THE MAKING AND UNMAKING OF A COMMUNITY

OF LATINO LABOR MIGRANTS IN ISRAEL

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Introduction

This chapter examines the emergence and demise of the community of undocumented

non-Jewish Latino labor migrants in Israel. According to the Ministry of Interior, by the

mid-1990s about 15,000 Latin American labor migrants resided in Israel without a legal

permit, comprising 15 percent of the estimated population of the country's

undocumented migrants.[1] By the end of the 2000s their numbers had had fallen

drastically in consequence of a harsh policy of detention and deportation deliberately

implemented by the state. Deportation led not only to the numerical decline in Israel of

Latinos,[2] as they were commonly identified, but also to the dismantling of a diverse and

vibrant community that in the course of a decade seemed to have had become an integral

part of Tel Aviv's metropolitan ethnoscape.

Drawing on the case of undocumented Latino migrant workers in Israel, the

chapter has a twofold focus: first, we examine the social, economic and political

constellations that encouraged the mobility of Latin American migrants to new

destinations and produced the type of networks that sustained the ongoing inflows of

migrants throughout the 1990s. We pay particular attention to the socioeconomic factors

that channeled Latino migrant workers to Israel at the "push" and "pull" ends of the

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[1] Data of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) show that between November 1995 and December 1996 the number of migrants from Latin America in Israel without a permit increased by 43 percent – a highly significant rise by any standards (CBS, July 30, 1998, Press Release 159).

[2] Hereinafter, we use the emic concept of Latino interchangeably with the etic Latin American, the former relates to the categorical designations used by the research subjects (from the "insiders" perspective) and the latter to the categories we used as observers.

migration flow, and document the main patterns of informal recruitment and labor market incorporation that mediate them.

Secondly, we portray the key social settings in which Latino labor migrants developed a sense of community and negotiated different forms of social belonging within constraining circumstances. We show how despite the positive reception that Latinos experienced on the level of society, political interventions eventually contributed to the effective unmaking of the Latino community and its forced dispersal.

The case of Latinos in Israel raises interesting insights into the dynamics of recent migrations from Latin America and more generally into undocumented migrations worldwide. Our case contributes to extant scholarship in least in two senses: first, whereas much of the literature highlights the significance of previous links between the countries of origin and destination in mediating migratory flows, less attention has been paid to religious factors influencing the choice of destination. Underscoring the multiple forms in which religion – as practice, institution and identity marker – intersects with migration-related phenomena, we examine the Latino experience in less traditional "immigration" contexts than the North American and Western European.

Secondly, we aim to contribute to research on undocumented migrant communities and associations in a situated context. Whereas much literature has dealt with processes leading to the establishment of communities, including those positioned at the margins of legality, and their survival strategies in an adversarial context (for a summary of this literature, see Moya, 2005), we extend our analysis to the political interventions and social conditions that bring about the dismantling of existing communities and the unmaking of migratory flows. We contend that control policies

targeting communities form an inextricable part of contemporary dynamics of mobility containment and boundary remaking (Anderson, Gibney, and Paoletti, 2011).

The Israeli Setting

Israel is a country of many contradictions. Observers have presented the Israeli case as a "typological" challenge in regard to migration and citizenship regimes (Zolberg, 2000). On the one hand, Israel exemplifies the characteristics of a "classic" immigration state and society where settler immigration, or *aliyah* (Hebrew: literally ascent) performs as a major mechanism for the making of the nation or "ingathering of exiles." At the beginning of the twenty-first century, two out of three members of the Jewish majority are foreign-born (40%) or of the second generation (30%) (Cohen 2002; Raijman and Kemp 2010). In 2012, 32 percent of all foreign-born had arrived from countries in the Middle East and North Africa and 68 percent from countries in Europe (including the former Soviet Union) and America (CBS, 2013: Table 2.8:108).

On the other hand, though self-defined as a Westernized society based on the adoption of liberal norms and civic principles in many realms, Israel also stands out as a resilient ethno-national regime that grants institutional and ideological priority to ethnic origin (Joppke, 2007). The Israeli Law of Nationality, which came into force on 1952, complemented the Law of Return of 1950. The latter law, based on the *jus sanguinis* principle, confers onto Jews and their relatives up to the third generation the right of immigration, while the former gives them Israeli citizenship virtually automatically.[3]

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[3] For a detailed explanation of the definition of a Jew for the purpose of return, and the complex ways in which religious and ethno-national components articulate in the question "Who Is a

Strains between civic and ethno-religious principles, and age-old debates over "Jewish" and "democratic" constitutional values, intensify in regard to relations between the Jewish majority and the large Arab indigenous minority, and more recently in the realm of non-ethnic migration (Avinery, Orgad and Rubinstein, 2010). [4] While Israel is committed to the successful absorption of Jewish immigrants and actively encourages their immigration, it is also highly exclusionary toward non-ethnic immigration, and official policies actively discourage it.

The recent history of Latin American immigration to Israel is underlined by ethno-national divisions as well as by different migratory dynamics. Jews of Latin American origin comprise two percent of the total Jewish population and upon immigration through the Law of Return they become incorporated in the social, economic and political life of the nation as full citizens (Roniger and Babis, 2008; Raijman and Ophir, 2014). Conversely, as we show below, Latin American migrant workers arrived through informal channels, into a context of reception devoid of institutional mechanisms for their incorporation, and upon arrival they were channeled to social positions that set them clearly apart from the Jewish Latin American immigrants.

Distinctions between the two groups are of course legal, as the non-Jews are undocumented and have few if any channels for regularization; but they are also symbolic, social and economic. Labor migrants have generally distinguished themselves from "South Americans," as Jewish immigrants from Latin America are usually called in

Jew," see Shachar 1999.

[4] Israeli society is divided across ethno-national lines of approximately 80 percent Jews and 20 percent Arabs. The latter, although legally considered equal citizens, in fact form a subordinate social, political and national minority (Smooha,1992). Ethnicity divides not only Jews from non-Jews but also Jewish ethnic groups (see Cohen 2002).

Israel, by identifying themselves through the label "Latinos" (see Paz, 2010). Despite their sharing a common language and culturally resonant codes, social contacts between these two groups of Latin American immigrants were mainly at the workplace as many Latino labor migrants worked as cleaners in households of Latino Israeli citizens. Difference in ethno-religious definitions of nationality, legal status and class positions intersected in the Israeli context, to create distinctions and structured relations between immigrants from the same countries of origin. Moreover, while the immigration of Jews is perceived as part of the ongoing nation-building project, labor migrations from the Global South are perceived as a challenge to national sovereignty and identity.

