



## Immigration and the interplay among citizenship, identity and career: The case of Ethiopian immigration to Israel

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### ABSTRACT

Migration is a common phenomenon of the globalization era. In this article we explore the interplay of three foundational concepts in the migration experiences of Ethiopian Jewish immigrants in Israel: citizenship, identity and career. Through our analysis we examine the multiple layers of being an immigrant citizen. Following immigration, as reflected in empirical studies with members of this community, we have observed tensions between inclusion and exclusion, equality and difference, work and family as well as gender role transformation, family restructuring, and generational differences. These issues are discussed in the context of the development of active citizenship and career. Career development is found to be a core process in the enactment of citizenship, the promotion of a sense of belonging and deeply related to identity formation. Identity as an overarching perspective, with its personal and collective meanings, plays an important role at the intersection between citizenship and career.

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Immigration is a prevalent phenomenon in contemporary Western so-called 'host' societies. Immigrants strive to be part of their new country, while at the same time they tend to maintain cultural links amongst their community. Often, the motive behind migration is essentially economic, but for people to move from one society to another, to make the transition to a different nation-state, other reasons may be involved. Our aim in this paper is to discuss the interplay among citizenship, identity and career in the context of immigration. Our emphasis in this discussion is on immigration not only as crossing national boundaries but also bridging cultures. Questions to be addressed include: whether access to citizenship is a sufficient condition for the enactment of a meaningful career and how quality (in the citizenship sense, as will be explained later) follows the access to citizenship as far as employment and work are concerned. The concept of identity is an overarching concept which connects citizenship with its various meanings and career in its broadest sense (i.e. with the variety of life roles included; e. g. Super, 1990). At the same time, identity adds another important perspective to the understanding of this junction. Hence, another question addressed in the article is about the role played by identity and its effect on identity formation when examined in the intersection between citizenship and career.

Close to these foundational concepts is the family, a likely arena of change following migration, and linked with the interplay among citizenship, identity and career. A brief examination of this arena will focus on transformations of family structure and generational dynamics as well as gender role changes and the family–work interface.

This discussion evolves around the case of Ethiopian Jewish immigrants to Israel. Their case is no doubt a unique one, yet it can serve to illuminate questions, guide debate and mirror themes and issues relevant to other immigration cases in western societies. Our discussion of Ethiopian Immigration to Israel comprises findings from a variety of studies carried out by the authors, published in the professional literature or presented in professional meetings, as well as evidence from other sources.

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## Citizenship: a conceptual map

Being accepted as a member of a nation-state is marked by citizenship (cf. Benhabib, 2004; Marshall, 1950). Contemporarily, following widespread immigration the composition of nation-states has changed and become much more diverse. Many Western polities are a mosaic of ethnic, racial, religious and cultural heterogeneity (Barbalet, 2007). Consequently, along with other manifestations of globalization, the study of citizenship emerges as a growing interdisciplinary area of scholarship within the social sciences and humanities, with intellectual as well as practical impacts (Isin & Turner, 2002). To lay the groundwork for our discussion, we briefly introduce some of the basic concepts and issues in the citizenship scholarship literature. Marshall (1950) seminal work precedes the wave of immigration in the later part of the 20th century and interestingly, as Yuval-Davis (1999, 2006) points out, his classical definition of citizenship as being ‘full membership of the community, with all its rights and responsibilities’, doesn’t mention the nation-state directly. Marshall distinguishes three qualities of rights and duties following the attainment of formal membership in a national state: i.e. civil, political and social citizenship. Not surprisingly, considerations of other rights have been suggested more recently, for example: ethnic, gender and ‘green’ or ‘ecological’ citizenship rights (Barbalet, 2007; cf. Isin & Turner, 2002; Janoski, 1998).

Scholars characterize types of citizenship in terms of fundamental emphases. Barbalet (2007) follows the distinction between *access* and *quality*. *Access* refers to the difference in citizenship status, to the rules of access defined by national states that separate citizens from non-citizens. For instance, two legal alternatives could be defined as citizenship by descent (*jus sanguinis*) or citizenship by birthplace (*jus soli*). Isin and Turner (2002) term this axis *extent*, with an emphasis on norms and rules of inclusion and exclusion at the center of this dimension.

*Quality* refers to what is provided by citizenship, the rights and duties comprised by citizenship. This axis of *content* of citizenship, addresses the issue of allocation of benefits and burdens of membership. A third axis refers to *depth* – thickness or thinness – of citizenship. This dimension adds the role of members’ ‘thickness’ of identities and how they should be accounted for and accommodated. Being a citizen is a multi-layered concept (Yuval-Davis, 1999) with variety of meanings reflected in parallel in facets of identity (as will be elaborated later).

