Migration Letters

Volume: 20, No: 7, pp. 1167-1184

ISSN: 1741-8984 (Print) ISSN: 1741-8992 (Online)
www.migrationletters.com

Transnational Immigrants Encounter the Workplace: North American Jewish Migrants in Israel Who Work in Fundraising

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Abstract

This paper examines how migrants' identities and experiences are shaped by their workplaces and fields of activity and vice versa: the perceived impact they exert on workplaces and fields of activity in their host country. Focusing on transnational migration theory and how it manifests in the case of North American immigrants in Israel, I examine these migrants' involvement in Israeli fundraising and philanthropy. The paper finds that North American Jews working in fundraising feel that their position has an influence upon their workplaces and, on a broader scale, Israeli society; that the transnational position helps them adapt to life in Israel; and that their transnational identity strengthens their Israeli identity.

Keywords: *Immigrants, Fundraising, workplace.*

Introduction

This study explores how transnational migrants' experiences are shaped by their workplace, occupation, and fields of activity, as well as their perceived impact on workplaces, occupations, and fields of activity in the host country. Focusing on North American (from the United States and Canada) migrants in Israel, I examine the effect of transnational migrants on their host country by investigating their perceived impact on their local workplaces, occupations, and other fields of activity. Specifically, this study addresses the processes experienced by North American Jewish migrants working in philanthropy, fundraising, and resource development in Israel, as well as their perceived influence on the non-profit field in Israel and in their specific workplaces.

In so doing, I probe two key aspects of the immigrant experience. The first is identity, which develops in and is connected to a person's nation and community. Transnational-migrant identity is viewed as an integral aspect of the field of transnational migration (Glick Schiller, 2018b; Vertovec, 2001). In contrast to the expectation that migrants will adopt the identity of their new country over their original one (Vertovec, 2001), in the past few decades, scholars have shown that migrants develop dual or even multiple identities (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, 1994; Kivisto, 2001; Vertovec, 2009). These identities can be an ethnic identity (Lev Ari, 2012; 2013), Religious identity (Lev Ari, 2022), national identity (Marschelke, 2021) or a compilation of ethnic, religious and national (Lev Ari, 2023). I investigate the variegated transnational identities that migrants form, focusing on how the formation of identity is shaped by workplaces and fields of activity.

Another component of transnational migration under investigation herein is adaptation or assimilation—issues that have been mentioned as lacunae in the theory of transnational migration (Brocket, 2020; Kivisto, 2001). Addressing these lacunae could provide a more holistic picture of the connection between migrants and their host and origin societies. I

use Berry's (1997) theory of acculturation to classify migrants' activities and experiences in a new society. Indeed, Berry examined how migrants adapt to a new culture, demonstrating that adaptation depends on the value they accord to their connection with the host culture and the significance they attribute to preserving their own cultural identity and characteristics, with four possible outcomes: integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization. Applying this framework facilitates a more complete picture of how transnational migrants relate to both their country of origin and their host county as well as enabling a critical assessment of how applicable this theory is to the case of transnational migration.

For several reasons, fundraising is a useful case for studying these phenomena in the context of transnational migration. First, much of Israeli fundraising involves interacting with foreign sources of philanthropy—particularly American (frequently Jewish American)—and thus those who work in this field are the epitome of globe-straddling transmigration. Second, considering that many North American migrants work in this field, it provides a good opportunity to study the various ways in which migrants adapt to their workplaces.

This study demonstrates how working as a fundraiser enables the Jewish migrant to adapt to Israel in a transnational way: knowledge of the English language and American culture actually helps such migrants feel more Israeli; likewise, they feel that they exert a significant impact on their workplaces. This study also shows how North American Jewish immigrants in Israel play a unique role in the "avenue of capital" from North America to Israel: in the transfer of money and linking Israeli organizations with foreign philanthropy. They can act as translators between the organization and donors or foundations. Some explicitly note the contribution they make to their organizations based on their heightened abilities to understand the donor's desires, receive support, and cultivate a lucrative relationship. Those who work as representatives of foundations have noted their importance in making Israeli civil society accessible to donors in North America, enabling donors to understand Israel's needs.

Theoretical Background

Transnational migration is a relatively new type of migration that emerged toward the end of the 20th century. Transnational migrants maintain "familial, economic, social, organizational, religious and political" ties with their home country (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p. 1). Technological advancements facilitating speedy and relatively inexpensive travel, communication, trade, and capital transfer (such as remittances), compared to the experiences of previous generations of migrants, have enabled transnational migration (Portes, 1997).

Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt (1999) and Verotovec and Cohen (1999) described the economic, political, and cultural transnational activities in which individuals and groups of migrants engage. Verotovec later conceptualized them (2009) to describe and examine transnational migration in terms of modes of transfer and transformation, using the three categories of transfer: "cultural reproduction," "avenue of capital," and "political engagement." I employ these three categories as a typology of transnational activity.

Economic transfer, the focus of this paper, might be the most obvious of the transfers conceptualized by Verotovec (2009); indeed, migration and transnational activities were initially a grassroots reaction to the global capitalist system (Portes, 1997; Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt, 1999). Capital transfer includes remittances, investments, and philanthropic giving (Portes, 1997; Luova, 2007; Verotovec, 2009; Portes and Brandon Martinez, 2020). Some scholars have viewed remittances as an essential part of transnational migration (Portes, 1997; Vertovec, 2001; Verotovec, 2009) and a major

aspect of the relevance and impact of transnational activities, specifically the economic part of transnational migration (Portes, 2003).

Another component of transnational migration that I investigate is the adaptation of the transnational migrants to their host society issue that has been mentioned as lacunae in the theory of transnational migration (Brocket, 2020; Kivisto, 2001). Addressing these lacunae could provide a more complete picture of the connection between migrants and their host and origin societies. Adaptation has several definitions which focus on different aspects, among them are psychological adaptation (Aroian, 1990) economic adaptation (Samuel, 1984) and cultural, which will be the focus here as acculturation. I use Berry's (1997) theory of acculturation to classify the activities and experiences of migrants in a new society. The reason for that is that this concept focuses on the migrant's own strategies of adapting to their host society. Which could address the lacune of the transnational migration theory.

Acculturation refers to the process via which individuals or groups adjust to a new environment (Berry, 1992, 1997; Berry, Phinney, Sam and Vedder, 2006; Sam and Berry, 2010). Berry examined how migrants adapt to a new culture, depending on the value they ascribe to their connection with the host or dominant culture and the significance they accord to preserving their own cultural identity and characteristics, with four possible outcomes: (1) assimilation—members of the non-dominant culture are willing to relinquish their culture to be part of the dominant culture; (2) separation—members of the non-dominant culture are not willing to relinquish their culture and prefer to maintain boundaries between themselves and the dominant culture; (3) integration—members of the non-dominant culture maintain their culture while becoming part of the dominant culture; and (4) marginalization—there is no preservation of the original culture nor connection to the dominant culture (e.g., forcing migrants to abandon their previous culture accompanied by discrimination by the dominant culture). Individuals or groups choose one of these strategies, although the choice may change over time. (Berry, 1997).

This approach provides a useful framework for understanding strategies of "migrant adaptation." Such a model is a suitable addition to the present research because it provides the transnational connection and its impact, the process that the migrant, or a group of migrants, experience within their country of destination, as well as the tension between seeking acceptance into the new society and maintaining one's own culture. This research may also benefit the acculturation literature; indeed, several studies claim that acculturation is a key factor influencing how a single person or a group will participate in a new culture (Berry, 1992, 1997; Sam and Berry, 2010).

A variety of papers have examined the issue of dual or multiple transnational identity, discussing migrants from South Africa who settled in Australia (Klingenberg et al., 2020), Kurdish migrants in Finland (Tovianen and Kivisto, 2014), Israelis who migrated to the United States and maintained their Israeli identity (Rebhun and Lev Ari, 2010), French Jewish migrants to Israel (Amit and Bar-Lev, 2016), and Jewish youth in Ukraine, who sometimes identify with countries they have never even visited (Golbert, 2001). These complex identities can persist even among second-generation migrants (Quirke, Potter and Conway, 2010; Brocket, 2020). Migrant identity is affected not only by the country of origin but also by the migrants' experiences in the host country and their attempts to adapt to their new home, as demonstrated by some of the papers cited above (Glick Schiller, 2018b; Levitt, 2004; Vertovec, 2001). Glick Schiller (2018b) referred to this aspect of identity as different "ways of belonging": transnational migrants can develop multiple senses of identification and eventually cultivate a transnational identity that transcends any specific national identity (Glick Schiller, 2018b).

These three terms, acculturation, transnational connection, and transnational identity, support one another. Acculturation explains the relations with the surrounding new society, transnational connection and transfer explain the connection with the society of

origin, and transnational identity is one of the ongoing outcomes of this process. Therefore, addressing these three aspects allows us to understand migrants' experiences and self-perceptions as well as perceptions of both societies.

Another contribution that this paper makes concerns the impact of migrants on their country of destination. Researchers have typically treated the immigration experiences of people from the same country (and the resulting transnational space) as more or less homogenous (Portes and Martinez, 2020). In this study, I propose charting new ground in the mapping and interpretation of the transnational space by focusing on how the experience of transnational migration, particularly identity and adaptation, are shaped by the workplace and occupation and manifest in activities stemming from the workplace and field of activity. Furthermore, studies of transnational migration generally focus on how migration affects the sending country, paying less attention to the impact on the receiving country (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt, 2017), seemingly assuming that immigrants have little to no effect on their host countries. I therefore examine the effect of transnational migrants on their host country by investigating their perceived impact on their local workplaces, occupations, and other fields of activity.