Labor Migration to Israel

Overseas labor migration to Israel is relatively new. It started in the early 1990s, when the government authorized recruitment of a large number of labor migrants to replace Palestinian workers from the occupied territories after the first intifada (Bartram, 1998; Raijman and Kemp, 2007). Official recruitment is through manpower agencies and employers, to whom the permits are allocated. Legally recruited workers come alone without families. They live and work in the workplace: construction workers on construction sites, agricultural workers at agricultural sites, and long-term caregiving workers in the patients' homes. The workplace conditions resemble a kind of "total institution," which leaves little or no margin for migrant associational initiatives.

According to estimates of the Central Bureau of Statistics, by 2002 (during our field work) there were some 238,000 labor migrants in Israel, about 40 percent of whom had work permits (Klein-Zehavi, 2003). As in other countries, the official recruitment of

labor migration brought about an influx of undocumented migrants. According to

Interior Ministry data, undocumented foreign workers arrived in Israel from almost

every corner of the world – though mainly from East Europe, South Asia, Africa, and

South America – and are employed primarily in the services sector.

In contrast to their documented counterparts, undocumented migrant workers

arrived haphazardly. During the 1990s they entered the country on tourist visas valid for

up to 90 days, which forbade them to work, and became undocumented by overstaying

it. An undocumented status makes a migrant not only vulnerable to the authorities'

pursuit but also "invisible" in the eyes of state apparatuses in regard to social, political,

and many civil rights. The lack of legal status and work permits has been a powerful

catalyst for the development of informal patterns of organization and the emergence of

new ethnic communities, concentrated in Tel Aviv-Jaffa;[5] they have rewoven the ethnic

fabric of Israel's major metropolitan area. Paradoxically, the lack of state regulation of

working and living conditions for undocumented migrant workers leaves room for the

emergence of new ethnic communities as a strategy for survival in a new society. In the

1990s three new ethnic communities developed in Israel among migrant workers: Black

African, Latin American, and Filipino. The great majority of African and Latino

migrants were undocumented and the Filipino community displays a mixed pattern.[6] By

1996, undocumented Latino migrants comprised about 15 percent of the total

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[5] The majority of the undocumented population of migrant workers resides in Tel-Aviv, where there is high demand for cheap and flexible low skilled labor. In addition, as we shall see, the municipality of Tel-Aviv developed a relatively inclusionary local policy that took care of migrants' needs (Kemp and Raijman, 2004)

[6] This is because Filipino immigrants are legally recruited to work in the caregiving sector. Many migrants become documented when they leave their employers or overstay their visa.

undocumented labor migrant population (Kemp and Raijman, 2008). By 2002 the total

number of Latinos in Israel was estimated at 13,000 people, arriving from a wide variety

of countries but mainly Ecuador and Colombia (see Table 1).

Table 1- Estimated Number of Latino Migrants in Israel, 2002

Country of origin	Number of Migrants	Relative proportion
Ecuador	5,000	38
Colombia	4,500	35
Chile	1,200	9
Peru	1,200	9
Bolivia	500	4
Venezuela	250	2
Brazil	250	2
Other	100	1
N	13,000	100%

Source: Kalir, 2010, Table 2, 47.

Undocumented Labor Migration and Deportation Policy

The primary method of the Israeli state for dealing with undocumented labor

migrants has been to make their deportation a systematic policy. After years of turning a

blind eye to them, between 1995 and 2008 over 76,000 migrant workers were deported,

the figure peaking in 2003 and 2004 (Bar Zuri, 2009). The most significant

organizational and institutional expression of the deportation policy was the

establishment of the new Immigration Administration in 2002 (Gill and Dahan, 2006).

Since then the immigration police has not refrained from expounding to the public in

detail the supposed threats latent in the situation: an economic threat ("the illegal foreign

workers make a significant impact on natives' unemployment"; "there is a financial

drain from Israel to their countries of origin"; "they hardly pay taxes, which creates a

heavy burden on infrastructure without promoting its maintenance"); a demographic and national threat ("demographically speaking, a 'state' within a 'state' is taking shape"; "the Jewish character of the state is being damaged by intermarriage"); and even a security threat ("because of their lack of affinity to Israel, the illegal residents are liable to be a platform for security crimes and hostile destructive activity" (Gill and Dahan 2006).

The formation of the immigration police was an important turning point in the scope of the deportation of undocumented labor migrants: according to its own reports, since its establishment in September 2002, 118,105 people have left Israel, 40,000 of them as deportees. Mass deportations were implemented after the arrest of migrants in raids on houses, workplaces, buses and shopping centers, and even after street pursuits. Such arrests, many of them accompanied by callous violence on the part of the police and the trampling of rights, became an everyday spectacle (Gill and Dahan, 2006). Not only did the sheer volume of deportations change but also the targeted groups. Recognizing the central role played by community networks and organizations in the lives of undocumented migrants, the police directed their activity at individuals but also at dismantling entire communities. Extensive policing and intelligence work was dedicated to locating and deporting community leaders, and raiding places where labor migrants held community gatherings and spent their leisure time (see e.g. Sinai, 2004, 2005; Wurgaft, 2004; Sabar, 2007). This context is important for comprehending the dwindling and demise of the Latino community of migrant workers in Israel.

Methodology

The findings and analysis in this chapter are based on a multi-year qualitative study with key ethnographic components. Data were collected by three main methods. First we held in-depth interviews with labor migrants, as well as informal conversations on visits to households and other sites of social gatherings in 1997 and in 2005. Gathering data on migrant workers in general and on undocumented foreigners in particular is difficult, so representative samples could not be assembled. Therefore we used the so-called "snowball" technique to detect and construct a sample of Latino labor migrants in Israel. Because the target was to assemble a group diverse in national origin and gender we applied multiple-entry snowballing to avoid the danger of interviewing limited personal social networks, which was inherent to the traditional snowball approach. We conducted 80 individual in-depth, semi-structured interviews. All were conducted in Spanish and were recorded with the consent of the participants.

Secondly, we conducted fieldwork in various social and institutional settings such as soccer games, salsa clubs, churches and religious congregations, organized tours, fairs, kindergartens, schools, and private homes in order to document the ways the Latino community was emerging in the city of Tel Aviv.

Thirdly, we conducted documentary analysis of government decisions, parliamentary protocols and special committees' reports to track the formulation of labor migration policies in general and on undocumented migrations in particular. We also relied on non-governmental organizations' reports, public campaigns and legal advocacy among migrants and on their behalf.

Latinos in Israel: Between the Push of Latin America and the Pull of the Holy Land

What factors drove thousands of non-Jewish migrants from Latin American countries – mainly Ecuador and Colombia – to move through unofficial venues to the Jewish state from the mid-1990s and establish their own communities?