Since citizenship is determined contemporarily by the nation-state, the extent (definition of boundaries of membership), content (formal and informal domains of participation as reflected by rights and obligations) and depth (e.g. ‘thickness’ of communal, ethnic, cultural identities, and their relationship with the process of acculturation) are related to historical trajectories of the specific political community (i.e. the national state) (Isin & Turner, 2002). Citizenship rights are not synonymous with human rights. The two types of rights have somewhat different roots and derive from completely different logics (Brysk & Shafir, 2004; Pinson, Arnot, & Candappa, 2010; Winston, 2007). Human rights are universal. They are grounded in the person by virtue of being human and mean to protect individuals against the arbitrary behavior of political bodies like the government (Shafir, 2004). Citizenship rights (and duties) mean to create a sense of community, belonging and participation in a nation-state (with the liberal emphasis on individual rights). Citizenship rights include the right to work as an inherent aspect of participation in the community (e.g., Marshall, 1950), and at the same time the right to work is regarded as a fundamental human right (Winston, 2007).

Janoski and Gran (2002) point out that there are at least four basic approaches to citizenship. A detailed review of their major assumptions and principles is beyond the scope of this article, but to briefly summarize, the liberal approach (which is divided into several theories with more or less significant nuances) is historically a dominant approach, especially in Anglo-Saxon democracies, with a strong emphasis on the individual and freedom from the state and social interference. The other three are consensual (e.g. communitarianism), participatory (e.g. neo-republicanism) and radical-pluralist (e.g. multiculturalism) (Janoski & Gran, 2002).

Each one of these approaches, and their theoretical derivatives and branches, differs somewhat in its emphases on citizenship rights and obligations. However in general, social, participation and economic citizenship rights include the rights to education and employment. For example, in Marshall’s account, the basic civil right is the right to work. A more detailed account may include the opportunity to take part in education from pre-primary education to higher education, vocational training, educational and vocational counseling, labor market information, job placement, and job security. At the same time, an obligation (in relation to work) may include not only sharing income by paying taxes, but also social involvement and contribution to society through work and ‘active citizenship’. This latter requirement as part of a ‘duties discourse’ is directed at welfare recipients who are required to engage in paid work to support their families as a prime obligation (Lister, 1997). Lister (1997) raises two main questions that we will return to later: (a) “whether this obligation should apply to those caring for children, and particular lone parents” and suspects that this policy is “gendered in nature” (p. 6); and (b) what the appropriate balance is between rights and responsibilities and “how that balance reflects gender and other power relations...when considering the obligation to take paid work” (p. 6).

The post-World War II period in which Marshall began to theorize citizenship was an era of full employment and a large and growing workforce. Fiscally, this workforce could support social citizenship rights. However later changes in structural economics and demographics led to a shortage of resources required for its maintenance. Indeed, Lister (2008) observes that social rights available to immigrants have been eroded in many European countries. Moreover, while Marshall’s world was one of full employment, it was also inhabited by a normative family comprised by “a male as breadwinner, a dependent female spouse and children” (Barbalet, 2007, p. 499). Today, the earnings of a sole breadwinner are often insufficient for the maintenance of a traditional family, and this coincides with a massive increase of women with dependent children in the workforce. In Barbalet’s words: “The labor force significance of economically independent females means that the citizen is now undeniably sexed. Sexually distinct perspectives on citizenship rights are now unavoidable.” (2007, p. 499).

In addition to the changes elaborated by Barbalet (2007) is the wave of immigration to industrial countries. Countries open their gates to immigrants for a variety of reasons. High on the list is their own economic needs, and by letting immigrants in they also respond to immigrants' economic needs. The motivation for immigration may also be varied and may include political upheaval and family reunification, in addition to economic needs.

In our current era of globalization a major challenge for many host countries is the adjustment and integration into a society of immigrants who arrive from less affluent countries to more affluent ones, from countries which are predominantly rural and industrial to those marked by post-industrial and information age characteristics. Lifestyles, norms and culture are carried with immigrants when they make such geographical and societal transitions. An example of such a transition is made by the community of Ethiopian immigrants to Israel.