American Presence in Israeli Civil Society

Fundraising is a key part of non-profit organizations' endeavors, enabling such organizations to maintain and develop new activities. Non-profit organizations usually have a department dedicated to resource development or at least a single employee tasked with this job; alternatively, they may use the services of a freelancer or external company. In Israel, many people working in this occupation are Anglos, and a large portion of philanthropic resources come from the United States.

Israel has a long and rich history of fundraising and philanthropy that began centuries ago. Over the years, various mechanisms of fundraising have emerged, including fundraising from various Jewish communities around the world and solicitation of wealthy Jewish individuals and families. These techniques were used by religious organizations, Zionist organizations, and political organizations. Today, Israel is the main importer of donations among developed countries, bringing in about 1.5 billion dollars a year (Haski-Leventhal and Kabalo, 2009). Some of this funding stems from political and governmental organizations from various countries, including Germany (Abelmann and Konarek, 2018).

American funding is highly significant for civil-society organizations in Israel (Schmid and Bar-Nissim, 2013; Shaul Bar Nissim, 2019; Levine Danie, Feit and Hazan, 2021), so much so that since World War II, the United States has been the center of fundraising for Israel (Haski-Leventhal and Kabalo, 2009). A study of giving by American Jewry revealed growth in giving to Israeli organizations, claiming that this is the outcome of more solicitation by Israeli non-profits, including, but not limited to, the foundations run by America "Friends of" organizations affiliated with Israeli non-profits (Haski-Leventhal and Kabalo, 2009).

Many American Jews cultivate their connection with Israel through donations, membership in Zionist organizations, lobbying for Israel in the United States, and, sometimes, visits to Israel (Sarna, 2004; Sheffer and Roth-Toledano, 2006; Levine Danie, Feit and Hazan, 2021).

Although there is no data regarding the number of North American Jewish migrants working in fundraising or philanthropy in Israel, it appears that Anglo migrants play a major role in this field (Katz and Greenspan, 2015). Indeed, many employment ads in this field specify that mother tongue English is required, and the main Facebook group for this profession communicates mostly in English.

Interestingly, two of Israel's 13 prime ministers had American roots, and both had a personal or family history of fundraising. Golda Meir, Israel's fourth prime minister, was

born in Kiev and grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, moving to Israel (then Mandatory Palestine) in her early twenties. In January 1948, as the head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, Meir was sent to the United States for a fundraising tour among American Jewry, during which she raised about 50 million dollars. Ben-Gurion described Meir as the "Jewish woman who got the money which made the state possible." Jim Bennett, father of Naftali Bennet, the 13th prime minister of Israel, migrated to Israel from San Francisco and for several years worked as a fundraiser for the Technion, an Israeli university. These anecdotes are examples of the prominence of Jewish migrants from North America in Israeli fundraising.

North American migrants to Israel exhibit numerous aspects of transnational activity and identity, including maintaining their original language (English), preserving their culture, creating a community of migrants in their newly adopted country, and maintaining connections with their country, communities, and families of origin (Amit and Riss, 2014; Segal, 2020). Some of these migrants commute to work in their country of origin or work in Israel as employees of or contractors for North American companies (Berger, Jacobson and Waxman, 2007; Segal, 2020). Many jobs in Israel require high-level English. They often work in such jobs, explaining why many English speakers do not learn Hebrew well (Segal, 2020). A considerable percentage of immigrants from the United States do not create strong social ties with individuals who are not emigrants from English-speaking countries, particularly the United States (Amit, 2012).

The case of fundraising in Israel by Anglo migrants is a good way to understand these transnational aspects because the work of fundraising or philanthropy in Israel is itself at the axis or junction of transnational transference of philanthropy to Israel.

Methodology

This study is based on a series of 24 interviews with North American Jewish migrants in Israel who are engaged in fundraising and philanthropy. A broad group of migrants was interviewed using snowball sampling. The sample included people who moved to Israel in various years, some of them more than forty years ago and some more recently; people who worked in this profession for various amounts of times; men and women; immigrants from the United States and Canada. They were approached either by publishing in a few professional groups on social media or by me or people I know in this field; they were also asked to connect to others who might be relevant and wish to participate in this study. All interviewees moved to Israel after reaching the age of 18, meaning they chose migration for themselves as working adults. The men and women who were interviewed belong to different streams of Judaism and work in a variety of non-profit organizations in Israel.

