Gouverner ou être gouverné ? Une approche par les échelles de la transformation du pouvoir et de l'autorité de l'État à travers de la politique publique d'immigration et d'intégration de quatre villes frontières en Israël

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THESE

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Amandine Desille

Governing or being governed? A scalar approach of the transformation of State power and authority through the case of immigration and integration policies of four frontier towns in Israel

Directeurs de Thèse : William Berthomière et Izhak Schnell

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Governing or being governed? A scalar approach of the transformation of State power and authority through the case of immigration and integration policies of four frontier towns in Israel

A thesis submitted toward a PH.D in Geography

Amandine Desille

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Supervised by: William Berthomière and Izhak Schnell

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חוג לגאוגרפיה וסביבת האדם ,בית הספר להיסטוריה ע"ש צבי יעבץ, פקולטה למדעי הרוח ע"ש לסטר וסאלי אנטין, אוניברסיטת תל אביב

מיגרנטר, בית הספר חברות וארגונים, אוניברסיטת פואטיה

מושלים או נמשלים? גישה סקלרית הבוחנת את התמורות בכוח וסמכות של הממשל דרך מקרים של מדיניות שילוב מהגרים בארבע ערי פריפריה בישראל

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Executive summary

Immigrant integration, although it usually constitutes a minor policy domain for local governments (already struggling with many newly decentralised responsibilities), reveals sensitive issues of identity, belonging or citizenship. Analysing immigrant integration policies brings out the very meanings of what constitute the uniqueness of a city, and, at the same time, its permeability and openness to the outside. Thus this policy domain makes it possible to investigate the transformations of the State, and its administrative and political system, in a context of neoliberalisation and increased devolution of responsibilities. Moreover, as migrants are often marginalised, it is important to ask to what extent local governance may offer a better path for immigrant participation in democratic decision-making.

The main question I address is: do mid-sized cities located at the margin of capitalist economic networks *govern* the social life of the places they administer, or are they *being governed*? To this extent, I analyse the particular immigrant integration policy domain in four Israel frontier towns: Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona. Although I assume these towns have little autonomy — in a context of overlapping, crosscutting, unbounded and fluid scales —, this work represents an important step to recognise the purposive agents who organise the social life of these cities. Through this research, I aim at challenging their autonomy and their capacity to address immigration. In fact, when making local policies, they reinterpret a national policy and adapt it to what they define as their local needs and interests.

The first part of the thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter focuses mainly on the theoretical model adopted in this project. The concept of *scale* is crucial to analyse the transformations of the hierarchies of power and authority. It provides the methodological boundaries necessary for fieldwork — the local scale then corresponds to a town —; while giving the possibility to apprehend a fluid and unbounded multiscalar space where actors located at various scales collide — the local governance. The second chapter elaborates on the concept of *place*. In fact, the transformations of statehood are not homogeneous and each place produces and reproduces the socio-political space of immigration integration in a unique way. Through the cases of Israeli mid-sized cities (or towns) located out of the socioeconomic and political core networks, the project investigates at the margin, in order to reach a better understanding of rescaling processes in 'ordinary cities' (Robinson, 2006). Here, the production of an Israeli periphery, both geographically and socio-politically, through immigration settlement, is addressed in better detail. Lastly, the third chapter, focusing on the methodology implied from the conceptual framework, restores the *social agents* as the main producers of change. The micro-history of places is a fundamental element to understand the transformations

of power. A large place is therefore given to in-depth encounters, participation in activities, field observations, as well as to the discourses produced by the towns themselves through the city museum, local newspapers, or official pages in social media.

The second part of the thesis explores the motives of immigration integration policymaking. When I tried to understand the reason why certain municipalities engage with immigration integration, while some others refuse, two sets of motives were found. The first chapter of this part unveils a discourse emphasising the benefits of immigration in marginal places. In that context, local leaders who take proactive steps for the development of their communities consider immigration to be a potential factor of growth. However, the sources of this growth do not entirely fit the hypotheses I first formulated. Findings show that the presence of immigrants makes it possible to reach out to State funding; helps maintain demographic levels which justify public service delivery; and participates in an 'in-place economy', guaranteeing municipal incomes to the municipality. The second chapter of this part establishes the fundamental role of immigrant politicians in the making of a proactive local immigrant integration policy. Immigrants who are part of the deliberation processes and of political parties advance this issue in local agendas. Nevertheless, they promote a certain attitude towards immigration, understood as restricted to immigrants who are perceived as deserving, productive and participative. Those two chapters show that neoliberal reforms in Israel and political and administrative decentralisation, combined with the will from local leaders to include immigration in their agenda, lead to the production of local immigration policies. Local politicians want to control the population that settles in their cities: their interests create tensions with the national immigration policy.

The third part of the thesis focuses on the outcomes of immigration and integration policymaking. I analyse here the integration outcomes desired by the actors involved in immigrant integration on one hand; and with whom those actors engage on the other hand. The first chapter provides an analysis of the narratives collected during fieldwork, and the resulting grounded theory of integration. The participants to this research define integration as a process in time, where new immigrants gradually access the main institutions of the Israeli state, namely religion, education, the armed forces, employment and politics. The role of State agencies, and particularly, the municipality, is seen as fundamental to facilitate this access. The last chapter therefore looks at the socio-political space created around this public and collective goal of immigrant integration. Through the distinct morphology of the institutional landscape of immigrant integration in the four cities, I show that each town has a unique way of apprehending its role towards newcomers. However, the four cases also converge: they illustrate the transformations of power, and the resulting multiscalar governance induced by

Israel's neoliberal politics. I argue that the particular position of peripheral towns, with their specific actors and programmes, contributes to maintaining those spaces of difference outside the centre.

The contribution of this doctoral research lies in bringing back social agents to the production of the rapid and deep changes of contemporary nation-states' political system. The triptych 'scale, place and people' makes it possible to address the transformations of power hierarchies from the many interests and skills of agents involved with a specific policy domain, in places that are made up of multiple layers of social, political, historical and economic relations. The re-establishment of 'ordinary cities', usually seen as forced to play a "punitive game of catching-up" (Robinson, 2006, p. 6), into relevant objects of study, is part of a larger school of thought that has advocated for their recognition in urban studies. Lastly, this work also contributes to a debate on immigration in small and mid-sized cities, at a moment where their role in immigrant settlement is getting more substantial.

Résumé

Bien qu'elles constituent encore un domaine marginal pour les gouvernements locaux (déjà submergés par les responsabilités qui leur incombent depuis les réformes de décentralisation), les politiques publiques d'intégration des immigrés agissent comme un révélateur de problèmes sociétaux liés à l'identité, l'appartenance et la citoyenneté. Analyser les politiques d'accueil rend visible ce qui donne à une ville son caractère unique, mais également sa perméabilité et son ouverture sur l'extérieur. Dès lors, confronter les questions de la ville et de l'immigration ouvre la voie à une enquête sur les transformations de l'Etat, de son système administratif et politique, dans un contexte de néolibéralisation et de transferts des responsabilités. De plus, alors que les individus issus de l'immigration sont souvent exclus des processus décisionnels démocratiques, il est important d'explorer les possibilités qu'offre la gouvernance locale lorsqu'il s'agit d'améliorer leur participation.

