writing a journal - “*only for family*” - of all the recipes she remembers from her mother. Ada says that her daughter and son-in-law have a small garden for summer vegetables, however, Peter remarks that although they may have a garden time constraints dictate the differences in approach for the two generations:

See, things were different then. You see the fishermen used to do it. On bad days they had nothing to do. They used to do the garden. Now they [second generation] work in town you have no time to do garden. In the weekend on their days off they want to go out. And when they [children] go on holiday we have to look after everything. Before it wasn't like that. No-one went on holiday.

Similarly, Emily and Francesco, first generation participants, brought up their children within the same learning environment, living with a large garden plot at the back of their house and taking part in all the tomato-sauce making rituals. Francesco said that it wasn't until their children had children of their own that they really started to take an interest. One of their sons has the enthusiasm to learn and helps out in their garden, and he also has a small plot at the back of his own home.

However, Francesco laments that because of constraints due to work commitments that his son has no time to tend to a larger garden as when Francesco was of the same working age.

Robert and Angela, also first generation participants, are afraid that the next generation are slowly losing their Italian identity by not carrying on traditional gardening practices, and, as a consequence, ties to Italian cuisine culture may be lost. Angela emphasises the demise of the tomato growing industry by Italians who dominated tomato growing in the Nelson region for a century:

It's like the tomato growers now in Nelson, you see. Nobody has taken over. A few sons have carried on but the rest, they all have office jobs. Nobody wants to do it. It's like the fishermen now.

Robert talks about the next generation also having interests elsewhere:

I tried to teach my children, but they are too busy working. They don't have much interest. There is too much sport, busy working, the computer and other things electronic...But they do help us make the tomato sauce, but I don't think they will carry on if we go. They do help me and I show them.

However, first generation Flora, feels her children have been well equipped to retain their Italian identity through learning about land and traditional garden practices. Her grandmother's ethos of knowing how to use land and make the most out of the earth has stayed with Flora. This philosophy underpins what Flora has taught her children and hope that they too will understand:

My grandmother had a lot of land - half of Island Bay length and she used to say:

"when you've grown up...you will see that people have gone to school [to get a higher education] but you have to come back on the land because you live from the land. The school and things, some people need it but not everybody needs it, because the land is what you feed from".

Flora's children have all been to Italy and spent many times working in the family orchards and businesses in the surrounding villages from where Flora used to live. For Flora "bringing up the children in the 'Italian' way has been a good thing". Both her husband and herself were keen to extend Italian tradition to their children by

growing and eating home grown Italian cuisine and living through its culture. Flora is satisfied her children have learnt as much as there is to learn.

Most first generation participants had a concern that Italian traditions and practices familiar to them would be lost in time. For them, activities like traditional gardening practices and garden based food production and other social practices and custom are important connections to being Italian. Because of different work life patterns and educational aspirations, the next generation of Italian-New Zealanders, according to most first generation participants, worry about their children and grandchildren having the potential to lose out on what it means to be Italian as they see themselves to be.

However, second-generation participants talk about continuity of practices mostly in thought and through memory, but for this generation, remembering how things were done through observation and immersion has meant they have retained a learned experience. For Anna and John, their third generation son, Matthew, is keen to learn and Anna talks of his interest in Italian cuisine:

He takes an interest in everything cooking-wise, like the eggplant he bought at the market the other day that we were preparing to put into the jars. There is a procedure and you have to know how to do it...Yeah, he really takes an interest in everything. It's interesting.

John talks about how his friend, another second-generation participant, when visiting his elderly father would learn about gardening for himself:

Helping out his father in the garden inspired him to get back into his garden and he said that he really knew what they [first generation] are on about. He said he knows how it feels like; he can see what it's all about. He comes home from work and puts his gardening clothes on and it's relaxing.