The interviews were semi-structured: interviewees were asked about their experiences, with minimal interruptions and a minimum number of guiding questions. Among the questions asked were: "Why do you work in your current workplace?", "Why did you choose to work in fundraising in Israel?", "Has working in English affected your experience in Israel?" and "Has working in Israel while being connected to America affected your experience in Israel?" This technique enables the examination of previous experiences and emotions vis-à-vis those experiences concurrent with a review of the interviewee's current situation. Ben-Ezer (2002) used the same type of interview among Jewish migrants from Ethiopia in a study of their migration process.

The interviews were conducted in English, Hebrew, or both, based on the interviewee's preference. No interview was conducted strictly in English or Hebrew. Yet, the English interviews sometimes contained only a few Hebrew phrases or words. The interviewees spoke mostly about their life and work experience, their experiences in Israel vs. their country of origin, and their Jewish, Israeli, American, and professional identity.

Studies of transnational migration usually employ interviews to map the networks, practices, identities, and institutions of a transnational community and space (Golbert, 2001; Itzigsohn et al., 1999). Levin and Glick Schiller (2004) reviewed the theory and suggested a methodology for the study of transnational migration. Specifically, they recommended that studies in this field use interviews with migrants and those connected to them. Several studies of transnational migrants have employed interviews as the main research method (Bauböck and Faist, 2010; Golbert, 2001; Itzigsohn et al., 1999). Likewise, an Israeli study used interviews together with surveys (Amit and Bar-Lev, 2016). A recent and comprehensive book entitled Qualitative Research in European Migration Studies (Zapata-Barrero and Yalaz, 2018) not only reviewed this type of qualitative research of migration in Europe but also recommended it, specifically interviews, as a means to study various aspects of migration in depth.

All interviews were lasted for at least one hour (in one case almost three hours). Most of these interviews were conducted online, using Zoom, because the research coincided with the height of the COVID-19 restrictions, making in-person meetings impossible. Yet, this type of interview has several advantages. Scholars have already mentioned some of these benefits (Gray, Wong-Wylie Rempel and Cook, 2020): convenience and ease of use, accessibility and time saving, with no travel requirements. Likewise, "Researchers who compared face-to-face versus online video conferencing interviews found the quality of the interviews did not differ from face-to-face interviews" (Gray, Wong-Wylie Rempel and Cook, 2020, p. 1294) and, in one case, "Participants in this study stated they were more comfortable speaking about a personal topic like parenting in a space of their own choosing" (Gray, Wong-Wylie Rempel and Cook, 2020, p. 1297).

The interviews were transcribed and subsequently analyzed, extracting and analyzing the themes that arose regarding relevant aspects of this study. To protect their anonymity, the names given below are pseudonyms. In addition, I removed any details that may reveal the identity of the interviewees. In the following sections, I discuss the relevant themes mentioned by multiple interviewees.

This research was conducted under the ethical restrictions of the Helsinki committee of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and only after obtaining the necessary approval from the university ethics committee. Informed consent was obtained from all interviewees after explaining to them the purpose of the interview and all granted separate permission to record them.

Findings

Migrants' connections

In many of the interviews, it became clear that the interviewees were connected to other migrants from North American migrants in Israel. Some of the interviewees mentioned other people I interviewed (sometimes without knowing that they were also interviewed) as people who helped or acompanied them in the process of moving to Israel, finding a job, or joining a community. Some mentioned that they had moved to Israel as part of an organized group.

Aming the interviewees, some moved to Israel because of their activity in a youth movement, mentioning specifically Habonim Dror, Young Judaea, or Hashomer Hatzair. One interviewee, for example, came to Israel with a group of members of Habonim Dror.[1] After living with this group for two years in a city in the north of Israel, she decided to leave the group. Shortly after doing so, she met her future husband and married.

[1] Habonim Dror is a Jewish, Zionist, and socialist youth organization active globally. Among other things, it encourages its members to make aliya (Jewish migration to Israel).

Some interviewees said that they had followed or been followed by family members. For example, one interviewee related that her sister moved to Israel about 10 years before she did. Another noted that she came following her brother, who had moved to Israel a few years previously. A third interviewee said that a few years after he moved to Israel from Canada, his parents followed him. A fourth related that after he and his wife moved to Israel, his wife's parents and brother followed them.

Jan, who had been in Israeli for about five years at the time of the interview, said:

For the 2 years leading up to coming here, I was looking for jobs here. I was looking into doing programs or fellowships here. However, nothing happened. Therefore, eventually I just decided to move even though I did not have anything set in place. I have a lot of friends who had made Aliyah. So, I know a lot of people who have moved here already and serve as the support system.

