

**Newcomers becoming insiders:
The making of citizens from migrants
in the US, Canada, the Netherlands, Israel**

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Abstract

What are migrants/immigrants expected to do, and to become, in order to gain full citizenship in the nation-state? What formal processes have been developed for marking the transition from immigrant to citizen, including examinations for citizenship as well as the range of prior preparations that lead up to that point? How do immigrant-receiving countries attempt to situate or “settle” international migrants in their midst? This paper critically assesses these issues in four countries – the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, and Israel – in terms of what they signal about what policymakers believe is at stake for both new citizens and the host country regarding this transformation of migrant to citizen. The paper distinguishes between immigration policy, focused on questions of gate-keeping – e.g., who is to be admitted into the country, according to which criteria – and (im)migrant or migrant policy, which is focused on the relationships between migrants and the host country once the migrants become part of the population of the host country.

A 2010 New Year's day *New York Times* story about immigration reform – the issue precipitated by concerns of students raised in the US but without legal status there, who cannot get jobs or proceed further in their studies due to their lack of citizenship or legal residency (Preston 2010) – was typical of the way immigration policy is framed in the United States and elsewhere. Policies focus on who should be allowed to enter the state, from which countries, with what sort of status, for how long; and reform focuses on the details arising from such concerns. A similar situation has emerged in Israel in recent years, due to 1980s policies to seek “labor migrants” (CIMI n.d.), primarily from Thailand and the Philippines, whose children, now army- and university-age, are not Israeli citizens but have no other citizenship and know no other country or culture as “home.”

However, while immigration policy is focused on questions of gate-keeping – e.g., who is to be admitted into the country, according to which criteria – another range of state action concerning immigrants falls outside its domain. Known as immigrant or migrant policy, it focuses on the relationships between migrants and the host country once the migrants become part of the population of that state. How does the state engage them from the perspective of encouraging or even enabling their integration, economically, socially, politically, and/or culturally, aside from legally (i.e., in the acquisition of citizenship papers)? Some states have begun taking proactive measures, engaging persons wanting to enter the state and reside there legally prior to their move, while they are still in their home countries. We consider such activities, too, under the heading of immigrant policy. (Refugee and

asylum policies are yet other categories, but we do not engage these in this paper.)

This paper explores states' attitudes and actions toward their "newcomers" and, in some cases, would-be newcomers, including state-generated requirements and procedures through which actual and would-be migrants may become legal residents and citizens. We take a comparative perspective, looking at the US, Canada, The Netherlands, and Israel. We are interested in understanding and critically assessing the ways in which immigrant-receiving countries attempt to situate or "settle" international migrants in their midst. The paper compares and critically assesses the approaches taken by each of these four countries with respect to what migrants/ immigrants are expected to do, and to become, in order to gain full citizenship in the nation-state. Particular attention will be paid to the formal processes developed by each of these four countries for marking the transition from immigrant to citizen, including examinations for citizenship as well as the range of prior preparations that lead up to that point. However, one of our findings is that "citizen making" involves *both* immigration policy and immigrant policy, and the two are so intertwined that they cannot be analyzed separately. So while focusing on immigrant policy, the case narratives engage immigration issues as needed for a clear presentation of that policy.

Immigrant policy as we explore it here is related to the notion of "settlement policies" or "resettlement services" of interest in studies of social services or social work theory and practices (e.g., Gal and Leshem 2000, Leshem 2006). Although there are some overlapping concerns, this is not our primary focus.

Be(com)ing citizens: Research questions and methodological notes

These four states were chosen because they illustrate different points on an initial analytic continuum of invitation and welcoming, from active encouragement of immigration and state-initiated help with resettlement (Israel), to less active encouragement but active assistance (Canada), to little encouragement (the Netherlands, the US) and more (the Netherlands) to less (US) assistance. These (non-) policies combine open-market and state-provided programs in different ways and to different extents, with even Israel talking today about privatizing its “immigrant absorption” activities. The research focuses on the criteria for, and the processes leading to, the transformation of migrants into full-fledged citizens of their host countries. Under what conditions are migrants transformed into citizens? What requirements must they meet in order to make this transition, what is the image of citizen that they are expected to adopt, and how is that image conveyed to them? What are the host country’s expectations – embedded explicitly or implicitly in public policy – of their newcomers in relation to this transformation? For example, the most common expectation focuses on language acquisition. But these states vary in the extent to which they require language-learning prior to receiving citizenship, as well as in terms of the kinds of support, if any, they provide for learning the language. How is mastery of the language tested? What rationales are given by the host country in respect to the required level of language learning?

Language does not stand on its own, apart from its cultural context and content. A second area of analysis concerns what might be called the host

country's social and cultural expectations in respect of citizenship and how these are transmitted. We note here, for example, that The Netherlands has recently begun asking prospective residents from some countries to view an 8-part video at the embassy or consulate in their home countries prior to taking the required pre-visa test. The video describes certain aspects of Netherlands culture (e.g., freedom of religious belief, how to parent children, etc.) with the clear expectation that immigrants will fit in to their new setting. Do the other countries in our study have comparable expectations, and if so, how are they conveyed to prospective new citizens?

A third aspect involves the political expectations regarding naturalization. What sorts of political beliefs and/or practices are required of migrants before they may become citizens? How are these expectations conveyed to prospective citizens? What sorts of examinations of migrants' political knowledge, beliefs, and/or practices are deployed before determining their fitness for citizenship in the host country? For example, are prospective (im)migrants and/or citizens examined on their knowledge of the state's constitution or other political-legal-historical documents?

In each of the four cases, we "read" their immigrant policies for the meanings of national identity in each and how these policies reveal the values, beliefs, and feelings (or sentiments) embedded in them. We analyze them in terms of what they signal about what policymakers believe is at stake for both new citizens and the host country regarding this transformation of migrant to citizen. In this, we adopt a "value-critical," interpretive policy analytic approach (Schmidt

2006, Yanow 2000, 2008), informed by a hermeneutic-phenomenological methodological stance. We critically interrogate the immigrant/migrant policies of the countries under study in order to interpret their meanings and significance for both the migrants and the citizens-residents of the host countries. The paper contributes new comparative insights on what is at stake for both migrants and host countries in the evolving processes of citizen-making in operation in these four countries. The questions of international migration, national identity, and citizen-making are currently at the forefront of concern among EU member states, in some places, newly so¹; in North America, they have been policy concerns, one might say, since the founding of the states. But relatively more attention has been given to immigration policies than to policy practices for transforming (im)migrants into citizens and integrating them into the receiving country. Citizen-making practices as they are conducted in the global South are also beginning to attract attention, especially as they countervene expectations from the “Western” world as to how citizenship is, or should be, acquired (Sadiq 2009); but to the best of our knowledge, little has been done on citizen-making from an interpretive perspective as it is done in the global North. Our research contributes to this conversation as well.

The paper builds upon previous research on the US (Schmidt 2000, 2006a, 2007a, Yanow 2003); Canada (Schmidt 2000, 2006a,c, 2007a,b); The Netherlands (van der Haar and Yanow 2009, Völke, van der Haar, and Yanow 2010, Völke, Yanow, and van der Haar 2009, Yanow and van der Haar 2009); and Israel (Yanow 1996, 1999). Data for this paper have been generated in the US and Canada (by

Lozano and Schmidt) through policy-relevant documents and in The Netherlands and Israel (by van der Haar, Völke, and Yanow) through documents, a key video tape (in The Netherlands), and interviews (Israel). In all four cases, the authors draw on their own lived experience, as “native ethnographers” (Narayan 1993) participating in their countries of permanent or temporary residence while observing them at the same time.

Here, we present our initial findings and preliminary analysis. We begin at one end of the continuum – the US, which has virtually no federal immigrant policy, leaving matters to local governments and, even more, non-profit, voluntary organizations such as churches and immigrant associations – and proceed through Canada and The Netherlands to Israel, which has a well-developed set of state-financed, -organized, and -administered programs.

Becoming “American”

As described in previous research (Schmidt 2007a), the United States has a very minimalist, mostly *laissez-faire* immigrant policy, despite the fact that it has been a major immigrant-receiving country for several centuries and remains so today. Immigrants receive little in the way of material or proactive support from the U.S. governments (national, state, or local) aiming to help them integrate as new members of the national community. In line with this reality, the United States has few formal requirements for naturalization to citizenship, and these few seem to be relatively simple in nature. By viewing the naturalization requirements in a larger context that includes the country’s immigration policy, however, it is possible to

discern more fully just what the United States expects of those who would become its new citizens.

Naturalization requirements

The procedures for the naturalization of immigrants to the United States are the responsibility of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) agency, located in the post-9/11 era in the Department of Homeland Security. Under U.S. law, state and local governments play no role in immigration policy or in the formal transformation of migrants into U.S. citizens, though they are free to engage in other forms of immigrant policy (such as English language classes, job training and placement services, etc.). Although there are other paths to citizenship for a relatively few migrants (e.g., those who are spouses or dependent children of U.S. citizens, those serving in the U.S. military, etc.²), the vast majority of U.S. immigrants who are naturalized will have met the following formal requirements, as articulated on the web-site of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services:

- ◆ Be 18 or older;
- ◆ Be a permanent resident (green card holder) for at least 5 years immediately preceding the date of filing the Form N-400, Application for Naturalization;
- ◆ Have lived within the state, or a USCIS district with jurisdiction over the applicant's place of residence [i.e., in the same U.S. state or USCIS jurisdictional area as where the application is submitted], for at least 3 months prior to the date of filing the application;
- ◆ Have continuous residence in the United States as a permanent resident for at least 5 years immediately preceding the date of the filing the application [for citizenship];

- ◆ Be physically present in the United States for at least 30 months out of the 5 years immediately preceding the date of filing the application;
- ◆ Reside continuously within the United States from the date of application for naturalization up to the time of naturalization;
- ◆ Be able to read, write, and speak English and have knowledge and an understanding of U.S. history and government (civics);
- ◆ Be a person of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the United States during all relevant periods under the law. (USCIS 2009a)

We will return below to the significance and meaning of these requirements, but for now we step back and examine the larger context in which they are applied in the citizen making process. Stepping back is important because, as noted above, before one can file an “application for naturalization” in the U.S., one must have been a “permanent resident (green card holder)” for at least five years. We begin, then, by looking at some aspects of immigration policy as they bear on immigrant policy.

The context of immigration policy

There are three main procedural steps for an international migrant to become a citizen: (1) obtaining an immigrant visa from the U.S. State Department; (2) obtaining documentation for permanent residency (a “green card”) from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS); and (3) being naturalized (i.e., becoming a citizen) by the USCIS.

