The process of ethnogenesis among Haitian and Israeli immigrants in the United States

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Abstract

This article examines the process of ethnic identity formation among two different groups of recent immigrants to the United States: secular kibbutz-born Israelis and middle-class Haitians. While the two groups are different in a number of ways, they share an ambivalence with the identities that American society would assign to them – as Jews and blacks respectively. By contrasting these two case studies we identify the role of the 'proximal host', the category to which the immigrants would be assigned following immigration. The determination of the ultimate definition of the ethnic identities of these immigrants is a result of the interaction of the conception of identity the immigrants bring with them from their countries of origin, the definitions and reactions of the proximal host group, and the overall ordering and definitions of American society. The ambivalence of both groups of immigrants towards their post-immigration identities is a result of both macro-forces determining the definition of categories and micro-forces of individual choice. In conclusion we show that because of the primacy of race in American society, Israelis are likely to face many more options in the determination of their identities, than are Haitians, although they both face a similar structural dilemma.

Introduction

The existence and ongoing nature of ethnic groups has been studied from both macro- and micro-approaches. In the macro-approach theorists have looked at the historical and geographical determination of ethnic groups, the content of the cultures and traits which comprise the group, and the nature of power relations in societies which put one or another group in a position higher or lower in the hierarchy. The micro-approach has been concerned with the dynamics of ethnic identity and identification, with the process of boundary maintenance and movement across boundaries and with the question of how individuals make decisions about the salience of their ethnicity to them,

about which of various ethnic options they will choose in their own identities, and about whether to invoke ethnicity and ethnic identities in political mobilizations and everyday personal encounters.

In this article we examine the dynamic and society-specific nature of the typology used to define ethnicity in the United States through an examination of the experience of two immigrant groups who, for different reasons, do not share the same classification system and categories in place in the United States: black immigrants from Haiti and Jewish immigrants from Israel.

Indeed, we shall describe the categories in place in the country of origin for these groups and the constellation of variables determining ethnicity in the United States that they face. We posit that the eventual identities of the immigrants and their descendants in the United States are the outcome of the different constellation of elements of ethnicity in their countries of origin, and the different opportunities offered by the host society, as well as the overall hierarchy of groups which reflects the power relations in the receiving countries. We also posit that the host society should not be understood as a homogeneous structure, but rather should be considered in terms of the proximal host for the immigrant group, in addition to the wider society. The proximal host is that group which would be the category or group in which the immigrant group would be likely to be classified or absorbed.

By examining two very different immigrant groups to the United States who share the fact that they each have an ambivalent relationship with their post immigration ethnic options we shall examine the point at which micro- and macro-approaches to ethnicity must come together – the point at which the structural conditions which shape the overall categories of ethnicity and the cognitive conditions which operate on the individual level to shape immigrant behaviours and identities converge. We shall also show that the process of ethnic identification for immigrants is more complicated than some models would suggest, including not only the determinations of the receiving society and of the immigrant group, but also of the proximal host group. In the final part of the article we show how overall structural power relations shape the options open to immigrants to negotiate their ambivalent identities.

Macro-determination of categories

Ethnicity is a historically and geographically specific concept. Bell's (1975) definition of an ethnic group is a 'culturally defined communal group', but this definition leaves open what particular aspects of culture are used to define the group. The elements which are used to arrive at that cultural definition in different societies are race, religion,

language, shared history and origins, nationality and class. One's personal identification and sense of identity no doubt include all of these elements to a greater or lesser degree. However, whether any one particular element or constellation of elements is used as a principle of social differentiation and group formation depends on a variety of variable circumstances. The element or constellation of elements used to differentiate among groups is thus historically variable in any one particular society, as well as being variable between different societies and, in fact, varies among groups within a particular society.

Depending on the historical circumstances in a particular society, some or one of these factors will be more or less important than others. Certain elements of identity historically have been paramount in defining access to citizenship, social status or mobility within the population. Currently in the United States race and shared history and origin are primarily used to define the boundaries between groups. Language, nationality and religion are sometimes very salient in particular regions, for a particular type of group or at a particular historical moment. For instance, religion is primarily used in the self-definitions of the Amish in Pennsylvania, and language is used in the southwest to differentiate those of Mexican origin. However, over the course of American history and across all regions and times race and national origin were the primary building blocks of identities.

This configuration of the relative weight of these elements is subject to change over time. The process of defining the boundaries of cultural definitions of ethnic groups is dynamic in nature and the result of historical forces which can change the relative balance of the groups. For instance, changing patterns of migration to host countries can lead to more or less attention to one or more of these elements in defining the groups.

Micro-theories of ethnogenesis

There have been theoretical and practical changes in the last thirty years that have served to further the relevance of the micro-approach to ethnic identities, most notably the reliance on self identity in determination of ethnic groups for official purposes in the United States. The watershed theoretical development in the study of ethnicity using the micro-approach was the publication by Frederik Barth in 1969 of *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, which argued that the attention of researchers should be shifted to ethnic boundaries and the determination of boundaries, rather than to the inventorying of cultural traits contained within the boundaries. Especially in the study of ethnic groups in the United States this led to new theoretical formulations of concepts such as situational ethnicity, and emergent ethnicity which sought to describe the processual, changing nature of individual

decisions to identify in ethnic terms, and the strength or weakness of that identification (Paden 1967; Yancey, *et al.* 1976; Okamura 1981).