One of the major gateways to the profession of fundraising is other Anglos working in this profession, especially for those who had not worked in this field in North America. For example, Pola, who is in her forties and had been in Israel for eleven years at the time of the interview, said:

The story of the first job is that I was teaching English for a woman who had also come from America, [teaching] her daughter. She did some work for Shatil (an Israeli NGO consulting organization, part of the New Israeli Fund). She was an advisor or consultant for Shatil. She said, "Listen, I know they have a fundraiser in the Haifa branch. Maybe let me put you in touch with her and you can talk a little bit about what she does and how to get into it." So, I went for it. I called her up. She was working in the Shatil offices. I got in my car and drove, and I met her at the Shatil offices. She told me about fundraising and what it is, how to get into it, and all of it. She connected me with one man who was looking for a fundraiser, an Arab environmentalist, who had a really small little non-profit. Then, she also connected me with this little women’s non-profit in Haifa.

Several interviewees mentioned a specific woman, who I will refer to as Monica, who started a firm specializing in fundraiser placement — mostly for Americans — and fundraising training. She herself moved to Israel from the United States and was interviewed for this study. Her firm is a magnificent example of a network of migrants helping other migrants to adapt to the new country. She herself received help from earlier Jewish migrants from North America and went on to help others enter this field.

Allie, who had been in Israel for about eight years at the time of the interview, said that a few years after coming Israel she decided she wanted to work in the non-profit world:

I kind of understood that I wanted to go into the non-profit field and, in terms of options, in the non-profit field, there are very limited options. I spoke Hebrew conversationally, but I applied to a few jobs and either because I did not have fluent Hebrew or my writing and reading were not good enough, they didn't seem like relevant options. So, I took a course. It was actually an online course, in grant-writing and fundraising. Her name was Monica. So, I took the grant-writing course and I really enjoyed writing. So, I said," Ok, maybe this is the way I will be involved in the non-profit field."

Entering the Field of Fundraising

Most interviewees did not work as fundraisers in North America prior to moving to Israel. For many of them, work in this field represented a way to find a job with a good salary that would allow them to influence Israeli civil society.

One interviewee, who works as a fundraiser for an Israeli nonprofit organization, said she wanted to work in Israel civil society "to help and influence Israel" and that she chose fundraising understanding that "if I choose to work in a civil-society organization, I have a skill that relatively few people in Israel have; I am a native English speaker. So, that's my advantage and that's my niche." She continued:

I quickly realized that it actually suits me, because I can work in a position that is relatively easy, there is a demand for English-speaking fundraisers, and it suits me because I love to write. In addition, I was good at it, they loved me, and it was nice to play a relatively important role in organizations when I was actually new in the country.

Alison, who came to Israel about 10 years before the interview, described her work in various civil society organizations or programs. In one of these organizations, all the workers and activists were Israeli born – Jewish and Arab – and she found herself in the role of fundraiser. She told me: "It was easier for me to do fundraising because I came from United States. It was easier for me to talk to the people that gave us money."

Not many interviewees had worked in this field in North America. One interviewee served as a community rabbi in the United States and later worked in fundraising in the United States for about 20 years. He said, "In America, I had major fundraising responsibilities. I had major fundraising responsibilities besides my own $4 million for my own department. In addition, I had a team of people doing fundraising all over the country."

Where Do They Work and Why?

Accordinfg to almost all the interviewees, moving to Israel was an ideological decision. In addition, most said that they chose to work in civil society organizations to influence Israeli society.

Even those who mentioned that they work in fundraising because it is convenient also noted that they do so due to ideology. For example, as Tova informed me: "I can work in a position that is relatively easy, there is a demand for English-speaking fundraisers, and it suits me because I love to write." She also mentioned that she works for a human rights organization because this is what she believes is right for Israel; she is willing to give up on higher salaries in non-ideological organizations. She even mentioned that as an employee of an Israeli human rights organization she sometimes feels afraid to tell others where she works. Yet, she believes that this is what is right for her and for Israel.

This also applied to many of the interviewees who work for political nonprofits: most described the importance they ascribe to this as a way to impact Israel – either vis-à-vis human rights, peace building, environmental or any kind of political advocacy. For example, Kelly, who works for a peace building educational organization, said:

It as an important part of their being in Israel. I think that for me it was an important thing about staying in the country. A lot of things didn't make any sense when I moved here. I grew up in the capital of the south where we had a sense of segregation in schools, like for my parents' generation, some of them were the first in non-segregated school. I went to a very mixed school, so for me an organization like this, it just made sense. For me, the choice of becoming a citizen was not simple, and some of the decision to become a citizen in Israel meant for me that I have to be involved. I wanted to contribute to positive impact in the country according to my values, either Jewish values or American, so for me to work in this organization was not only because of the art, it was much more personal for me. Both positions I got in fundraising are because the content of what the organization is doing is important for me. So, I think that comes first, that I need to believe in the cause.