Undocumented Latino labor migration to Israel can be explained in terms of three intersecting dynamics (1) unstable socio-economic and political conditions that pushed Latinos out of their homelands; (2) factors in Israel that pulled them to that country (employment opportunities, higher wages, easier entry than to North America and Western Europe, at least until 1997); (3) the emergence of social networks and institutional frameworks (ethnic associations) that link the two foregoing factors for informal recruitment and consolidation of a distinct ethnic community.

Push factors:

The structural constraints affecting most Latin American countries provide the general context for understanding Latin American migrants' motivation to migrate. Since the early 1980s most Latin American countries entered a transition period, where authoritarian and repressive regimes gave way to the democratization of national politics. That said, such processes of democratization should be understood more as formal reforms whereby political mechanisms were re-established (such as the re-installment of the political party system, press freedom, and human rights' discourses), but not necessarily accompanied by deep socio-economic reforms. The increasing foreign debt, austerity plans dictated by the International Monetary Fund, high inflation, and consequent internal recession and economic stagnation widened social gaps and

poverty rates (Lijphart and Waisman, 1996; Sznajder, 1993). The combination of falling incomes, frustrated ambitions, and restructuring of many Latin American economies generated powerful pressures for emigration in skilled blue-collar workers as well as the educated urban middle classes. Hence political and socio-economic conditions alike should be considered important push factors for emigration from different countries in South American (Massey et al., 1999).

The impact of structural push factors resurfaces in our empirical data on pre-migration characteristics of labor migrants, including reasons for migration and socio-demographic and human capital attributes.

Reasons for migration

The reasons migrants themselves gave for their move reflect the grim economic situation in their home countries. The major motivating factors were lack of opportunities for upward social and economic mobility in the sending societies. The majority gave economic reasons for leaving their countries of origin. These subsume five main themes: (1) the opportunity to save large amounts of money in a short time (2) a strong desire for economic independence and a preference for self-employment/ business ownership by the time they return to their home countries (this is the main reason for saving large amounts of money); (3) buying a house or a plot of land; (4) securing a better future for their children (high education); (5) guaranteeing adequate financial support in old age (after retirement).

Second to economic reasons, the existence of social networks abroad (in Israel or elsewhere) was also singled out as one of the determinant reasons for migration. Many

of our respondents told us that they thought of Europe and Australia as the original destination but finally decided on Israel because they had someone there to help them upon arrival. Social networks established in Israel prior to migration were quite common among immigrants in our study. Before their departure almost half our interviewees had family members or friends residing in Israel, and almost two-thirds had at least one family member living there during their stay in Israel. For example, Rosita, 24, a woman from Armenia, Colombia, presents an interesting pattern of family drafting and network migration to Israel. At the time of the interview 33 members of her family lived in Israel. For Rosita, family ties were a fundamental component in taking the decision to " have a try" in Israel. The extended family functioned as a source of support helping her both financially and emotionally to overcome the difficulties of migration. Rosita's case illustrates how relatives initiate other people in the migration process by providing them support, thus reducing its costs and risks. In this way, migration as a *virus* "spreads from person to person and from family to family" (Massey, 1987:1398), increasing the probabilities of other people migrating to Israel. As social networks mature they acquire a momentum that feeds labor migration, and this seems to be the major mechanism that perpetuated Latino labor migration to Israel in the 1990s.

Similarities to other countries notwithstanding, labor migration to Israel has a singular feature: as the Holy Land, Israel has a unique attraction for Chistians worldwide who aspire to visit the country as pilgrims. Moreover, with the coming of the new millennium, many of them wanted to assuage their yearning for the coming of the Messiah. The religious motivation is significant for two main reasons: first, one fifth of our respondents adduced religious reasons for choosing Israel as the preferred

destination; secondly, and most importantly, religious motivations were translated into action through the creation of religious organizations which mushroomed within the Latino community. Later in this chapter we shall show that religious life is one of the most important aspects of Latino community organization and development.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the Latino labor migrants

The demographic and social characteristics of Latino migrant workers classified by gender are presented in Table 1. Half the respondents in our sample came from Colombia, whence arrived the largest group of Latino migrants. Approximately a quarter migrated from Ecuador, the rest from Bolivia, Peru, Chile and Venezuela.

Migrants, whether men or women, were young (34 years on average), which confirms what other studies have shown: migrants were concentrated in the central labor-force ages. There were substantial differences among gender groups regarding marital status. Migrant men were more likely than women to be single or married whereas migrant women were more likely to be divorced and widowed. The high proportion of married men and women and separated/widowed women migrants suggests that the role of income provider impels men and women alike to look for migration as an alternative to local employment.

The bulk of Latino migrants arrived in Israel between 1993 and 1995, the period of high legal and organized recruitment (which did not include Latin American countries). At the time of the interview, respondents' length of stay in Israel averaged

four years. The data suggest several patterns of migration according to family situation:[7] (1) family migration (spouses and children migrate together); (2) family migration in stages (one spouse migrates before the other spouse and children); (3) single-parent family in stages (single parent migrates before the children); (4) independent migration (men or women migrate independently); (5) spouses migrate together, leaving the children behind; (6) single parent leaves children in country of origin; (7) one spouse migrates to Israel, leaving spouse and children in country of origin. As expected, men and women displayed significant differences in pattern of migration by family situation. Over half the migrant men were single, coming independently to Israel, compared with only 30 percent of the migrant women in this category. Particularly interesting is that a high percentage of women migrated alone (25 percent compared to only 3 percent among males), leaving their children in the home country in the care of ex-husbands, parents, or other family members. Likewise, many of the male workers left wives and children behind (15 percent and 9 percent of male and female migrants, respectively); or both parents migrated to Israel and left the children with relatives in their countries of origin. Both male and female migrants sent money to their kin who cared for their children.

Over a quarter of female and male respondents reported having children residing with them in Israel. Fifty percent of these children were between the ages of six and twelve and attended primary schools at the time of the interview. Approximately one fifth were younger than six and attended private kindergartens run by other Latino

[7] In our analysis of patterns of migration we partly rely on the classification of Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994).

migrant women. Another 20 percent was children aged 12 to 18 who attended secondary schools. At the time of the interview most of our respondents in the sample lived in south Tel Aviv, near the bus central station area, which in time became an enclave of labor migrants.