The first step typically occurs while the prospective citizen still resides in her home country, and gaining the immigrant visa is no easy matter. In the main,

these documents are obtained through one of three avenues: *first*, having work skills and/or educational credentials in demand in the U.S. economy and being sponsored by an employer who has committed a job to the applicant; *second*, being sponsored by an immediate family member (e.g., spouse, parent, child) who is already a U.S. citizen or (more rarely) a permanent resident; or *third*, by being selected in a “diversity lottery” designed to diversify the countries of origin of U.S. immigrants (i.e., applicants from countries with large numbers of previous U.S. immigrants are excluded from the lottery). In 2009, the 416,000 immigrant visas authorized by the U.S. Department of State were allocated as follows: (1) family sponsors: 226,000; (2) employer sponsors: 140,000; (3) diversity lottery: 70,000.

Sponsorship (by either employers or family members) requires the sponsors to demonstrate that they have incomes at least 125% of the U.S. government’s official “poverty line” and that they commit contractually with the U.S. government to financially assist the immigrants if they are unable to be self-supporting. This contractual obligation remains in force until the immigrant has become a U.S. citizen or has lived in the U.S. as a legal resident for at least ten years.

Prospective immigrants who receive immigrant visas are then eligible to move to the United States and to receive their permanent residency documentation (the “green card”). It is important to note here that any prospective immigrant who has been discovered to have been living in the United States without authorization (i.e., “illegal” immigrants) is permanently barred from ever receiving an immigrant visa or permanent residency and, therefore, from obtaining access to naturalization (though there are some circumstances under which this stricture is waived).

Currently, over ten million people living in the United States – nearly one-third of its immigrant population – are permanently barred by this provision from seeking citizenship in the country in which they reside and work.

U.S. expectations of new citizens, in summary

The following formal procedures embedded in both immigration and immigrant policy and leading up to U.S. naturalization make clear what the U.S. government expects in its new citizens:

(1) Citizens are expected to *obey the law*, and especially laws aiming to protect U.S. control of its borders;

(2) Citizens are expected to be *economically self-sufficient*, to not be a burden on the society and its governments;

(3) Citizens are expected to be "*settled*" as relatively stable residents of a U.S. community;

(4) Citizens are expected to be *English-speaking* (despite the multilingualism present throughout U.S. history);

(5) Citizens are expected to have a basic *understanding of, and positive appreciation for, the nation's historical development and the workings of its government*; and

(6) Citizens are expected to be *morally upright*.

How are prospective U.S. citizens expected to become people with these characteristics?

Citizen-making: The path to naturalization

Unsurprising in a country with a political culture that has long been recognized for its commitment to liberal individualism, the most striking aspect of the U.S. approach to “citizen making,” especially in comparison with other countries, is the degree to which prospective citizens are expected to acquire the necessary attributes of citizenship *on their own*. That is, U.S. governments have very few support services aimed at helping newcomers acquire the characteristics necessary for their successful transformation into U.S. citizens.

The primary exception to this generalization is that many public school districts, community colleges, and immigrant-focused NGOs (such as immigrant service centers) in the United States have traditionally offered adult education courses in English as a second language (ESL³) and in “civics” (i.e., U.S. history and the workings of U.S. government, including its “Constitutional principles”) designed to prepare applicants for the naturalization exam. However, the budget shortages of public schools and non-profits so typical in recent decades mean that these courses are chronically oversubscribed and many prospective students are turned away, forcing them to attend proprietary classes or to seek out more individual solutions (e.g., on-line course materials, self-study workbooks, audio CDs, DVDs, etc.), all of which can be quite costly.

In any case, the U.S. national government assumes no responsibility for ensuring that prospective citizens have access to services that might provide them with the characteristics and skills required to successfully complete the naturalization process. In the main, then, U.S. naturalization policy assumes that

prospective citizens should be quite capable of acquiring the attributes necessary for successful citizenship, either on their own as individuals, or with the private help of their families and/or employers. Experientially, this process serves to introduce immigrants to the very culture that they are being expected to acquire. The US has a strongly "liberal" political culture, and this immigrant policy fits right into it. But how does the government make judgments about the degree to which these attributes have been successfully acquired by applicants for naturalization?

Citizen-making: Demonstrating worthiness

Overall, the application process is quite formalistic and administratively bureaucratic, involving the provision of proper documentation by the applicant, two separate formal examinations (in the English language; and in knowledge of U.S. history, principles and practices of Constitutional government, and "civics"), and a ritual administration of a citizenship oath. The English exam involves a demonstration of basic speaking, reading, and writing ability, and applicants who go to the USCIS web-site are given several lists and flash cards of vocabulary words in English to help them study for the exam (USCIS 2009b). The history, government, and civics exam involves successfully answering a minimum of six out of ten questions, chosen from a set of 100 questions (with answers) contained in a brochure available to applicants on the USCIS web-site (USCIS 2009b), which the website encourages applicants to study and memorize and to practice answering with family members and/or friends.

In addition to these exams, applicants are "tested" for their ability to meet formal procedural requirements by submitting to fingerprinting (enabling criminal

record checks) and by submitting various documents demonstrating residency records, personal identification (including photos), etc. A personal interview is conducted by a USCIS officer and is part of the examination process. Lying on any part of the application process constitutes evidence of moral unfitness and may be used to disqualify the applicant.⁴

After successfully completing all phases of the application and testing process, the applicant participates in a public oath-taking ceremony during which the applicant renounces loyalty to any other country, swears (or affirms) loyalty to the United States of America, and promises to uphold the Constitution, etc. We infer that this latter oath is evidence of the applicant's positive appreciation for the United States and its governing principles and institutions.

We should point out here that even though U.S. naturalization policy does not require much in the way of social, cultural or political commitments on the part of the new citizens, this does not mean that Americans are not concerned with the beliefs and cultural practices of their new citizens. Indeed, informally, there is strong social and economic pressure on immigrants not only to learn the dominant English language, but also to avoid using non-English languages in public spaces (which tends to lead to the loss of these languages by the third generation of immigrants; see, e.g., Schmidt 2009). Similarly, children of immigrants learn quickly to avoid being stereotyped as newcomers by their peers in school, leading to patterns of rapid assimilation that affects the entire family in various ways, as well as the degree to which immigrant families participate in politics (see, e.g., Garcia-Bedolla 2005, for the experiences of Latino immigrants). And immigrants

find it in their interest to make strenuous efforts to “blend in” to the dominant culture as quickly as possible if they are seeking to move out of typically low-income employment niches to advance “up the ladder” of economic success in the U.S. In short, even in the absence of explicit cultural assimilationist policies, powerful forces generating high levels of cultural assimilation are deployed in the social and economic sectors of the country.⁵

A second general observation we wish to make here is that U.S. naturalization policies do not channel new immigrants into active, democratic forms of political participation. As noted above, the emphasis in U.S. policy is on being economically self-supporting, on obeying the law, and on appreciating the benefits of living under U.S. constitutional principles. Thus, *liberalism*, as opposed to *democratization*, is the dominant motif of the U.S. citizen-making process. At the same time, here, too, there are strong forces in civil society pushing immigrants towards patriotic nationalism. This is so because, as outsiders, immigrants often feel insecure about the degree to which they are accepted as “real Americans” (this seems to be particularly true of non-European or “non-white” immigrants), so compensation through a kind of hyper-patriotic nationalism is quite common in many immigrant communities, particularly among the second generation.

Becoming “Canadian”

Like the United States, Canada has been a major immigrant-receiving country for much of the past two centuries, and it has had much experience in developing processes and procedures for making citizens out of international

migrants. Currently, the formal requirements for naturalization in Canada are remarkably similar to those of the United States. And once again we find that understanding the citizen-making process in Canada requires that we examine not only Canada's immigrant policy, but also its immigration policy.

Naturalization requirements

Becoming a citizen of Canada means working with a national government agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). As noted below, Canada's federal system of government is present in the "citizen-making" process in that the country's provinces have a role to play in the authorization of immigrants, but only the national government's CIC is involved in the formal making of new citizens. To become a citizen of Canada, immigrants must meet the following formal requirements. To qualify, individuals must:

- ◆ Be at least *eighteen years of age* (though children under 18 may be granted citizenship through the application of a parent or guardian if they meet certain criteria);
- ◆ Have *permanent resident status* in Canada, "and that status must not be in doubt. This means you must not be the subject of an immigration investigation, an immigration inquiry or a removal order (an order from Canadian officials to leave Canada)" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010a);
- ◆ Have met a *residency requirement*, defined for adults as having "lived in Canada for at least three years (1,095 days) in the past four years before applying. Children do not need to meet this requirement." Moreover, applicants may count time spent in Canada prior to becoming permanent residents if that time falls within the four-year period (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010a);
- ◆ Demonstrate "adequate knowledge" in at least one of the country's two *official languages*, English and French (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010a);

- ◆ Have no record of certain *criminal behaviors*, including being “investigated” or “charged” with a war crime or crime against humanity (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010a); and

- ◆ Demonstrate adequate “*knowledge of Canada*,” which includes “the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, such as the right and responsibility to vote in elections. You must also have an understanding of Canada’s history, values, institutions and symbols” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010a).

The context of immigration policy

As with other countries, Canada’s immigration policy conveys much information about what it expects of individuals who would be Canadian citizens. Currently, Canada’s central focus is on gaining new citizens who will contribute productively to the economic development of the country, though Canadian residents and citizens may also sponsor family members for immigration for purposes of family unification. In regard to institutional policy, one of the key differences between Canada and the other countries under study here is that Canada’s provincial governments – especially that of Quebec – have been authorized a formal role in the immigration processes of the country. Indeed, because of its French language regime and distinctive cultural communities, Quebec has been authorized a separate role in “selecting” immigrants from among those applying to the Canadian government to settle in the province, which led to other provinces being authorized to “nominate” candidates for an immigrant visa. Thus, CIC’s website lists the following authorization categories for those contemplating application for permanent resident status in Canada (listed in this order): (1) “skilled workers and professionals”; (2) “Quebec-selected skilled workers”; (3) “Canadian experience class” (mainly those who are temporary workers in Canada

and/or students who have graduated from Canadian post-secondary educational institutions); (4) “investors, entrepreneurs, and self-employed individuals”; (5) “Provincial nominees”; and (6) family sponsored individuals (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010b).