La question principale qui motive ce projet est la suivante : les villes moyennes situées en marge des réseaux économiques capitalistes *gouvernent-elles* la vie sociale des lieux qu'elles administrent, ou *sont-elles gouvernées* ? Pour y répondre, l'analyse porte sur le domaine particulier des politiques publiques d'intégration des immigrés, et ce dans quatre villes aux frontières d'Israël : Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat et Kiryat Shmona. Une étape importante est de reconnaître les intentions des acteurs qui organisent la vie sociale de ces villes. L'autonomie de leur gouvernance est sans doute relative, alors que les échelles de pouvoir se chevauchent, se croisent, et que leurs limites deviennent fluides et perméables. Au travers de ce travail, l'autonomie et la capacité des villes à administrer l'immigration sont donc mises à l'épreuve de l'analyse. En effet, alors qu'ils forment des politiques publiques, les acteurs réinterprètent la politique nationale et l'adaptent aux besoins et intérêts locaux qu'ils définissent.

La première partie de la thèse est divisée en trois chapitres. Le premier présente essentiellement le modèle théorique adopté. Le concept d'*échelle* est crucial pour l'analyse des transformations des hiérarchies de pouvoir et d'autorité. L'échelle, d'un point de vue méthodologique, fournit la limite du « terrain » — l'échelle locale correspond ainsi à la ville — ; et d'un point de vue analytique, elle permet d'appréhender un espace fluide et ouvert, où les acteurs situés à différentes échelles se rencontrent — ce qu'on appellera la gouvernance locale. Le deuxième chapitre développe plus en profondeur le concept de *lieu*. En effet, les transformations de l'Etat ne sont pas homogènes, et chaque lieu produit et reproduit de façon unique un espace socio-politique où se rencontrent les acteurs de l'intégration des immigrés. Le cas des villes moyennes israéliennes, situées en dehors des réseaux socioéconomiques et politiques, permet une enquête

à la « marge », qui dévoile les processus de rééchelonnement dans les villes « ordinaires » (Robinson, 2006). Ici, on explorera plus en détails la production d'une périphérie israélienne, géographique et socio-politique, au prisme de la politique dirigiste d'installation des immigrés telle qu'elle a été élaborée dès les premières années de l'état israélien. Enfin, le dernier chapitre présente la méthodologie qui découle du cadre conceptuel adopté, en instaurant les *acteurs sociaux* comme principaux producteurs de changement. La micro-histoire des lieux est un élément fondamental pour comprendre les transformations du pouvoir. Les entretiens qualitatifs, les observations participantes ainsi que les récits produits par les villes (au travers du musée municipal, des journaux locaux, ou des pages officielles des mairies dans les médias et les réseaux sociaux) sont au centre de l'analyse.

La deuxième partie de la thèse interroge les raisons de la mise en œuvre d'une politique d'intégration des immigrés. Deux causes principales — correspondant aux deux chapitres — semblent motiver certaines villes à intégrer à leurs responsabilités la question de l'intégration des immigrés, alors que d'autres villes s'y refusent. Le premier chapitre de cette partie analyse les discours qui s'attachent à démontrer les bénéfices tirés de l'immigration dans ces lieux. Des élus locaux, qui adoptent une attitude proactive face à l'injonction des villes à assurer leur développement, considèrent l'immigration comme un facteur potentiel de croissance. Cependant, les sources de cette croissance diffèrent des premières hypothèses formulées dans le cadre de ce travail. Les résultats montrent que la présence d'immigrés permet d'obtenir des ressources de l'administration centrale ; d'entretenir une base résidentielle qui justifie le maintien des services publics ; et d'assurer une « économie présentielle », garante de revenus pour la municipalité. Le deuxième chapitre, quant à lui, établit le rôle fondamental des élus locaux nés à l'étranger dans la mise en œuvre d'une politique locale d'intégration des immigrés. Les immigrés qui prennent part aux délibérations et qui sont membres de partis politiques sont à l'origine de l'avancement de ces questions sur l'agenda municipal. Néanmoins, ces mêmes élus vont promouvoir une certaine attitude face à l'immigration, qu'ils entendent restreindre à des immigrés méritants, productifs et participatifs, et ce dans une perspective d'immigration « choisie ». Ces deux chapitres montrent que les réformes néolibérales en Israël et la décentralisation politique et administrative, combinées à la volonté des élus locaux d'inclure l'immigration à l'agenda municipal, entraînent la production de politiques locales d'immigration caractéristiques. Les élus locaux veulent choisir les individus qui s'installent dans leur ville, un choix à l'origine de tensions entre les différentes échelles de pouvoir.

Les résultats de l'élaboration de politiques publiques d'intégration des immigrés sont abordés dans la troisième partie. L'analyse porte sur les résultats désirés par les acteurs ayant un rôle

actif dans l'intégration des immigrés, et leurs actions pour les atteindre. Le premier chapitre se penche sur les récits collectés pendant le travail de terrain, et ce que ces récits disent de l'intégration. Les participants définissent l'intégration en tant que processus dans le temps, au cours duquel les immigrés accèdent graduellement aux institutions principales du pays, soit la religion, l'éducation, l'armée, l'emploi et la politique. Le rôle des agences de l'Etat, et en particulier la municipalité, est perçu comme crucial pour faciliter cet accès. Le dernier chapitre explore l'espace socio-politique créé autour de l'objectif d'intégration des immigrés, tel que défini par la collectivité. Chacune des quatre villes a une façon unique d'appréhender son rôle face aux nouveaux venus, qui apparait à travers les différentes morphologies des paysages institutionnels, Cependant, les quatre cas convergent sur certains points : ils illustrent les transformations du pouvoir, et la gouvernance multi-échelle qui découle de la politique néolibérale israélienne. Enfin, les caractéristiques de ces villes moyennes périphériques, avec des acteurs et programmes qui leur sont propres, contribuent à maintenir ces espaces de différence à l'extérieur du Centre.

Ce travail doctoral a pour objectif de replacer au centre de l'analyse les acteurs sociaux, qui produisent les changements rapides et profonds du système politique de l'Etat-Nation. Le triptyque « échelle, lieu et acteurs sociaux » rend possible l'analyse des transformations des hiérarchies de pouvoir à partir des intérêts et compétences des acteurs qui interviennent dans un domaine particulier, et dont les décisions sont ancrées dans les lieux, définis par les couches multiples de relations sociales, politiques, historiques et économiques. Rétablir les « villes ordinaires », généralement perçues comme jouant « un jeu punitif de rattrapage » (Robinson, 2006, p. 6), en objets d'étude pertinents, est un objectif que l'on cherche à atteindre avec le concours d'une plus grande école qui promeut l'étude des villes moyennes. Finalement, ce travail contribue également à une meilleure compréhension du rôle de ces villes moyennes qui se voient administrer l'immigration, alors que l'installation d'immigrés en dehors de la « ville globale » s'amplifie.