John also gives a reason why his generation hasn't followed the first generation's practices in the intensive way of gardening:

What's interesting is why we have never ever got into it until now, because you are so involved nowadays life is different to back then. It's more, I can't even find the right words, it's more intense, life now, compared to back then.

John still recalls his grandfather growing acid-free Italian tomatoes and being taught how to maintain the plants during the growing period:

I still remember when my grandfather was growing tomatoes he used to say to me, 'Watch what I'm doing because when I've gone you won't know unless you're actually observing what I'm doing'. ...I still remember visually what he was doing; seeing how tall the tomatoes used to grow, picking the leaves off so they continue to climb, how they order them. I mean they've all got an experience of how they grow them.

John also understands what an 'Italian' garden looks like in Island Bay with the inclusion of recycled fishing nets to protect the garden:

For me that's quite natural to see it. They use it as to protect the garden from pests, cats, dogs so forth. I mean my father has got it all over his. It's not a pretty sight! It is quite funny! I think it's the character of the Italian garden. Such a crack up!

In the same way other second generation participants, husband and wife, Richard and Teresa have had many opportunities to learn about gardening. Most of Richard's apprenticeship in Italian gardening practice came from his holidays spent in Nelson working at his cousin's tomato orchards. Teresa has a broad understanding of the skills handed down to her by her parents:

You watch your parents, you don't do it with them but it stays there and you just do the same thing.

She gives an example of making fresh vegetable salads from the garden with olive oil dressings to make her point. She explains that for non-Italian New Zealanders she has entertained, the salads are outstanding. "They say, 'Wow. We've never had this before, it's amazing!'" For Teresa it's not amazing, it's usual for her to have these particular flavours:

They say, 'we haven't been brought up like this', and I think this food is normal. It's what my parents had. I just don't make carrots just boiled or raw, everything is oil based. You like it or don't and you take it for granted. And someone's never had you think, 'Oh, wow! This is just normal!'

Teresa and Richard say they are always trying to plant traditional Italian crops, for example, artichoke, grapes and tomatoes. However, the first generation tend to want to 'fix' problems and pass on knowledge as to why things aren't working in the garden. Teresa says:

*My father always comes around and comments 'Oh, you're not doing this right'.
Nothing's ever perfect!*

*Richard adds, I don't ask because they always like to comment. They always
have something to say!*

Immigrants bring with them familiar cultural practices from their homelands. The Italian immigrants or first generation use their garden as a form of creative labour representing their homeland from the practices they know best (Morgan, Rocha and Poynting, 2006, p.95). A productive garden to this generation is a creative one at the outset, cultivating plants not available to them and reconnecting with their roots with other fellow migrants in the same position. On the other hand, the next generation who are settled or born into the environment do not have a similar emotional need to connect. For them a garden is not as necessary as when products were not readily available. Now it is inexpensive and effective to purchase tomato sauces and pastes, olive oils and other commodities to satisfy cultural cuisine – even though most participants would claim that the taste is never better than home grown and produced. The garden to the second generation is still a novelty and not a necessity. Garden making is carried out but not to the intensive extent as the previous generation. The intensive 'Italian' garden is present in abstract thought yet to be fully realised. The older generation are present in their lives and it is *their* gardens, which still tend to bind the extended family unit. Many first generation gardeners still have large productive gardens even though products can now be bought anywhere in the marketplace. However, by growing and producing their own food the reconnection with their homeland through sensory means is intact (Morgan, Rocha and Poynting, 2006, p.93).

For the offspring of immigrants, gaining knowledge about Italian garden practice has been through the means of observation and partaking in activities as part of their childhood experiences. John's extensive understanding of gardening practice is a function of his own *habitus* formed through his childhood environment.

However, John does not practice gardening to the same level as his parents or previous generations. Some garden activities he has observed and understands are passed down to his son through practice. As with Bourdieu's concept of tastes and dispositions which are cultivated and experienced, John's learned behaviour is a product of the rules and practices governing garden making handed down to him by the previous generation. John, and other second generation participants, do not necessarily practice according to the conditions they have been taught. Their garden making is a variant of what they have learnt. This generation embrace spontaneity, using their observances and experiences as guidance towards their specific choices, and no firm obedience to rules (Woodward 2007, p.122).