Human Capital and Socio-Economic Attainment Prior to Arrival

Table 1 also displays the levels of human capital acquired by Latino migrants in their countries of origin. Men on average had higher levels of formal education than their female counterparts (13 and 12 years of schooling, respectively) and were more likely to hold academic degrees (22.6 and 14.3 percent, respectively).[8] On average, half the Latino migrants had worked in white-collar occupations in their country of origin before migrating to Israel. One third of female migrants had worked in pink-collar occupations (clerks and sales). Half migrant males had worked at blue-collar jobs (e.g. taxi and truck drivers, mechanics, welders, electricians) many of them self-employed.

The bottom panel of Table 1 provides information on the migrants' monthly income prior to migration. On average respondents reported they earned $378 (from all type of sources) with significant differences between men and women (women earned

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[8] At the time of the study the educational achievements of populations across Latin-American countries showed great variation. For example, approximately 11 percent of the adult population (aged 25+) in Bolivia, Chile and Ecuador had attained post-secondary education. In Peru this figure was 19 percent (UNESCO, 1997: Table 1.3). In any event, the average educational attainment of populations in Latin America is lower than that of Latino migrants arriving in Israel.

50% of men's income). These low income levels contrast with wages migrants expected

to earn in Israel, namely $1,000 to $1,500 per month on average. Hence the wage gap

(especially for women) might have operated as a powerful magnet pulling people to

Israel.[9] Also, all labor migrants in our sample lived and worked in Israel without legal

authorization.

Pull factors:

Whatever the migrants' motivation, immigrants would not have gone to Israel in

the absence of a propitious political economic opportunity structure for their reception.

The segmented and dual structure of the Israeli labor market is crucial for understanding

the demand for their labor mainly in the domestic and services sectors. As Portes and

Rumbaut have pointed out, "the match between the goals and aspirations of foreign

workers and the interests of firms [or employers] that hire them is the key factor

sustaining the movement from year to year" (1990:17). Demand for foreign labor in host

societies is caused by the inability or the unwillingness of local employers to recruit

workers to the secondary sector of the economy as native workers are not "willing" to

work under hard conditions, low salaries, instability and lack of future prospects (Harris

and Todaro, 1970; Piore, 1979). In Israel demand for low skilled labor force was met in

the past by Jewish immigrants from Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa

(Bernstein and Swirsky, 1982), and later by Palestinian cross-border workers from the

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[9] Women working in domestic service ten hours a day six days a week reported an average
income of $1,200- $1,500.

occupied territories in West Bank and Gaza (Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein, 1987).
However, following the deterioration of the security situation in 1991 and the signing of
the Oslo agreements, Israel enacted closure policies that prevented the entry of
Palestinian workers, opening the gates to the official and non-official recruitment of
labor migrants from overseas (Raijman and Kemp, 2007).

Labor Market Insertion in Israel

Latino migrants have a limited range of economic alternatives available in the
Israeli labor market (see bottom panel of Table 1). Because of their undocumented
status, they are excluded from most jobs regardless of their actual skills, and they cannot
enter the occupations for which they are qualified. The great majority of Latino women
were employed as domestic workers in Israel but only ten percent of them had worked in
domestic service in their countries of origin. Likewise, 41 percent of Latino migrant men
were employed as domestic workers in Israel; they were called *nikyoneros* or *cleaning
guys* - a hybrid of Spanish and Hebrew. Other Latino men worked in construction (19
percent), light industry (22 percent), and other services (restaurants, moving services,
religious services: 18 percent).

Although the majority of the Latin American migrants were salaried workers some
entrepreneurial activities within the community took place. Examples are private
kindergartens organized by Latino women (who took care of Latin American children
living with their parents, many of them born in Israel), hair salons operated at home, tour
organizers (especially to the Holy Places), cookery, photography, removals services and
electric appliance repairs (especially among men).

Although it has been argued that the source of pride for temporary migrant workers is the achievement of their goals as economic providers for their families back home (Piore, 1979), for some of our respondents their downward occupational mobility in Israel was traumatic even though they saw their stay there as a transitional experience. [10] Female migrants experienced their entry into the domestic service niche as extremely traumatic, especially those taking live-in jobs (*internas*) in private households, because of the limitations on their freedom and their isolation from Latino social ties. With the passage of time in the country, women managed to move away from the live-in situation, rented an apartment with friends or family members and worked as freelancers in private houses (Raijman et al., 2003).

As undocumented residents and workers in the informal sector of the economy they received no employment benefits, even though they were supposed to be protected by local labor laws (Raijman and Kemp, 2002). There were a number of ways in which employers could exploit this asymmetrical situation to their own advantage. For example, pre-arranged rates of payment could be lowered, earnings could be paid much later than previously agreed – or not at all. Although undocumented workers had the right to claim their share, they rarely took this option even when non-government organizations could act on their behalf. As a rule they preferred to lose their money and change jobs rather than take legal action, which could risk capture by the police and deportation.

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[10] Being at the crossroads, many are planning to migrate to a European country (primarily Spain). This step is seen as an alternative strategy—as the opportunity to become a legal resident in Israel is almost nonexistent, and the hope of finding a more suitable job, if not for them at least for their children, is doomed to failure (Raijman et al. 2003:739)

*Mediating networks***:** *Patterns of Recruitment of Latino Migrants*

Although push factors at origin and pull factors at destination create the conditions for international migration flows, with time new and independent factors such as social networks and institutional frameworks develop in consequence of migration. Once in place, social networks (based on kin and friendship) expand, connecting present and prospective migrants (in countries of origin). Migrant networks tend to become self-sustaining over time because they constitute social capital available to prospective and new migrants. Among people considering migration, ties to an earlier immigrant present in the host country are likely to increase the probability of selecting that place of destination. Moreover, knowing or being related to migrants gives access to sources of information and connections, reducing the uncertainty related to migration, especially among undocumented migrants (Massey et al., 1987; Massey et al., 1993; Massey and Espinosa,1997).

Patterns of recruitment of Latin American migrants, especially in the domestic sector where most women and 40 percent of the men worked, were informal and assumed two main forms (1) direct recruitment through Israelis (from a Latin American background) and (2) recruitment conducted by co-ethnic social networks. Direct recruitment of domestic workers was effected through Latin American Jewish families living in Israel. Family members or friends residing in the sending country acted as recruiters on their behalf while the recruiting Israeli family sent money for ticket and other expenses of the prospective migrant. The migrants went to Israel as tourists, on a three-month tourist visa, which did not entitle them to work. When their visa expired they became undocumented residents in Israel and could be caught and deported. With

the second form of recruitment, through co-ethnic social networks, people in countries of origin responded to "invitations" from friends and family already living and working in Israel; or they decided to try for a similar experience, stimulated by rumors that earning money was easy, which sparked hopes of an opportunity to "make it in Israel". These methods proved successful as long as the tourist loophole in Israel was relatively open thereby minimizing the costs and risks of transatlantic migration.[11]

Parallel to these two forms of recruitment, we identify other private "entrepreneurs" in countries of origin that promoted Latino migration to Israel. These were travel agencies in the home countries that spread the image of a "golden Israel," a land of opportunity with high salaries and excellent labor conditions; they sold packages (including flights and hotels) for a trip to Israel. Religious practices and networks also functioned as informal channels of recruitment. For example, many interviewees mentioned organized religious pilgrimage to the Holy Places as the first venue for gaining acquaintance with Israeli society and as an easy way to enter the country.

