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The New Second Generation: Non-Jewish *Olim*, Black Jews and Children of Migrant Workers in Israel

ABSTRACT

This article offers an overview of the empirical research on the new second generations in the Israeli setting, while highlighting the sociological problématique emerging from the data. It summarizes key empirical findings on the second generation of immigrants from the Former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, and children of migrant workers, and it introduces new variables and theoretical angles that have recently emerged within the Israeli context of immigration, such as transnationalism and inequalities based on race, nationality, religion, and citizenship. We argue that by introducing these analytic parameters, the Israeli research agenda on immigrants' second generation should expand beyond replication of the questions applied toward the massive immigration waves of the 1950s.

DURING THE 1990S, ISRAEL WITNESSED A RENEWAL OF MASSIVE IMMIGRATION waves reminiscent—at least in their intensity and suddenness—of the formative immigration flows of the 1950s. Yet, the different ethnic composition of this new wave of immigration and the radically different context within which immigrants were received make it extremely difficult to extrapolate from past migratory experiences. In the 1990s, Israel welcomed more than one million immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU), including significant numbers of non-Jews, who comprise about 30% of this immigrant population. A second group of Jewish immigrants arrived from Ethiopia, known as *Beta Israel*, who differed significantly from FSU migrants in terms of social and demographic characteristics. Numbering

close to 100,000 people, this relatively small but conspicuous group brought to the fore a new dimension in Israeli migration discourse—race.

In addition to these waves of “privileged” immigrants, who were accepted into Israel within the framework of the Law of Return, sizeable inflows of migrant workers joined the immigrant population of Israel during the 1990s. Originally recruited to replace Palestinians, who commuted daily and who worked in the lower tiers of the Israeli labor market, an estimated 102,000 labor migrants entered with work permits. By the end of 2006, another 84,000 workers had entered and remained beyond the expiration date of their tourist visas.¹

Altogether, these two groups of non-Jewish workers accounted for 11% of the labor force in the private sector. This places Israel among the five leading advanced economies that have come to rely on labor migration within a relatively short period of time.²

These new patterns of migration differ from previous immigration waves in several crucial respects. Most Ethiopian Jews and non-Jewish FSU immigrants entered Israel within the framework of the 1970 amendment to the Law of Return and received citizenship immediately upon arrival. Conversely, labor migrants, documented or undocumented, were not perceived to be prospective immigrants and naturalization channels are *de facto* closed to them. These differences notwithstanding, patterns of non-Jewish, non-Palestinian, and non-white migration are of far-reaching sociological importance. In particular, they introduce new parameters of analysis that expand the previous central categories and set new parameters for contemporary discussion on migration in Israel.

The increasing number of non-Jews who are also non-Arab is leading to an interesting situation that makes it more difficult to classify the Israeli population by national or ethnic categories. As Yinon Cohen poignantly noted, it is no longer the case in contemporary Israel, as was possible twenty years ago, to state that all immigrants are Jews, all non-Jews are Arabs, and all labor migrants are Palestinian day laborers.³ The entry and absorption difficulties encountered by the sizable population of Ethiopian Jews have led to the emergence of racial divides and intra-Jewish color-based forms of racism.⁴

Recent public debates on citizenship and migration reforms indicate that these new patterns of immigration are likely to leave their imprint on Israel society’s incorporation policies and its collective identity.⁵ For some, this influx of predominantly “non-ideological” and in some cases non-ethnic, immigrants is nothing short of a threat to the “Western”, democratic, and Jewish self-definition of the State of Israel. For others, the new

immigrants strengthen and reinforce Israel's *raison d'état* as the place for the proverbial "ingathering of the exiles" as well as a resource that revitalizes the country's demographics and economy.