Conclusion

Migrant gardens are seen to be an ephemeral phenomenon in some migrant studies from Australia (Armstrong 1998, Morgan et al., 2006). It is argued that this may not necessarily be the case with the level of learned and knowledge-based experiences of the second and third generation participants in the study of the Italian community in Island Bay. For them, garden and traditional cuisine production is a point of difference from other New Zealanders' activities and hence creates a distinction to understand their Italian identity. They also see the value of retaining practices that secure their roots and heritage to a place many miles away. The connections they have to Italy and their heritage are found through learning about growing and cooking traditional foods. The taste, smells and sights of food bring connective emotions to being Italian. For Matthew, a third generation Italian-New Zealander, retaining cultural knowledge through his actions in writing his grandmother's recipes, and for Ada, writing a family journal, are part of their material culture in that it is something of value to them and future generations. Stahl (2010) recognises that biographical approaches to material practice are of importance to understanding connections with the past, and can have a transformative affect to understand one's identity:

... objects simultaneously mobilise familiarity, and therefore connections with past practice.... (Stahl 2010, p.155).

Conclusion

This thesis examined the intergenerational garden practice of a community of New Zealanders of Italian descent living in Island Bay, Wellington. The maintenance of traditions of an Italian life originated from the chain migration of Italians in the late nineteenth century. Discussion and analysis found that these practices are actively performed with all generations, although adopted with varying degrees of intensity. Analysis also found that the ethnic identity of the Italian community is retained by their cultural practices in the back garden. It is not just what is visible, but also what is taking place in these spaces. It is the relational integration of culture with nature and objects, and the intergenerational transmission of this that marks the Italian garden as a site of importance in understanding the material culture of this community. For the Italian first generation participants, the garden is a setting for the intermingling of work, taste, and familial sociality. For the second and third generation, it is a place to realise and focus on identity, and, by retaining learned dispositions, helps to enrich and capture future generational identities.

This thesis used a multi-disciplinary approach grounded on Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical framework on distinction and the concept of *habitus*, and by using Christopher Tilley's ethnographic theoretical work on the materiality of gardens. Through these frameworks, the thesis demonstrated that the intergenerational social practice of garden activities by Italians is continuous, and that cultural memory is an evolving adaptive feature, yet retaining the notion of unbroken bonds through generations.

In essence it is the retaining of this cultural knowledge, which determines what it means to be Italian for this community. Connections to Italy are still strong for all generations yet belonging to New Zealand is something that the second and third generations also have a connection. Placing the garden as a site for place, action and thought materialises ideas of cultural identity, and links across generations, both as New Zealanders and as Italians. The form in which an Italian garden takes, and the action, which is created in garden practice is indicative of these cultural connections.

Some second generation Italians within the community and living outside of the community, have published their family histories.⁷⁰ These publications have created a strong viewpoint on what it means to be Italian for this generation. The idea of ‘being Italian’ is not only in thought but also in practice through the printed form. It appears that there has been it seems a ‘speeding up’ of the second generation to secure their heritage and legacy through the creation of these histories⁷¹, which underscores the importance this generation places on the need to understand one’s roots through the continuity of histories of the past.

In the course of this study, two first generation participants have passed away, and with sadness this has been a poignant moment in determining whether this research on the continuity of Italian tradition is a theoretical perspective on the lives of others. It is hoped that the memories of these participants are carried through in this research and to remind readers that these stories are history and legacy of their lives in Italy and New Zealand.

It is hoped this research will contribute to the body of knowledge on what it means for migrants and future generations to maintain their identity - either through their gardens or other sites of importance to them. Armstrong’s paper (1997), states the importance of documenting gardens which are rich in cultural meanings, in the way gardens are used and what is cultivated,

what we can do is catch their fleeting stories and attempt to understand their meaning (Armstrong 1997, p. 60).