By far the top priority for Canada’s immigration policy is seeking individuals who will contribute to the development of Canada’s economy with high-end skills and/or entrepreneurial resources, and this has been true especially during the Conservative Party government that gained power in 2006. This fits the Conservatives’ neo-liberal orientation toward economic policy, which has become increasingly dominant in the party in the last several decades. And since Canadian immigrants include a proportionately much smaller number of unauthorized or “illegal” international migrants than in the US, the government has much more control over its de facto immigration and “citizen making” policies. While the sponsorship requirements are not as stringent as those for U.S. immigrants, prospective Canadian permanent residents must show proof of economic self-sustainability (i.e., a verified job offer and/or entrepreneurial resources), as well as of good health. Applicants for permanent residency may also be required to obtain a document from the police verifying that they have no criminal record that might prove a threat to Canada’s public safety.

Canada’s expectations of new citizens, in summary

It is evident that, in formal requirements, Canada’s new citizens are expected to meet criteria that are quite similar to those in the United States. They are

expected to:

(1) *obey the law*, though here (in comparison with the U.S.) special emphasis is given to excluding persons accused of war crimes or crimes against humanity, rather than those who have entered the country without authorization;

(2) be *economically self-sufficient*, in a manner that *contributes positively to the economic development* of the country;

(3) meet an *authorized residency requirement* (though only for three years, rather than the five required in the U.S.);

(4) have a working *knowledge* of one of the country's two *official languages*, English and French; and

(5) have demonstrated *knowledge* of the country's political system, as well as the country's history, values, institutions and symbols. The major difference here (in addition to substantive differences between the two country's self-understandings) is that Canada's preparation of new citizens more explicitly focuses on the "rights and responsibilities" of citizenship than does that of the United States, as will be seen in the next section.

Citizen-making: The path to citizenship

How does Canada expect its prospective new citizens to acquire these characteristics? Here is where Canada's approach begins to diverge most significantly from that of the United States, in that Canada's general orientation toward immigrant settlement is more proactive than the predominantly *laissez-faire* approach of the United States (see Schmidt 2007a, for a more elaborate

comparison on this point). And this more proactive general orientation is reflected in Canada's efforts to help immigrants acquire the characteristics necessary for meeting the requirements for naturalization.⁶ Thus, by contrast with the US, Canadian state documents written to aid immigrants in preparing for naturalization provide considerably more support to Canada's prospective citizens. With respect to language learning in preparation for employment and the citizenship exam, for example, the CIC's web-site states: "The Government of Canada, in cooperation with provincial governments, school boards, community colleges and immigrant-serving organizations, offers free language training across the country to adult permanent residents" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010c). As noted in the U.S. section above, this is not something promised by the U.S. government to its own immigrants preparing for the naturalization exam, who are left largely to their own devices.

Citizen-making: Demonstrating worthiness

As in the U.S., those seeking Canadian citizenship must demonstrate their worthiness for membership in the "Canadian family" by passing a citizenship exam, as well as by providing all required documents and taking a citizenship oath. Once again, it is in the *content* of the exams and the oath that some of the most significant differences in citizen-making between the U.S. and Canada appear. The Canadian exam seems to entail a more politically active orientation to the "rights and responsibilities" of citizenship than is true of the U.S. exam. Prospective Canadians, for example, are expected to know some of the practical implications of

the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and they are also expected to know how to register to vote for candidates for public office, as well as the names of their own representatives in the Canadian Parliament and their provincial and local elected representatives (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009).

Like prospective new Americans, new Canadians are expected to be familiar with some of the customs and values of Canadians as a people, but the Canadian citizenship self-study documents spell these out much more substantively, and in much more detail, than do those of the U.S. There is not space here to replicate even a few of the statements articulated there, but let us summarize by saying that new Canadians are expected to sign on to a "Canadian way of life" that emphasizes "fairness, tolerance and respect," "diversity and cooperation," "equal opportunity" (especially between women and men), equal "civil rights," and "environmental responsibility" (summarized in Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010d). In general, it is safe to say that Canada's expectations for its new citizens reflect the country's generally more communitarian heritage, in comparison with the more liberal individualistic tradition in the U.S. (see Bloemraad, 2006, for a systematic, though limited in scope, case-study comparison of citizen making in the U.S. and Canada). Finally, throughout the Canadian documents, the expectation that Canadians are to be more involved in making the country "work" effectively (both politically and economically) and in upholding its collective values is much more pronounced than is the case in comparable United States documents. There are other significant points of comparison as well, but there is not space here to develop them.

Becoming “Dutch”

In the Netherlands, the government expects migrants to participate socially, culturally, and economically in Dutch society. This expectation has been growing ever more explicit in state policies, as government regulation of residence permits has been becoming ever more stringent. That expectation is central to the government’s aim in its policies directed at integrating newcomers. To integrate into society, migrants first need to be *civically* integrated, which is to be achieved through learning the Dutch language and coming to know the society’s norms and values. Considered a condition for integration (*integratie*; Ministerie van VROM n.d.a), this *inburgering* (becoming a burgher) will lead “people [to] feel a bond with Dutch society” (Ministerie van VROM n.d.b).

According to the 2006 Civic Integration Abroad Act (*Wet inburgering buitenland*, WIB), civic integration into Dutch society has to start in the country of origin – for a specific group of migrants. These need to apply ahead of time for an entry visa, the MVV (*Machtiging Voorlopig Verblijf*), and are required to take a language and orientation exam prior to making their application. As part of the preparation materials for this exam, the Ministry of Justice, which has jurisdiction over immigration law, developed a film, ‘Coming to the Netherlands’ (*Naar Nederland* 2005). Before presenting our analysis of the film’s representation of ‘Dutch identity’, ‘the Netherlands’, the targeted migrants and their ‘identity’, and the state’s expectations of them, we begin with the political context in which the 2006 Civic Integration Abroad Act, the basis for contemporary immigration,

citizenship, and integration policies, was established.

It is important to note at the outset a key difference in policy terminology. By contrast with the US and Canada, in the Netherlands the policies addressed in this paper fall under the term *migranten* – migrants – rather than immigrants or immigration. This ties in to the state's history of not seeing itself in the post-WWII period as a country of immigrants (van der Haar and Yanow 2009), which already demarcates it from the other three states studied here. In this section, then, we will primarily use that term.

The historical and political context of contemporary migration policy

The initiative to begin the integration of migrants in their own countries of origin was proposed in two 2002 legislative motions. Conservative-Liberal parliamentary member Blok requested that the government come with proposals that would emphasize the “importance of the essential Dutch values, norms and fundamental rights” in prospective migrants’ visa application procedures (Tweede Kamer 2002-2003, 28600 VI, 60). Christian Democrat parliamentary member Sterk asked the government to present proposals to begin the civic integration of migrants coming to form a family or to reunite with their families – according to the government, about half of the total number of migrants – while they were still in their countries of origin (Tweede Kamer 2003-2004, 29700, 3: 4). On the basis of these two motions the center-right government⁷ decided in the 2003 coalition agreement that would-be migrants would be required to have a basic understanding of the Dutch language prior to entering the Netherlands (Tweede

Kamer 2002-2003, 28637, 19: 14). In the 2004 revision of the civic integration system Memorandum, the government wrote that prospective migrants should also have a basic knowledge of Dutch society (Tweede Kamer 2003-2004, 29543, 2: 5).

The idea behind the initial introduction of these measures was that knowledge of Dutch language and culture prior to arrival in the Netherlands would limit family formation or reunification migrants from ending up with a socio-economic and socio-cultural "deficit" (Tweede Kamer 2003-2004, 29700, 3: 5) once in the Netherlands (Tweede Kamer 2002-2003, 27083, 25; see also Tweede Kamer 2005-2006 30573, 1: 18): "Only with knowledge of the Dutch language and Dutch society can one participate fully and on a basis of equality in Dutch society" (Tweede Kamer 2005-2006, 30308, 7: 117). The government intended the measure to function as a selection criterion, to stimulate the integration of newcomers once they were in the Netherlands, and to limit migration (Tweede Kamer 2003-2004, 29700, 3).

The requirement that prospective migrants pass a basic exam in Dutch language and culture in their country of origin was effectuated in the 2006 Civic Integration Abroad Act (*Wet Inburgering in het Buitenland*, WIB; part of the 2000 Foreigners Act, *Vreemdelingenwet*). This act reinforced existing migrant policies on 'civic integration', which had first become an object of specific legislation with the enactment of the 1998 Civic Integration Act for Newcomers (*Wet inburgering nieuwkomers*, WIN; de Vries 2007). The latter was replaced in 2007 by the Civic Integration Act (*Wet inburgering*; WI), which requires certain groups of migrants holding permanent residence permits to pass a 'civic integration examination'

(*inburgeringsexamen*), which is more comprehensive than the MVV test. These two acts – the 2006 WIB and the 2007 WI – and their associated tests and preparation materials convey the state's expectations with respect to citizen-making.

Entrance requirements: The basic civic integration exam in the country of origin

Since 15 March 2006 people between the ages of 18 and 65 wanting long-term residence in the Netherlands (meaning longer than three months) and who need an MVV – the entrance visa – have to take and pass the 'basic civic integration exam' (*basisexamen inburgering*) at the Dutch embassy or consulate in their country of origin or of residence. In 2008 7277 persons took the MVV test (down from 7708 in 2007): 89% passed on their first try; 31% of the candidates were men; 79% were between 18 and 35 years old; most were Turkish, Moroccan or Chinese nationals (IND 2008, 2009). The exam has two parts: a 15-minute language test,⁸ and a 15-minute test of knowledge about Dutch society.⁹ Available test preparation materials include the *Naar Nederland* film, a manual with 100 questions from which the exam questions are drawn, an audio-CD of the same questions, a booklet with stills from the movie, and the opportunity to practice three different versions of the Test of Spoken Dutch (*Test Gesproken Nederlands*, TGN) online (regulated through personal identification codes).

The target group for the exam is citizens of countries whose entry to the Netherlands requires a visa, who want to migrate either to form a family (*gezinsvorming*) or for family reunification (*gezinshereniging*), or because they are clergy intending to serve a congregation (IND 2009; Tweede Kamer 2003-2004,

29700, 3).¹⁰ The first two cases presume the prior existence in the Netherlands of a spouse, registered partner or unmarried partner. This person must be over 18 years old in the case of family reunification and 21 years old in the case of family forming, earning at least 120% of the minimum wage (in 2010, for family forming this means € 1558.85 a month; for family reunification, € 1299.04; IND n.d.a). This also means that, from the perspective of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (*Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst*, IND), which administers the exam, the candidate has a contact person ('referent') in the Netherlands who can provide the € 70 preparation materials for the basic exam.¹¹ The exam itself, for which the candidate has to register online via the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken*),¹² costs € 350, and the MVV visa for a stay with a partner or family member costs € 830 (IND 2009).