### **Immigration: the case of Ethiopian Jews in Israel**

Immigration to Israel of the *Beta Israel* community in Ethiopia is based on the belief of common historical roots. According to their tradition they are descendants of ancient Jews who migrated to Africa and struggled throughout the centuries to maintain and preserve their identity. Most of them lived in rural areas in three different regions in Ethiopia: Gondar, Wallkayte and Tigray. Although there are some cultural differences within this community, they shared the dream to go back to 'Golden Jerusalem', and the story of aspiration to return to the 'holy land' served as a holding narrative for the Beta Israel community. Hence, their immigration to Israel already stems from a sense of collective identity within their community in Ethiopia and as a shared identity and historical lineage with the people of the 'host' country. The migration of the major early waves of Ethiopian immigrants (in 1979–1983 and the mid-1980s) involved clandestine operations; a long and harsh trek through desolate and dangerous desert with thousands of people losing their lives, and sometimes years of hiding in camps in Sudan, before being airlifted to Israel (Ben-Ezer, 1992; Shabtay, 1995; Yilma, 1996). The Ethiopian community in Israel is composed of more than 116,000 members, while about 38,700 of them were born in Israel (CBS, 2010).

In this unusual case of immigration, the 'host' state is actively involved in bringing the immigrants in and the immigrants receive citizenship and state support upon their arrival. Citizenship is defined by descent (*jus sanguinis*) and the 'law of return' (a citizenship law that was passed by the Israeli parliament in 1950, a few years after the Holocaust and following the establishment of the State of Israel).

However, despite having citizenship rights, certain state support and aspects of shared collective identity in place, the complexities of immigration are conspicuous. Issues related to meaning of work, education, family, gender roles and work–family interface will be examined through the combined prism of vocational psychology, citizenship and identity formation.

### **Features of Ethiopian Jews before immigration**

Most Ethiopian Jews resided in remote villages and commonly lived on agriculture, working in the fields, raising cattle, sheep and goats. Another typical occupation of male Jews in Ethiopia was blacksmithing, while pottery was more of a female artisan trade. The whole family used to be involved in seasonal agricultural labor, though women were in charge of all domestic work. However, in general, boundaries between work, family and other spheres of life were not distinct.

In Ethiopia the extended family used to be the basic unit of affiliation around which life evolves. Life was highly structured. Adults were at the center, and respect for parents was a central value, as indeed the code of respect for authority in general (Shabtay, 1995). In this hierarchical society, the male was the head of the family, and older people were the authority in the extended family.

Developmental progress with its concomitant expectations was also clear and structured. Children took part in the family workload from an early age and contributed to family maintenance. At least until the 1980s schooling in the rural areas was very sporadic, if it existed at all. Adolescence as we know it in Western society was nonexistent and children moved to adult-like roles early. Young females could typically get married shortly after puberty, and males in their late teens–early twenties (Flum, 1998).

All that changed with the dramatic transition from rural-African life to an urban lifestyle in a fast-developing society, a transition from a traditional culture to a predominantly Western culture. In many ways their life couldn't have been more different following immigration. We have now a perspective on this immigration that spans three decades since the early waves. Although there has been a certain continuity of migration from Ethiopia during these years, our discussion will be guided by a focus on generational differences in issues related to education, work and employment, as well as work–family interface. In addition, gender differences and identity formation will be discussed and lead to the closing section.

### **After immigration: work, employment and education**

The older generation who made the transition found themselves in an entirely different work environment. Indeed, the meaning of work had to be reconstructed. In addition to language difficulties and their encounter with basic communication problems, their specific work or occupational skills acquired in Ethiopia were not transferable, and the lack of education left them with little to build on. They resided in urban neighborhoods. Work was organized and structured differently, and the relative sense of independence was lost. Hence, a large percentage (approximately 70%) of immigrants of this generation was unemployed. Their citizenship rights entitled them to receive unemployment and welfare benefits which were a significant source of support, but their participation rights were not fulfilled. Access to citizenship and the right to be economically supported is an important step

forward towards survival in the new country, however the majority is still unable to act as citizens and participate socially in a fuller sense.

The unemployed parent is likely to serve as either a reference point or a model for his or her offspring. As a result, the negative consequences of unemployment are likely to affect the next generation as well (Cinamon, 2001). The construction of the meaning of work evolves around the need to be employed and support the family. Typically, parents advocate in very general terms the need for education, “to work hard” in order “to get a good job”, a message that may sound unreal or contradictory to the child’s experience when parents are out of work (Orpani-Fadida, 2010). Parents of the older generation who made the transition from the Ethiopian culture are, by and large, at a loss when educational options and considerations, and work related values, are concerned. They can offer very limited guidance to their children. In addition, the parents who did work tended to have unskilled jobs and their information about the world of work is restricted to their immediate experience. Not unlike similar situations elsewhere, they communicated to their children this constrained map of the world of work (Whiston & Keller, 2004).