While generally framed as an immigration debate, the long-term significance of such issues depends, largely, on what happens to the second generation of immigrants. Research literature shows that immigrants' identity formation and their socio-economic integration are long-term processes that contain an intergenerational dimension.⁶ As children of immigrants become independent actors in the labor market, politics, and culture, they also become protagonists of the transformations generally associated with immigration. In this manner, they advance new challenges that impinge upon the social fabric and economic structure of the receiving society. Yet, despite the great diversity of recent immigration to Israel, the limited number of studies of the new second generation advanced to date has been based for the most part on the "conventional" analytical frameworks of assimilation and ethnic identity formation within the perspective of *homecoming* migration. This paradigm relies on a conflated notion of immigrants as necessarily Jewish, entitled to citizenship automatically, and "white". In applying this paradigm, much of this research has overlooked the modes in which new migration processes in Israel interact with and challenge significant variables such as nationality, religion, citizenship, and race.

Although a relatively recent phenomenon, we argue that the immigration of non-Jewish, non-citizen, and black Jewish immigrants calls for the integration of these analytic variables into current research on the second generation in Israel and on emergent patterns of social, cultural, and economic inequality. The aim of this article is, therefore, to present the state of the art of empirical research on this new second generation in the Israeli setting, while highlighting the sociological problématique emerging from the data. This analysis begins with a brief review of the main issues related to the "old" second generation in Israel. From here, we present the new patterns of migration to Israel of non-Jews from the FSU, black Jews from Ethiopia, and migrant workers. This presentation is followed by a discussion of the main challenges that these new patterns pose for Israeli sociological research on second generations.

In contrast with previous studies, which have focused on each immigrant population separately, the present article offers a comparative framework. This allows us to identify common factors responsible for the growing inequality between the second generation of immigrants of different backgrounds and the veteran population. We argue that by focusing on the challenges to extant variables and the introduction of new theoretical

angles—such as transnationalism and inequalities based on race, nationality, religion, and citizenship—future research will attain new understandings of migratory phenomena in the Israeli context and the ways in which new patterns of immigration interweave within stratification processes.

THE “OLD” SECOND GENERATION

Two periods of peak migration are crucial in delineating the differences between the “old” and the “new” second generations: the period immediately after statehood (1948) and the last decade of the twentieth century. Besides pointing out the large immigration influxes that produced demographic transformations of the receiving society, both periods reveal several differences in terms of the ethnic composition of the immigrant population and drastically different reception contexts.

Two major geo-cultural groups are commonly distinguished within the “old” second generation: Jews of Asian and North African origin, known in Israel as *Mizrahim*, and Jews of European and American origin, known as *Ashkenazim*. Although far from being homogeneous, both groups were distinctly stratified in every aspect, including education, occupational status, and income.⁷ The extensive body of research on the children of these migration waves—the “old” second generation—dealt mostly with measurement of educational and earning gaps stemming from ethnic disparities. For example, we learn that gaps between the second generation of *Mizrahim* and *Ashkenazim* have hardly changed during the last decades.

In 1975, one in four *Ashkenazim* was a university graduate, compared to one in twenty *Mizrahim*. In 1995, the educational gap narrowed, but not significantly: one out of three *Ashkenazim* was a university graduate, compared to one in ten among *Mizrahim*. Likewise, the increasing income gap among the “old” second generation shows that children of *Mizrahim* have failed to catch up economically with their *Ashkenazi* counterparts.⁸ The explanations offered for these gaps propose they are the result of differential opportunity structure (such as residential segregation and tracking in education) and/or prejudice-based discrimination against Israelis of *Mizrahi* origin deeply rooted in modernization policies and the orientalist outlook of the melting pot ideology prevalent during the 1950–1960s.⁹

The major analytical tools applied in these studies derived from ethnicity research and status attainment theory. Accordingly, they sought to explain the persistence of ethnic gaps in education, occupation, and earnings. However, from the perspective of immigration theories, the relevant

units of analysis—*Ashkenazim* and *Mizrahim*—ignored other diverse types of immigration and modes of incorporation. Thus, since an exceptionally diverse, new massive migration is already having an impact on Israeli society, we expect that the focus of future research on the second generation will have to extend beyond the *Ashkenazim–Mizrahim* cleavage to include the experiences of the new immigrants’ children, their modes of incorporation, and the new challenges they pose.¹⁰

We assume that new immigrant groups may lead to the “normalization” of Israel into a *de facto* immigration state, as opposed to an exclusively Jewish immigration state. More specifically, each immigrant group is likely to become an intrinsic part of stratification processes that will impinge upon future generations’ socio-economic mobility and cultural incorporation. Hence, in the following sections, we single out the new variables introduced by recent migration patterns and discuss their implications for the new theoretical perspective that needs to be developed.