The MVV – a sticker in the migrant's passport - is the key to entry into the Netherlands for members of these groups; the two-part basic exam is the first step in their civic integration trajectory. One key to understanding the intent of the exam lies in who is required to obtain an MVV visa prior to entering the Netherlands for long-term residency. They come from the so-called Third World states of Africa, Latin America, and most of Asia. Categorized in Dutch migrant policy language as "non-Western allochthons" (see Yanow and van der Haar 2009), these are the migrants seen within Dutch society today as problematic, socially and culturally, and who are the target groups of Dutch 'integration policy'. Nationals from other countries are exempt from the visa requirement and therefore from taking the MVV test.¹³ After MVV-obliged migrants (*MVV-plichtigen*) have relocated to the

Netherlands, they apply for a residence permit. As part of that they need to pass the more comprehensive civic integration exam (*inburgeringsexamen*), which they prepare for by taking further language and “civics” courses.¹⁴

Citizen-making through *Naar Nederland*

To the best of our knowledge, *Naar Nederland* is the only government-sponsored film available at this time that not only seeks to introduce would-be immigrants, albeit from selected states, to the behavioral, social, and cultural practices of the host country and its people, but expects them to view it prior to their arrival. The 106-minute DVD was produced by Odyssee Producties, independent filmmakers, together with the independent consultancy agency CINOP, at the request of the Ministry of Justice. It is available in thirteen languages: the original Dutch, plus translations into French, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Kurdish, Modern Standard Arabic, Moroccan Arabic, Tarafit (Rif Berber), Chinese, Russian, Indonesian and Thai (Ministerie van VROM 2009: 15).

The film has eight parts, introducing the topics that can be included in the MIV test: geography, transportation, housing, history, form of government, politics and legislation, Dutch language, raising children and education, healthcare, and work and income. This “set of knowledge elements” came from Ministry of Justice requirements, civic integration experts’ and historians’ advice, ideas from the ‘Dutch canon’¹⁵, and the findings of a survey conducted among migrants, migrant organizations, policy experts and others (CINOP 2005: 4). The original film contained images of a bare-breasted woman emerging from the sea at the beach, a

pop concert including nudity, and two men kissing. To avoid difficulties with the governments of certain countries in which the film was being screened, which were likely to be offended by them, a second version was produced which censors these images (CINOP 2005: 8).

The filmmakers aimed to “provide an informative and realistic image of the Netherlands” (CINOP 2005: 7). Their starting point was the perspective of “a (not so chance-worthy [*kansrijk*]) migrant from all possible parts of the world” (ibid.). A second, more to-the-point, identification of the target group emerges when CINOP explains why the film is available in thirteen languages: to understand “a complex society as the Netherlands” requires using people’s native language, “especially for people from a non-western society” (CINOP 2005: 4). In the Dutch migrant policy context, ‘non-western’ is associated with people who have problems integrating into Dutch society. Identity markers ascribed to this prototypical migrant have been used by the filmmakers to tell a story of the Netherlands and Dutch identity and to demonstrate what is expected of newcomers in terms of attitudes and behavior. The film’s female presenter in her thirties acts as a “friendly guide in a new country.” The film also draws on testimonials from migrants and some Dutch natives with whom viewers might identify and who might create peaceful or even humorous moments in discussing “what people experience in their role as a new migrant” (CINOP 2005: 7).

NL expectations of new citizens: Countering the image of paradise and presenting ‘the real Netherlands’¹⁶

The Netherlands is a small country. It is cold and often rains, the country is

densely populated, there is a lot of traffic, and people are not very welcoming. Many areas are below sea level. In the case of a flood these parts, which is where most people live, would be under water.

This selective list of information is how *Naar Nederland* opens. Presented in the first episode of the introductory chapter of the film, they illustrate the tone of demystification that we find throughout the film. Because of its narrative, aural, and visual form, the film expresses even more clearly than the migrant policy texts themselves the state's expectations of those becoming Dutch. Arguably, these expectations hold for all migrants, even though the film is explicitly intended only for some of them.

The film's central intent appears to be to counter the classic image that potential immigrants often have of the receiving country as "a paradise", a point made explicit only at the end of the film. The subsequent part of the statement offers the more 'realistic' image, addressing this personally to the viewer in the form of a direct question that contains a challenge to meet the state's expectations (emphasis added):

But it [integration] does not happen by itself. There are opportunities in The Netherlands *to build a future together*, but you will have to work hard for it. Do you want that? Can you do it?

What the 'Netherlands as a paradise' image held by the "not so chance worthy migrant" (CINOP 2005: 7) is remains unstated, but the film's focus on socio-economic topics, such as work and housing, suggests that the producers interpreted the 'Netherlands as paradise' primarily in terms of living conditions.

Migration itself is both normalized and problematised. In the film's first part it

is presented as a global phenomenon and part of Dutch history.¹⁷ About current society the presenter states: "By now, the Netherlands has 16 million inhabitants, a significant part of whom has foreign origins. The most renowned is Princess Máxima; she is from Argentina and married to the Dutch crown prince Willem Alexander in 2002." Immediately after that passage, "protest against the number of foreigners" and "tension between groups" are mentioned, against the background of current terrorist attacks worldwide.

In the section about learning the Dutch language, the presenter says, "Dutch is a very difficult language for foreigners", without any further explanation. She emphasizes the importance of starting to learn it in the migrant's country of origin; but then she seems to mitigate expectations, saying, "At this moment you do not have to know a lot". She also makes clear, however, that in the Netherlands it is common for adults to go to school, and she notes that learning the language requires talking to Dutch people. A series of testimonials emphasizes the importance of learning the language to "integrate" and to "succeed" in the Netherlands.

In the section on legislation, the filmmakers foregrounded the principles of equality and prohibition against discrimination, as laid down in Article I of the constitution. The presenter explains that men and women have equal rights, that men and women have the freedom to marry a person of their own choice, that the law prohibits discriminating against men and women because they are homosexual, and that there is freedom of religion. The film then presents four cases of punishable behavior: honor killing, possession of weapons, female circumcision, and

domestic violence. These cases reflect issues that have been prioritized on the political agenda in recent years and which are addressed in integration policies; three of the four concern violence against women and girls. The presentation of the cases is direct and seems intended to warn the viewers about their legal consequences: newspaper headlines pop up; the presenter explains the issue in explicit language; and each example is closed by hammering such as used in court, repeating that these matters are punishable in the Netherlands. The selection of information suggests a focus on family-based migration. It explicitly and firmly counters the image of the Netherlands as a country with unlimited freedom. But the examples lead us to suspect that the filmmakers have taken male, Muslim migrants as their focal audience.

Family issues are addressed at length in the film, perhaps because the target group is family-formation or -reunification migrants. What family and childrearing are about in the Netherlands is mostly explained by a “Dutch” mother. The initial image of a “Dutch family” shows a mother, father, two daughters, and a son all sitting around a table playing a game. The presenter explains that families in the Netherlands are small, that this includes one-parent families as well, and that nuclear families living together with members of the extended family are rare. The film continues with the mother’s testimonial explaining that she values creating a warm and safe nest, characterized by what is usually translated as coziness (*gezelligheid*, a difficult concept to translate which is widely considered to be a national cultural identity marker). The mother does things together with her children, establishes clear rules of conduct, and works to stimulate them in positive

ways. She also mentions that she never hits her children. The film goes on to state that parents are responsible for their children outside the house. Furthermore, with regard to their education, schools expect parents to be actively engaged with their children's education.

With regard to housing, the presenter communicates at the film's outset that people in the Netherlands live indoors, and for that reason houses need to be well constructed. She explains that the Netherlands has both owner-occupied and rental housing. The latter, called "social housing", is intended for people with low incomes and is related to various problems; and it is suggested that viewers are likely themselves to live in social housing neighborhoods. The film emphasizes these elements of social housing: the buildings have been constructed quickly (unlike the housing initially described), so they rapidly develop defects which the renter has to pay for; they are situated in old neighborhoods which "the Dutch" have left and where mostly migrants are living; the neighborhoods are marked by high unemployment, drug use, noise, and fights. A man tells the viewer that he comes from Turkey, shows the viewer his house, and says that if he had to do it again, he would have stayed in Turkey.

The section on work also emphasizes problems for migrants. The film presents as the norm that everybody in the Netherlands has to work, including women with children; but it warns that the unemployment rate among migrants is high, that a diploma obtained in the country of origin is likely to be of lower value in the Netherlands, that the migrant who does not speak Dutch will only be able to find work as a house or office cleaner or gardener, that migrants coming to the

Netherlands for family forming or reunification cannot apply for welfare support, and that migrants themselves will have to do their best “to remove prejudices” and gain the boss’s confidence.

Across several sections of the film, several attitudes and behaviors are presented as being “typically Dutch” (in the phrase commonly used by the Dutch about themselves), thereby reaffirming the image of the Netherlands as a modern liberal democracy. Attitudes include:

- equal roles of men and women
- freedom of religion, sexual preference, and political preference
- acceptance of public nudity.

Behavioral characteristics include:

- the centrality of home life
- societal compromise in handling differences
- the right and duty of all Dutch citizens to do something about criminal offences
- eagerness to volunteer
- directness
- an “open window” culture, meaning one of openness, with nothing to hide (so-called because many homes and apartments have large, picture glass windows in the living room open to the street, with no curtains).

That the common vision of the Dutch nation is oversimplified becomes clear in the reaffirmation and countering of certain stereotypes of liberal modern states. As these states provide freedoms and possibilities, their individualism and wealth

requires independence and an active attitude: "Nothing happens by itself." The image of the Netherlands as a modern, liberal paradise is countered in the opening testimonials, where it is characterized as "bleak, cold, untouchable," requiring individuals to be independent ("But I do have the idea you need to be independent, and that's not possible for everyone") and where people are not always as tolerant as the international image portrays them ("Dutch people really have very little patience"). In the last section the presenter explicitly tries to counter the image of the Netherlands as a paradise when she states that "many people are not rich" and that "many families have financial problems, because "living is expensive".