Those who arrived as children or were born in Israel have been through the Israeli educational system and hence are better equipped, certainly as far as basic skills are concerned. Recent statistics reflect the decrease in rates of unemployment in the Ethiopian community. Whereas in 2002 the percentage of unemployed was 25%, in 2005 it decreased to 18.2%. This is still significantly higher than the average in the country (8.6%), but the trend is encouraging. What is not reflected in the statistics is the difficulty of young Ethiopian immigrants in negotiating occupational choice. Biased access to information and lack of knowledge leaves them with a relatively narrow and uncertain view of the occupational map (Flum, 2000).

In general, there is an increase in educational level among Ethiopian immigrants. While only 11% graduated from high school in 1995, 20% did so in 2004. In addition, there is also an increase in the proportion of students from Ethiopian families who graduated from high school with the matriculation certification (36% in 2008, compared with 30% ten years earlier). However, despite this increase, their graduation rate is still significantly lower than other Israeli Jews (55% in 2008 and 52% in 1998) (The Israeli Association for Ethiopian Jewry, 2007a). A report published in 2005 (Gindin, 2005) indicates that approximately 3000 Ethiopian immigrants earned a Bachelor degree. The distribution of areas of study reflects the dominance of social sciences at 48%. Only 6% study engineering. A central motivation of young Ethiopians in choosing occupations like education, social work and other helping professions is their wish to be effective in caring for their community. This is an example of immigrants who would not just wish to be citizens but to *act* as citizens. Their ‘active citizenship’ mirrors their commitment to the welfare of their community and their own agency (cf. Lister, 1997). At the same time, the concentration of young Ethiopian immigrants in a narrow range of occupations emulates the exclusionary aspect of their community.

This is also another example of the complexity of the interplay among citizenship, career and identity, which directly refers to the main questions addressed in this article. Although their status as citizens is not disputed, in practice there is informal tension around the dimension of their inclusion–exclusion. This tension is illustrated by another look at the issue just discussed. The distribution of areas of study and employment of young immigrants from Ethiopia might be constructed as an occupational interest and choice and hence be a reflection of an inclusive social process. Alternatively it or could be interpreted as a consequence of exclusion and the result of informal socially erected barriers which prevent them from being accepted in occupations or jobs that do not have direct contact with the Ethiopian community. Indeed, following this interpretation, they in turn often adopt exclusionary socially constructed views of themselves and make them their own personal construction (or, from an Eriksonian identity formation perspective they are at risk to internalize others’ inferior views of themselves), and refrain from exploration beyond these work related boundaries (cf. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2002).

The career development literature offers an alternative perspective to complement the citizenship one. Young Ethiopian immigrants’ construction of a focus on their own community could be an example of career adaptability (Savickas, 1997). Instead of struggling with jobs where they are at risk of being regarded either as inferior or equal to others, they turn into their own community where their competence and inner communal understanding is a huge advantage. At the same time, their response to exclusionary forces within society can be described in terms of their constrained ‘zone of acceptable alternatives’ (Gottfredson, 1981, 2002), their limited occupational map and the perception of occupations as inaccessible to them. Of course, this discussion should be taken in the context of the gap between the immigrant community and the host society. The larger this original gap is, the more this career–citizenship interface is likely to be observed (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1983). In the case of young Ethiopian immigrants in Israel they act as a bridge between their community and the larger society. In a recent study of female 11th grade adolescents of Ethiopian origin (Orpani-Fadida, 2010) participants report a limited future occupational horizon. Mostly relatively low skill jobs are regarded as accessible to them, and they tend to be skeptical about the advantage of higher education. On the other hand, when those who are already higher education students are studied, they voice their aspiration to break the occupational walls surrounding their community along with their strong commitment to the Ethiopian immigrant community (Mahart, 2011). By serving this function they promote the inclusionary sense of the people in their community and, at the same time, enhance their community’s antidote to exclusionary forces in society.

A facet of the tension between inclusion and exclusion is reflected in the Israeli social discourse in relation to Ethiopian immigrants. Whereas a dominant rhetoric is one of promotion of inclusion and support for this community, at the same time there is evidence of clear exclusionary sentiments and informal discrimination. Examples of inclusive activities can be found in over a dozen NGOs which focus on a variety of needs of the Ethiopian community, and legislation for a governmental program aiming to enhance the participation and integration of Ethiopian immigrants in Israeli society (resolution 188 of the Israeli parliament, 2008; <http://www.iaej.co.il/newsite/>), with an emphasis on educational and employment goals. Unfortunately, the discriminatory and exclusionary evidence related to the combination of cultural gap and racism is also mirrored in the social discourse and is reported in the media (e.g. Ynet, 2009a, 2009b).