THE “NEW” SECOND GENERATION

NON-JEWISH OLIM

The recent immigration wave from the FSU brought to Israel about 300,000 immigrants who are not Jewish according to *Halacha* (the Jewish religious legal code). This may be due to their being persons of different nationalities who married Jews or the children of inter-ethnic marriages.¹¹ The number of non-Jewish immigrants rose from about 5% in 1990 to over 50% in 2000, which created a new sociological category of non-Jewish *Olim*.¹² Along with the demographic significance, the effect of this group goes beyond its quantitative numbers, since it has driven a wedge, previously unknown in the Israeli context, between nationality, religion, and immigration. This is especially important given the close connection between religion and state in Israel, which limits the freedom of non-Jewish immigrants with regard to matters of personal status, for example in marriage, divorce, and registration of children, burial.¹³

Most previous studies on FSU immigrant youth have focused on social and cultural issues typical to their relocation and adjustment.¹⁴ In general, this literature shows that Russian-speaking immigrant adolescents strongly identify with the Russian language and culture, and they maintain a sense of cultural superiority towards Israeli peers. In addition, several studies pointed to various disadvantages experienced by FSU youngsters in Israel. For example, young immigrants often have difficulty creating friendships

with local peers because of language and cultural barriers, as well as social stigmas associated with being a “Russian” immigrant in Israel.¹⁵ Another major disadvantage impacting immigrant youngsters’ integration process is their poor educational achievements: A higher percentage of immigrants than native-born Israelis do not attain a matriculation certificate (69% versus 55%, respectively). Likewise, more than 20% of the immigrant teenagers drop out of the educational system, compared to less than 10% of native-born Israelis.¹⁶

Alongside these studies’ significant contributions to our understanding of the difficulties experienced by the FSU immigrant youth, some important questions remain unanswered. In particular, there is a lacuna in understanding the nature of the experiences of non-Jewish youngsters, who may be facing even greater obstacles in their path to attaining successful participation in society. The logic behind this speculation is that while many Russian-speaking immigrants have to cope with cultural shock and the many stigmas ascribed to them by the host residents, non-Jewish teenagers carry an even heavier burden since they do not belong to the national-religious majority.

In one of the few studies that addressed some of these issues, albeit in a partial manner, Niznik conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with FSU youngsters who immigrated to Israel between 2000 and 2002.¹⁷ She found that most respondents defined themselves as “Russians”, expressed alienation towards Jewish and Israeli identities, and had difficulty acquiring the Hebrew language. These findings differ significantly from her previous study conducted among adolescents who immigrated to Israel during the 1990s. These earlier immigrants held more positive views of their new home and did not perceive their multiple identities in terms of conflict and contradiction.¹⁸ According to Niznik, one possible explanation for such prominent differences may be that the more recent sample contained a much higher percentage of non-Jewish immigrants. This state-defined status seems to be an obstacle in their social and cultural integration.

In another recent study conducted by Zaslavsky and Horowitz among non-Jewish FSU immigrants in the 16–23 age group interviewees reported that they experienced more difficulties in social and occupational integration compared to their Jewish immigrant-counterparts and they felt that they would have less chance of finding a spouse and building a family in Israel. Moreover, non-Jewish immigrants, compared with Jewish ones, expressed a stronger willingness to leave Israel in favor of a third country. The authors speculated that this difference might be related to their

pessimistic assessment of future integration in a country where national belonging plays a major role in the public sphere.¹⁹