Dual Belonging and Identity

The interviewees reported several aspects of belonging to both Israel and the United States and / or Canada. These include multiple visits to both countries (before and after moving to Israel), retaining American citizenship while living in Israel, and voting in American elections. Likewise, working in English and, as required by fundraising and philanthropy, significant engagement with American individuals, communities, and organizations also constitute notable aspects of this phenomenon.

Tova said, "To be an olah is to always live in two worlds. But I talk to my parents every day. I do try hard to keep in touch with them and my brothers… I think I'm very connected to what happens in America."

When asked how Israeli or American she feels Sara, who works as a representative of a Jewish American federation in Israel, said:

Obviously, Americans don't treat me as someone that was born in Israel. I work a lot with Jewish communities, it is interesting. I think they know I can see both sides. They can tell I view things differently than someone who was born here (in Israel) because I am different. You know, sometimes we do these activities with large groups, and asking them what their identity is – Israeli or American. I know I'm an Israeli, but you can't take the American out of me.

Later she talked about her children, all born in Israel, yet she and her husband made efforts to ensure they are fluent in English and retain some American identity; indeed, one of her children plays baseball in Israel.

This dual identity is not a problem for her. In fact, as she noted:

I think that this job placed me in a position where I could really do what was most important for me, to connect Israeli and American Jewish communities, and to contribute to the foundation of Israel.

Furthermore, Ricki told me:

Now, when I go to United States, I feel more Israeli than I ever feel here (in Israel). I think that here it's obvious that I am an American, so people see that. And when I get to the United States, I see the cultural changes. I noticed that in others who made aliya years ago and for me, too. The American perspective is out of date because it connects to the way things were years ago. But I travel there a lot, so I think that, for me, it's different.

One interviewee described her previous jobs in the following manner:

They all accepted me well. I can't think about anything negative that was connected to my identity as an American, not in the Jewish non-profits and not in the Arab non-profits. I don’t know what they might have thought, but they all respected me; they all knew I supported their cause. I really felt, well, I feel that I have an impact on Israeli society because I am working in ideological organizations and my main job is to connect the two worlds of Israel and America.

Later, she related that working in human rights organizations affected the way she feels in Israel. She told me that she did not tell her daughter’s kindergarten teacher that she works in a human-rights organization because she did not want her daughter to be treated differently. Likewise, when she and her colleagues go out for lunch, they do not tell the owner of the restaurant where they work.

Many of the interviewees described an Anglo community in Israel to which they belong. For example, Alison said that:

I am part of the liberal Anglo community (in Israel), for example I'm part of my synagogue board. I think that the community is so important, and during my first years I kind of avoided the Anglo community, because I wanted to be absorbed here in Israel. I wanted to be part of the society and not to differentiate. But the years passed, and I decided that I'm already absorbed. The community makes it all more comfortable. They understand better. It is the type of some basic understanding that you don’t have to explain, they understand.

Migrants' Perceived Impact of on Their Workplaces

Many of the interviewees described the positions of fundraiser, foundation representative, and other related roles as a way to belong in Israel as Americans. For example, Sara, who

came to Israel in 1976 and works as a representative of a Jewish American federation in Israel, told me:

Part of my job is to show Israel to Americans and, for me, to be in this crossroad is a privilege. I feel so blessed that I found myself in this kind of a position. I think that this is what has held us and helped me stay here in Israel for so long because it is a way for me to be part of the building of the Jewish state. For me, the Jewish world is so important. So, for me, to be in this place where I can connect American Jewry to Israel, I feel that "Wow, I succeeded."

Sara continued: "I think that this job placed me in the position where I could really do what was most important for me, to connect Israeli and American Jewish communities and to contribute to the foundation of Israel."

Ricki described how, when talking to a donor from another country, she sees herself "as a bridge to Israeli civil society and they also see me as someone who represents Israel. I do not think about myself that way, but they do. I don't have the Israeli flag on my forehead."

Shlomit referred to herself as a "cultural translator": "They ask me daily, 'What is happening in Israel? What do Jews and Arab think? What is the Israeli perspective?' So, I need to tell them, to help them understand what is happening here."

Tova, who works for a human-rights organization, said:

I want to say that I'm really happy I'm working there. Because I feel that I have a job that is meaningful, and I have become a very important part of this organization. It is not just a job. They pay me, obviously, but it is a mission for me; it is a moral obligation. Moreover, I am happy that I can fulfill my moral obligation to Israeli society during my workday. That is what fundraising allows me, to have a job, a career and activism together. I am promoting this agenda and that is my job. I work, but these are my values.