## Work and family

Inevitably, the transition from one culture to another, especially when norms, traditions and world view are dramatically different, is a challenging and potentially threatening experience. The family is the core unit. Families are a source of emotional holding and support. When traditional norms and socially constructed values are undermined with the transition to a new society, the need for the family as an emotional safe refuge is greatest, right when old structures are undercut and some traditional constructions do not hold any more. At the same time, the extended family that used to provide an essential source of support is often dispersed. The extended family can now offer limited emotional holding and much less practical help.

One aspect of this challenge to former understandings of family life is the changing place of children in the family. In Ethiopia, children are clearly inferior to adults with obvious hierarchical norms of behavior. In Israeli society children tend to be much more at the center of the family. However, beyond this general difference in cultural norms, with immigration the role of a child in the family may take another turn. Children, who usually learn the language faster become “language brokers” (Weisskirch, 2005). These children and adolescents serve as translators and interpreters to their parents. This is an example of how often in the family context there is a partial reversal of roles as a result, at least temporarily.

Against this kind of backdrop the change in work–family interface is viewed as a major challenge with considerable implications. Whereas citizenship rights entitle Ethiopian immigrant families to get support from governmental agencies, this support can never fill the socio-emotional void that is created by their transition. As noted above, life in Ethiopia was highly structured, roles were clear, making their living was very much part of family life. Adjustment to a different construction of the meaning of work and the need to cope with the tension between work and family and its newly experienced interface, is far from easy. An important facet of these forced adjustments is the challenge of blending family and work roles within a different, new, structured relationship.

This challenge is of course not unique to Ethiopian immigrants. However, the dichotomy and clear boundaries between family and work as well as the concept of dual career earners are new ideas to most of the first generation Ethiopian immigrants. Dual worker couples are the majority in Israel (70% of couples between the ages of 25–64). For Ethiopian immigrants migration thus required a revision of lifestyle, a reconstruction of the meaning of work and family spheres and their relationship.

The change in work–family interface among Ethiopian immigrants in Israel is accompanied by a transformation in gender role responsibilities, which in turn has an impact on traditional hierarchy within the family. As already indicated, the participation rate of women in the labor market in Israel, as in other industrialized countries, is high. Ethiopian immigrants came from a country where gender role responsibilities are traditional: men work mostly in the fields away from home and are regarded as essentially the breadwinner and women are responsible for the domestic sphere. The economic needs of immigrants as well as the acceptable norms and standards of women's participation in the Israeli labor market enable the participation of Ethiopian females in work outside their homes.

Women find themselves with new opportunities in addition to new responsibilities and obligations. This affects drastically the family structure. A key to the first generation immigration situation is individuals' relative lack of education. Both male and female Ethiopian immigrants, especially in the first waves of immigration, could participate mostly in unskilled or low skilled jobs. These jobs are also often temporary ones. For men, this kind of situation is experienced as degrading. Women found themselves with more options. They could get some of the low-skilled low-paid jobs in industry, working side by side with the men, or in stereotyped feminine employment such as cleaning or a range of caring jobs. Not surprisingly, this is reflected in the trends of employment of male and female Ethiopian immigrants in Israel in the decade 1995–2005. While among women there was an increase in the rate of employment between the years 1995–2005 from 22.8% to 42%, among men there was a decrease from 63.2% to 54.6% (The Israeli Association for Ethiopian Jewry, 2007b).

Discussing the processes of globalization, Nira Yuval-Davis (1999) highlights the growing phenomenon of women who take advantage of their new opportunities and autonomous access to money economy. These changes, she adds, “are threatening to traditional male domination and the traditional family” (p. 12). It could be argued that women benefit from such changes. On the one hand they have to cope with more responsibilities and higher complexity, but on the other hand, their life is enriched. The world is much more open to them. Their opportunities in terms of education and work are growing, and can serve as a buffer to intra-family stress and pressure of social forces. At the same time, men's masculinity as constructed in traditional terms suffers a blow. Their leadership or dominant role in the family is undermined and they are more dependent on other family members. Hence, men seem to experience themselves in an unsafe place; they are under threat in the context of the family and encounter the exclusionary forces in society.