Thus, researchers in this micro-tradition have been concerned with how individuals or aggregates of individuals choose to put themselves into ethnic categories, and with the results of those choices for overall structural conditions and for individuals and for group size etc. Yet Barth and others do not look at the determination of the ethnic categories available at any point in time, recognizing only that they are historically and geographically variable. The determination of the categories and the content of the categories are seen to be the result of historical macro-forces and are therefore generally studied by researchers concerned with those macro-forces. In the micro-approach the categories are held constant and the subjects of inquiry are the movement across category boundaries and the salience of the categories at any one point in time.

Migration and ethnicity

What happens when an immigrant from one society where the categories and the content of the categories are determined in one way moves to a place where categories are determined differently and have a different content? Take a case of a hypothetical Irish Catholic from Northern Ireland who moves to Montreal. Such an individual experiences a clash in the elements used to determine ethnicity. Accustomed to using religion as the differentiating principle of ethnic-identity construction in Ireland, the immigrant finds that his or her religion – Catholicism – is the same as the francophone group's in Montreal, but that his or her language – English – puts the immigrant with the anglophone group. The immigrant and the host society do not share the same scheme or blueprint for assigning identity. The process at the micro-level is of course constrained by the structural forces that determine the cognitive elements in the immigrants' mind about what their identity consists of, and what categories are socially meaningful; it also determines the structural conditions that shape the categories in place that the immigrant faces upon arrival in the new society.

The dynamics of ethnogenesis

1. Migrant ethnogenesis: the prevailing model

In the implicit model of an immigrant coming to have an ethnic identity assumed by researchers such as Park (1950), Glazer and Moynihan (1963), Greeley (1971) the immigrant arrives and faces fixed categories and rules of classification in the receiving society. Thus, the immigrant faces the existence of categories A B C D E, discovers that

he or she is identified along with other As and the interaction of the immigrants of identity A and those already in category A, as well as the interaction and structural relations between category A and the wider society leads to the ongoing dynamic determination of the content of category A. A Polish immigrant thus arrives in the United States and is faced with the category of Polish ethnics who are, of course, different in their cultural traits and behaviour because the group of Polish Americans is the result of the ongoing relationship between Polish and American influences. However, the immigrant fits into the category Polish and develops a Polish-American identity.

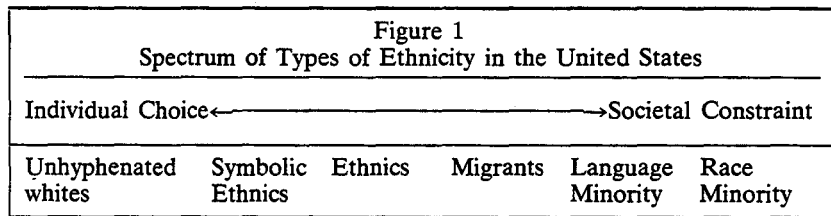## 2. Migrant ethnogenesis: the proximal host model

We have identified three social actors in the dynamic of identity formation following migration. Two are familiar to theories on this subject and one is a new addition. First, there is the individual immigrant. He or she uses elements to determine his or her own identity and also to attach a positive or negative valence to that identity. Second, there is society at large, which uses elements to determine the immigrant identity as well as to attach a positive or negative valence to that identity. Finally, there is the collection of people we call the 'proximal host' – the group to which the receiving society would assign the immigrant – the waiting category in the minds of the individuals in the receiving society. In other words, the proximal host is the group that the wider society would define as the immigrant's co-ethnics. Both the perceived hierarchy of groups and the elements used to define the content of ethnicity may vary across these three social actors or they may be uniform. In the case where they are uniform there is little ambivalence and little change in the process of ethnogenesis. In the process where there is much variation there develops ambiguous ethnic identities, and the outcome of the identities of immigrants is more open to change as well as to the development of new macro-categories.

In our view the outcome of the immigrant's identity will be a result of the assignment by the receiving society, the cognitive map of the immigrants themselves and the conceptions of the proximal hosts – the ethnic group to which the individual immigrant would be assigned. In the example of the Polish immigrant there is not much difference between the two models. The determination of the immigrant's identity would be the result of the immigrant having a conception of a Polish national identity, the wider American society would use national origin, language and appearance to assign the immigrant to the Polish category, and the Polish-American would use the same elements to recognize the new immigrant as one of their fellow ethnics. As we shall see, however, in many cases this symmetry of use of elements

and symmetry of resulting categories is not universal. In the case of our two immigrant groups, secular Israelis and middle-class Haitians, the conceptions of the three social actors – society, immigrants and proximal hosts – are different and thus at the micro-level the resulting classification of any one individual immigrant is ambivalent. In this way these micro-processes influence at the macro-level the resulting existence of, and content of, ethnic groups in the United States. The definition and content of these groups is therefore a dynamic and not . a preordained fact.

The spectrum of groups in the United States

What is the spectrum of groups that the immigrants face once they are in the United States? The salience and manoeuvrability and social consequences of the categories of ethnicity will vary depending on the historical and structural circumstances present in the host society. In the United States the kinds of ethnic categories in place range considerably in terms of their consequences for the individuals classified in each of the categories, in terms of the range of choice allowed to individuals in how to classify themselves, and in terms of the strategies or agendas adopted by the different groups. The spectrum of types of ethnicity in the United States is presented in Figure 1. The groups are arranged along a continuum from left to right of (1) a lesser to a greater degree of influence of ethnicity on individual behaviour, and (2) the degree of choice of ethnicity open to individuals. In the United States since race and shared origin are the axes most determinative of ethnic identity, it is those groups that are defined racially which have the least amount of options or flexibility for changing into other types of groups.