שילוב מהגרים, אף על פי שהוא אינו מתחומי המדיניות המרכזיים ברשויות המקומיות (אשר מתמודדת לאחרונה עם אחריויות רבות שהועברו אליהן מן השלטון המרכזי), חושף מקרים רגישים של זהות, שייכות, או אזרחות. ניתוח מדיניות השילוב של מהגרים בעיר מבליט את הייחודיות של עיר מצד אחד ואת החדירות והפתיחות שלה כלפי חוץ מאידך. כך תחום מדיניות זה מאפשר לחקור את השינוי המדיני, ואת המערכת הפוליטית והאדמינסטרטיבית, בהקשר של ניאו-ליברליזם והאצלת הסמכויות הגוברת.
יתר על כך, כיון שמהגרים נדחפים לשוליים לעתים רבות, עולה עוד יותר החשיבות לשאול באיזה מידה הרשות מקומית עשויה להציע מסלול טוב יותר לשיתוף המהגר בתהליך הדמוקרטי של קבלת החלטות.

השאלה העיקרית בה עסקתי היא: האם ערים בינוניות הממוקמות בשולי הרשתות הכלכליות והקפיטליסטיות שולטת בחיים החברתיים בשטחן, או שהן נשלטות? לצורך זה, אני מנתחת את מדיניות שילוב המהגרים הייחודית של כל אחת מארבע ערי פריפריה בישראל: עכו, ערד, קריית-גת וקריית שמונה. על אף כי אני מניחה שעצמאותן של ערים אלה קטנה יחסית ומכיון שהכוח מתחלק בין בעלי עניין רבים, עבודה זו מהווה צעד חשוב בדרך להכרת הכוונות ובזיהוי הסוכנים המעצבים את חיי החברה של ערים אלו.
בעזרת מחקר זה, ברצוני לאתגר את האוטונומיה והיכולת של ערים אלו להתמודד עם הגירה. בעצם, על ידי יצירת מדיניות מקומית הרשויות המקומיות מפרשות מחדש את המדיניות של השלטון המרכזי ומתאימות אותה לאינטרסים ולצרכים שלהן.

בחלק הראשון של התזה שלושה פרקים. הפרק הראשון מתמקד בעיקר במודל התאורטי עליו מתבסס המחקר. קנה מידה (Scale) הוא מושג חיוני בניתוח הטרנספורמציה של ההיררכיות הכוח והסמכות. מושג זה מגדיר את הגבולות המתודולוגיים הדרושים לעבודת השטח- כך למשל, קנה המידה מקומי יקביל לעיר. בנוסף שימוש בקנה מידה מאפשר לתפוס מרחב מולטי-סקלרי גמיש, ללא גבולות ברורים, אשר בו השחקנים השונים נפגשים, מה שנתפס כמשילות מקומית. הפרק השני עוסק במושג מקום (Place). למעשה, התמורות במעמד המדינה אינן הומוגניות וכך כל אזור מייצר את המרחב הסוציו-פוליטי של שילוב מהגרים בדרך ייחודית. דרך מקרי המבחן של ארבע ערים בישראל הנמצאות מחוץ לרשת הסוציו-אקונומית והפוליטית המרכזית, הפרויקט בוחן את השוליים, בכדי להבין לעומק את תהליך שינוי קנה המידה ב'ערים רגילות' (Robinson,2006).
לכן, יצירה של פריפריה בישראל, מבחינה גאוגרפית וגם מבחינה סוציו-פוליטית,דרך יישוב מהגרים, נבחנת לעומק. הפרק האחרון בחלק זה עוסק במתודולוגיה העולה מהמסגרת המושגית, ותומך בגישה המחזירה למרכז את הסוכנים החברתיים
(Social agents) כגורמי שינוי עיקריים. המיקרו היסטוריה של מקום היא אלמנט חשוב להבנה של תהליך השינוי. על כן בחרתי לתת מקום נרחב למפגשי עומק, השתתפות בפעילויות, תצפיות ולשיח אותו מייצרות הערים עצמן דרך המוזיאון העירוני, מקומונים או אתרי אינטרנט רשמיים ומדיה חברתית.

החלק השני של המחקר בודק את המניעים ליצירת מדיניות שילוב של מהגרים. כאשר ניסיתי להבין מדוע חלק מן הערים עוסקות בשילוב מהגרים, כשאחרות מסרבות לעסוק בנושא, מצאתי שתי מערכות של מניעים. הפרק הראשון בחלק זה חושף שיח המבליט את היתרונות של הגירה באזורי השוליים. בהקשר זה, מנהיגים מקומיים, אשר נוקטים עמדה פרו-אקטיבית לפיתוח הקהילות שלהם, רואים במהגרים כגורם משמעותי ובעל פוטנציאל לעודד צמיחה. עם זאת, מקורות הצמיחה לא לגמרי תואמים את הנחות המקור שלי. הממצאים בשטח הראו דווקא כי נוכחות מהגרים מאפשרת גישה לכספי תמיכה ממשלתיים; מסייעת בשימור מסה דמוגרפית המצדיקה שירותים ציבוריים ומחזקת את ה'כלכלה המקומית' (in-place economy) ותורמת להגדלת ההכנסות של הרשות המקומית.
הפרק השני של חלק הזה מבסס את תפקידם המרכזי של פוליטיקאים מהגרים ביצירה של מדיניות מקומית לשילוב מהגרים. מהגרים אשר לוקחים חלק פעיל בדיון הציבורי או פעילים במפלגות פוליטיות מסייעים בקידום הנושא והבאתו לסדר היום הציבורי. אף על פי כן נציגים אלו מקדמים יחס מסוים כלפי הגירה, המוגבל בעיקר למהגרים הנתפסים כראויים, יעילים ומשתתפים. שני הפרקים הללו מראים כי הרפורמות הניאו-ליברליות יחד עם תהליך הביזור בפוליטיקה ובממשל בישראל,ובשילוב עם הרצון של מנהיגים מקומיים לכלול את נושא ההגירה בסדר היום שלהם, הם שהובילו ליצירתה של מדיניות הגירה מקומיות: פוליטיקאים מקומיים מעוניינים לקבל שליטה על האוכלוסיות שמתיישבות בתחומם, מה שיוצר מתח עם מטרותיה של מדיניות ההגירה

הלאומית.