This research has attempted to define the material culture of the garden as an identity marker for Italians in Island Bay. The gardens in this research have been the basis to understand people, stories and lives of those that live in and among them. The ‘fleeting stories’ and documentation of Italian gardens and its people in Island Bay has provided a treasure trove of enquiry on intergenerational identity and the changes and continuities of this closely-knit and evolving community. The

⁷⁰ See <http://www.islandbaylittleitaly.com/food-and-family-book.html> (accessed 3/12/13); Moleta, V. (2012). *Family business: An Italian-New Zealand story*. Christchurch, N.Z: Canterbury University Press.

⁷¹ This observation has come from the interview process, and anecdotal conversations with Italians who are part of my community living in Island Bay. Second generation Anna had made a trip to Italy for the first time in 2013. She explained how connected she felt to the land, the customs and the people, and how she felt an emotionally deep part of the environment – a connection that has strengthened her identity of being Italian. Passing conversations with first generation Carolina have indicated that both her and her husband Enrico are expanding their garden and have built a glasshouse for their tomatoes, used from a dismantled glasshouse once used by Enrico’s uncle.

domestic garden tradition has allowed Italians from first, second and third generations to find meaning in who they are through the actions of garden practice. Being Italian in Island Bay is a new way of understanding what it also means to be a New Zealander in the twenty-first century. The material culture of the Italian garden is a marker of identity continuity for this community as well as locating the garden as a site for bridging the old with the new.