In several cases, the non-Jewish immigrant adolescents' failure to integrate is expressed by various patterns of social marginalization, such as violence, alcoholism, drugs, and prostitution. In this respect, a Ministry of Education internal study conducted among immigrant "teenagers-at-risk" found that the percentage of non-Jewish adolescents was much greater in this group, in comparison with Jewish immigrants. Moreover, the situation of female immigrants was even worse, as 29% of the girls in the study claimed to have been living on the street, compared to 19% among the boys. Many of these girls were victims of sexual abuse, partly due to their non-Jewishness, which made them "unsuitable" for establishing a proper Jewish (and therefore Israeli) family.²⁰ Likewise, Fishman and Mesch's investigation of FSU immigrant adolescents' delinquency patterns found that the key factors influencing the likelihood of being involved in delinquency were level of acculturation and parental control, as well as national definition (Jews or non-Jews). That is, Jewish immigrant youngsters were less likely to be involved in delinquency than were non-Jews.²¹

Furthermore, being non-Jewish relates not only to the sense of national belonging but also to differences in religious affiliation. In contrast to the first half of the 1990s, when it was correctly assumed that a new *Oleh* was necessarily associated with Judaism, a significant segment of recent FSU immigrants affiliate themselves with other religions, mainly Orthodox Christianity.²² Moreover, many immigrants who identified themselves as Jews in the FSU discovered that they were not recognized as Jewish in Israel, and so they were forced to look for a new self-definition and alternative sources of belonging.

Religious affiliation is especially important for immigrant adolescents, since the period of coming of age is necessarily characterized by an intensive search for social, cultural, ethnic, and religious identities.²³ Though the role of religion in the integration process of non-Jewish adolescents has yet to attract substantial research attention, two recent studies did address this phenomenon. Rapoport and Kaplan examined Russian-speaking youngsters' conversion process in the religious boarding schools for girls. Making an important contribution to the analysis of the authoritative usage of religion in young immigrants' adaptation, the study presents the conversion process as a mechanism of "fixing" female immigrants' "problematic" Jewishness by institutional religious treatment. As such, its main emphasis is on the educators' strategies in religiosity inculcation, and it pays less

attention to the role of religious beliefs and practices in the immigrant girls' lives, mainly seen by the researchers as an act of instrumental conformity.²⁴

Furthermore, Elias and Khvorostianov's study sheds some light on the place of Christianity in the lives of non-Jewish youngsters. Based on semi-structured interviews with 93 Russian-speaking teenagers, the researchers found that 41% of the interviewees defined themselves as Christians. This group was divided into unprofessed Christians, who hid their religion and were not involved in any religious activities; and professed Christians, who openly expressed their religious beliefs and were affiliated with an organized religious community.²⁵ All participants in the study turned to Christianity in Israel as a result of the hardships of immigration, exacerbated further by their lack of belonging to the national majority.

The two groups of "newly-born" Christians had fundamentally different experiences in terms of the consolidation of their religious identity as well as in the density of their social network and their sense of integration into the host society. The researchers argued that these differences stem from the fact that the professed Christians found their way into society through the network of an immigrant church, which served as their safety net and a primary source of emotional support. Such a resource was not available to unprofessed Christians and they suffered from both spiritual and social isolation. Hence, becoming a Christian, in secret, failed to solve the major social problems facing non-Jewish youngsters in Israel—social alienation, isolation, and marginality.

Additional young adolescents turned to religion through meeting FSU immigrant youth and children of labor migrants, both of whom found in Christianity a shared cultural space. These encounters occurred at Christian music festivals and religious seminars. Given that there are very few opportunities for inter-cultural contacts in Israel, aside from those that occur in some workplaces,²⁶ these encounters may well have served as a forum in which friendships and mutual support were established between two marginalized sectors of Israeli society that usually live in separate worlds.