Next we shall see that religious and other social types of associations generated social capital for prospective migrants. They also served as a social space for interaction, mutual aid, and the formation of community life.

The Making of a Latino community

Scholars have consistently called attention to immigrants' disposition to form their own communities and voluntary associations (Moya, 2005). While there is

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[11] Since 2000, border control has become much tighter in general, and also for Latin-American tourists perceived as "prospective" illegal migrants (Morad 2005: 3).

considerable debate over the factors driving the formation of immigrant associations –

whether they relate to the civic and political culture of the immigrants or their hosts,

most scholarship concurs that migrants' organize and associate where neither traditional

institutions (e.g. kinship) nor newer ones in the host countries (e.g. a welfare state) can

satisfy their social, cultural and economic needs (ibid.: 836-840).

In this sense, there is nothing exceptional in the dynamic driving the formation of

community organizations among Latino migrants in Israel or in the needs they went to

fulfill. Deprived of social status, prestige and power in the occupational and social

spheres, and also of more traditional support structures, many migrants search for

alternative spaces to meet their needs, maintaining ties with the communities back

"home," as well as articulating their own sense of community in the new country.

Throughout the 1990s Latino migrants in Israel created a wide array of social

arenas that included religious and lay activities, as well as educational and political

forms of organizing (see Schammah et al., 2000; Kemp and Raijman 2003). These

formed the backbone of an emergent and distinct community. We begin by describing

the first two types of social arenas: recreational, mainly sport and dancing clubs, and

religious congregations. Both were often presented by our interviewees as a measure for

classifying different types of Latinos according to their "moral" virtues and codes of

behavior.

Recreational Activities: soccer and salsa

Soccer games and clubs were a salient axis around which Latino migrants organized

their leisure activities, mainly on weekends. Soccer games were played in public places,

within and beyond the limits of South Tel Aviv, where most undocumented migrants resided; they served as a meeting point for men, women and children of the whole community. Matches were taken seriously to the point of organizing nation-wide championships such as *Copa America* (at Dolphinarium Park in one of the Tel Aviv beaches) and the *Mundial* (at Hayarkon Park in Tel Aviv). The latter included teams representing different countries, so it also created an opportunity to interact with labor migrants then in Israel from elsewhere in the world (Rumania, Turkey, Ghana, etc.).

Sports events provided a suitable base for pursuing other community activities as well: during the gatherings improvised stalls sold traditional food: this was not only an intrinsic part of the happening but also a way to make extra cash. Money for mutual aid was raised mainly through the occasional holding of fairs (*kermesse*), raffles and other creative arrangements. Funds were collected to help members of the community facing difficulties in finding employment, health problems or deportation, but also to aid communities back home struck by disasters, as was the case with the 1999 earthquake that affected the city of Armenia, in Colombia's "*eje cafetero*," whence most Colombian migrants originated.

Gatherings for dancing and listening to Latino music were another common leisure activity that brought Latinos together. Like other organizational initiatives, salsa dancing also fulfilled several functions, from overcoming homesickness to consolidating a pan-Latin identity that superseded differences in national identity. However, as Morad (2005: 6) points out, as they brought together Latinos and Israelis, salsa gatherings created opportunities not only to reaffirm identity boundaries but also to cross boundaries and transform social hierarchies.

Places for salsa and other types of Latino dancing sprang up in Tel Aviv with the arrival of migrant workers but Israelis' attraction to salsa is part of a broader "enchantment" with all "Latino things." This is manifest, inter alia, in the highly positive attitude towards Spanish language and culture in general that Israelis display (Lerner and Katz, 2003); the popularity of Latin American telenovelas; and the "traditional" treks to South America on which young Israelis embark as *mochileros* upon their demobilization. [12] In this context, salsa clubs became not only a magnet of attraction but also a setting where Latinos can interact on an equal basis with Israelis, thus bolstering their self-esteem as well as usually outstripping the local dancers (Morad, 2005).

Religious Spaces: the Catholic Church and Evangelist Churches[13]

A well-known fact is that migrants move with their religious beliefs, practices, and institutions (Greeley 1972; Smith1978; Warner 1993, 1998; Levitt, 2004). These often provide spiritual solace within the experiential context of displacement (Van Dijk 1997), as well as a social space for the constitution of new identities in the face of discrimination and exclusion.

Latino migrants attended two kinds of religious organizations: the Catholic Church in Jaffa which congregated once a week for Latino gatherings around the Mass offered in Spanish; and independent religious organizations, mostly evangelist,

[12] Except for Palestinian citizens and orthodox religious Jews, military conscription in Israel is mandatory for all citizens that reach the age of 18 and is perceived as the cornerstone of civic duty in Israeli national discourse. The lengthy period of military service (two and three years for women and men respectively) is mostly perceived as a liminal stage before entrance to "adulthood." Since the early 1980s, leaving the country to treks in far-away and "exotic" places like South America, Asia and Australia, has become a common "rite of passage" for Israeli youngsters once they finish their military service and before they start their adult life.

[13] For a detailed analysis of the religious life of Latinos in Israel see Kemp and Raijman, 2003.

established by and for migrant workers. Regarding the latter, Latino migrants became spiritual entrepreneurs, both as "importers" of religious practices and institutions from their home countries, and as founders of new churches which until their arrival did not have a strong hold in Israel. Our field work showed that nearly ten Latino evangelical churches operated in south Tel Aviv by the early 2000s. They varied in size, activity, and denomination – Pentecostal, Baptist, Assembly of God, Adventists, or groups organized by Messianic Jews, but all were evangelical. As is usually the case (Freston 1998: 338; Martin, 1995), boundaries between different types of popular Protestant denominations were very fluid, with members moving between congregations or churches changing their affiliations. According to our data, evangelical communities comprised more than a thousand congregants, about half of them regular attendees, the rest occasional passersby. Arguably then, about 7 percent of the Latino migrant workers were active to one degree or another in evangelical churches (Kemp and Raijman, 2003).[14]

Many of the churches were supported by the central headquarters outside Israel while others had established connections with the network of Protestant Arab churches in Israel. Migrants attended the churches regularly to pray and receive moral support, or for special occasions such as weddings, festivals and baptizing their Israeli-born children. Besides the religious and social aspect, churches organized group lessons in the local language Hebrew, and in the country's "unofficial" second language English. There were also "capacitation and training" classes in sewing and hairdressing for adult

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[14] This figure is comparable to the membership of evangelical churches in Latin America itself, where a "genuine Protestant revolution" has been under way since the 1960s (Freston 1998: 337; Martin 1990).

members, and after-school activities for youngsters. All in all, churches served simultaneously as spiritual center, bank, school, employment bureau, and community center (see also Patillo, 1998).