Citizen making: Worthiness through the filmmakers' eyes -- framing the audience and their expectations

According to the filmmakers, migration to the Netherlands does not only involve moving to another *country*, it means moving to another *culture*. Therefore, knowing that the Netherlands is not a paradise and being presented with a "realistic image of the Netherlands," as described above, is not enough. Migrants are expected to engage Dutch culture proactively: "You are going to the Netherlands, a different culture, how are you going to deal with that?" To answer that question, the movie provides prospective migrants with several pieces of advice. They address socio-economic values in the Dutch society, such as: you should find a job and learn the language as soon as possible, you should educate yourself (for example, in learning how to work with a computer), and as parents, you should motivate your children in their education.

Naar Nederland explicitly identifies gender as an important topic to be

addressed with regard to integration. This is clear not only from the topics it engages, but in the overrepresentation of female characters in the film. Whether the filmmakers were aiming to get female viewers to identify with the female characters or whether they were thinking to emphasize the Netherlands as a country in which women have equal rights and participate actively in Dutch society, what becomes clear is that they perceive the audience as originating from a patriarchic society and as in need of being educated. The topics included in the film enable us to see that the filmmakers were working with a particular image of migrants' "sending societies" – lacking freedom, individual autonomy, and equality, in which the kinds of activities forbidden in The Netherlands, like honor killing and female circumcision, are the norm. This results overall in a patronizing character to the advice given, displaying the kinds of expectations prevalent today in Dutch politics and in the wider society.

Becoming "Israeli"

Because of its founding purpose as a homeland for Jews, Israel has never developed a general immigration policy – if by that one means a policy to regulate the flow of migrants from particular source states or the numbers allowed in over a certain period of time – nor has it developed a policy for non-Jews. The 1950 Law of Return established the right of immigration for all Jews, which the state likens to other states' repatriation of their co-ethnics;¹⁸ the 1952 Law of Citizenship extended this to citizenship, on arrival. It includes immigrants born Jews, defined as having a Jewish mother (the sole possibility under Jewish law [*halacha*]) or

maternal grandmother; of Jewish ancestry (having a Jewish father or grandfather); or converted to Judaism (by halacha, this would have to be only through an Orthodox rabbinical court; citizenship law does not comport with halacha, which has created a number of problems for civil law and procedures¹⁹). A 1970 amendment, designed to meet circumstances of the developing and anticipated immigrant pool, added the children, grandchildren, and spouse of a Jew and the spouse of a child or a grandchild of a Jew.

With respect to non-Jewish immigrants, its economic growth (largely resulting from its high-tech industry) has turned Israel into an attractor state (a condition it shares with some other EU member states, such as Poland; field notes, Study Day, 12/14/09); that and its use of foreign labor (a relatively recent change to longstanding ideology), both developing over the last two decades, have brought attention to "migration management," directed at five distinct areas:

- labor migrants imported temporarily but often remaining illegally (largely from Thailand and the Philippines, for agriculture, construction, and home nursing care);²⁰
- family reunification (of Palestinians residing on either side of the Green Line) and citizenship by marriage;
- trafficking;
- illegal entry and presumably false asylum claims (Africans from Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea coming via the Sinai and Egypt, most of them judged to be economic migrants [presentation, Salomon, 2009]; and
- refugees (Vietnamese boat people and Bosnian, Kosovar, and Sudanese

refugees have been given permanent residence status [CIMI n.d.]).

Like some other EU member states, Israel has also begun developing policies with respect to “returnees,” citizens who emigrated and whom the state is attempting to draw back (field notes, Study Day, 14 December 2009).²¹ Another group for whom policies are not at the moment clear are children of non-Jewish parents who accompanied Jewish partners, entering under the Law of Return, but whose parents later divorced, leaving the children without citizenship or immigrant rights (Ilana Shpaizman, personal communication, 13 February 2010). Citizenship may also be acquired through naturalization, residence or marriage, but only immigrants arriving under the Law of Return are eligible for immigrant policy support (Law of Return 2010). As most newcomer citizens are Jews, the focus of this section will be on them.

Because of the political circumstances underlying its founding – the late 19th century pogroms in Poland and Russia which launched the first waves of migration; the Holocaust, whose survivors were displaced persons often not welcome in their places of origin; expulsions from North African and Eastern European states in the 1950s – Israel has actively sought out Jews worldwide whose lives, livelihood or ties to Judaism were at risk. A network of *shlichim* (representatives of the state or of the Jewish Agency, an NGO actively involved in immigration-related matters) has helped identify Jews in their home countries and worked to prepare them to immigrate, not only with respect to advice concerning employment opportunities and prior language acquisition, but also concerning establishing their Jewish identity prior to their departure. Because it is today much more an open-door immigration

of “choice” than an immigration of “rescue” (presentation, Zeltzer-Zubida, 12/14/09), there is little room for “policy,” and the 1952 Law of Citizenship left little discretion to the Ministry of the Interior to formulate one (presentation, Salomon, 12/14/09). The focus of “citizen-making” in Israel, then, is not on acquiring the legal status of citizenship, but on acquiring an Israeli *national* identity: transforming Jews with multiple national experiences, histories, cultures, and identities into Israeli nationals, through the acquisition of certain cultural knowledge and characteristics.

State activities focus on the integration, or “absorption” (*klita*), of immigrants (*olim*, pl., *oleh/olah*, m./f. sing., persons who “go up”): although Hebrew has a word for immigration in general (*hagirah*), the term commonly used for immigration to Israel is *aliya*, “to go up,” drawing on various aspects of Jewish religious and cultural practices.²² These activities lie in the domain of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption (*misrad l'klitat aliya*), established in the 1970s (CIMI n.d.). Other agencies have also been involved in the funding of these activities, such as the Housing, Labor, and Education and Culture ministries, along with the Jewish Agency. Moreover, although the government has taken its own neo-liberal turn in the last two-plus decades, its immigrant policy is still much more state-sourced and –regulated than privatized.

The procedural context of immigrant policy

The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption is responsible for “the economic, occupational, social, and cultural integration of immigrants (*olim*) during their first

three years in Israel" (with housing-aid eligibility today lasting five years) and for encouraging the promotion of absorption throughout the society (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998). Information appears clearly and thoroughly presented on the webpage, in Hebrew, English, Russian, with Spanish and French materials available (but not Amharic; nor is it in Arabic, one of the state's three official languages, along with Hebrew and English). Because that support is so extensive, it is hard to present all of it (see www.moia.gov.il/Moia_en/HomePage.htm); this section will give a summary.

Immigrants are met at the airport, where the "administrative aspects of absorption" are taken care of:

recording immigrants in the database, issuing official documents [most importantly, the immigrant identity card (*teudat oleh*)], providing pocket money (against the "absorption basket" [see below] and customs grant), initial information of various kinds, referral to temporary housing, and referral to the appropriate agencies for those in need of extra help. (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998)

They are provided with 6 months of health insurance, National Insurance for those under 18, and transport to their initial place of residence (presentation, Kirschenbaum, 2009). Absorption activities include the provision of initial temporary housing or financial aid to pay rent for the first 6 months, intensive courses in basic Hebrew (government-financed *ulpanim*), employment counseling and re-training, help placing children in school, supplemental schoolwork help, high school matriculation exams in the student's native language, university tuition coverage, assistance obtaining driver's licenses, and concessions on military service, customs duties, and income taxes. In past times, as well as with some immigrant groups today (such as the Ethiopians), support extended to the provision

of beds, sheets, pillows, blankets, pots and pans, dishes and cutlery, lamps, desk chairs, and the like.

Language is still seen as the key to successful absorption (along with work or schooling, and knowing the names and addresses of needed contact offices; presentation, Kirschenbaum, 12/14/09). The initial six months of financial support is intended to enable the immigrant to focus on language acquisition, without needing to hunt for work at the same time. This may also have been the initial rationale for providing housing, whether via “absorption centers” in the earlier “direct absorption” programs or via rental support in the present “absorption basket” policies (discussed below). The immigrant is given a personal counselor at a local office of the Ministry; together they build a plan, according to the immigrant’s profile (presentation, Kirschenbaum 12/14/09). A physician, for example, might get an ulpan (Hebrew language classes), professional courses, occupational refresher [*histaglut*] or relicensing courses, or referrals to training courses and English classes (for professional purposes). In certain occupational fields (primarily science- and engineering-related), depending on the employer and the position, wages can be subsidized for various periods of time, serving as an incentive to employers to hire immigrants (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998). In addition, the Ministry has been using work/live situations to settle “*gar’inim*” (“cells” of immigrants, formed in their home country) of students, professionals or families (e.g., in such established cities as Ashkelon and Kfar Saba; interview, Khanin, 12/9/09).

Policy changes: Toward privatization via "direct" vs. "indirect" absorption

The election of the center-right Likkud government in 1986 marked a significant shift in immigrant policy. Whereas up to that time, Israel had been marked by the communal character of its collective settlements and a social welfare state, the new government brought about a "de-socialization of organizational life," in the words of Dr. Ze'ev Khanin, the Chief Scientist of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, with the increasing "marketization" of services (interview, 12/9/09). In addition to expressing the government's neo-liberal ideology, this shift reflected the perception that earlier policies made *olim* overly dependent on the state, such that they were not taking action for. Moreover, it was intended to be responsive to the specific character of the immigrant pool, in particular, immigrants from the (Former) Soviet Union (FSU). Those who had arrived in some numbers in the 1970s were met with "indirect absorption" via "absorption centers" and centrally determined administrative criteria, which was later perceived as not taking into account their personal agency. Awareness in the 1980s of difficulties in absorbing this group was a spur to a major policy reorganization for the anticipated 1990s FSU immigration (presentation, Shinhar, 12/14/09).

The size and character of the immigrant groups partially explains the shifts in immigrant policy. Total immigration to Israel from all sources during the 1990s was 956,319, about 1/6th of its existing population. Of these, 821,763 came from Asian and European Russia combined; significant numbers from Argentina and France joined them (Central Bureau of Statistics 2007). The European Russians, in particular, were engineers, physicians, scientists, artists, musicians; under the

influence of Likkud neoliberal ideology, the feeling was that they could take care of themselves – they had family and other connections already in Israel, they had initiative and knew how to work society, and they could find employment on their own, especially in the defense or developing high tech sectors, much more efficiently through a privatized system (interview, Khanin, 12/9/09). The perceived characteristics of this immigrant group came together with the prevailing political ideology to effect what the Ministry describes as “a radical and irreversible revolution” in a “new approach to the immigrant”: “Direct Absorption” (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998).