Gender differences are conspicuous in the younger generation as well. Research evidence indicates the relative vulnerability of young Ethiopian immigrant males and possible future stress in relation to work–family interface. In a study using Holland's Self-Directed Search questionnaire with 268 high school students, Flum (2000) found that in comparison with immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Israeli born adolescents, the Ethiopian male students' differentiation mean score was by far the lowest and they tended to be inconsistent. Their results showed poor familiarity with vocational interests and revealed a difficulty in discrimination among the types of interests. Unlike their male counterparts, Ethiopian female students' differentiation mean score was higher and their structure of types of vocational interests was remarkably similar to Holland's hexagon's circular ordering.

In a recent study of 210 Israeli university students, future work and family plans of young Ethiopian immigrants were investigated (Cinamon & Vardi, 2008). Ninety-six (48 females and 48 males) were of Ethiopian origin (the rest of the sample consisted of Israeli born students who were not of Ethiopian origin). Significant differences emerged in role salience. Ethiopian

immigrant students attribute higher importance to work roles compared with non-Ethiopian Israeli-born students, who attribute more importance to family roles. The relative emphasis of Ethiopian immigrants on work rather than family is surprising in light of their traditional family orientation. Indeed, it may highlight their need to underscore this domain and invest themselves in it in order to break the walls of exclusion. Interestingly, in addition, non-Ethiopian Israeli-born male students are found more committed to work role than their female counterparts, while among the Ethiopian immigrant students, females tend to be more committed to work role than Ethiopian immigrant male students. This finding can be interpreted as another indication of the shift in gender roles among (young) Ethiopian immigrants in Israel. Non-Ethiopian Israeli female students tend to anticipate lower levels of enrichment between work and family (compared with their male counterparts). Among the Ethiopian immigrant participants, the results are in the opposite direction. Ethiopian immigrant men plan to spend fewer hours a day involved in home tasks ( $M = 3.1$ ;  $SD = 0.5$ ) in comparison with the women participants ( $M = 4.0$ ;  $SD = 0.4$  and  $M = 6.4$ ;  $SD = 0.7$  respectively). Indications of high commitment to the work roles and also plans to spend relatively many hours with the kids at home suggest lower understanding of the challenging task of role blending as well as low understanding of the labor market. The Ethiopian students, especially young women, can be defined as at risk in terms of work–family interface.

To summarize this section, by examining the post-migration family arena more layers of the interplay between citizenship, career and identity are exposed in their complexity. What is evident among Ethiopian immigrant families in Israel are: some reversal of roles within the family; weakening of extended family support; tension between old traditions, norms, values and structures and those in the new society; transformation in gender roles, along with the experience of a different world of work with its opportunities and barriers. In the second generation, changes in educational foundation and career prospects are apparent, but a relative deficiency in career related literacy can also be observed.

In the next section the process of identity formation following immigration will be highlighted and provide another prism for the examination of the intersection between citizenship, identity and career.

### Immigration and identity formation

Two markers inherent to immigration, discontinuity and difference, affect identity formation. Both discontinuity and difference are multi-layered and are experienced by individuals personally and as a collective. They are also simultaneously observed by others outside the immigrant group, and may affect the essence of membership and belonging from within the group and by the larger society. At the same time, from a different perspective the tension between inclusion and exclusion as it is being experienced within the group and in the surrounding society interacts with the process of identity formation. Being newcomers into society, who don't share the immediate history, who are handicapped in their communication capabilities, and are guided by a different culture is a reflection of discontinuity and difference. It becomes the essence of otherness experienced by members of the 'host' society and a source of exclusionary sentiments. It also reflects leaving the past behind and uprooting, as well as a sense of otherness on the level of the individual and the group of immigrants as a collective. For the collective it becomes, inwardly, a source of inclusionary feelings.

#### *Discontinuity*

However, Erikson's emphasis on identity as it "contains the complementarity of past and future both in the individual and in society" is important here (1968, p. 310). People tend to make sense of the past by assigning meaning to earlier experiences, and this is done by individuals as well as the cultural group. These meanings shape their views of the future. Similarly, the view of the self at present and as it is projected into the future impacts upon the meanings drawn from the past. In his emphasis on the temporal dimension in the identity formation process Erikson describes the reciprocity between the retrospective and the prospective. For immigrants who experience discontinuity this could turn into a problematic task, especially when the cultural gap between the culture of origin and the prevailing one at the country of destination is wide. This is certainly true for Ethiopian immigrants to Israel, as was depicted earlier.