החלק השלישי של המחקר מתמקד בתוצאותיה של מדיניות שילוב והגירה. בפרקים אלו אני מנתחת את התוצאות הצפויות אותם ביקשו השחקנים המעורבים להשיג; ואת השחקנים בעזרתם הם ביקשו לעשות זאת.
הפרק הראשון מספק ניתוח של הנרטיבים אותם אספתי במהלך עבודת השטח ואת התאוריה המעוגנת בשדה (Grounded theory) של המושג 'שילוב'.
המשתתפים במחקר מגדירים שילוב כתהליך בזמן, בו מהגרים חדשים נכנסים באופן הדרגתי למוסדות הישראליים המרכזיים כמו מוסדות דת, מערכת החינוך, צבא, תעסוקה ופוליטיקה. תפקידן של סוכנויות ממשלתיות בתהליך נמצא הכרחי בכדי לאפשר את שילובם של המהגרים, תפקידה של הרשות המקומית בתוך סוכנויות אלו נמצא בעל חשיבות גדולה במיוחד. הפרק האחרון מחפש אחר המרחב הסוציו-פוליטי שנוצר סביב המטרה הקולקטיבית של שילוב המהגרים.
באמצעות המורפולוגיה המובהקת של הנוף המוסדי של שילוב מהגרים בארבע הערים, אני מתארת כיצד לכל עיר יש תפיסה משלה לתפקידה מול המהגרים. ובכל זאת ארבע מקרי המבחן נפגשים: הם ממחישים את תמורות הכוח ואת הממשל המולטי-סקלרי שנוצר בעקבות הגישה הניאו-ליברלית של הפוליטיקה הישראלית. לטענתי, מיקומן של ערי הפריפריה במודל המולטי סקלרי בנוסף על השחקנים והתכניות הייחודיים להן תורם לשימור הערים הללו מחוץ למרכז.

תרומתו של מחקר זה היא בכך שהוא מדגיש סוכנים-חברתיים כגרומים לשינוי העמוק והמהיר של המערכת הפוליטית המדינית.
שלושת המושגים 'קנה-מידה, מקום וסוכנות' מאפשרים את ההתמודדות עם השינויים בהיררכיית הכוח דרך האינטרסים והמיומנויות של הסוכנים, במקומות הבנויים משכבות של יחסים חברתיים, פוליטיים,היסטוריים וכלכליים. שובן של 'הערים הרגילות' להיות אובייקטים רלוונטיים למחקר לאחר שבעבר נתפסו לרוב כמשחקות ב "Punitive game of catching-up" (רובינסון, 2006, עמ'. 6), זוהי חלק מאסכולה הפועלת למען הכרתן של ערים אלו בלימודים עירוניים. לבסוף, עבודה זו תורמת גם לדיון על הגירה בערים קטנות ובינוניות, כאשר תפקידם ביישוב מהגרים מקבל משמעות רבה יותר.

Preface

Amandine Desille was granted a Marie Curie fellowship in 2013 within the framework of the ITN Marie Curie Programme "INTEGRIM". The aim of this research training programme is to structure the existing high-quality research capacity on migration and integration policies and processes in the European Union and neighbouring countries. Based on a long-standing cooperation, the programme includes eight partners: UDeusto (ES), CEDEM (BE), SCMR (UK), IGOT (PT), IMES (NL), MiReKoc (TR), CEU (HU) and MIGRINTER (FR). Amandine benefited from her immersion into a pan European research network of experts on immigration and integration issues. She was part of the work package four of the programme "Urban integration, residential patterns and mobility", in which she was in close contact with leading experts of her field such as Lucinda Fonseca in Lisbon or Floris Vermeulen in Amsterdam. Members of this work package organised scientific meetings twice a year and provided guidance to the doctoral fellows.

Besides her insertion into the team Migrinter and the university of Tel Aviv, she spent 12 weeks in IGOT, university of Lisbon, in winter 2015. She also participated in seminars in Bilbao, Amsterdam, Budapest, Istanbul, Harvard, Birmingham and Lisbon on immigration, integration and urban governance. Beyond scientific aspects, it is worth noting that Amandine's training also included an initiation to innovative methodological tools. She participated in a film school at Budapest in December 2014 and May 2015. She made use of her skills to shoot a short video documentary on a representative of the immigrant party Israel Beitenu during the campaign for general elections in 2015.

Amandine has also been a lead organiser of two international seminars. The first one took place in December 2015. The event, entitled, "International Migrations and New Local Governance" took place in Poitiers on the 10th and 11th of December. It gathered speakers from France, South Africa, Switzerland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Japan, and the United Kingdom. A selection of papers presented during the seminar will be published as an edited book at Palgrave in the series "Migration, Diasporas and Citizenship". The second seminar is a joint initiative of doctoral students from Migrinter. It focused on ethnographic approach to international migrations. This one-day seminar inaugurated the conference celebrating the 30th anniversary of Migrinter.

Her inscription in dense and international institutional web of migration centres enabled Amandine to be part of two networks of students. She is an active member of the Réseau Migration (http://reseaumig.hypotheses.org/), which gathers over 150 junior researchers from France and beyond. The network organises a yearly conference and circulates information about

jobs and calls for papers among its members. The second group of PhD students of which Amandine is part is the one formed by Integrim fellows. Together, they submitted in 2016 a proposal to the COST funding programme of the European Union. This proposal is titled "Migration Research and Policy Speaks" (MIGRAPS) and its aim is to create a platform linking academic research and policy makers on migration issues. Her active participation in these networks is already paving the way for future scientific collaborations at an international scale.

As the coordinator of the INTEGRIM programme for Migrinter, I would like to thank Izhak Schnell. The co-supervision of Amandine's with William Berthomière has been an extremely fruitful collaboration.

Thomas Lacroix, CNRS research fellow, deputy director of Migrinter

Contents

CHAPTER 1 ◊ GOVERNING OR BEING GOVERNED? A SCALAR APPROACH OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF STATE POWER AND AUTHORITY THROUGH THE CASE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION POLICIES OF FOUR FRONTIER TOWNS IN ISRAEL: AN INTRODUCTION 19

PART I: SETTING THE STAGE

CHAPTER 2 ◊ TO GOVERN OR TO BE GOVERNED? RE-INTRODUCING AGENCY AND PLACE TO ACCOUNT FOR RESCALING IN MID-SIZED CITIES 41

CHAPTER 3 ◊ IMMIGRATION AND FRONTIER TOWNS IN ISRAEL 108

CHAPTER 4 ◊ GROUNDING THE RESEARCH IN PLACES, LISTENING TO THE ACTORS, ACCOUNTING FOR SCALAR PROCESSES: METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS 170

PART II: THE EMERGENCE OF LOCAL IMMIGRATION POLICIES: RECONCILING SCALE AND AGENCY

CHAPTER 5 ◊ IMMIGRATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY: RESCALING OF THE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 204

CHAPTER 6 ◊ MEANINGFUL INTERVENTIONS: LOCAL IMMIGRANT POLITICIANS PRODUCE SCALE ... 249

PART III: IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION POLICIES: FROM SYMBOLIC POLICIES TO IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES

CHAPTER 7 ◊ A GROUNDED-THEORY OF INTEGRATION: IS THERE A LOCAL INTERPRETATION OF IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION? 283

CHAPTER 8 ◊ MULTISCALAR AND FRAGMENTED GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION 324

CHAPTER 9 ◊ GENERAL CONCLUSIONS 361

Chapter 1 ◊ Governing or being governed? A scalar approach of the transformation of State power and authority through the case of immigration and integration policies of four frontier towns in Israel: An introduction