BLACK JEWS

The immigration of Ethiopian Jews—known as *Beta Israel* or *Falashas*—poses another important challenge for research on the social, cultural, and economic incorporation of the second generation in Israel. The Ethiopian immigrants arrived in Israel in three major waves: the first wave of the 1980s numbered 8,000 immigrants, the second wave of the 1990s comprised about 20,000 persons, whereas the third wave continues and has aroused a

major public debate over the inclusion of the converted *Falas Mura*, who are not recognized as Jews according to *Halacha*.²⁷

Studies of the Ethiopian immigrants' integration identified four main obstacles that result in their marginalization in Israeli society: (a) failure of assimilation programs implemented by bureaucratic, paternalistic governmental institutions; (b) reluctant recognition of their Jewishness by the rabbinic authorities; (c) their modest possession of cultural and material capital in Western terms; and (d) stigmatization processes related to skin color that yield to overt and manifest articulations of racism, and multiple forms of discrimination in Israel.²⁸ In this respect, Lissak correctly concluded that among all Jewish immigration waves,

The situation of immigrants from Ethiopia is unique, in the following ways: in their Jewish identity, which has yet to gain the full recognition; in the mutual sense of estrangement between them and the Israeli population; and, no less important, in their skin color. Being an immigrant nation, Israeli society has dealt with immigrant groups in the past that possessed one or two of these qualities (e.g., *Bnei Israel* from India). However, a remarkable combination of all these qualities makes the Ethiopian immigrants different and the relatively high number of these immigrants highlights their salience even more.²⁹

The perception of Ethiopian immigrants as a vulnerable population—an “immigration of distress”—elicited the intensive involvement of the state in all aspects of their integration process.³⁰ Ethiopian immigrants have been granted many more resources than any other group of immigrants. However, their lack of suitable cultural, social, and financial resources for inclusion into the new society together with the paternalistic attitude assumed by state institutions left them segregated in poor neighborhoods, where cheap housing was affordable to those depending on the state mortgage system with little prospects of socio-economic mobility.³¹

Today, the Ethiopian community in Israel constitutes one of the poorest populations in the country. Nearly half of all the Ethiopian families are dependent on welfare support as their only source of income;³² the average salary of Ethiopian immigrants is below the poverty line; only 32% male immigrants and 10% of females are employed; 63% of those employed work primarily in unskilled jobs in industry and construction; 45% of parents cannot speak Hebrew; and 49% of families live with two or more people in each room.³³ The gaps between younger Ethiopians and the rest of Israeli society remain very wide, even though they have achieved higher levels of

education than their parents, participate more in the labor market, and have improved their wages over time.³⁴ The social and economic departure point of this immigrant community seems to indicate that there are substantial challenges facing the second generation of Ethiopian immigrants in breaking with the cycle of poverty and deprivation.³⁵

Another key issue characterizing their integration in Israel relates to difficulties experienced by Ethiopian youngsters in the host education system. Since their arrival in the mid-1980s, children have been placed in the state religious school network. Yet, the form of Judaism taught in these educational institutions is vastly different from their own religious tradition, thus alienating them from their past, their community, their cultural heritage, and their mother tongue.³⁶ Furthermore, no special curricula were developed to meet their needs, apart from participation in intensive Hebrew courses in both elementary and secondary schools.³⁷ Accordingly, 40% of students in grades 1–9 scored below their class level in reading, 60% rank below class level in Hebrew and mathematics, and the percentage of school dropouts between 14–17-years-of-age is double the national average. Similarly, the number of juvenile delinquents among this immigrant population arrested for illegal activities is much higher than the national level and it increased by 255% between 1996 and 1999.³⁸

One major consequence of racial prejudices, doubts raised about their Jewishness, and the low status allotted them in Israeli society, is that many Ethiopian youngsters undergo a deep identity crisis. One of the chief avenues chosen to express this identity crisis is growing identification as “blacks” (instead of Israelis) and adoption of black Diaspora cultural symbols (e.g., music, hairstyle, fashion, and forms of social protest) completely foreign to them in Ethiopia.³⁹ However, the “ethnicization” of color makes the young Ethiopians even more “visible” as blacks, thus emphasizing their forced non-belonging to the Jewish majority of Israel. In this sense, Ben-Eliezer argued that rather than enlarging the bounds of the public sphere and contributing to a multicultural understanding of Israeliness, the patterns of protest developed by the second generation of Ethiopian descent have failed to improve their social status. It appears that these identificatory processes may be generating the opposite effect as they contribute to modes of social exclusion based on cultural racism.⁴⁰