Figure 1 Spectrum of Types of Ethnicity in the United States					
Individual Choice←————————————————→Societal Constraint					
Unhyphenated whites	Symbolic Ethnics	Ethnics	Migrants	Language Minority	Race Minority

On one end of the spectrum are unhyphenated whites. This group, descended primarily from the northern and western European early immigrants to the USA, especially from England, no longer claim a particular shared history and origin. They do not think of themselves as a category but define themselves on surveys and censuses as American. (For a more detailed description of this population, see Lieberson 1985). The next category comprises symbolic ethnics, who identify with

a shared history and origin and a nationality such as Irish American or Italian American. However, there is a lot of choice involved in the particular categories that the people choose to invoke. The groups have no organizational basis and it is only in terms of affective ties and leisure voluntary activities that they display their ethnic identities. (For a detailed description of symbolic ethnics see Waters 1990.)

The next category is the ethnic group. Individuals who are members of ethnic groups have an ethnic identity that does not hinder their full participation in American society but which has more than just a symbolic component to it. For instance, their ethnic identity still influences their choice of marriage partners to some degree. Generally, there is an organizational component to these groups in that there is some corporate entity or concrete group to which the individual belongs. American Jews who are members of organizations or synagogues would be classified as an ethnic group. The next more intrusive type of ethnic identity we call an immigrant group. This is an identity that is still a very salient and intrusive identity in terms of national loyalty, everyday life and feeling apart from the host society. In general, immigrant groups are composed of groups with a high degree of separation from the host society. In terms of residential dispersion or concentration, for example, they are likely to live either in ethnic ghettos or rural communities. While the tendency historically in the USA is that these groupings survive only in the first generation and then change to more assimilated ethnic groups and symbolic ethnic groups in future generations, there are exceptions to this rule such as the Amish, who have managed to maintain a very separate way of life for many generations, in spite of the lack of wider societal discrimination.

The final two groups, we label minority, following the definition of Wirth 'a group of people distinguished by physical or cultural characteristics subject to different and unequal treatment by the society in which they live and who regard themselves as victims of collective discrimination' (Stone 1985, p. 42). We distinguish among groups defined by language – Hispanic groups in the USA – and those defined by race such as Black Americans. Minority groups are the least integrated into the wider society and have the least amount of choice in terms of self-identification.

Israelis and Haitians in North America

In Table 1 we present the situation for the two groups we have studied in depth, kibbutz-born Jewish immigrants to the United States from Israel, and middle-class Caribbean immigrants to the United States from Haiti. The table summarizes the dimensions or building blocks of ethnicity of the groups and the different interpretations and reac-

tions to those dimensions among the different aspects of the host society and the society of origin. The dimensions of ethnicity include race, religion, shared history and origins, language, nationality and class. The social perceptions, which are crucial to the determination of that ethnicity, are how the respondent sees and defines himself or herself in the country of origin, how the host country sees the respondent, how the proximal host sees the respondent and how the respon-

Table 1. *Dynamic typology of ethnicity and ethnic identity*

	How respondent sees self in country of origin	How host country sees respondent	How proximal host sees respondent	How respondent in North America sees self
Israeli-Americans				
Race	0	0	0	0
Religion	1−	1+	1+	1− (+) (−)
Shared history	1+	1+	1+	1+
Language	1+	0	0^1	1+
Nationality	1+	1+	1−	1− (+) (−)
Class	0	0	0	0
Haitian Americans				
Race	0	1−	1+	1− (+) (−)
Religion	0	0	0	0
Shared history	1+	0	1−	1 (+) (−)
Language	1+	0	0	0
Nationality	1+	0	1−	1 (+) (−)
Class	1+	0	0	1 (+) (−)

Key
Salience dimension 1 = utilized 0 = not utilized
Valence dimension + = positive − = negative
$\begin{pmatrix} + \\ - \end{pmatrix}$ = ambivalence

Note
[1]   We refer here to the language of everyday life, not religious observance.

dent in North America sees himself or herself. The last column in the table, how the respondent sees himself or herself is a result of the interaction of the categories that the person develops before migrating, and his or her reception by the host country in general and by the proximal host in particular.

The table reports on two degrees of meaning for each of the dimensions. For each dimension and social actor we report a salience dimension: 1 if the dimension is an important and meaningful dimension of the demarcation of ethnic boundaries and 0 if the dimension is not an important one. The valence dimension measures the degree of pride or stigma attached to that particular dimension of ethnic identity. A plus is given when that dimension is a source of ethnic pride and a minus is given when that dimension is a source of stigma or shame. Of course, all these determinations are relative and generalized. We are not arguing that each of these is a universal decision of each of these social actors, only that the overall sense is either positive or negative on each of these dimensions. On some dimensions both the Israelis. and the Haitian immigrants develop an ambivalent identity because the valence attached to the dimension is very different for the different social actors. It is in this situation that the negotiation of identity becomes difficult on a day-to-day basis for the immigrant.

In the first column we report on the valence and salience of each dimension in terms of how the immigrant thought of himself or herself in their country of origin, prior to the immigration to the United States. This column answers the question: 'Is this dimension a salient part of a person's ethnic self-identification and belonging?'. The second column answers the question of how the host country sees the respondent and classifies him or her. The third column describes how the proximal host sees the respondent and the final column reports on how the respondent sees himself or herself in the United States following their immigration. We determined these opinions and attitudes in part through our survey and fieldwork with the two immigrant groups.[1]

The case of Israeli immigrants

In the case of Israelis, presented in the top half of Table 1,we concentrate on secular Jewish Israelis who have immigrated to the United States. The empirical source of our data is a comparative study conducted by Mittelberg and others[2] of kibbutz-born Israelis who have immigrated to the US and of those who have remained in Israel. The data were collected in 1987 and 1988, from a representative sample of kibbutz-born, then aged eighteen to forty-three, who had lived on their kibbutzim at least until age eighteen. The survey was administered through mail questionnaires, with a 50 per cent response rate. The sample accurately reflected the universe of kibbutz-born, while the

sample of kibbutzim reflected the differentiation between kibbutzim in terms of ideology, kibbutz size and age. The kibbutz-born respondents were made up of three groups: (1) emigrants to North America (N = 127); (2) leavers who live outside their kibbutz but in Israel (N = 155); and current kibbutz members (N = 381). Thus, a comparison was possible between different career paths of three subpopulations of Israeli-born who had shared a fairly homogeneous childhood and youth together.