Monica, who was mentioned earlier by another interviewee and who built a firm in Israel for fundraising training and placement, later returned to the United States. As she told me:

I arrived in Israel very energetic and very, maybe optimistic, that I could make a change. I wanted to help the field, but I had an interest in anything that might help with that and be to the benefit of all the people who lived there. So, I had to run as fast as I could in my time, but I also had to make sure that I was training someone else, so that when I'm done, I can't run anymore, I have run as hard and fast as I could. But the race doesn't stop. I have to be able to pass the baton, so that's what I did there. It was a relay. I trained as many people as I possibly could, I advised as many people as I could, and I passed the baton and whether I'll go back to the race, I don't know, but I know that there are many people running very fast and hard. I believe or I hope that my speech about passing the baton means there are many other people who took it upon themselves to do the same thing I did. Maybe just one or two, but if enough people will do it, hopefully, we will have enough people to keep going and, eventually, somebody will get there.

'We Would Not Have Attained These Achievements, Had We Not Made Aliyah'

"We would not have attained these achievements had we not made Aliyah," is a quote from an article published on the Israeli news website Ynet (Fishman, 2021). This advertorial piece presents the story of three Anglo Jewish migrants (Olim) who claimed that the professional success they achieved is due to the fact they came to Israel from the United States. Although this piece is an advertorial, the notion also arose in several of the interviews I conducted.

Several of the interviewees described their Israeli career as more impressive, fulfilling, and sometimes more profitable than their American career, or the career they assume they would have had if they had remained in North America. They mostly mentioned that they

reaped greater satisfaction from their Israeli career or that they were able to achieve much higher employment status than they would have done in North America.

The interviewees attributed this success to a number of factors. Among them is Israel's size as well as what Israel means to them – migrating to and remaining in Israel are usually linked to ideology ― and sometimes to their advantage as English speakers and Americans. For example, Monica, who worked in the United States as a fundraiser and came to Israel in her mid-thirties, founding a consulting firm in Israel, described herself as "a big fish in a small pound" in Israel.

Many of the interviewees depicted the position of fundraiser, foundation representative, and other relevant roles as a way to belong in Israel, be Israeli, and represent Israel to Americans, and the Americans to Israelis. For example, Sara related:

Part of my job is to show Israel to Americans, and for me to be at this crossroad is a privilege. I feel so blessed that I found myself in this kind of a position. I think that this is what held us and helped me stay here in Israel for so long because it is a way for me to be part of the building of the Jewish state. For me, that the Jewish world is so important for me, to be in this place I can connect American Jewry to Israel, I feel that "Wow, I succeeded."

Discussion and Conclusion

This study shows how working in fundraising, resource development, and related roles provides North American immigrants in Israel with a transnational connection to their country of origin, a transnational process of acculturation, a transnational way of belonging to both Israel and their country of origin, and a way to influence the country of destination.

This study demonstrates that the profession of fundraising in Israel offers Anglo migrants a relatively convenient path to adapt to Israeli society: it is a profession that enables them to use their native language (English) and their acquaintance with American culture and society to help the Israeli non-profit organizations for which they work. In this field of employment, transnational migrants use their transnational traits to better adapt to their host society. Thus, adaptation relies not only on a connection with the host culture but also a connection with the culture of origin. Meaning, for at least some migrants, the outcome of integration (maintaining their culture) might be more beneficial than assimilation (adopting the host culture instead of their original culture).

Working as fundraisers enables this group of migrants to feel part of Israeli society as Americans. This dual belonging is the result of transnational activity and enables adaptation to Israeli society, in this case, via the workplace. Therefore, it seems that the adaptation of this group of migrants is enabled by a transnational connection and identity. It also seems that this role helps them to adapt: they use their relative advantage, are employed in a desirable profession, and feel that they have an impact on their workplace and, consequently, on Israeli society, which, for the most part, accepts them as both Americans and Israelis.

The position of fundraiser also enables people who moved to Israel for ideological reasons to work in a meaningful job with a perceived impact on Israeli society. These migrants work in non-profit organizations in which they believe, playing a valuable role.

Many, in fact most, interviewees spoke about the importance they attribute to their work for Israeli nonprofits. Many stated that they entered the field of fundraising because they wanted to work in non-profit organizations and thus contribute to Israel, working in a job that has meaning and value for Israeli society. This aligns with their description of their immigration to Israel as a product of value choice and value connection with what is

happening in Israel. This is also consistent with the findings of previous studies regarding Jewish immigration from North America to Israel.