> First of all, really, immigrants are on my daily priorities. It means that I see in immigrants a resource that can lead the city to social development, to economic development. This is how I see the immigrants. Not as them that we have to take care of, but as them, who with the right push, can then help the city to develop, to advance, and to be… a very important part of the city. And that's why I travelled to Russia six times in remote places, which nobody heard of in Russia. (Extract of the interview with the mayor of the city of Acre, 2015)

In the last decade, the mayor of the northern city of Acre has taken pride in the extended immigrant integration programme offered by the municipality. Many can speculate on the reasons that have pushed this town to adopt an immigration policy, despite the many other daily struggles the city faces. Of course, this extract is not to be taken at face value: immigration is still a marginal domain of policymaking in most Israeli local governments, including Acre. Nevertheless, the fact that an elected councillor leads the six-worker municipal department of immigration integration, and that many other municipal agents are recruited within municipal services for their command of the Russian language, are proofs that the hundred families coming every year to settle in Acre are taken seriously. Acre is a sort of microcosm of the Israeli society, better known by tourists for being a crusader city, where Palestinian, Jewish and foreign-born Israelis share the same place: in this context, what does such an investment mean?

This short extract already holds many threads for research. One might wonder what the reasons of the concern of the mayor for the city's economic development might be; what is the nature of this abovementioned 'push' for the personal development of those immigrants who chose Acre as their home, and the resources summoned to make it possible; and what are those trips he mentions to reach out to Jewish communities in Russia. Through this discussion with Acre's mayor, the withdrawal of the Israeli central government from a matter that has been central for the first decades of its existence materialises. This shift in the administration of public affairs is revealed here, and is symptomatic of broader transformations, where cities voluntarily invest resources toward immigrant integration, leading to a variegated landscape of local immigrant integration policies.

The main question I address, through the analysis of the particular immigrant integration policy domain, is: do mid-sized cities located at the margin of capitalist economic networks govern the social life of the places they administer, or are they being governed? For this purpose, I investigate immigration integration policies in four frontier towns in Israel: Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona. The autonomy of their governance is, I assume, relative, in a context of overlapping, crosscutting, unbounded and fluid scales. However, challenging their autonomy and their capacity to address immigration, to reinterpret a national policy and adapt it to what they define as their local needs and interests, represents an important step to recognise the purposive agents who organise the social life of these cities.

This work is embedded in debates central to social geography the last decades: the transformations of statehood and power; the constant dialectic between the State and the territories they administer, which are produced by, but also inform, policies and public actions; and the agents at the core of these transformations. In this introduction, I therefore hope to address the current and larger debates that I relate to all along this volume. I then present the Israeli case, which in my opinion, can bring to light many of the interactions between the transformations of the State and immigration and integration issues. I explain more particularly to which scholarly discussions this work potentially contributes, within the modest limit of a piece of doctoral research. The approach I have adopted to do so is briefly presented, and is anchored in a three-dimensional conceptual framework, built on the concepts of scale, place and agency. Finally, I describe the structure of the thesis, divided in three larger parts, and nine chapters.

1 Transformations of the hierarchies of power: toward a new governance of immigration and immigrant integration

When it comes to immigration issues, scholars have not reached a consensus on the analysis of policymaking processes and the resulting policies. Opposed to one camp firmly believing that the deep changes experienced worldwide have not yet eroded the nation-state — the ultimate producer of the ideologies that oversee policies —; is a growing camp calling to go beyond 'methodological nationalism' and adopting postnational and transnational arguments. The nation-state loses its monopoly over power, in favour of new — or consolidated — actors, whether they be supranational organisations, transnational networks, subnational governments, grassroots organisations, representatives of the civil society or even private industrial or business actors.

I suggest that neither is entirely wrong, or entirely right. Instead, I argue that we ought to look at both phenomena: the attempts deployed by the central administration to keep a grip on certain state affairs, while getting rid of others; and the strategies of other actors to penetrate sovereign policy domains, or to avoid their devolution. For this purpose, I am particularly interested in the rise of cities in policymaking, and more specifically immigration and integration policymaking. The next subsections deal with the general debate around those questions. The transformations of statehood, but also of the role of the State and the subnational state in immigration and integration matters, represent the main issues this doctoral work raises.

1.1 From decentralisation to multiscalar governance

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw the beginning of a new order, against the post-war Welfare State, characterised by: the expansion of a free market ideology and its diffusion in multiple governmentalities; the withdrawal of the State from the social sphere and the cut in public expenditures; the parallel increased responsibilities devolved to local governments and private actors; and the triumph of values based on individualism and economic success. The flagships of this new order are the structural adjustment programmes imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the South; and Thatcherian and Reaganean reforms in the North. Those profound transformations have usually been regrouped under the label 'neoliberalism', and have reshaped the meaning of this word, giving it the definition widely used today. Neoliberalism is the new global capitalism, argues geographer David Harvey (2005).

In this context, geographers have been increasingly concerned with the rise of cities in the worldwide power structure and the shift from 'local government' to 'local governance'. This means that under the conditions of more aggressive and dematerialised forms of capitalism, globalisation, and accelerated dissemination of information and communication technologies, power hierarchies have been transformed, giving more authority to strategic urban sites. Moreover, the territorial choices affecting those cities are not solely in the hand of the national government or its local administrative branches, but a variety of actors have penetrated the administration of cities, with complex and often conflicting interests. This has led to a shift from simply decentralised government to multiscalar local governance.

The first works in geography documenting the increasing role of cities can be dated from the 1980s. In the English-speaking scholarship, Kevin Cox and Andrew Mair (1988) published the article "Locality and Community in the Politics of Local Economic Development" the same year Peter K. Eisinger (1988) published his volume *The Rise of the Entrepreneurial State, State and Local Economic Development Policies in the United States.* The economic role of cities, and their

capacity to assume the economic development of the territory they govern, was revisited. In this context, geographers restored the concept of 'scale' as an analytical category.

Two decades later, the seminal work of geographer Neil Brenner (2004) *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood,* endorsed the concept of scale as the relevant tool to address the transformations of the hierarchies of power. In fact, "the geographical scale at which political power and authority is located does not constitute a natural order, but rather is constructed and subject to change" (Leitner in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008). Scales are produced, reproduced and contested, from scalar flux to scalar fixes. Under new forms of capitalism and globalisation, globalisation and localisation become dialectically related processes. In that sense, rescaling means that a redistribution of power occurs in a complex and interscalar way: power is not simply located at local level (Herod, 2011). Supranational organisations, transnational networks, but also the State, and a myriad of locally grounded actors, all participate in the rescaling of power.

To elaborate on this argument, I turn to a French-speaking social geography, led by French geographer Guy Di Meo, who links territorialisation and the rescaling of public action. In his opinion, actors aggregate to form a governance regime and design public policies and actions that target a specific territory. Those actors are located at different scales, so that endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors cross the territory for which they intend to form policies (Di Meo, 2008, pp. 6–7). Di Meo's social geography is not far from Patrick Le Galès (2011)'s political analysis, but it extends the understanding of governance to its connection with a territory, which informs — as much as it is subjected to — the strategies of actors.