Any analysis of the emerging ethnicity of Israelis in North America requires a comparison between Jewish identity of Jews in Israel, and that of Jews in North America. Sociologists of Jewish ethnicity in North America have often used three types of indices to determine Jewish identity (Goldscheider 1986; Cohen 1988). The first is Jewish religious ritual practice and identification with the Jewish religion; the second is the degree of social and organizational involvement in the Jewish community; and the third is support for Israel. Comparison between Israeli data and North American data is inherently problematic on all three of these dimensions of Jewish identity. By the same token, so is analysis of the life of Israelis on these dimensions in North America.

In Israel, Jewish discourse and expression are not confined to one part or aspect of society. Jewish community involvement in Israel is part of everyday life, neighbourhood, workplace and citizenship. The Jewish calendar, its holidays and meaning, the Hebrew language, culture and sovereignty all take place in the national public domain. The synagogue is a place at best for personal rites of passage; at worst, the fulcrum of intense political secular fights. By contrast, in the United States the synagogue is the major place where people who identify as Jewish engage in Jewish discourse and where Jewish values are developed. American society allows its ethnics both national citizenship as well as the maintenance of separate ethno-religious identity. Thus, there arises a disparity between the subjective secular, quasi-national Jewish identity of many Israelis, especially of the Ashkenazi élite, and the synagogue-based ethno-religious identity of diaspora American Jews.

At the same time Jewish religious practice is not the centre of Jewish life of most Israelis. This may explain the differences in the consciousness of being Jewish of Israelis in Israel and those who have immigrated to the United States. Only 29 per cent of people born on the kibbutz who still live there say they feel Jewish to a very high degree, although 47 per cent of their émigré peers do. These findings confirm earlier data provided by Mittelberg and Sobel (1990) on the relatively low ideological commitment of young Israelis of Ashkenazi ethnicity. In-married kibbutz-born do not feel Jewish to a high degree, though for those abroad, being Jewish *per se* has become much more

salient. This is also reflected in differences between emigrants and those still in Israel on attitudes towards assimilation. Almost 70 per cent of emigrants have a general negative attitude to assimilation compared to 57 per cent of their non-emigrant peers.

The salience of Jewish identification of kibbutz-born rises both in the context of the diaspora and sometimes in the situation of intermarriage but not necessarily in the everyday life of the Israeli kibbutznik. Indeed, Shokeid quotes one Israeli student living in Queens as saying, 'I am an Israeli, I don't perceive of myself as Jewish. It is only by chance that I was born to Jewish parents' (Shokeid 1988, p. 41).

Race is not a salient dimension for the Israeli-Americans before or after their immigration. The major dimensions defining ethnic boundaries in Israel are religion, shared history and origin and nationality. For instance, Ethiopian Jews who come to Israel are not primarily defined as black, but rather first as Jews who are eligible for automatic citizenship by virtue of the Law of Return for immigration into Israel, second as having non-European origins, and finally as developing a sense of Israeli identity. While there may be some degree of prejudice based on skin colour in Israel it is not at all a major part of self-identification or other identification within the country.

Religion is a dimension for these respondents to identify themselves but for these individuals it is for the most part one with a negative valence. These secular Israelis define themselves as Jews in a secular sense but do not belong to organized religion and for political reasons are aligned against Orthodox and more fundamentalist religions. This is ultimately a source of ambivalence for the Israeli Americans, because religion is a positive source of the determination of ethnic boundaries and identification for the proximal hosts of the Israelis – American Jews. The organized religion basis of American Jews' identifications as Jews is a strong one. Thus, the Israeli Americans have an ambivalent relationship to the dimension of religion in their self-identification in the United States because their own negative valence and their proximal hosts' positive valence are at odds.

The shared history and origins of the Israeli Americans we studied are Ashkenazi.[3] This is a valued dimension for them in Israel and when they come to the United States it fits with the celebration of the cultural aspects of ethnicity implicit in American pluralist values. Since American Jews and the Ashkenazi Israelis share the same eastern European Jewish culture, it is a positive aspect of their identities once they immigrate to the USA. The Israeli immigrants speak Hebrew as their first language in Israel. Speaking Hebrew is an important part of their self-identification and it has a positive value attached to it. Speaking Hebrew is not a dimension of ethnicity that is very salient to either American society at large or in day-to-day life among the American Jewish community. Thus, the Israelis are left with a

positive value to their Hebrew language. In fact as Shokeid (1988) notes, speaking Hebrew and the reading of Hebrew-language news-papers is one of the major ways in which Israeli immigrants to the USA celebrate their ethnic identities.