The term itself is not new; what is new is how it is being understood and implemented today. The general absorption pattern was established in pre-independence years: immigrants who were preceded by family or countrymen were usually helped by them to settle, often in cities and suburbs. After independence, those who had desired skills and/or capital – mostly educated refugees from the urban centers and towns of Europe – were able (and allowed) to contend on the open market and settle themselves in cities, towns or agricultural areas, as they chose. Immigrants from rural towns and villages of North Africa (French and Spanish Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya), the Middle East (Kurdistan, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, etc.), and elsewhere (India, Poland, Rumania) arrived in most cases without already-established networks or capital; they lacked (or were told they lacked) useful skills. These immigrants were integrated through what in the 1970s came to be called “direct absorption”: the governmental representative at the port or airport sent arriving groups of immigrants to a transit camp (*ma’abara*)

or, later, to an apartment or a caravan in a development town²³, where they might also be given language classes, but little else. Tales abound of families put on trucks and told they were being brought to the city, only to find themselves in a new town somewhere in the middle of the southern desert (see, e.g., Kishon 1964).

Immigrants arriving in the late 1960s to the mid-1980s encountered a different policy: "indirect absorption" through "absorption centers" [*merkazei klita*], residential hostels opened in 1965 by the Jewish Agency to address the needs of academics, professionals (*Facts about Israel* 1977: 92), and entrepreneurs. This was the overall characteristic of this wave of immigrants: 205,000 predominantly Western Europeans, Argentinians, Soviet Union emigres, and "*Anglo-Saxons*" (from North America and the British Commonwealth). Mostly financially independent, they did not need (or want) to be dependent on the state; only the Soviet Georgians, who did not have these means, were subject to direct absorption in development towns (e.g., Afula Ilit). Largely subsidized by the government, these absorption centers provided a set of immigrant services under one roof: *ulpanim* (intensive Hebrew language courses), employment services, school placement help for the immigrant's children, and other assistance. Policy also included tax rebates and customs exemptions, on the argument that having the automobiles and appliances to which they were accustomed overseas would incentivize such educated immigrants and facilitate their absorption.²⁴ With a temporary residential base in the absorption center and their own capital, they had time to find housing on the open market, purchased at times with government loans at beneficial rates.

Today, direct absorption appears to combine some elements of both direct and indirect absorption of earlier times. It still means that immigrants are largely on their own; but they receive extensive state support, under a new ideology: "immigrants integrate themselves as they wish rather than being directed by absorption clerks to places and ways of life not necessarily suited to them" (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998). The new policy was intended to cut bureaucratic red tape by minimizing contacts between immigrants and the authorities. It is presented as a more flexible, "autonomy" or "empowerment" system (CIMI n.d.) that rests on the immigrant's "freedom of choice" coupled with the Ministry's "provision of resources" and "assistance at specified intervals." Integration also rests, however, on a set of "informal absorption systems," including the influence of relatives and the wider society during everyday interactions, the development of which is part of immigrant policy (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998).

The major change is the replacement of the absorption centers and the centralized determination of what immigrants could get with an "absorption basket" [*sal klita*] from which choices can be made, including such things as:

1. vouchers for hotel accommodation, basic expenses, and apartment-hunting during the initial absorption period;
2. the first 12 months' of rent;
3. assistance with property taxes and utilities;
4. half a year's worth of living expenses, covering the period of Hebrew-language studies;
5. costs of children's education;

6. purchase of basic furnishings.

Up to 20% of the first year's allotment, intended to cover initial expenses and rent for the first three months, is disbursed at the airport; the rest is deposited into a bank account set up once immigrants provide a home address (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998).²⁵ The ulpanim (under the direction of the Ministry) have apparently taken over the service coordination role held previously by the absorption centers (and the Jewish Agency). Employment information and counseling are provided there, as is trouble-shooting of bureaucratic problems (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998).

The new policy of self-determination turned out not to work for everyone, such as rural FSU immigrants, single mothers (a large percentage of FSU immigrants; Ilana Shpaizman, personal communication, 13 February 2010), and the elderly. For the latter, the Ministry rented small hotels and turned them into absorption centers, where an older person could get a small room (interview, Khanin, 12/9/09). It has also not worked well for at least two other groups, both coming from more traditional, and in some cases less developed settings: Ethiopians, the larger group, numbering 78,577 since 1980 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2007) – coming from a rural, agricultural society by way of transit camps in Addis Ababa and elsewhere, “a flight of 4 hours brings them from a different era” (presentation, Zeltzer-Zubida, 12/14/09); and immigrants from the Caucasus region (Kavkaz) and Buchara, both Former Soviet Union, many of whom, contrary to the stereotype, came from urban settings with higher education (Ilana Shpaizman, personal communication, 13 February 2010). It is the Ethiopians who

garner most public attention. Unlike the other recent, large immigrant groups – the Russians, French, and Argentinians – Ethiopian immigrants have been largely illiterate; they have been living in “African huts” in rural villages, working as “subsistence farmers in an extremely non-western setting” (CIMI n.d.), their agriculture basic, with no machinery to speak of; and their children have not been in school (presentation, Zeltzer-Zubida, 12/14/09). Their absorption continues to be run through absorption centers, rather than through the open-market policies of direct absorption; and immigrant policy makes special provisions: they have 15 years of “rights” (the items in the absorption basket; interview, Khanin, 12/9/09) and in some cases, even in the second generation (Ilana Shpaizman, personal communication, 13 February 2010), whereas members of other immigrant groups are entitled to three years for some things and 10 for matriculation exams and vocational training (Ilana Shpaizman, personal communication, 13 February 2010). For instance, Ethiopians have unlimited university tuition support for up to 15 years; they can leave the university without finishing their studies and return within those 15 years with full support. Other immigrants receive tuition waivers if they begin their studies within the first three years of immigration (army service, which is mandatory within a certain age range, can defer that limit), and there is an overall three-year limit (interview, Khanin, 12/9/09). Still, the Ethiopians’ absorption has been problematic (as has that of the other two groups). According to Zeltzer-Zubida (presentation, 12/14/09), it is not a matter of inadequate financial support. We are, she says, “repeating the same mistakes we made in the 1950s,” a sentiment echoed by Shinhar (presentation, 12/14/09), in reference to

the treatment of the North Africans and Middle Easterners, who were sent to transit camps or development towns in areas remote from urban and cultural centers.²⁶

Israel's expectations of new citizens and veterans

Unlike the other cases presented here, worthiness is not at issue; all that is needed is "Jewish" identity under the 1952 or 1970 laws. The only thing that might be prepared ahead of time is documentation of Jewish identity or basic language acquisition; but unlike the other three states discussed here, there are no language or cultural tests to be taken to qualify for entry, for citizenship, or for immigrant policy support. But this does not mean that the acquisition of the immigrant ID card automatically turns a new immigrant into "an Israeli." Until the 1990s, there had been tremendous social pressures to become "Israeli" according to a fairly clear model: first names and family names were to be Hebraized; speaking any language other than Hebrew – e.g., one's mother tongue – in public was considered shameful, as was a non-Israeli accent; knowledge of Israeli geography, Jewish customs (although one need not be observant), and native-born (*tsabar*, "cactus") attitudes (primarily, directness and an emotional toughness) were expected. Social pressures to conform to that model were strong; there was no recognition of the hybridizing aspects of integration processes (see Shimoni 2007).

Here, too, things have largely changed, thanks both to the size of the Russian immigration relative to the total population and to the growth of worldwide travel that has brought young people after their army service to all corners of the world, from Nepal to Phuket to Amsterdam, for extended sojourns, introducing

them to other ways of living, other foods, other music. "The great numbers of Russians forced us to accept their culture, language, theater..." Zeltzer-Zubida (presentation, 12/14/09) said. "They forced us to respect different cultures. ...Then came the Ethiopians, the French, the South Americans [Argentinians]. We learned to respect and to encourage people to be connected to their roots." The Russian immigration forced a greater variety in what "being Israeli" could mean; it also brought a recognition of the emotional costs of immigrating: "Denying one's origins and one's language..." something previous expectations of new immigrants enforced, "affects you personally, and it affects your family" (Zeltzer-Zubida, presentation, 12/14/09). Such a view is now articulated on the Ministry webpage: "The great importance of preserving ethnic cultural heritage is acknowledged; instead of advocating a 'melting pot,' each group is helped to preserve its heritage and uniqueness" (Ministry of Immigrant Absorption 1998).

In short, the "melting pot" model of forced assimilation has been gradually replaced by "the American pizza" as a model of society – "a common base, with different toppings" (Pines, presentation, 12/14/09; Zeltzer-Zubida, presentation, 12/14/09, made a parallel observation). Still, adoption of this more multi-cultural view is not uniform: its implementation varies across ministries, as well as within single ministries between officials at upper levels and street-level bureaucrats (e.g., school teachers); and Ethiopians continued to Hebraize their names through the 1990s (Ilana Shpaizman, personal communication, 13 February 2010).

What *is* expected is a willingness to join one's own efforts to the project of developing and maintaining the state (by becoming a productive member of the

workforce) and sustaining its Jewish character (through learning Jewish and Israeli history and religious customs). Ministry policies instituted by the mid-1980s provide opportunities for the latter: the distribution of High Holiday prayerbooks, information booklets on all Jewish/Israeli festivals, festival parties and packets (apples and honey for Rosh Hashana, the “four species” for Sukkot, menorahs for Hanukkah), two field trips to historical sites, including a mandatory trip to Jerusalem, lectures on Judaism, heritage, society, economy, geography, civics, and so on are part of the absorption basket. More than that: Ministry policies encourage veteran citizens to volunteer to aid in the absorption of new immigrants, hosting them at home, helping them learn the language, accompanying them to agency offices and acting as translators. Absorption officials make the point that 80% of the state’s citizens are themselves immigrants or the children or grandchildren of immigrants. By implication, one might say that the state expects new immigrants, having experienced the voluntarism of veterans, also to contribute, in time.

In short, Israel is in the process overall of adopting a more “multi-cultural” model of society. The pizza’s “common base” is commonly perceived as being a Jew and knowing Hebrew. But Jewish identity has also been called into question by both the Russian and the Ethiopian immigrations, in particular the former. As Lustick (1999) notes, the large numbers of non-Jews among the Russians – the percentages he names, citing various government officials and Orthodox rabbis, range from 20% to over 50% – has posed a problem for statisticians, leading them to fudge the questions and categories in census and other surveys. In his view,

what is emerging is a common base of being “not-Arab.” And yet this is also not quite accurate, as the Druze – Arab, but not Muslim – have long been seen and treated as Israelis, serving in the army. Moreover, a sizable number of Palestinian-Israelis identify with Israeli culture and nationality: music, foods, sports, television programs, films, and other elements, including native-born Hebrew accents, and the current lack of another option make them part of this base – and a welcome one, among certain segments of the Jewish-Israeli population.