In Israel, where this doctoral project was conducted, the language of scales is not yet preponderant among geographers. First, the role of supranational organisations such as the European Union is irrelevant. Second, Israel is still considered a rather centralised state. Tel Aviv is usually described as the only city that has the bargaining power to make choices outside the central authority. This exceptionalism is pointed out in particular when it comes to its immigration policy (Raijman & Kemp, 2002; Alexander, 2003; Berthomière & Hily, 2006; Rozenholc, 2010; Schnell, 2013; Kalir, 2014).

However, I argue that other cities, located out of — old or more recent — core networks of power, do see a shift toward multiscalar local governance. Walking around remote towns in Israel, a simple look at the printed logos, belonging to the multiple donors — ministries, industrial donors, philanthropists, international organisations and other foundations — funding municipal departments and organisations, show the complexity of the financial packages

municipalities have to put into place to see their projects finalised. Even in small and mid-sized cities, local actors are under the obligation to innovate to access national or even transnational networks and their resources (Béhar in Loubière, 2011; Auerbach, 2012). To understand better the extent to which those spaces 'without power' — which I call 'frontier towns', 'small and mid-sized cities' or even 'peripheries' in the course of this work[1] — indeed have the capacity to join the production of new scales of power, authority and responsibility, I turn to the case of immigration and integration policies.

1.2 Immigration and integration issues in the contemporary city

Following the worldwide trend described above, cities have become important sites where immigration and immigrant integration is discussed (Penninx, Kraal, Martiniello, & Vertovec, 2004; Varsanyi, 2008; Good, 2009; Caponio & Borkert, 2010; Schiller & Çağlar, 2010; Walker & Leitner, 2011). Even though immigration policy is still very dependent on national governments or European Union's regulations, decentralisation and fragmentation of power along various scales have translated into new 'political opportunity structures', that is a new institutional context for policy-making (Jørgensen, 2012). Since rationalities and logics diverge at local level, and are place-dependent, policy outcomes vary from city to city.

Apart from issues of devolution of power, where immigration policies are conceived following a top-down logic of 'activation' (Penninx et al., 2004), immigrant integration issues also raise from the idea that cities, being the sites where integration occurs, are more responsive to the needs of the immigrants they host. In fact, "In every European context, most immigrants live in cities. That is where the jobs, housing, schools, support services (whether governmental or non-governmental), religious and leisure facilities, and their own social networks are concentrated" (Penninx et al., 2004). Bottom-up 'mobilisation' (*Ibid.*) is more and more seen as an option in the production of divergences in immigration and immigrant integration policies. Examples from the 1990s include Frankfurt's case study by John Friedmann and Angelika U. Lehrer (1997), who have documented the development of a multicultural policy in the German city of Frankfurt, against the national take on immigration at the time. In Israel, Tel Aviv has similarly challenged the national immigration policy and has established a municipal service for non-Jewish immigrants (Raijman & Kemp, 2002; Alexander, 2003; Berthomière & Hily, 2006; Rozenholc, 2010; Schnell, 2013; Kalir, 2014). More recently, the most visible demonstration of the role of

[1] The term 'frontier' reflects the political construction of these places, out of core networks, at the borders; the term 'periphery' emphasises more strongly their economic dependence to core networks; while the term 'mid-sized city' is more associated to their situation in an administrative system of cities. All those aspects are intertwined in the four cities under scrutiny.

cities in immigrant integration has been the development of forms of 'local citizenship' in 'sanctuary cities' (Walker & Leitner, 2011; de Graauw, 2013).

Those cases are still seen as exceptional. Activation is more common than mobilisation, or at least more successful in forming policies. Hans Mahnig, amongst others, argues that immigrant policies are generally reactive: "The presence of immigrants becomes a topic in the political debate only when it starts to be perceived as a threat to the society as a whole" (Mahnig in Penninx et al., 2004). Later in his chapter, he also writes: "local conservatism prevails" (*Ibid.*), arguing that cities are not more accommodating than the national administration.

Here again, examples and their counter-examples show that there is no straightforward trend. However, it seems that, even within inclusive policies, there is a new convergence toward limiting immigration to certain immigrants. I turn to political philosopher Will Kymlicka (2015)'s recent work on solidarity. Kymlicka suggests that multiculturalism and neoliberalism, although coming from different ideological frames, have developed together. The same agencies have pushed them forward. This resulted in a situation of 'inclusion without solidarity' where multiculturalism is limited to certain categories of immigrants (Kymlicka, 2015). Is there a 'neoliberal' immigrant, who is favoured in immigration policies?

1.3 A neoliberal immigrant?

When I state that cities are more and more considered active immigrant integration policymakers, what does 'integration' mean? Integration is a concept deeply connected to a field of research concerned with citizenship and nation-state issues. It refers to the inclusion of foreign-born individuals into the nation. One way the scholarship has addressed integration, which I dismiss altogether here, is to measure immigrants' performance, relatively to the performance of the 'average' national. A second way — anchored in Benedict Anderson (Anderson, 1983)'s 'imagined communities' —, can refer to the way the national discourse is geared toward the inclusion or exclusion of certain groups, and hence the collective imaginary of the nation. In drawing the boundaries of the nation, immigration provides a sense of its limits, of what is outside: "Because immigration constitutes the limit of what constitutes the national state. Immigration is the limit that reveals what it is intrinsically, or its basic truth" (Sayad (1996) reprinted in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, p. 166).

Another way to address integration is through the multifaceted policies designed by public agencies to deal with immigrants once they have settled in the country. Here, scholars have looked more particularly at the way immigrants are depicted as a problem, and consequently as

the object of public actions. Thus, the role of institutions is crucial when "[…] integration [is] a collective societal goal which can be achieved through the systematic intervention of collective political agency […]" (Favell, reprinted in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, p. 374). Depending on the outcomes aimed at by public agencies when they think of immigrant integration, attitudes and associated policies vary between transient, assimilationist, multicultural or intercultural policies (Alexander, 2003; Penninx et al., 2004; Schnell, 2013).

Integration, in this sense, has been subjected to many changes along the recent developments I have described in the first part of this section. In the European context for instance, integration has shifted with the new European social project, as: "Integration acquires a new purpose – the purpose of achieving social cohesion in society driven by active, participatory and productive individuals" (Soysal, 2012). The deservingness of immigrants is more and more correlated with their capacity to be employed, even when they are undocumented, and to prove their social integration (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012). This translates into new immigration schemes, such as the European blue card for high-skilled immigrants.