Finally, the dimension of nationality causes an ambivalent situation for the Israeli immigrants. In Israel, before immigration, nationality is important in the self-identification of the Israelis. They have a strong positive association with an Israeli national-identity. The general American society also classifies the Israeli immigrants as Israelis and in keeping with the American pluralist ethic has a positive valence attached to the celebration of a national identity of the immigrants. However, the proximal hosts, the American Jews, have a negative association with Israeli-Americans. American Jews have a strong posi-tive association with the existence of Israel. In fact, that is one of the ways in which American Jews define their ethnic identity: support for Israel. The Americans Jews, however, would rather that the Israelis identify as Jewish than as Israeli-Americans because the existence of a category of people who have left Israel to immigrate to America is problematic ideologically. In simpler terms, the American Jews would rather that the Israelis joined the American Jewish community. The problem for the Israeli immigrants arises because of a conflict between the salience and valence of the host and origin country. The Israeli immigrants have a problem in thinking of themselves as Israeli-Ameri-cans because that implies that they have freely chosen to leave the state of Israel.

2. Institutional affiliation

The second dimension used to measure Jewish ethnicity in the United States is insitutional affiliation and social integration. Indeed, it can be expected that the proximal host at the local level of the Jewish community judges the Jewishness of the Israelis as it judges its own, namely, by the degree to which they participate in and contribute philanthropically to the ethnic communal institutions. Proximal host institutions like Jewish philanthropic associations function as agencies of migrant identity formation by socializing the immigrant into Ameri-can norms and behaviour.

Do the Israeli émigrés affiliate to Jewish institutions, do they gener-ate their own friendship networks and/or social institutions? The kib-butz-born émigrés did not report significantly different frequency of social contact with either other Israelis, local Jews or non-Jews. In other words, their social world is dispersed, unlike that of their local Jewish peers in the United States. As to affiliation with any Jewish voluntary organization or indeed any organization of Israelis, between

84 and 90 per cent of kibbutz-born in America report little or no contact with either.

In terms of synagogue attendance, over 80 per cent of kibbutzniks in Israel report 'Almost never' attending the synagogue. In North America 61 per cent continue with this same response while 34 per cent report attending synagogue on important occasions. Thus, a significant third of these secular born and raised, Israeli sabras, have chosen the diaspora option for Jewish identification and affiliation. For the remainder, this option was not adopted even though it was open to them. Israeli ethnicity in the United States, like emigration itself, is a matter of free choice of the subjects, between the different options offered by their proximal hosts and the wider American society.

To date Israelis have chosen neither to enter into the ethnic organizations of their American Jewish peers nor to generate organizations of their own. As long as their ambivalence of identity remains, this limbo is likely to continue until such time as the Israelis come to peace with being public expatriate Israelis and then generate a subsidiary organizational structure of the Jewish community, or alternatively, generate a totally new Israeli ethnicity with its own separate national origins based Israeli-American culture – the beginning perhaps of a new public route to a symbolic ethnicity of its own. Whatever the choice, having been made it will signal the resolution of the ambivalence of being a permanent Israeli Jew in the United States.

3. Support for Israel

Israelis who have a low commitment to Israel on the dimension of Jewish identity have been found to be more likely to emigrate from Israel (Damian 1987; Mittelberg and Sobol 1990). Once they have emigrated from Israel, the men, especially, are likely to marry out of the Jewish people (Mittelberg and Lev-Ari 1991, p. 33). Secular Israelis with their generically low level of Jewish identification are highly susceptible to assimilation and intermarriage in the diaspora because their baseline ethnic identity is founded on nationalism. Moreover, as Shokeid (1988) has indicated, they are intensely alienated both from the diaspora Jewish culture *qua* diaspora, and the religious world *qua* religion, which is the principal mode of public Jewish expression in the United States. Israelis in North America have to this point not developed any surrogate Israeli ethnicity to replace the national culture that they have quite willingly (though with some guilt) left behind.

A high percentage of Israelis in North America report being proud of being Israeli, which is not surprising as they are voluntary, young, first-generation immigrants. Second, they tend to emphasize to themselves and to others the temporary nature of their sojourn in the USA.

This is to be seen from two different responses of our subjects. On the one hand, 81 per cent report that they originally came to the USA for a temporary stay, thus attesting that their arrival was a chance encounter, the motive was not 'premeditated' as a crime might have been. When asked about plans to return, despite the fact that 49 per cent of these Israeli-born respondents have US citizenship and an additional 26 per cent are permanent residents, only 33 per cent responded that they did not know *when* they would return, while only 8 per cent declared that they had no intention to return. A full 53 per cent responded that they would return within five years or so. Thus, the suspension of time suspends the ambiguity of the status and life goes on as usual. Emigrants to the US are thus those who did not decide to return to Israel, rather than those who decided to leave Israel.

The case of Haitian Americans

The Haitian Americans also have an ambivalent identity in the United States, although the ambivalence manifests itself in a different way. Many Caribbean immigrants to the United States regard it as a problem to be considered black in the United States. This is because, first, they have a different conception of race in the Caribbean, one which recognizes more shades of skin colour and more categories of difference than just black and white as is done in the United States. Second, being considered black in the United States implies downward social mobility from the more exalted status of the immigrant blacks.

The theoretical difference between race and ethnicity that has been debated in American social science is faced every day as a practical and personal question by black immigrants. Race has been used by theorists to refer to distinctions drawn from physical appearance. Ethnicity has been used to refer to distinctions based on national origin, language, religion, food – and other cultural markers. In American history race has been used to describe the differences between whites and Blacks. The 'one drop rule' of race classification for Blacks meant that there was no attention paid to the ancestry of Blacks, anyone with a black ancestor was defined as black racially. There were also restrictions on immigration of free Blacks, so there was no attention paid to the national origins of black individuals. Blacks have therefore been presented as a group that is homogeneous on ancestry. This is in contrast to the white population, where ethnic differences were very much noted and defined. Thus, in modern discussions of the ethnic situation in the United States researchers and politicians compare Blacks with Jews and Italians, thereby mixing race and ethnicity – in addition to comparing Blacks with whites and Asians, divisions more closely associated with what we define as race groups. The

group defined as Blacks or African-Americans is used very often interchangeably both as a race and as an ethnicity or ancestry group. The interchangeability of this ethnic-racial category only works when one assumes homogeneity of cultural as well as racial characteristics within the black population.