Explaining immigrant policy

What might explain these differences in immigrant policy across these four states? One might imagine that the degree of state-funded assistance might reflect the relative size of the national budget, or of the state’s population size and the size of its immigrant population relative to that, or of the size of the land mass as an indicator of its absorptive capacity. None of these, however, explains the differences here: the US and Canada are closer to each other in land mass by contrast with The Netherlands and Israel, which are themselves rather close in size, yet within these pairs assistance is not comparable. Although Israel has a smaller area, it has a great deal of open space away from the metropolitan areas (without touching on the issue of Palestine and its lands), and through its central planning programs and population dispersion policy (for water and security reasons), it has exercised a strong hand, via its initial “direct absorption” policy, to place immigrants where the state wanted them, something we do not see in the other cases. The US has a much larger budget than Israel’s, yet Israel provides much

greater assistance; Israel has a larger proportional immigrant population, although fewer in absolute numbers, than the US – with just one region in New York, Brooklyn, accounting for 50,000 immigrants in one year recently (van Dalen 2009). Canada may have a relatively large land mass, but the whole country has fewer people than the US state of California. These data are summarized at the top of Table 1 (not included here).

It has been suggested that neoliberal or other ideological views account for the differences (e.g., Shpaizman 2010). For instance, Israel's founding ideology – to be a homeland for Jews – is often offered as an explanation of its immigration "policy"; but this does not explain the extent of the support provided by the state, an immigrant policy that far surpasses any of the other states examined here. Choices could have been made to provide far less or to leave their "absorption" entirely up to individuals, as had been the case with the first three waves of immigration (prior to Independence).

We do, however, find a distinct link between immigrant policies and an overall national culture – as if the very act of negotiating these policies itself is an aspect of the "citizen-making" of their substance. Our initial comparative analysis across the four cases highlights the following features.

1. Neoliberalism and the responsibility for integrating. All four of these cases manifest a rise in neoliberalism. But this plays out differently in each one with respect to the matter of responsibility for integration-focused activities. In the US, responsibility rests largely on the individual or on voluntary associations – but this

has long been the case: the US has never had a governmentally sponsored immigrant policy, and integration remains the individual's almost sole responsibility. In Israel, by contrast, a mid-1980s governmental shift toward the right came on the background of a longstanding labor government and communally-focused sociopolitical culture. Even where immigrant policy today emphasizes individual choice and responsibility, the government still provides financial support and organizational-administrative infrastructure for a long list of activities, from language classes to housing to education. In keeping with neoliberal ideas, however, the Ministry of Absorption now emphasizes the responsibility of veteran citizens to help integrate newcomers (e.g., by accompanying them to governmental or other offices where they can assist with translating between Hebrew and the immigrant's language).

Canada and The Netherlands are somewhere in between. Canada has an explicit and proactive national policy for integrating immigrants and encouraging them to become citizens. Moreover, the Canadian Federal government provides funds, along with the provincial governments and non-governmental organizations, for language classes and for certain aspects of economic integration, and it also has sponsored a program in which Canadian nationals are encouraged to mentor immigrants to facilitate their integration experiences. The Netherlands is closer to the US in that it places responsibility for their integration on migrants themselves, with no state support. At the same time, like Israel although less formally, the Netherlands encourages its Dutch-born citizens to get involved in helping migrants to integrate, for instance in acting as language "coaches."

We would array these, relative to each other and roughly, as follows:

Less state
responsibility

More state
responsibility

US

NL

Canada

Israel

2. Political and cultural commitments of citizen-making policy. We can also array the orientations toward citizen-making on a continuum, with bureaucratic formalism at one end and explicit cultural elements with a communitarian dimension on the other. In the case of the US, citizen-making policies are very *laissez-faire* and highly formalistic. The English language and history/civics tests are focused less on cultural dimensions than on nationalistic ones seemingly designed to encourage patriotism more than civic participation. Canada's "knowledge of citizenship" exam, on the other hand, is explicitly concerned with citizens' rights and obligations to participate in governance. It tries to encourage new Canadians to have a sense of responsibility for the common good, as well as tolerance and respect for the country's commitment to the maintenance of cultural diversity.

For The Netherlands and Israel, cultural elements of polity-membership are much stronger. Both share a community orientation that is absent from US practices and political culture (although it was present at the founding of the US and continued to be an active part of local government in New England towns through the 1970s, where town meetings were still held regularly and made a part of secondary school curricula). The Netherlands' language test – at least to judge from the sample materials available on-line at no cost – is as much a test of

everyday knowledge (e.g., when and how to put the garbage out for collection) as it is of vocabulary and sentence structure, and both the MVV and the extended tests engage the kinds of cultural knowledge illustrated at length in the DVD, which gives governmental operations rather short shrift. Its procedural dimensions, however, have been growing as well; but as these seem to us subservient to the cultural demands (especially by contrast with US formalism), we place it at that end of the continuum.

As Israel has no requirements or tests and as the immigration and citizenship laws' definitions of Jewish identity are rather broad, requiring less stringent documentation than the religious authority, there is little in the way of bureaucratic formalism. It is in the ancillary activities provided by the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption – ritual “supplies” for the holidays, tours of the country, prayerbooks, and so forth – that one sees the focus on cultural expectations, although these expectations appear today much more open and “looser” than they had been into the 1990s and than those conveyed in The Netherlands. The tours, for example, seem to be oriented toward inculcating a particularly Israeli cultural fondness for such exploration as they are fostering a connection to the land.²⁷

Bureaucratic
formalism

Cultural
expectations

US

Canada

Israel

The Netherlands

3. Ideas about integrating newcomers: Laissez-faire, forced compression, and the

rise of "multiculturalism"? It is possible that the idea of multiculturalism – a policy that aims for a peaceful accommodation among a variety of distinctive cultural groups living within the jurisdiction of the state, avoiding pressures aimed at cultural uniformity – has become a marker of being a modern state (Wade 2010). For Israel, until the 1990s, becoming a citizen also meant becoming "Israeli," where what that meant was clear and singular (tied up with language, accent, and cultural identity). Since then, however, the notion that one needed to relinquish all other identity markers, in a forced "melting pot," has given way to the notion of Israeliness as "an American pizza," with a common base (language, but not necessarily accent, and cultural identity, but not necessarily Jewish-ness). The Netherlands has long seen itself as a "tolerant" society in which difference was part of the landscape – as long as it could be regularized within one of its existing "pillars" (Catholic, Protestant, or social-liberal); and the post-World War II period of shared national identity was seen as not being penetrated (or hybridized or otherwise affected) by migrants who, as temporary workers, would return to their countries of origin. The idea of multiculturalism initially found fertile ground, fitting with the notion of tolerance and minimal immigrant requirements or expectations, as the state perceived itself as not being an immigrant society. In recent years, however, the state has been struggling with this self-image and, in direct opposite of Israel's development, has moved away from the idea of multiculturalism, at the same time that its expectations and requirements of migrants have grown stronger. (We find it interesting to note that the Netherlands has no metaphor for such integration discussions and expectations – no melting pot, mosaic or pizza – most

likely because it has not seen itself for the last 65 years as a country of immigrants. Its present struggle over integration policies is an expression of having to come face to face with the idea that the "guest" workers were staying on, that they did not fit into the pillar structure within which differences had been accommodated for 2/3 of the 20th century,²⁸ and that the newcomers' differences from the veteran residents were not only striking but also challenged many of the closely-held values common across WW2 and post-War generations.)

Canada's self-image as a mosaic of cultural communities is also reflected in its immigrant policies, which require participation but do not dictate what "a good/real Canadian" has to look like, beyond a commitment to tolerance of diversity and willingness to learn the dominant languages. The US remains a political cultural puzzle on this score. Its original melting pot image, which required abandoning any prior markers – Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson both inveighed against hyphenated Americans in the early 1900s – began to be contested during the 1970s by the image of the "mixed salad," at the same time that hyphenated identities became much more normalized and even desirable (Yanow 2003). Its immigrant policies, however, have not changed to keep pace with this shift (and anti-immigration policies and public opinion have grown stronger over these same decades).

Strong
multiculturalism

Forced
conformity

Canada

US

Israel

NL

These points and other aspects of the cases are summarized in Table 2 [not included here; to be presented at the conference].

Concluding thoughts

As this paper was intended to present our initial analysis of these four cases, we do not at this time have conclusions. With respect to directions for future research, we consider this to be our starting point, and we expect this section of the paper to be developed as we proceed further with our analysis.

Notes

¹ In Estonia and Lithuania, for instance, governmental administrative structures have recently been reorganized to create new departments or even new ministries that focus attention on integrating migrants into the dominant society. In other cases, such as the Czech Republic, what had been created in 1993 as a counseling center for immigrants has by now grown into a full-fledged NGO (presentations by state representatives attending the “Study Visit for Integration Professionals from EU Member States: Immigrant Integration and Diversity in Israel” (14-17 December), sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jerusalem and the A. Ofri International Training Center in partnership with the Israel Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and the Center for International Migration and Integration, JDC (Ramat Rahel, 14 December).

² In the 1986 Immigrant and Refugee Control Act, “amnesty migrants” – those already present in the US, albeit illegally – were legalized (given green cards, on showing proper documentation), but not given automatic citizenship.

³ ESL is a recognized field of occupational education and employment.

⁴ We will add more information later about the timeline over which this process unfolds (applications are made first; how long between that and the test date; both tests on same date? interview, too? and then how long, on average, to the swearing-in ceremony?), because it is rather different from the NL process and very different from Israel’s (the US is a group ceremony, not an individual one, often with a large number of new citizens being sworn in simultaneously in one ceremony; many, if not most, dress up for the occasion, which is marked in ceremonial fashion with the giving of flowers and private, family- and/or friend-based celebratory lunch or dinner; sometimes news media attend, sometimes with a cultural celebrity or a political leader).

⁵ We should point out that a “Task Force on New Americans,” composed of high-level Federal agency personnel and headed by the Secretary of the Homeland Security Department, was established by former President George W. Bush, in 2006, and the task force issued a report (“Building an Americanization Movement for the Twenty-First Century”) that explicitly called for a more explicit policy of cultural assimilation for U.S. newcomers. However, the Report seems to have received little attention in U.S. politics, although it remains available on the USCIS web-site:

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=9a1d9ddf801b3210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=9a1d9ddf801b3210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD>.

⁶ There is not space here to discuss Quebec’s somewhat separate approach to immigrant settlement. For a good overview and assessment, see Carens 2000, Chapter 5.