At the national level, French politician Nicolas Sarkozy's proposal for 'targeted' immigration policies (*immigration choisie* in French) is in line with other trends in Europe where immigrants are more and more expected to be self-sufficient. The transformations of frames of deservingness mean that immigrants are envisaged as neoliberal subjects, who can achieve integration with the right entrepreneurial and independent spirit. The counterpart is the common marginalisations of the 'undeserving' — disabled, Roma and undocumented migrants (Rajaram, 2014). As Thomas Faist has rightly put it: "It is not only the categorization of people along nationality/citizenship and thus the accident of birthplace, but also their distinction with respect to economic utility and social adaptation that make a difference to the life chances of many individuals" (Faist, 2013, p. 1644).

How do those new neoliberal immigrants feed the ambitions of the cities engaged in endless competition over resources? Some would answer: they become part of the competition (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010). Indeed, "Cities compete to attract the most skilled and creative migrants, and the municipalities are responsible for poorly skilled and less resourceful immigrants and descendants" (Jørgensen, 2012, p. 245). However, it does seem that this equation is not that simple.

The very first hypotheses for this doctoral work lay in the understanding of the relations between immigration and economic development in cities. What is found is that this link is not obvious. In the context of South Africa, Caitlin Blaser and Loren Landau argue: "[…] in most cases

local authorities have neither the tools to capitalise on the opportunities presented by multi-locality nor the ability to respond to the challenges it presents. In many cases, shortcomings start with the local officials' poor awareness and acceptance that movement and multi-locality can be positive vehicles of change or that their actions can help determine outcomes" (Blaser & Landau 2016). What about other national and local contexts? In the case of desired settlement immigration in particular — Israel representing one example of such immigration —, is the contribution of immigration to cities seen with more clarity? How can I address this issue in a context of changing hierarchies of power?

2 Governing or being governed?

In this rather broad debate, one can see that North America and Europe are the main fields of research. Nevertheless, those regions are far from being the only recipients of mass immigration, and are certainly not the only ones which experience transformations of their political and administrative regimes.

Despite its relative isolation in the scholarship — Israel being usually treated as a standalone example —, the Israeli case presents several features which can provide new angles to bring light to the transformations of the State. In the first subsection, I address more particularly the position of immigration in national politics, as Jewish immigration represents a strong feature of nation building in this much disputed area. Second, Israel has experienced an important rupture in the late 1970s, following a worldwide trend, characterised by the progressive — and rather jittery, with sporadic strong interventions — withdrawal of the State from planning, and by extension, from immigration policies. The advantage is that immigration and planning are both well-studied fields, with a peak of research works following the mass immigration of the 1990s, which provides me with a benchmark to evaluate the current situation.

Nevertheless, if there is a consensus that since the 1980s, there has been a 'neoliberalisation' of the State, coupled with a *de facto* decentralisation, there has been little interest, if any, on the impacts of the devolution of responsibilities on immigration issues. In the last subsection, I address more particularly the role of cities in immigration, and I wonder: are Israeli towns governing or being governed?

2.1 On immigration in Israel

The building of a 'Jewish home' in mandatory Palestine at the turn of the century is profoundly associated to immigration to Israel, also called *Aliyah*. *Aliyah* and the ingathering of the exiles are inscribed in the declaration of independence, and in 1950, Israel's immigration policy the 'Law

of Return' became the legal expression of the Jewish character of the State (Yoav & Peled in Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004). In particular, Jewish immigration after 1948 was instrumental for "creating […] a fait accompli" (Kimmerling, 1982), legitimating the existence of Israel. Immigration settlement is conceived in parallel with goals of strengthening secure borders for the state and the quick populating of the sovereign territory (Efrat, 1988).

However, immigration settlement followed ethnic logics, where European Ashkenazi immigrants were mostly settled in core areas, while immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East were directed toward transit camps, and then to new towns established at the frontiers. From the 1980s on, there has been a consensus in the Israeli scholarship that in the 1950s, the State was at least partially responsible for engineering spatial segregation (Shama & Iris, 1977; Lipshitz, 1991, 1998; Yiftachel, 2000; Khazzoom, 2005; Tzfadia, 2006). The result of this settlement policy was the production of spaces of difference, along the Simmelian sense of frontier (Groupe Frontière, 2004). Immigrants were unevenly integrated, following an 'ethnic logic of capital' (Yiftachel, 2000). Today, towns located away from the socioeconomic, political and geographic core are composed mainly of individuals of North African and Middle-Eastern ascent (called oriental Jews or *Mizrahim*), and more recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

Despite those differentiated paths of integration, Israel has taken pride in its integration policies. Indeed, the idea persists that immigration integration in Israel is easier, since immigrants are 'Jews coming to a Jewish society' (Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1998). In a context of 'repatriate' migration, "The presumed existence of historic, cultural, and/or religious heritage shared with the host society leads to the expectation of fast and painless social integration of the repatriates" (Remennick, 2003, p. 25).

Surely, the massive immigration wave of the 1990s has benefited — and probably also participated — in a new integration policy, less assimilationist and more open to sociocultural pluralism. Russian-speakers have created a multifaceted cultural world of their own, translated into a *de facto* cultural autonomy (Remennick, 2003)

The last decades have also meant new challenges for Israel's integration policies. Israel's access to the industrialised world has led to more diverse and plural immigration: non-Jewish (halachically) immigrants among the former USSR, Ethiopian, Argentinean and Romanian beneficiaries of the Law of Return (Lustick, 1999); and non-Jewish immigration induced by the transition toward a post-industrial economy (Raijman & Kemp, 2002). This 'new second generation' (Elias & Kemp, 2010) characterised non-Jewish immigrants, Black Jews and children

of migrant workers in Israel, largely ignored by the central administration, has become a reality that cities start dealing with.

2.2 The city in Israel

Walking around the four cities I have selected for fieldwork — Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat or Kiryat Shmona — can be misleading: the apparent apathy, even backwardness and feeling of overstretching time, hide the tremendous changes they have gone through during their short history. Prior to the establishment of the Israeli state, under the Ottoman and the British mandates, Israeli cities enjoyed rather large autonomy. In 1948, and as the central administration sought legitimacy, their authority was transferred to the new national state (Gradus, 1983; Elazar, 1988). The first years following the establishment of the state saw central planning aimed at creating new cities and settlements, sometimes above the ruins of former Palestinian villages, to accommodate the large flows of newcomers and secure the new territory (Efrat, 1988). As early as the 1960s, the government expressed renewed desire to strengthen local governments (Gradus, 1983; Elazar, 1988). The most important step of this *de facto* decentralisation is the reform toward direct mayoral elections in 1978 (*Ibid.*). After the 1980s, more changes affected cities: on the one hand, the progressive withdrawal of the State from public service means that local governments took over new responsibilities; on the other hand, local politics began to be considered more important, and national parties intervened more and more in local politics (Elazar, 1988).