An interesting aspect is the impact as perceived by these migrants. This perceived impact is the outcome of choosing to move to Israel and working in a position that offers an opportunity for them to use their relative advantage as Anglos and to engage in transnational activity as an essential part of their job. Studies of transnational migration have generally focused on the impact that migration has on the sending country, devoting less attention to its effect on the receiving country (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt, 2017), seemingly assuming that immigrants have little to no effect on host countries. This perceived impact is important because it reveals the transnational experience in the workplace and because the impact of migrants on the receiving country is a less researched topic; the perceived impact in this case might imply that it could exist in other cases.

This study reveals how North American Jewish immigrants in Israel play a unique role in the "avenue of capital" from North America to Israel. That is, they play an important role in the transfer of money, connecting Israeli organizations with foreign philanthropy. They are not exclusive in that, but they can be translators between the non-profit organization and donors or foundations. Some even explicitly noted their contribution to their organizations: they are optimally positioned to understand donor desires, receive support, and cultivate a lucrative relationship. Those who work as representatives of foundations have noted their importance in making Israeli civil society accessible to donors in North America, so that those donors can understand Israel's needs.

As this study demonstrated, North American Jewish migrants in Israel develop and maintain networks that help them move to Israel, enable others to move to Israel, and offer support when looking for employment. This reinforces the findings of prior studies, including studies about North American Jewish migrants in Israel concerning the importance of support from social networks after migration (Amit and Riss, 2014). It seems that these social networks also have a major impact on the decision to migrate to Israel. Such networks might be founded by migrants or by Jewish and/or Israeli organizations (Amit and Riss, 2007). Some have noted that, for Jewish migrants from North America, the process of deciding to move to Israel can take a few years and usually includes repeated visits to Israel and consultations with people in Israel representing various fields and organizations (Amit and Riss, 2013; Segal, 2020).

This is an aspect of the migrant's transnational network post migration – it helps find a job and belong to a community (Basak and Lubbers, 2021). This is evident both in the immigrants' preliminary contact with Israel, their acquaintance with Israel, their perception of themselves as connected to Israel, and the fact that after moving to Israel they are in constant contact with the United States and Canada.

For the majority of the interviewees, their employment is a transnational way of belonging, meaning it allows them to be "Israelis" and "American/Canadian" simultaneously. Moreover, it is a way to fulfil their ideology, to feel that they have an impact on Israel in accordance with their values and ideas. It is also a way to feel that their "Americanness" is not only accepted by Israelis and can exist together with "Israeliness" but that it is also valued by their Israeli colleagues and accords them a role that has an impact on Israeli society. This connection with the country of origin, as well as their very identity as Americans or Canadians, does not, as a rule, obscure their identity as Israelis. In fact, many have described how the fact that they are native English speakers in a role that requires a connection between countries and familiarity with the United States and Canada helps them integrate into their workplaces.

Many interviewees tried to become "Israeli" and described thinking of their place in Israel, the meaning of being Israeli for them, and the way they are perceived by Israelis

and Americans. This included their role in the workplace and the great importance of the workplace in their perception of Israel and their belonging to Israel.

None of the interviewees described situations of discrimination, deliberate exclusion, or coercion to be Israeli. In fact, some complained that in conversations with Israelis, Israelis usually start speaking to them in English, even though they would be happy to try to speak Hebrew to improve their command of the language. Some described a relationship with Israeli natives—among them some who claimed that their spouse would be happy to move to the United States and they were not interested. One interviewee returned to the United States due to her Israeli-born spouse's choice and to her displeasure—she said she would have preferred to stay in Israel. That is, even when migrants leave Israel, this is not necessarily a product of the immigrant's own feeling.

At the same time, in several interviews, issues arose relating to difficulties of adaptation and absorption in Israel. Some human rights activists feel real fear vis-à-vis revealing where they work, and one even described the alienation from members of her community in the United States when she returned there to give a lecture. However, these were largely personal feelings. Indeed, none of the interviews experienced concrete instances of discrimination.

One interesting finding is that many of the interviewees work for Arab organizations —in terms of the identity of the management and employees and in that they promote political issues relevant to the Arab community in Israel. The interviewees said that they were accepted well by those organizations. Furthermore, some said that their Arab colleagues accepted them more readily than their Israeli-born Jewish counterparts because, as migrants, they had not served in the Israeli military. The lack of military experience, which has been described as something that hinders their belonging to general Israeli society, was described in these cases as something that actually helps them gain acceptance among their Arab colleagues. The perceptions of Jewish migration to Israel have not received much research attention, but the existing scholarship in this field suggests that, for the most part, this migration has been accepted well by Israel's Arab population (Al-Haj Leshem and Shuval, 1998); indeed, in some cases these migrants are viewed favorably and are more readily accepted than Israeli-born Jews.

This study demonstrates how a transnational identity enables better absorption, better adaptation and, in fact, a professional opportunity that is unique to English speakers and those who are deeply familiar with North American society.

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