The case of middle-class Haitian Americans is presented in the bottom half of Table 1. The empirical source of our data is a study conducted by Waters and Apollon (1990) of Haitian-American professionals and their children who have immigrated to the United States from Haiti. Each subject underwent an in-depth interview addressing racial and ethnic identification. The in-depth interviews lasted between one and two hours and were tape recorded and transcribed. Thirty first-generation Haitians and thirty second-generation Haitians from all over the United States were interviewed about their ethnic and racial identities. The first-generation Haitians were all middle-class professionals: physicians, nurses, engineers, school teachers, secretaries, real estate agents and office managers. All had college degrees or were the wives of men who had college degrees. They were contacted through professional organizations and personal contacts. The second-generation respondents were all children of professionals.

While the middle-class status of these immigrants makes them a non-representative, perhaps an atypical, sample of all Haitian immigrants to the United States, their class status does highlight some of the conflicting cross-pressures faced by the immigrants. The middle-class Haitian professionals will have experiences that are very different from those of Haitians with a different socio-economic background.[4] However, their experiences as blacks in the middle class are suggestive of some of the possible reactions of other middle-class first- and second-generation black immigrants (from Jamaica, Barbados, etc.).

The first dimension in Table 1, race, is complicated by class relations in Haiti in a way that it is not in the United States (Buchanan 1983). One major difference between the elements used to define race and ethnicity in the Caribbean as opposed to the United States is that class and shade of skin colour are factors that affect the ethnic and race identity of people in the Caribbean but not in the United States (Stone 1985, p. 19). Foner (1987, p. 202) describes the fact that in Jamaica 'Black, or colored Jamaicans who become doctors or lawyers, for instance, or high level civil servants, who acquire the cultural characteristics associated with white Europeans, and who maintain a respectable standard of living are often thought of "as if" they were white'. As Dominguez (1975, pp. 31–2) describes it, colour in Caribbean countries, unlike in the United States, refers to 'a position on a continuum of racial mixture between European and African, and not merely to one's color of skin. Determination of position on such a continuum depends upon the evaluation of hair form and facial fea-

tures, as well as color of skin'. In the United States the system of slavery and the caste-like system of race relations that developed following the Civil War led to the development of the 'one drop' system of race classification, where if a person had one drop of black ancestry he or she was classified as black, and no 'mixed' or intermediate colour classifications were recognized (Dominguez 1986). As Stafford (1987b, p. 147) notes 'Haitians tend to regard the US system of racial classification as illegitimate, as applied to them, and they assert a sense of moral superiority, arguing that "the same thing could never happen in Haiti" '.

Among the middle-class Haitians whom we interviewed, race identity, while present in Haiti, was not an overriding dimension of self-identification. Woldemikael (1989) also found a lack of racial consciousness among Haitian immigrants in a study of a Haitian community in the midwest. This is because in Haiti the majority of the population was black and so the differences that were noted were more based on class distinctions. In the United States by contrast, the race of the immigrants is an immediate dimension of identification, and in many cases of continuing discrimination and prejudice. The proximal hosts of the Haitian immigrants, American Blacks, also identify the new immigrants by their racial identification, but they associate a positive valence to such an identification (Raphael 1964). They believe for the most part that Haitians should identify with black Americans as Blacks who are proud of their racial heritage in addition to their ethnic backgrounds (Woldemikael 1985). New immigrants who are not accustomed to defining themselves racially, and who perceive the wider American society's racism, are thus in an ambivalent situation with regard to racial identification because they see both the negative valence to the identification by the wider white society and the positive pressure to identify racially from the American black community. Thus, the racial identification of the Haitian immigrants is ambivalent.

While religion may be a personal source of identification and pride for the individual, it is not an important dimension of social differentiation for these immigrants either in the home or host country. This is because a variety of different religions co-exist within the heterogeneous groupings according to race and nationality that include Haitians. The shared history and origins of the Haitian people as African-Caribbean are a source of pride and culture to the middle-class Haitians and one that they consciously invoke to differentiate themselves socially from American Blacks. In a variety of situations Haitian immigrants expressed pride in being the first black nation in the Western hemisphere and a sense of collective history in celebrating their revolution (Stafford 1987a). The proximal host of black Americans sometimes interpreted the special national and historic origins of the Haiti-

ans as being a way of accentuating national and ethnic differences instead of accentuating racial commonalities (Waters 1991a).

The language of the middle-class Haitians is French, which they use as a badge of their education and class position to show that they are not lower-class Haitians who only speak Creole. While most of the middle-class Haitians can speak Creole, they attach a particular positive association with their ability to speak French. However, when they immigrate to the USA, the lack of a large French-speaking community and the emphasis put in the United States on speaking English lead to a rapid loss of identification with the French language and a lack of emphasis on speaking French or speaking Creole as a dimension of ethnic identity for the second generation.

Finally, the national dimension for Haitians is similar to the shared origin and history. Haitians are proud of their national origins and attach a positive valence to it (Laguerre 1984; Stafford 1987b; Woldemikael 1989; Waters and Apollon 1990). However, the wider American society's value of pluralism and valuing different national origins is overshadowed in this case by the tendency in American society to have race as an overriding characteristic for Blacks. Thus, Americans see the immigrants as Blacks, not as middle-class Blacks and not as Haitians primarily. The Haitians are left with an ambivalent sense of the valence and salience of the dimension of national identity because of a clash between their pre-migration conceptions and the values held by the host country and the proximal host.