Undocumented migrants saw in churches a "shelter" from the vicissitudes of everyday life. Anita from Colombia and a regular worshipper at the CC church[15] explained to us that she was drawn there as "compensation" for the threatening and alienating surroundings of the area where she lived, near Tel Aviv's old central bus station: "There are a lot of drunk migrants from Poland, Romania, Portugal, and Russia. It's frightening," she says, adding, "The CC is like my family in Israel." For Maria, who like many of her friends left her children in her home country to be raised by her mother, the church constituted "a form of self-help. It gives me the strength to go on." For others, churches provided an alternative structure of opportunity wherein participation afforded status and power in the community hierarchy (Warner, 1998:25). This was especially so regarding the church leaders and those who held key positions in the community's religious life, like becoming a deacon or participating in the choir or organizing the weekly canasta round robin among community members to raise funds.

The churches' existence was hardly a secret. Some were registered as autonomous associations or as the "subsidiary" of a recognized church in Israel. Although the churches did not go out of their way to declare their presence, especially the newly founded, they were far from underground organizations. Anyone who happened to walk by during a service could hear the soulful chant emanating from their open windows. The churches' public nature stood in contrast to the desperate attempts

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[15] The churches are referred to by their initials only.

by undocumented migrants to disguise their presence in public arenas in times of deportation campaigns and thus avoid attracting the authorities' attention. Much of the churches' attraction for the migrant workers, and part of their socio-therapeutic function, was that they could offer not only spiritual but also physical sanctuary. This was related to the fact that religious places were protected from police intervention and surveillance, becoming a "free space" for undocumented migrants – if only for a short time (Kemp and Raijman, 2003).

A less obvious way in which religion was linked to migration was migrants' making religious claims not only to express their beliefs but also to support their inclusion in the host society. Such was the case with Evangelist churches, in which both leaders and lay members usually translated their interpretation of Christian theology into a claim of belonging, in line with hegemonic definitions of belonging and membership in Israel (ibid).

For example, in our conversations with pastors and congregants they often emphasized their Christian beliefs in the Return to Zion as a prologue to the advent of the Messiah and their concomitant identification with the Jewish people's right to the Land of Israel. Asked to define the main goal of his church, the pastor of the ER church declared ardently, "Its purpose is to encourage Christians in the world to pray for the people of Israel, to connect with the tradition of Israel, and to become acquainted with the reality in the Land of Israel" (ibid.: 307). The desire to "work for Israel" as Christians was a recurrent motif in personal conversations with church leaders and in the collective prayers and petitions of the church members. However, "working for Israel" acquire a double meanings in the context of migrants, who during the day worked at

domestic chores for Israelis and feared deportation, and in the church articulated their desire to support the Jewish state and help solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (perceived in religious terms) as their *raison d'être* in the Holy Land. An example is Gloria, wife of a Baptist pastor who also worked at cleaning houses, or as she called it *"limpia el polvo y reza."*[16] As she explained to us:

> *Zionism was and remains a national movement with the goal of establishing the State of Israel. We are Zionists. We love everything about the Jewish people. Our powerful desire for a visa stems precisely from the desire to help the Jews. Otherwise, why should we be here? We are here to serve the Jewish people.* (Gloria, the pastor's wife, ER Baptist church, Tel Aviv, Israel, 8 February 2001)

Thus theology blurred differences between Evangelical Christianity and Jewish Zionism as articulated in religious practice and in the believers' narratives of identity. It also framed congregants' precarious legal situation as undocumented migrants seeking legitimacy.

The Unmaking of the Latino Community

Usually theories that describe the emergence of new ethnic communities do not deal with the mechanisms that may dismantle the formal and informal associations created through the migrants' own initiatives. In this section we analyze the impact of policies of control and deportation on the institutional setup of the Latino community in Israel and how they eventually contributed to stemming the inflow of Latino migration

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[16] "Clean the dust and pray."

to that country. We focus on two main types of organization: political and educational, and show how they were reshaped by political interventions.

Political organization: The OTL[17]

The formation of community patterns and institutions just described was not only the result of migrants' resourcefulness. To some extent it also made evident the fissures between a stringent regime of "non-immigration" that officially sought to prevent the settlement of non-ethnic migrants and the positive reception that Latinos enjoyed on the level of society. The latter enabled the de facto social incorporation of undocumented Latinos as participants in an array of social networks and daily interactions with NGOs advocating for migrants, municipal welfare agencies, schools, youth movements, activists, and more (Kemp and Raijman, 2004).[18]

According to Roer-Strier and Olshtain-Mann, this positive reception derives from the broader positive stereotype of South American Jewish immigrants in Israel (1999: 425); others relate it to perceived similarities between the Latino and Israeli "outgoing nature" (Schnell, 1999) or to the presence of a "sympathetic" South American Jewish community already established in Israel (Morad, 2005:14). Another and perhaps more tangible factor here was Latino migrants' ability to "go unnoticed." Unlike migrant workers from black Africa or Southeast Asia, Latin Americans could pass as Israelis because of their physical similarity. This reduced the chances of their being sought or jailed by the immigration police, and likewise helped them in their interaction with the host society (Roer-Strier and Olshtain-Mann, 1999).

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[17] For a detailed analysis of the political organization of Latinos in Israel see Kemp et al., 2000.
[18] Municipal policies and advocacy NGOs mediated the needs and claims of undocumented communities in general, especially those in which families were formed.

All these enabling factors led Latino migrants to engage in what Kalir (2010) calls a strategy of "practical accumulation of belonging," namely a form of cumulative symbolic capital that defies the "either-or" logic of formal citizenship and is recognized as legitimate and legitimating by the dominant national community (ibid.:13). This pragmatic form of belonging worked at the individual and collective levels, and drew on the Latinos' ability to manipulate their public (in)visibility as a resource in what we may call a "politics of visibility," namely to be "seen" or "unseen" according to context.