⁷ The second Balkenende administration, consisting of Christian Democrats and conservative and progressive liberals, governed between 2003 and 2006.

⁸ The language test can include the following: listening and repeating sentences, listening and answering short questions, giving antonyms of words, and repeating a brief story (Ministerie van VROM 2009: 11). The command of the language has to be at the A 1 minus level of the Common European Framework of Reference, a European Union standard for linguistic competence.

⁹ Both are taken using a telephone line linked to a computer and speech recognition software.

¹⁰ In the past 60 years, migration has related to former colonies, the state’s labor needs, family reunification issues resulting from those, and asylum from strife elsewhere. The first category includes people from the former Dutch Indies (Indonesia), Surinam, and the Dutch Antilles. Temporary labor migrants (‘guest workers’, *gastarbeiders*), many of whom stayed in the Netherlands, came from Greece, Italy, former Yugoslavia, Cape Verde, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, and Turkey. Family reunification migrants came from these groups, joining the laborers who remained.

¹¹ According to the publisher, 8814 sets (exam plus preparation materials) were sold between March 2008 and April 2009 (IND 2009).

¹² The registration form is available in Dutch and in English, and asks for information on the candidate and the contact person (*referent*) in the Netherlands (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken n.d.).

¹³ Nationals from the following countries are exempted: in Europe, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, and Vatican City; Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the USA; and South Korea and Japan. Moreover, people with Surinamese nationality (Surinam was a Dutch colony until independence in 1975) who can prove that they took at least Dutch language courses at the level of primary education (IND n.d.b) are also exempted. This

group would be considered non-western allochthon and as such are part of the target group of integration policies, but with respect to 'basic integration,' the government apparently considers them to be ready to migrate to the Netherlands without additional preparation and testing.

¹⁴ From January 2010 onwards, newcomers had to have passed this exam in order to apply for a permanent residence permit, including for asylum (IND 2010). Those who passed the MVV test have to pass the extended exam within three and a half years of entry; other migrants – those resident for longer time, prior to the passing of the 2006 law – have up to five years to take the exam (Ministerie van VROM n.d.c.).

¹⁵ The Dutch canon is an official overview of 50 key events in Dutch history taught in school curricula.

¹⁶ This section is based on a fuller analysis of the film (Völke, van der Haar, and Yanow 2010).

¹⁷ The history chapter links migration to the Dutch Golden Age in the 17th century, to trade, colonization, slavery, and the reception of religious refugees, and then to de-colonization and the arrival of guest workers in the post-WW II era.

¹⁸ These are people who, for various reasons (e.g., expulsion during war), have been living elsewhere: e.g., ethnic Germans expelled from the former Soviet Union; people of Greek or Bulgarian origins; a "native Armenian" living in the Armenian republic; Italians exiled from areas that were under Austrian rule before 1920; Russian citizens of "Finnish origin," defined as a person whose parents or at least two grandparents were registered as Finnish citizens or as someone with a strong link to Finland but who is unable to provide documents proving their origins as such, extended to the applicant's spouse and their children; any person of "Irish origin or affiliation" (Rubinstein 2000). Rubinstein notes that these countries differentiate between nationality and citizenship, "and the compromise between the two approaches - a national state and equality of all citizens - is made by combining the definition of the state as a state of the ethnic nationality and the promise of equal rights for all citizens." The repatriation argument could well be claimed for the right of return claimed by Palestinians, an issue beyond the scope of this discussion.

¹⁹ The evidence required for immigration and citizenship may be less stringent than that required by the rabbinate for purposes of marriage and burial. Today's population includes many, in particular of "Russian" and Ethiopian origins, who are not deemed Jewish by halacha, leading to proactive policy efforts to educate all new immigrants in Jewish history and customs, to convert Ethiopians prior to their immigration or require a pledge of intent to convert as a precondition for including them in the prospective immigrant group, and to interesting discussions concerning contemporary immigrant policy strategy choices (interview, Khanin, 12/9/09) and the "Jewish" character of the state (see, e.g., Lustick 1999).

²⁰ A problem has arisen concerning the Israel-born children of labor migrants. Since 2005, their parents could acquire citizenship by virtue of their birth (presentation, Salomon, 12/14/09); some have even served in the army, but their own status has been called into question as they reach majority. As of the writing of this paper, all decisions concerning

persons' status have been put on hold and the matter is under review by the Supreme Court, which has one year to reach a determination.

²¹ Emigration policy is another side of this coin. We note that in The Netherlands for a period of time, state policy encouraged emigration, both because there was a shortage of employment and because of the feeling that the coastal metropolitan region from Amsterdam to Utrecht (the *randstad*) was overcrowded. This policy lingers, for example, in webpages intended to assist emigrants (e.g., <http://emigratienet.nl/home>). In Israel, by contrast, for many years emigration was considered akin to betrayal, a feeling captured in the label attached to emigrants – *yordim* (literally, those who go down) – which used to be said in a derogatory tone of voice. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin described them in the mid-1970s as “‘*nefolet shel nemushot*’ (roughly, ‘the fallen among the weaklings,’ which in Hebrew is highly insulting)” (thanks to Shaul Shenhav, personal correspondence, 5 January 2010, for this reminder). This attitude has changed in the last 10-15 years.

²² *Aliya* and *oleh/olah/olim* remain the terms in both policy and everyday usage for all immigration to Israel, irrespective of religion: the then Jewish Agency chairman, Sallai Meridor, in 2004 spoke about 300,000 olim “who are not Jewish according to the halacha” (Shaul Shenhav, personal correspondence, 5 January 2010). The terms derive from Biblical roots in religious rituals and ceremonies that reflect the elevated geography of Jerusalem with respect to the rest of the country. The three annual harvest festivals (Passover/Spring, Shavu’ot/early Summer, Sukkot/Fall) were pilgrimage holidays drawing on the agricultural cycle and requiring “going up on foot” (*aliya baregel*) to Jerusalem for sacrificial offerings in the Temple. The same term is also used in prayer services three times a week in reference to being called “up” to the synagogue dais to read from the torah scroll; in that context, it is an honor, a sense of which attaches as well to the pilgrimages and their sacrificial orders. One might say that the term is largely “normalized” within the Hebrew language and everyday discourse, a “conventional metaphor” (Lakoff 1987) whose source meanings in religious practices remain readily accessible. Khanin (interview, 12/9/09) drew the distinction between *hagira*, the “generic” term for immigration, as a sociological phenomenon and *aliya* as expressing an ideological dimension.

²³ The major social policy during the state’s first two decades was population dispersal away from urban centers (for security, water resource, and economic reasons). Newcomers were settled on communal agricultural settlements or transit camps (*ma’abarot* - tent “cities”) spread around the countryside, as well as in abandoned Arab houses in towns (e.g., Ramla, Lod, Bet She’an). The tent cities and these towns were turned into “development towns” (the equivalent of Britain’s “new towns”; see, e.g., Lichfield 1970, Spiegel, 1967). By the 1970s, these had become known for their overcrowded housing conditions, high unemployment, high percentage of welfare recipients, and poor schools and low educational achievement. Awareness was dawning that this set of policies had created a second class of citizens. The Israel Corporation of Community Centers, a government corporation funded primarily by the Ministry of Education and Culture, opened the first of its community centers [*matnassim*] in 1972-73, charged with integrating residents into the dominant culture of the state through the use of various kinds of nonformal educational programs (Yanow 1996).

²⁴ For example, they were excused from the 100% customs duty levied at that time on cars, ovens, refrigerators, and other “luxury” items.

²⁵ Shmuel Shinhar (presentation, 12/14/09), the father of the basket idea, tells a fascinating story of its invention. He headed a small, clandestine committee of civil servants who, in 1986, based on interviews with the immigrants who had already arrived and on contacts in the Soviet Union, foresaw the potential of Israel's receiving a large number of the 3,000,000 Jews then living there. They saw that the absorption centers would be unable to handle the influx, which would require all the country's hotel rooms – an insufficient number. Up to this point, the idea was entirely “intellectual”: they had no data, no public discussion, and no idea where so many immigrants would be housed. By checking the non-operating electricity and water meters, they found 60,000 available apartments. The centers, they saw, fostered dependency on Jewish Agency bureaucrats, e.g., to fix mail or plumbing problems. In their view, immigrants could take their own responsibility for such matters, if they had enough money. They also envisioned a role for local governments taking responsibility for their own residents and providing language, social, and educational programs. They estimated the total costs at \$22,000 per person or \$50,000 per family. But this would require circumventing the existing system and moving toward an open market model. Putting all of this together, in March they filed their report recommending a total change in the system. In April the Minister took it to the government for a vote. It was accepted by the Prime Minister without any public debate; two key MKs, the immigrant associations, and the Jewish Agency opposed it. The Regulations Committee met in 1987 and issued the first policy regulations. This had been done at the nadir of Soviet immigration. In 1989, “the floodgates opened.”

²⁶ The failures of the state to absorb them, especially when contrasted with immigrant policies toward later, non-Mizrahi immigrants, led to demonstrations and riots and the rise of Israel's Black Panther movement (named after the US one) in the 1960s-1970s – and to changes in various social policies. Asked whether the problems with Ethiopian integration reflected racism, Zeltzer-Zubida answered by way of the example of university students, for whom immigrant policy is working better but who hit a “glass ceiling” when it comes to employment. Charges of racism have certainly been leveled, and “Ethiopian” has become a label connoting “backwardness” and more, much as the race-ethnic-based slur “Moroccan knife” used to be used in the 1960s-1970s. The newspapers carry many stories about discriminatory attitudes arising in military and school settings. One story, related on the basis of anonymity (to DY, 8/12/09), suggests the problem. A child returned home one day and told his mother that he had been taken out of class, along with other classmates, for special instruction. His mother asked him why; he did not know. She investigated and learned that “all the Ethiopians” had been removed for additional tutoring. Furious, she asked how they could do this without checking her son's records – he was earning top grades – and without consulting the parents. It is a classic case of discriminatory labeling based on stereotyping.

²⁷ One might even call the concept of the “tiyul” (walking tour) a national institution. This point emerges in Yaakovi's (2004) discussion of the design of the “new” Supreme court building; see also Zerubavel (1995).

²⁸ The state has made efforts to get the Turks, Moroccans (who are mostly Berbers), and others to form an Islamic pillar, which would parallel the old, religion-based pillars now fading from view. That effort did not work, and more recently, state agencies have attempted to get Moslem women to take on a leadership role, in effect as representatives of that community and thereby “pillarizing” it. See Roggeband 2010.

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