Appendix

Garden map

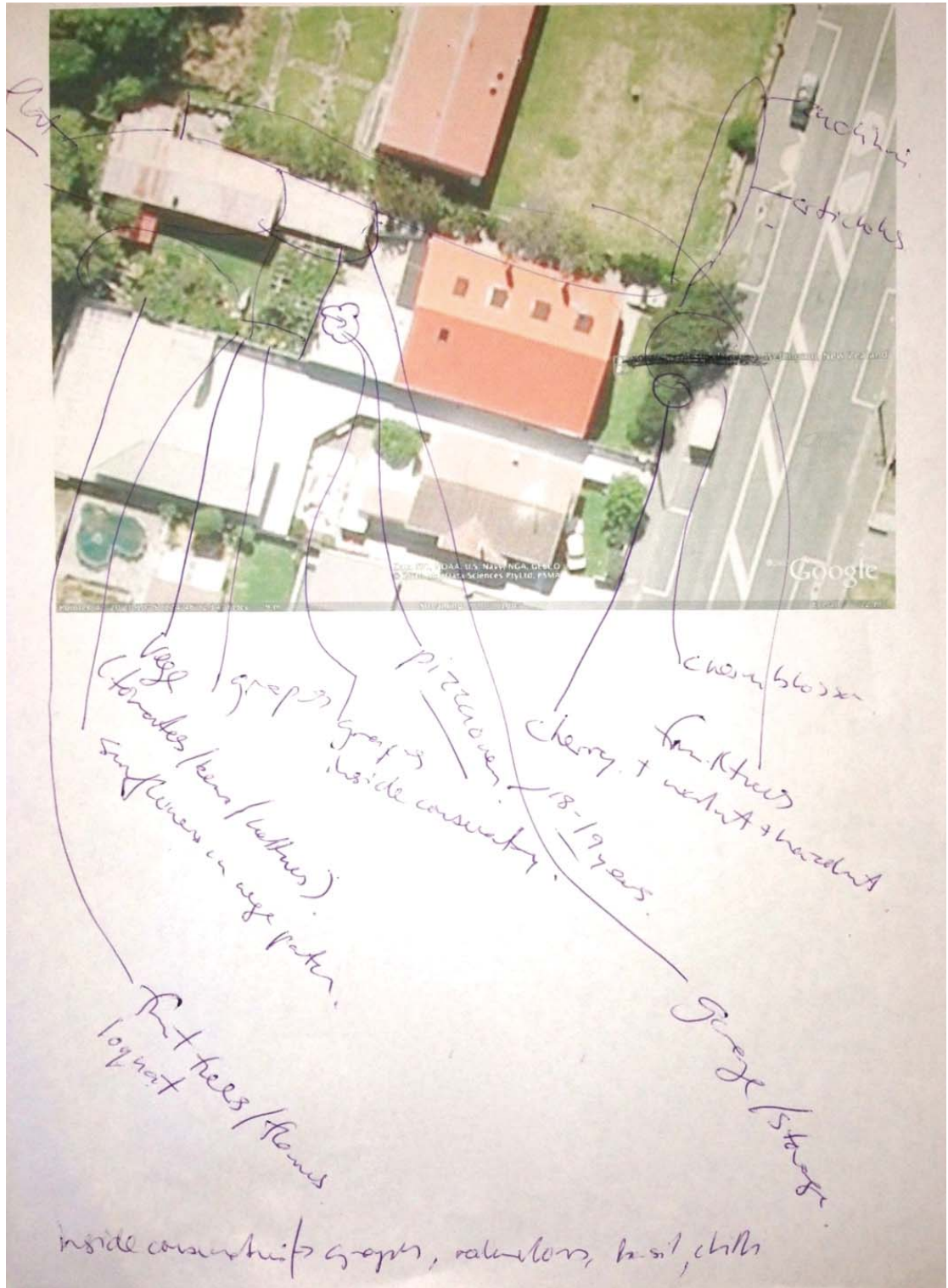


Figure 29. Map drawn by participants and researcher (Map: Google Maps 2010)

Table of participants

Ada and Peter	Second (Ada) and first generation (Peter)	40-60 yrs, Married Fisherman. Homemaker
Anna and John	Second generation	40-60 yrs, Married Nurse aide. Tailor
Maria and Jack	First generation	70-90 yrs, Married Retired fisherman and seamstress/tailor
Carolina and Enrico	First (Carolina) and second generation (Enrico)	40-60 yrs, Married Nurse aide. Taxi Driver
Richard and Teresa	Second generation	40-60 yrs, Married Builder. Administrator
Emily and Francesco	First generation	70-90 yrs, Married Retired Fish Shop Proprietor Homemaker
Rosa and Thomas	First generation	70-90 yrs, Married Retired fisherman. Homemaker
Lidia and Silvio	First generation	70-90 yrs, Married Retired Fish shop proprietor and Homemaker
Robert and Angela	First generation	60-80 yrs, Married Homemaker Fish Shop Manager
Flora and Luigi	First generation	60-80 yrs, Married Retired Fisherman. Homemaker
Joseph and Lisa	Second generation Lisa – New Zealander	40-60 yrs, Married Builder. Homemaker
Rita	Second generation	40-60 yrs, Married to a New Zealander Administrator
Matthew	Third generation	20-30 yrs Student/Pizza Shop worker

Interview questions

1. Briefly describe your garden or outdoor area? Sketch?
2. How much time do you spend on the garden?
3. What are the most important reasons for having a garden?
4. How have you made decisions to the planning and structure or layout of your garden?
5. Is it a functional productive garden i.e. for the production of food or is it a social space? How do you spend your time in the garden?
6. Do you prepare food in the garden? Is it an extension to the kitchen?
7. How would you describe the garden of your childhood?
8. How did your parents or extended family use their garden?
9. What is different to your garden compared to theirs?
10. What about other Italian families? Do they have similar gardens?
11. Is your garden: Italian influence? Kiwi influence?
12. What is of value to you in your garden and why?
13. Is there anything you would want to change?
14. What do the /younger older generation think about your outdoor space?
15. What do you think they would say?
16. What is your ultimate garden?

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