NON-CITIZEN LABOR MIGRANTS

The recruitment of labor migrants during the 1990s is one of the most notable examples of the inclusion of the Israeli economy in the neo-liberal global system. Since the early 1990s, substantial numbers of labor migrants were recruited to replace Palestinian commuter-day-workers who had been working in Israel since 1967.⁴¹ In contrast to Palestinians, overseas labor migrants live within the host society, some of them have become *de facto* “permanent temporary residents”, even though formal channels for their naturalization are virtually closed to them. As in other countries, official recruitment of labor migration brought about an influx of undocumented migrants who arrived in Israel mainly from Eastern Europe, Southern Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South America.

Since the 1970s, Israel has instituted a labor migration policy abandoned by most European nation states.⁴² In this respect, Israeli laws and regulations governing labor migration are much more akin to the patterns of labor migration regulation in the Gulf States and Southeast Asia. They are much stricter than in countries with longer histories of foreign labor recruitment. Similar to the Gulf States and Taiwan, Israel grants work permits to employers to whom the migrant worker is indentured, thereby maximizing employer and state control over the foreign population. The state does not allow residence without a work permit nor does it guarantee access to housing, social benefits, and public medical care. There is no coherent system of asylum or a proactive family reunification policy. Once labor migrants have a child born in Israel, they lose their work and residence permit and are required to leave the country.⁴³

The patterns of official recruitment of labor migrants in Israel have resulted in an increase in the number of undocumented migrants—some of whom live with families established while working in the country.⁴⁴ Deportation of undocumented labor migrants, enacted by the labor migration system since 1995, has been the primary policy response to these new social realities. Following the setting up of the Immigration Police unit massive deportation campaigns of undocumented migrants has taken a more systematic and dramatic turn as entire families have been targeted.⁴⁵

Implementation of the extended deportation policy has called the public and policymakers’ attention to the situation of migrant workers’ children, born and raised in Israel, who lack legal status and social and civil rights. The estimated number of these children varies enormously, according to circumstances and political interests. According to figures presented by the Population Department, there were some 10,000 children by 2003.

However, these figures were refuted by a joint research effort conducted by the Tel-Aviv municipality and the Knesset Research and Information Center. They claim that the number of children has decreased to about 2000 (80% of whom are under the age of five) since the massive crackdown by police on undocumented migrant communities.⁴⁶

There is a growing body of research in Israel on the political, economic, social, and legal aspects of the labor migration phenomenon,⁴⁷ intra-state and municipal dynamics of policymaking,⁴⁸ as well as studies of the factors that enhance or inhibit the formation of migrant worker communities in Israel.⁴⁹ Yet, little academic research has been conducted to date on the second generation of migrant workers. In a recent study, Kfir probed how the dynamics of governmental and non-governmental policymaking in Israel have affected the socio-economic positioning of the children of migrant workers. She found that the presence of families and children among undocumented migrants has had a major influence on public policies related to this population. In turn, this has led to policies that enable them to realize some of their rights, including gaining access to the domains of education, health, and even citizenship.⁵⁰

The government's decision of 26 June 2005 to grant permanent residency and later citizenship to children of labor migrants aged ten and over who were born in Israel, speak Hebrew, and are currently studying or have completed an Israeli education confirms this finding. Furthermore, these children's parents and younger siblings will be granted a yearly renewable status as temporary residents, which will entitle them to full social rights. Once enlisted in the Israeli army, they and their siblings will become Israeli citizens and their parents will be accorded permanent residency.⁵¹ According to data published by Israel's Population Authority, 460 families totaling 1,400 people have requested legal status; of these, 35 families have been approved. Children who do not meet the criteria can expect that they and their families will be deported, though, to date, the government has refrained from carrying out proactive deportation of children.⁵²

Notwithstanding the strict immigration policies applied to non-Jewish immigrants, recent policies over the naturalization of labor migrants' children bear witness that new patterns of non-Jewish immigration have set in motion an unprecedented public and policy debate over citizenship and immigration in the Israeli context. On the institutional level of policymaking, the naturalization of non-ethnic immigrants highlights the fact that, juxtaposed to their political claims, national governments must confront complex issues and implement policies that often involve contradictions. Thus, in spite of its proclaimed non-immigration policy for non-Jews, the

Israeli government has developed policies and institutional arrangements that render “manageable” and “sustainable” the contradiction between neo-liberal labor market policies and ethnic exclusivity.