In 1998 this politics was evident in a brief attempt to organize the community to mobilize collective claims (Kemp et al., 2000). Following the experience of undocumented African migrants who established the African Workers Union (AWU), Latinos attempted to create their own union, the Organización de Trabajadores Latinoamericanos (OTL), which would function as a channel for interaction with Israeli authorities and organizations dealing with labor migrants. The initiative followed previous unsuccessful attempts by activists in the community to gather Latinos from different parts of the continent under one common organization. However, the significant catalyst for organizing was the government's declaration about its intention to implement tougher arrest and deportation measures against undocumented migrants.

The first assembly of the OTL was convened by a local journalist and was followed by a series of meetings and consultations of OTL members with AWU (African Workers Union) leaders, Knesset members and non-governmental organizations. Participants discussed the steps required to address successfully both Israeli public opinion and members of the community reluctant to participate in political activities. The OTL's short-lived political activity reached its peak at a meeting between

Latino and black African representatives and the chair of the Knesset Committee on Migrant Workers (17 May 1998), at which an alternative policy to deportation was discussed. The meeting resulted in the submission of a joint proposal by both migrant communities' representatives and members of the Knesset committee, which recommended the grant of one-year work permits for undocumented migrants already residing in Israel and a $5,000 deposit meant to ensure that migrants would leave the country when the permit expired. The government rejected this proposal.

The Latino political organization was nipped in the bud when police raided the homes of some community leaders. From interviews with Latino leaders, we learned that members of the community believed that the escalation in the arrest and deportation policy was a direct reaction to the community's organizational activities. Conversely, the OTL leaders related the failure at organizing politically to the lack of an integrated and coordinated organizational infrastructure, and of a participatory political culture among Latinos in general. According to Kalir (ibid.: 231), who conducted ethnographic work mainly in the Ecuadorian community, this explanation is shortsighted as it fails to consider that the achievements of the Latino community until then greatly depended on its ability to keep out of the authorities' spotlight while accumulating social belonging in Israeli society.

In either case, as we will show next, whether choosing "quiet" accumulation of practical belonging or "noisy" mobilization of collective claims, the politics of (in)visibility of the Latino community was disabled by governmental interventions that eventually caused its unmaking.

La Escuelita and the Great Deportation

As stated before, Israeli state policy on undocumented migration took a dramatic turn in 2002 with the creation of the immigration police. This organization launched a multi-pronged attack to deliver a severe blow to labor migrants' networks and organizations. Its officers arrested and deported many of the immigrant activists with the clear objective of deterring undocumented migrants from attempts at organizing and settling.[19]

From the establishment of the immigration police Latino migrants felt under siege. Being "undocumented" became a permanent burden affecting migrants' everyday lives, and it constituted a recurrent theme in community gatherings. Viviana, from Bolivia, shared with us her consternation regarding her status.

> *I live with tension. We never have a moment of peace. We are not free to act and interact as normal people. People take advantage of this situation. Take for instance the questions of renting an apartment. You know that they charge you more just because you are illegal and you cannot say a word. I already left two apartments and my money guarantee was not returned. Again, I couldn't complain. If you need a medicine, you cannot get it because illegal workers don't have medical insurance. Most employers do not want to pay for that.*

Suddenly home and street turned into dangerous places. Fearing arrest and deportation, migrants avoid gathering in public places (Raijman et al., 2003).

Police raids targeting the old and new central bus station area in Tel Aviv led

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[19] See Algazy (2001); Sinai (2001); Wurgaft (2003, 2004).

many migrants to move out to the surrounding areas with a lower concentration of foreign workers, hoping to reduce the chances of being caught. A case in point is Irene, from Venezuela, who moved to a northern suburb of Tel Aviv:

> *Although living in the suburbs makes me feel a little more secure I know that the police can catch me in any bus at any time. To be on the safe side, I always have an amount of money reserved for the ticket in case of deportation. You know, when I leave my house I never know if I'll be back.*

In other cases, many women working as live-out domestics considered the possibility of taking a live-in position as a strategy to avoid being arrested on their way to work.

As rising numbers were detained and deported many decided to leave the country of their "own accord." Deportation campaigns were particularly hard on families. Until the establishment of the immigration police, the authorities had refrained from deporting families with children or deported the father with the expectation that the wife and children would follow suit. As many families realized that they were not immune to deportation and that integration into Israeli society was not a viable option for non-Jewish migrants, parents began thinking about the moment of returning home to their countries of origin.

In 1999 preparing children for return led to the creation of *La Escuelita,* a Sunday school-like framework operated by migrants and Israeli volunteers. Whereas arrest and deportation policies resulted in the dismantling of most of the other community institutions, La Escuelita exemplifies how migrants' associations and initiatives change and adapt to new political constellations.

In the relatively short history of La Escuelita two distinct periods can be identified: the first from its foundation until the wave of deportations in 2005, the second from 2005 to the present. La Escuelita was the initiative of a Colombian migrant worker who operated an "underground" kindergarten for undocumented Latino children, and of Mesila.[20] Its main objective was to provide an educational framework where Latinos' children could preserve their linguistic and cultural heritage for the time span until they returned to their (parents') countries; the chief objective was to facilitate the children's return to those countries. It was operated by volunteers from the Latino and the South American Jewish community on Friday afternoons (Kemp and Raijman, 2008).

In 2005 La Escuelita changed its principal objective from a primary focus on nurturing the Latin American cultural and linguistic heritage of the children to a larger focus on the assimilation of children and adults in Israeli culture and society. As mentioned, deportation campaigns targeted families but in fact deported mainly men and women who had resolved to remain in Israel with their children. Many of those who stayed were eventually naturalized as a result of two government decisions in 2005 and 2010 that granted legal status to children and their families (Kemp, 2007).[21] The determination to stay and the legalization campaigns reshaped the focus of La Escuelita's activities: it would not only be a place for children's activities in Spanish but would have to adapt

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[20]The Tel Aviv-Yafo municipality founded Mesila in 1999 to grant social, educational and health assistance to undocumented migrants who concentrated in and around the city.

[21] In 2005, 562 of the 862 applications were accepted. In 2010, 221 of the 700 children's applications were accepted. See Government (2005), *Decision no. 3807* and Government (2010), *Decision no. 2183* http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2010/Pages/des2183.aspx (accessed 31 December, 2013).

itself to the new reality meeting the needs of the whole community by becoming a
learning center for children, and offering language courses in Hebrew and English and
lectures for adults.