Visibility sought, visibility scorned

The common denominator in the predicament of our case studies is their shared structural dilemma. Despite their very different cultural contents, they share an ambivalence to their collective identity, which in both cases is derived from the tension between micro- and macroworlds – opening up options for changing macro-categories and not only interpersonal choices amongst given macro-options from which the immigrant can but choose. By resisting macro-world definitions the migrant attempts to transform them. The structurally generated shared ambivalence is thus itself the tension on the micro-level that may bring about new macro-definitions of ethnicity. This leads us to suggest the probability that emergent new ethnicities will appear and hence the notion of an open typology. How then does this micro/macro tension present itself in each of our cases?

(a) The Israelis suffer a cognitive/normative exclusion because of the over-identification of Jewishness with religion and an institutional exclusion or perhaps absence, because they do not participate in synagogue membership, parochial schools or philanthropic-based commu-

nal institutions. In addition, they are unable to legitimize the migrant culture based on national origins because this legitimacy is denied by both their peers in their country of origin and their proximal hosts in the United States.

(b) Haitians suffer from a cognitive/normative exclusion because of the hosts' over-identification of colour with ethnic boundary, thus their quest for 'racelessness'. They attempt to form organizations that stress their ethnic identities as Haitians. However, until very recently, any political organizing or lobbying that involved interaction with the wider American society was done on the basis of their racial identity as Blacks (Woldemikael 1989). Whether the recent increases in the numbers of black immigrants will alter the situation so that organizations will develop that allow the migrants to identify ethnically rather than racially remains to be seen.[5]

The crux of the problem for these two groups is that they do not think of themselves using the same categories as are in place in the host society, the United States, that they migrate into. The categories in which they would be put are problematic for these groups because in both cases they perceive a degree of stigma in adopting the new identities that American society would use to define them. Under the American categorizations the Israelis would be classified as Jewish and the immigrants from Haiti would be classified as black. The problem for the Israeli immigrants is that being ethnically Jewish in the United States is defined by two major factors: first, religious identification and traditional religious practice and, second, support for Israel and for immigration to Israel. The secular Israelis do not qualify for inclusion on either point. The problem for the immigrants from Haiti is that American society tends to classify them racially, for the most part not recognizing their national origin and cultural background, even if that is the identification they would like to make.

The Israelis spend much energy trying to be 'invisible immigrants' because on the whole they do not want to be recognized and categorized as immigrants, identified with their nationality. The black immigrants spend much energy fighting their status as 'invisible migrants'. They do want to be recognized as immigrants and not classified as being the same as native American Blacks. In both of these cases the process of migration puts into opposition the self concept of the migrants and self-identification in ethnic terms with the conception and categorization of the host society. This shows the dynamic and historically specific nature of the definition of ethnicity.

The ethnic options of Israelis and Haitians in the US

Despite the different content of the dilemma facing the two groups studied here, the underlying cause of the ambivalence that they face is similar: a disjunction between the elements used to define ethnicity in the home country, the host country, and among the proximal hosts. The resolution of this ambivalance for these different groups is dependent upon the social significance attached to the categories in the United States that they face. We outline here the possible resolutions. There are four possibilites for the Israeli immigrant adaptation. They include:

1. They could assimilate to their proximal host group of Jewish Americans. This would mean they would redefine their own ethnicity as diaspora Jewish. In other words, they can become American Jewish. Religion would then be the major component of their ethnicity.
2. They could generate an Israeli-American ethnicity that is non-religious. This would include an emphasis on Hebrew newspapers, Israeli institutions, day schools, cultural clubs, and the like. Perhaps one could expect that the growing concentration of Israelis in Los Angeles might be the first to develop such an Israeli-American ethnicity. This is because there is already a large concentration of Israelis in Los Angeles, and the Jewish community there is not as strong or as religious as the one in New York, the other area where Israeli immigrants are concentrated.
3. They could evolve into a symbolic ethnicity. They could intermarry with non-Jews without conversion and retain only a few and intermittent ties with either an Israeli or Jewish ethnicity. The test for this would be in the next generation.
4. They could return to Israel. The Israelis are not refugees and thus they retain the option of returning to their host country.

Like Haitian immigrants, secular Israelis have a major problem with their ethnic identification in two separate domains. First and foremost on the religious domain, they do not share the interpretation of their proximal group, American Jewry, on the predominant role of religion in local Jewish ethnicity. With respect to the second dimension, support for Israel, they not only feel the guilt of presumed desertion but they are also accused of such, both by current hosts as well as peers at home. Thus, we find cases of denial of religion as a basis of identity and denial of the permanency of being an American. Their being in America is enclosed as it were, in existential or phenomenological brackets, in a suspension of time until conditions will be appropriate for the normatively approved return home. Even so, America offers Israelis all the options from full-blooded Jewish ethnicity to voluntary

nominal symbolic ethnicity, as we have seen. How the group itself will evolve or whether it will evolve as a group at all remains to be seen.

The possibilities for the Haitian immigrants include three alternatives.