Young people, in adolescence and emerging adulthood, wrestle with identity formation more acutely than people in other stages of life. In a study of young Ethiopian immigrants to Israel carried out in the late 1990s (Flum, 1998) the focus was on high achievers, those who were among the very first Ethiopian immigrants to reach a university level of education. All the participants ( $N = 12$ ) in this study eventually graduated, a few reached advanced degrees and most work in positions that fulfill their sense of communal mission that was expressed so clearly in their projection of their personal future at the time of the study. These participants had been in their late-childhood to mid-adolescence at the time of immigration.

It was found that a key element of these individuals' identity formation is their ability to link past experience in one cultural context with current perception of themselves and future orientation in a different cultural context. They transform while resorting to early experiences, bringing them up to date and making them relevant to their current experiences and developmental challenges. They turn past experiences in an utterly different cultural context into constructive building blocks in the formation of their identity by linking them to their future projection of their selves. In this manner, the early self-system that consists of an integration of culture and personal experiences is transformed following transition, rather than being denied.

Hence, these young immigrants from Ethiopia were able to create some sense of continuity by using the transformed psychological resources and experiences from Ethiopia as developmental building blocks and construct a bridge over their transition. They oriented themselves towards the future by establishing continuity with their past. They worked towards their

goals and their projected future self as part of their developmental project that included the creation of a sense of continuity as a backbone of their identity formation, a process in which they accommodated both pre- and post-transition cultures.

To create a sense of continuity and link between the self in the culture of origin and the self in the new culture is possible for those who can have direct access to their own memories before the transition. However, it could become a complicated task for young people who grew up in an immigrant family. They don't have the same direct access to pre-immigration personal memories, their culture of origin is likely to be predominant at home, but different than the one prevailing in society beyond their cultural community. They experience discontinuity with either alienation from the past or with an indirect experience of their roots, while horizontally they travel between the cultures on a daily basis negotiating continuity and sameness along with their difference.

In another study (Flum, 2008) the participants were relatively high achieving high school students. They were either infants at the time of migration or were born after their parents immigrated to Israel, growing up in very different developmental circumstances in comparison with the participants in the previous study. They are unable to relate much to actual personal experience prior to making the transition. If at all, it is a remote, second-hand memory. Yet, life in Ethiopia as well as their families' dramatic migration is part and parcel of their family and communal history.

The question of how they negotiate the past, link it with current experiences and whether they are able to construct a meaningful future, is central to their identity development process. Unlike participants in the earlier study who experienced the Ethiopian culture directly and were able to find a way to accommodate both discourses in a personal way, young adolescents in the more recent study experience the Ethiopian culture in a post-transition form. Identity confusion is a dominant phenomenon among them, with those who appear to show identity diffusion (more so boys) and others who are actively searching for a way out of the confusion through identity exploration (with higher representation of girls). The diffused are uninterested in identity issues and relate to themselves in occupational terms based on a momentary influence or impression, with a narrow view of the world of work, characterized by immediateness and appearance. Those who are engaged in some kind of identity exploration are usually trying to connect with the past in various ways, create some kind of continuity. They may look for models to identify with and may explore a broader occupational space, but they are still quite limited with what is available to them in terms of models and guidance.

### *Difference*

Belonging to Beta Israel, the unique identity of the Jewish community in Ethiopia, was originally behind the Ethiopian immigrants' exodus to Israel. In Israel they are granted an access to citizenship, a formal belonging to a nation-state where their membership is ensured. They are guaranteed equal rights and duties along with a new national identity. However, being a citizen is apparently multi-layered too, as Yuval-Davis (1999) proposes. Citizenships are gendered, racialized, and differentiated ethnically. The collective identity of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel is signified by their skin color and the common culture and history. Hence, this constitutive identity has relatively clear boundaries which mark the difference within the formal equality (cf. Yuval-Davis). The nature of participation of the membership is "thoroughly affected" by the social and economic positionings of the people who are identified with the group, as well as sub-groups within this group identity (cf. Yuval-Davis, 1999, p. 132). For young immigrants from Ethiopia (first and second generation), an enhancement of a sense of belonging and participation is facilitated by their career development. Career development becomes the major path taken to act upon their citizenship. There are three main, roughly depicted, constituents, included in their career development: education, military service, and participation in the world of work. For individuals these components are keys to progress and change of position of themselves as individuals. Since they are so clearly identified by their group identity, peoples' change of position is likely to impact in the long run the position of their collective identity as well. It is a long process, but it is one which could be detected.