Today the target groups of educational activities are mainly female migrant
workers, aged 25 to 50+, originating from five countries: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru,
Bolivia and Puerto Rico (Lerner, 2014). With respect to children, the emphasis is not on
Spanish language but on offering tutoring as a compliment to the regular school's
educational agenda.

Unlike their parents, who define themselves by country of origin and take pride in
it, the children, many of them Israeli-born, define themselves as Latinos and are less
interested in their parents' culture of origin, which their families would like (ibid.: 4-5).
The staff composition has also changed: presently the majority of volunteers and staff
are Israeli-born Jews of Latin American descent; there is no representative of the
migrant workers' community. All have command of the Spanish language. Indeed, while
staff and children mix and switch between Spanish and Hebrew, which highlights the
children's dual identity as "Latino and Israeli," their parents speak mainly Spanish since
their Hebrew level is very low, regardless of the number of years they have lived in
Israel (ibid.).

Latino Migrants and their Families: "Legal Liminality" in a Jewish State

The experience of Latino migrants who had children born and raised in Israel could
be best described as one of "legal liminality" (Menjivar 2006). Coined by Menjivar
(2006), the concept refers to the social position and forms of belonging of individuals

and social groups who lack legal personhood but gain nonetheless different types of recognition and social presence. The Israeli migration regime is based on explicit no-family policies aiming to prevent the creation and settlement of families of non-ethnic migrants, with or without documents (Kfir and Kemp forthcoming). Nevertheless, Latinos with children in Israel usually found themselves caught in between contradictory policies and logics of inclusion. Thus for example, pregnant migrants were entitled to reproductive health services such as labor and delivery at public hospitals covered by the National Insurance Institute if registered by an Israeli employer, subsidized prenatal care at municipality centers and full preventive medical services for babies until the age of 1-1.5, regardless of their parents' legal status. Migrant workers' children were undocumented by virtue of their presence in Israel, yet they were entitled to medical coverage partly subsidized by the state and to compulsory free public education (Kemp and Raijman 2004, 41). Thus, whether driven by public health logics protective of citizens or by residence-based definitions of entitlement, these regulations include migrants lacking legal status in the Israeli social protection system in ways that acknowledge their reproductive life.

Latinos also experienced the tensions between official policies that rendered their families invisible and everyday social interactions that reaffirmed their social ways of belonging and presence. Thus, while raising children under the constant shadow of deportability took a great toll from Latino families, having children also enlarged the circles of association and interaction of Latino migrants with Israelis beyond the worksite to teachers, volunteers and parents in schools such as Bialik-Rogozin where half of the students are migrant workers' children, or in youth movements such as the

Zionist Scouts Movement (Tzofim), which created the Eitan troop for migrant children (http://www.zofim.org.il/). Albeit partial and segmented, these forms of social integration accorded Latino families a social personhood anchored on everyday cooperation and interpersonal networks of solidarity which proved crucial during the anti-deportation campaigns that lead to the naturalization of children and their families in 2005 and 2010 (Kemp 2007; Kemp and Kfir forthcoming).

Conclusion

The present chapter has focused on the making and unmaking of the Latino community of undocumented migrant workers in Israel. Our contribution is twofold. First, whereas much of the literature on migrant communities has dealt with the processes leading to its emergence and reproduction in host countries, less has been written on the political interventions and social conditions that bring about their dismantling and the stemming of migratory flows. Here we aimed to fill this gap by extending our analysis to the control and enforcement policies that have brought down the Latino community in Israel and put a stop to the migratory flows into the country.

Secondly, by focusing on the specific case of Israel we wanted to contribute to the existing literature on undocumented Latino immigrants in non-English-speaking countries. To date, most research on Latino migrants has been conducted in the USA, where Latinos constitute 17 percent of the total population and 73 percent of unauthorized migration (Hoefer et al., 2012). The migration experiences of undocumented Latinos to other destinations have largely been neglected, therefore the Israeli case provides a broader comparative perspective for the study of modes of incorporation of Latino immigrants into host societies.

Throughout the chapter we examined the social, economic and political constellations that encouraged the mobility of Latin Americans to a new destination in the Middle East. We highlighted the type of formal and informal networks that sustained the ongoing flows of Latino migrants to Israel throughout the 1990s, and the emergence of a wide variety of community networks and informal associations. Furthermore, we have underscored the significance of religious factors for choice of destination, but also regarding the ways religious activities led to the establishment of immigrant churches providing protected spaces against the backdrop of the constant threat of arrest and deportation (Kemp and Raijman, 2003).

The emergence of migrant workers' communities in Israel is of special interest since it challenges the basic definition of Israeli society as an ethno-national polity which encourages permanent settlement of Jewish immigrants and discourages settlement of non-Jewish migrants (Kemp et al., 2000). Like other labor-importing societies Israel was forced to confront new dilemmas posed by the presence of the new undocumented migrant populations, the Latino community included, and their reproduction costs. The migrants' rights to basic education, health, and welfare evolved into a new conflictive arena where the limits of membership in the traditional ethno-national state were being questioned. Claims were advanced by the migrants' themselves as well as a diverse array of non-governmental organizations, trying to work out a tolerable modus vivendi for what seems to have become a de facto multi-ethnic society far exceeding the limits of the ethno-national Jewish Israel (Kemp and Raijman, 2004).

Since 1996, the Israeli state has resorted to the detection, detention and deportation of undocumented migrants as a multipronged approach to control, deter, and

halt undocumented migratory flows to Israel. Non-Jewish migration was seen as a threat to the Jewish character of the state, internal security and the socio-economic wellbeing of the native population (Raijman and Semyonov, 2004). Detention and deportation strategies implemented in Israel since the mid-1990s, and most harshly in the 2000s, made a forcible impact on the precarious organization of the Latino community. Deportations and the mass exodus of Latino labor migrants exerted a devastating effect on the social organizations that during the 1990s promoted a Latino sense of community. The social spaces that were run by and for Latinos that provided the basis for the community were crushed, and friendship and kin networks formed around these informal social organizations were decisively truncated. When community leaders, pastor churches and Latino migrants were pursued, detained and deported by the state, social and religious activities ceased and the community finally collapsed.

Detention and deportation are some of the more visible forms of internal enforcement prevalent not only in Israel but in other host countries such as the US and countries in the European Union. The practice of deportation is another way for states to reaffirm the contours and importance of national citizenship and sovereignty in the global context (Menjivar, 2014). They constitute the normative boundary lines between citizens and non-citizens, and within different groups of non-citizens (documented and undocumented). As our case study has shown, policing of immigrants and enforcement controls through detention and deportation shape the everyday lives of immigrants, their families and communities in major receiving countries, and intensify their socio-economic vulnerabilities.

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