1. They could assimilate to their proximal host group – American Blacks. This would mean that they would disregard their ethnic identity and accept the American classification of themselves as black Americans, in effect abandoning an ethnic identity for a race identity. This strategy is perhaps easiest in terms of negotiating day-to-day interactions in American society, but may be hardest in terms of individual psychological reckoning of the meanings of being black in American society for the second generation. For the most part this has been the path chosen by earlier immigrants. Even when the first generation tried to maintain an ethnicity, they faced what Bryce-Laporte (1972) called the invisible nature of their immigrant status. While they may perceive themselves in ethnic terms as Haitian or Jamaican, American society classifies them using racial criteria as Blacks. The middle-class Haitians may choose to resist this option, however, because they perceive it as involving a loss of social status.
2. They could maintain a dual racial and ethnic identity. This was the strategy adopted by the majority of our respondents. For the second generation this means consciously trying to let people know that they have an ethnic identity in addition to the immediately apparent racial identity. The most common strategy adopted is one of juggling identities. This can best be described as a type of situational ethnicity. They are black sometimes, and in some situations, and in others they stress their ethnic backgrounds. Some consciously speak of passing as American Blacks or as ethnics in particular places and times. Some refuse to accept distinctions and, for example, put 'other' as a response to a question on race rather than responding as black. On a practical and everyday level, if these people do choose to identify ethnically, they have to deal with the 'invisibility' issue, namely that whites especially are not likely to be expecting ethnic variation among Blacks and are likely to identify them racially rather than ethnically. So immigrants and their children have to cope with a situation where sometimes they do not have the opportunity to identify ethnically or they must somehow strategize to identify ethnically.
3. The Haitian-Americans could adopt a stance of racelessness. This means that they would try somehow to avoid being classified by race. This strategy was attempted by a small minority of the second-generation individuals we interviewed. They attempted to deny any race identification, in effect to be 'raceless'. These individuals refused to classify themselves as either 'black' or 'white' on official forms, opting

for 'other' or just not responding. They reported that they did not identify at all as black but only as Haitian. This means that their self-identification is almost always at odds with the identifications others make of them in impersonal encounters in American society and that as a result they must consciously try to accentuate their ethnic identity. Given the primacy of race as a criterion for classifying people in the USA, this seems to be a strategy that would be very difficult, if not impossible, to sustain in the long run.

While Israelis have the option of symbolic ethnicity, Haitians do not have that option. The key ingredient in being a symbolic ethnic is the voluntary aspects of that identity (Gans 1979; Waters 1990). This voluntary aspect does not exist for the black immigrants. This is in sharp contrast to the possibilities and strategies adopted by the Israeli immigrants to deal with a classification system that causes them difficulties. The Israeli immigrants have more latitude to be able to identify. Of course, the problems these groups face are different. The Israelis face a stigma in being Israeli immigrants. However, if they just assimilate to being American Jews they do not experience downward social mobility. They merely have to readjust their behaviours and identities. The Haitian immigrants have an interest in maintaing their initial identification with their immigrant status because to take the path of least resistance and let themselves be classified the American way would mean downward social mobility with perhaps some very real costs in terms of discrimination in housing and employment (Sutton and Makiesky 1975).

Conclusion

Ethnicity is dynamic. In the case of immigrants at least, it is an outcome of the negotiation of a collective identity at the interface between two cultures in the biography of immigrants, lived through the history of immigrant communities. Ethnicity and its emergence can best be studied by taking advantage of both macro- and micro-sociology. In short, the ethnicity of any migrant group cannot be derived exclusively either from the macro-categories of the host society or the micro-cultural baggage brought by the migrants themselves to the new land. Rather, an analysis of the reciprocal relationship between the two needs to be made, in order to delineate the different theoretical and empirical options open to every migrant and every migrant group. It has been our primary observation presented here, drawn from two radically different contemporary migrant experiences in the USA, that where there is a disjunction between the different attributions of meaning to categories of identification from the micro- or macro-levels, this leads to subjective ambivalence in the minds of the immigrants. This opens up the option for the generation of a new

ethnicity where it otherwise might not have been. Whether that option is embraced, is a result not only of the migrants' intention and the reciprocal response of the proximal group, but also of other factors including the power relations evident in society. Understanding the sources of the ambivalence faced by individuals, however, enhances our ability to understand the range of the adaptive options, and which of them are likely to be chosen and why. Finally, the disaggregation of the axes of ethnicity and the elements of ethnicity in different societies and groups such as we have done with this typology should also enable one to develop a better understanding of the dynamics of ethnic identity.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. We also relied on the determination of other researchers who have studied the inter-ethnic relations of groups interacting with our two case-study groups. For instance, there are a number of studies reporting on African-American reactions to Caribbean immigrants (see Raphael 1964; Bryce Laporte 1972; Sutton and Makiesky 1975; Justus 1976; Foner 1985; 1987; Woldemikael 1989; Bonnett and Watson 1990). We have also relied on fieldwork such as Shokeid (1988), who chronicles the interactions between Israelis and Jewish Americans.

2. The research team included Professor Zvi Sobel, Mrs. Lilach Lev-Ari and Mr. Dani Zamir. The research was funded by grants from the Ministries of Absorption and Education of the Government of Israel and from the Kibbutz Movements.

3. The Sephardic Jews, many of whom have immigrated to America from Israel, are beyond the scope of our study.

4. In fact, subsequent work with lower-class Haitian and other Caribbean immigrants and their children in New York City found that the immigrants had many of the same reactions and ambivalent feelings about being black as the middle-class immigrants described here. The lower-class second generation, however, had a very different reaction and identified with black Americans completely (Waters 1991b).

5. Kasinitz (1988) has suggested that changing patterns of employment among Car-

ibbean immigrants will bring about more opportunities for ethnic political action, as opposed to racial political action, because more recent black immigrants are not dependent on entrepreneurial jobs in the black ghetto for employment, but rather have service and professional jobs that give them the political freedom to develop ethnically based coalitions rather than ones based on racial ties to black Americans.

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ROUTLEDGE

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