On the analytical level, the naturalization of non-ethnic immigrants has produced a unique schism between nationality and citizenship in a predominantly ethno-national migration regime. From a research perspective, this schism points to the need to develop, on one hand, more subtle understandings of “membership” as embedded in particular social and political contexts; and, on the other hand, an understanding of trends that blur the line between the legal jurisdiction of particular nation states and globalized migration systems.⁵³

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

There is an enduring, widespread belief in Israeli society, as well as among Israeli sociologists, that Jewish immigrants’ return to their historic homeland is a unique phenomenon. However, in the 1990s, the notion of uniqueness with regard to immigration came to be considered less and less appropriate. In a critical appraisal of the state of the art in Israeli migration studies, Shuval and Leshem concluded, “Israel is becoming more and more like other societies in which there is a large-scale immigration.”⁵⁴ As such, Israeli society shares the same attributes that typify other countries that have admitted large numbers of immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, migrant workers, and persons seeking family unification.

This article affirms this critical view by demonstrating that the arrival and inclusion of new immigrant groups have contributed to a further transformation of Israel into a *de facto* “normal” immigration state as opposed to an exclusively Jewish immigration state. Hence, new stratification criteria that have emerged with recent waves of immigration are likely to become an intrinsic part of social processes that will impinge upon the second generation’s socio-economic mobility and cultural incorporation. Accordingly, we propose a new research agenda that takes into consideration such variables as nationality, religion, race, and citizenship, while examining the new second generation’s integration process.

First and foremost, despite the initial differences between FSU immigrant youngsters and their Ethiopian counterparts, the two immigrant groups share significant similarities that are likely to influence their patterns of social and cultural inclusion. For example, whereas prior immigrants from Islamic countries and Eastern Europe barely remained in contact

with their compatriots in their countries of origin, the new second generation may well retain close ties with their homeland and with co-ethnics worldwide.⁵⁵ In doing so, they will become part of wider transnational communities that offer alternative sources of identification unavailable in Israel during the melting pot years.⁵⁶

Remennick's study on transnational patterns among first generation immigrants from the FSU in Israel showed that the issue of transnationality is relevant not only to a discussion of immigrants' identity construction, but also in regard to their social and economic mobility. She found that immigrants especially active in transnational exchange with their co-ethnics in Russia, the US, Germany, and other countries had better command of both the English and Hebrew languages and earned a higher income than did their less "transnational" compatriots.⁵⁷

Even though Remennick's study does not enable us to present a conclusion regarding the causal relation between transnationalism and immigrants' integration, it could be argued that transnational networks provide their members with substantial social capital that could be further utilized in advancing occupational or social integration. This noted, FSU immigrant youth maybe more successful in translating their transnational leanings into economic or occupational opportunities than the second generation of Ethiopians, since their membership in the Russian-speaking transnational Diaspora is characterized by continuous community building efforts. In contrast, Ethiopian youth's proclaimed belonging to the black Diaspora has more of a symbolic nature and therefore is less likely to provide them with realizable social capital.

Numerous studies also found that both Ethiopian and FSU immigrant youth experience significant difficulties in the Israeli educational system. This is reflected in higher dropout rates and lower achievement rates of matriculation certificates, compared with native-born Israelis. In the case of immigrants from the FSU, this process is resulting in significant inter-generational educational downgrading, since they are less educated than their parents are.⁵⁸ Furthermore, black Jews and the non-Jewish *Olim* can hardly identify with cultural symbols central to the Israeli educational program that neglects the cultural heritage of both immigrant groups.