A clear example in the Israeli context is the military service as an element of career development. It is also a clear instance of an enactment of citizenship. The military is regarded as a social sphere that facilitates close connection and deep collaboration among young people from a variety of communities and social sectors, and is experienced as a social melting pot (Lieblich, 1989). Following the immigration from Ethiopia the military authorities devised a policy aimed at making a contribution to the integration of Ethiopian young immigrants into Israeli society. This policy is comprised of three emphases: to make young Ethiopian immigrants part of the Israeli collective, to create opportunities for mobility within the military and as a basis for career advancement after their military service, and to prevent marginality as a result of their relative deficit in some areas due to migration (Shabtay, 1999). This institutionalized effort meant to promote their sense of belongingness as an anchor of identity formation, and indeed the military service is reputed to be relatively successful in its contribution to the integration of young Ethiopian immigrants into Israeli society (Shabtay, 1999).

In sum, career is central to identity formation and can promote a change in the way identity components are assembled into a whole in the process of identity formation. By acting on their citizenship status (i.e. by the quality of their participation in the world of work) immigrants can facilitate a change in their own definition of who they are, confirmed by society. Hence, enhancing their sense of belongingness along with the amelioration of the tension between equality and difference intersects with the tension between exclusion and inclusion.

### **Conclusion**

One of the main challenges in the era of globalization is migration. Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul (2008) cite the United Nations (UN Popul. Div., 2006) estimate from 2005 claiming that 191 million people around the globe lived then outside their

country of birth. This figure has been on the rise in the last few decades, and indeed this figure has doubled in 30 years. In Bloemraad et al.'s (2008) observation notions of citizenship (which encompass issues of legal status, rights, participation, and belonging) within nation-states are consequently tested.

In this article our focus has been on immigration and the interplay among citizenship, identity and career through a discussion of the experiences of Ethiopian Jewish immigrants to Israel. We have highlighted the importance of active participation in society, employment and unemployment, the interface between work and family, gender role differences, generational change, career development and identity formation issues. The case of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel allows us to examine citizenship as a multi-layered concept (Yuval-Davis, 1999) and to show some of the concomitant complexities of citizenship in general and in relation to career development specifically (cf. Euwals, Dagevos, Gijsberts, & Roodenburg, 2010). However one source of complexity, the mechanisms of selection of citizenship by immigrants and the intricacies of selection by the receiving country is avoided (see Euwals et al., 2010).

Despite the uniqueness of the case of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel, they mirror certain trends that exist in other countries reviewed in the literature. Although the relationship between citizenship, education and labor market position differs among these countries, ethnic minorities tend, for instance, to appear as suffering penalties in comparison with their majority population peers, even when they have equivalent education. And this is evident in studies of second generation immigrants in Western European countries (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008).

Education is an important foundation, of course. However it has to include social and cultural understanding with an emphasis on 'career literacy'. Once work is experienced not only as an immediate survival issue, but also as a developmental prospect and as active participation in society, one's sense of embeddedness is likely to be enhanced. Second generation career aspirations may focus on the promotion of the well-being of their immigrant community and young people may be able to transcend the discontinuity inherently experienced within this community. Nevertheless, the analysis in this article indicates that in order to engender equality and overcome difference and exclusion, the young generation has to reconstruct the 'zone of acceptable alternatives' (Gottfredson, 1981, 2002) and push its boundaries. A change in the spectrum of occupational aspirations, a better understanding of job-self compatibility, of the world of work and the blending of life roles is related to a parallel action. Action taken by institutionalized social forces (e.g. the educational system, the military, and the world of work) may impact on this type of movement towards integration, along with the enactment by the young individuals in the immigrant community.

Here we focus on the intersection of citizenship in a deep sense, career as the center of action and an overarching integrative concept of identity. Young people of immigrant families should be given the space and encouragement to connect with their communities' past and cultural inheritance as part of their identity formation, as well to explore their current options and future alternatives using information and social signifiers relevant to the larger society of residence. By and large, immigrants wish to root themselves, and be citizens who can act as citizens.

An examination of the phenomenon of immigration through the conceptual lens of the relationship among citizenship, identity and career demonstrates the complexity of the phenomenon, and the importance of taking an interdisciplinary approach. Guided by the questions articulated at the outset, and following the analysis of the case of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel, it can be concluded that access to citizenship is not the sole key to integration into society and to a sense of belongingness in the receiving society. Citizenship is multi-layered and a key to integration has to go beyond access. Active participation in society through work and the development of career serves as a scaffold for social integration and an anchor of belongingness for the re-constructed identity.

We believe that many of the phenomena represented here in the case of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel are relevant more widely and hope that further research will examine the interplay of citizenship, career and identity in other immigrant communities.

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