Despite these similarities, we can postulate that immigrants from the FSU are more likely to succeed in closing these educational gaps than their Ethiopian immigrant counterparts due to the profound difference in cultural capital transported from their countries of origin. Partial support for this claim can be found in a network of supplementary schools established by the immigrant teachers from the FSU. The most well-known network is

Mofet (literally, be a model of excellence), where more than 90% of students succeed in earning a matriculation certificate.⁵⁹ Thus, FSU immigrants can draw upon a very strong immigrant community in demographic, political, and cultural terms⁶⁰ including the independent network of alternative education.

In contrast, immigrants from Ethiopia and the labor migrants are dependent on host society institutions and resources. Resnik's study is insightful in this regard as it documented how a unique multicultural school located in Tel-Aviv succeeded in providing children of migrant workers with a variety of important professional and cultural resources that may assist them in their future lives, irrespective of whether their parents return to their home country, stay in Israel, or immigrate to a third country. On the other hand, as Resnik poignantly noted, such an educational program that reinforces these children's transnational identity can also be seen as an attempt by the Israeli establishment to prepare a mobile manpower of the future, well-trained to serve the needs of global capitalism.⁶¹

Alongside several educational disadvantages, research to date suggests that non-Jewish *Olim* and black Jews are subjected to various mechanisms of discrimination and stigmatization stemming from different religious affiliation or skin color. Such forced exclusion leads, it seems, to the higher rates of illegal activity covered extensively by the Israeli media. This, in turn, reinforces young immigrants' feelings of marginality and alienation. One might argue that immigrant youth's involvement in delinquency is a temporary phenomenon that will diminish in parallel with improvement in their families' economic situation. However, the case of the second generation of non-Jews and black Jews does not suggest that we can accept such an optimistic prediction, since they will be marginalized by the host society as long as religion and race remain central criteria for inclusion in Israel. This situation poses significant challenges for Israeli state institutions—such as adopting a more flexible definition of Jewishness, affirmative actions, and struggle against ethnic and racial stereotypes in media—so these immigrants can attain full incorporation into the majority.

In this regard, the growing presence of immigrants who choose to affiliate themselves with Christianity inevitably raises the issue of religious pluralism that is located at the center of contemporary academic discourse on second generation immigrants' religiosity.⁶² Here, Israeli social scientists lag far behind their counterparts in the US and Europe. Much more research needs to be advanced in investigation of immigrant children's religious life as well as on the limits placed on implementation of religious pluralism in the Israeli, predominantly Jewish, context. Likewise,

future studies on these youngsters' social and occupational integration will show whether their path to inclusion will be influenced by discriminatory mechanisms related to their religious affiliation.

Finally, public debates on migration and citizenship are particularly acute with regard to labor migrants who, against all odds, have settled in Israel, established families, and formed vibrant communities in South Tel-Aviv (n.b., where the proportion of labor migrants nears 20% of the area's population). Yet, while the impact of citizenship as a key mechanism influencing immigrants' incorporation has become a central concern in academic research and public discourse in Europe and elsewhere,⁶³ it has elicited scarce attention by Israeli researchers. As a result, Israeli academics have yet to investigate such key questions as: to what extent have new definitions of membership incorporated the new category of "minorities" who are neither Jewish nor Arab; what identification processes are taking place among the second generation of migrant workers; and what challenges do the first and the second generation of migrant workers pose to the ethno-national regime in Israel.

NOTES

1. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, Press Communication 139/2007, www.cbs.gov.il/reader/newodaot/hodaa_template.html?hodaa=200720139

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11. *Halacha* is the code of rabbinic law that provides precise guidelines for the Jewish way of life, and is also accepted by the State of Israel in determining civic status. Hence, every individual, whether observant or not, is classified along religious lines. *Halacha* applies a matrilineal definition of who is a Jew, and so the FSU immigrants who were born of inter-ethnic marriages in which only the father was Jewish are not recognized as Jews in Israel. As a result, a new immigrant category has been created "Entitled to immigration according to the Law of Return", which is applied to non-Jewish immigrants who nevertheless are entitled to Israeli citizenship.

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