Against this very brief historical background, one can see the progressive liberalisation of Israel. In the 1970s, Israel sees the infiltration of a 'new right' ideology from the UK and USA (Razin, 1990). In 1977, the right-wing Likud party won the national elections, a pivotal year in Israeli politics, with the shift from a founding Labour Zionist bloc to a more neo-Zionist, neoliberal Likud party (Shafir & Peled in Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004). Yet the real turn, that led to an actual withdrawal of the State and reduced public expenditures occurred in 1985, under American pressure (Kay, 2012). In 1997, the IMF included Israel in the developed countries list. From that period on, the prestige of business careers exceeded the prestige of military careers (Shafir & Peled in Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004). When I started fieldwork, in 2013, the result of the elections confirmed this trend. The coalition was made up of parties that all believe in free market, tax reduction, cutting welfare subsidies, weakening labour unions and in general, whittling away at the government's principles (Rubin, Navot, & Ghanem, 2014).

The impact of this new state of affairs for cities, is that "A faltering, ineffective central government and increasingly pressing local problems, encouraged the emergence of more

assertive, entrepreneurial and effective local governments" (Ben-Elia, 2006). Caught in a 'Darwinist environment' (*Ibid.*), local governments must deploy necessary actions to maintain levels of public service delivery, and attract public resources, investments and residents.

However, and following the multiscalar character of governance as defined in the European and North American contexts, "relations between central and local governments are not simply hierarchical but rather form a web of multiple actors" (Auerbach, 2011). What about spaces that are traditionally described as powerless in the Israeli scholarship — peripheral mid-sized cities?

2.3 The peripheral mid-sized city in Israel

Planning has been a substantial function of the Israeli State, especially after its establishment, in its semi-socialist form. As I have mentioned before, and as old urban centres quickly reached saturation point, an important task for planners at the time was the creation of new settlements to host the on-going flow of Jewish immigration. In this context, a large number of new settlements, among them around thirty mid-sized towns, were planned at the borders of the new state, to act as administrative and economic centres for their rural hinterlands. Those new towns, designed along the principles of Walter Christaller's central place theory, were called 'development towns' (*ayarot pituach* in Hebrew). However, soon after they were built, signs of their failure were quick to show: ethnic segregation, out-migration, unemployment, lack of public infrastructures, and isolation from the hinterlands they were planned to benefit from… their marginalisation has produced correlative negative effects of socioeconomic stratification on the population they have hosted until today (see for instance Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004).

These peripheries, described by Israeli geographers such as Yehuda Gradus (1983), have also suffered from the political regime of Israel. Gradus explains that Israel is mostly centralised, and fosters high political stakes when it comes to planning. In that context, development towns were very dependent on the central administration, which even sent representatives from the centre to act as local leaders. In the 1960s, a decade after their establishment, some cities finally saw leaders emerge from their own communities — usually Jewish immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East. However, at the central level, the Israeli parliament — the Knesset — still displayed overrepresentation of members from the centres (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, but also from the older rural settlements, or *kibbutzim*). In that sense, Israeli politics was sectorial rather than territorial (*Ibid.*).

The core/periphery dichotomy described by Gradus led to what he calls the emergence of 'ethnoregionalism', or a reactive political regionalism (*Ibid.*). The main beneficiaries of this marginalisation are the nationalist, conservatory right-wing parties in Israel. In fact, the success of Likud in 1977 is a result — among other reasons — of the resentment of the inhabitants of development towns toward the Labour party. With the strengthening of the right-wing bloc, the justification of the occupation of frontier areas has shifted from defence justification (Labour) to historical ideological and religious reasons (Likud) (Smooha & Peretz, 1982). As "[...] Mizrahi identity has been preserved at the social and economic peripheries, not as a distinct cultural orientation, but as a *diffused sense of origin and solidarity, fuelled by persisting marginality and hardship*"[2] (Yiftachel & Tzfadia, 2004, p. 229), Likud has permitted the reunification of the image of the settlers and the defenders (Kellerman, 1996).

The arrival of around 800,000 new immigrants from the former Soviet space in the 1990s has revived the debate around development cities in Israel (Berthomière, 2003). As the immigration policy shifted in the 1980s — a result of the new neoliberal reforms of the State —, the government took steps to develop incentives to lead the newcomers to the Northern and Southern districts of the country. Even if the housing policies adopted by the State to encourage settlement in the development towns have been rather successful, the question remains: who will stay in those areas? In fact, out-migration in development towns was always high, as high as 20% in the 1950s (*Ibid.*). And indeed, even though many cities have benefited from a demographic burst — Former Soviet Union immigrants still represent around a quarter of these towns' residents —, the continuous building of housing for low purchasing power families in development towns has translated into a vicious circle of precarity (Aymard & Benko, 1998). Immigrants who settled and stayed in development towns were generally older, less educated and with lower professional prospects than the ones settling in the centre.

Nevertheless, the 1990s mass migration has revealed new capacities among local leaders in those peripheral towns. First of all, some elected mayors were more and more professional and were able to counter decisions from the central administration to prevent mass settlement in their cities (Auerbach, 2001). They succeeded in transforming themselves from ethnic brokers to 'more capable, entrepreneurial and independent mayors' (Razin & Hazan, 2004, p. 90). Strong local governments managed to resist mass installation, while the weakest one were forced to accept, leading to even poorer predicaments (Tzfadia, 2006). With new flows of immigration, residents of the peripheries have participated actively in immigrant integration (Berthomière, 1996).

[2] In italics in original text.

Another effect of the 1990s immigration has been the rise of new political parties in the political landscape of development towns. Immigration weighs on politics, as Soviet immigrants and oriental immigrants tend to strengthen the Zionist, anti-democratic coalition (Acosta, 2014). Immigrant parties *Shas* and *Israel Beitenu* are well settled in the periphery (Achouch & Morvan, 2013; Berthomière, 2004). *Israel Beitenu* municipal councillors are present in every city council in the towns under scrutiny, as Russian-speaking immigrants tend to affiliate to radical Jewish nationalism (Tzfadia & Yacobi, 2007; Lerner, 2015). At national level, this means that the peripheries continue to provide voters for right-wing parties, with an inclination for extreme rightist positions and security discourses (Rubin *et al.*, 2014).

Despite this rather 'negative' portrait of immigration settlement, Israel is often quoted as an example for its best practices when it comes to its relations between the diaspora and Israeli socioeconomic development. Transnational institutions such as the Jewish Agency[3] — and its programme linking diaspora groups and local authorities 'Israel's partnership 2000' —, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee — and the Taglit-Birthright Israel programme— are set as examples, since they make the best of the financial resources of one group, and the development needs of the other (Agunias & Newland, 2012).

3 On the importance of immigration issues, an indicator of contemporary societal and political transformations

In this rather rich theoretical and empirical context, it has been quite a challenge to adopt an inductive position. In fact, the idealised research guideline that researchers have no preconception before they start observations is impossible. However, and especially as I do not aim at collecting data for the purpose of elaborating a general theory, I adopted a 'dialogue' between fieldwork and the literature. Hence, the data collected can challenge existing theories and enrich them (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This inductive approach involves looking at things differently, in order to add a new layer.

What did I do differently? I decided to enquire into 'ordinary cities', and more particularly, to encounter their actors. In that sense, my aim was to bring back agency within a field that has been mostly occupied by structuralist theorists. Those agents, re-empowered as they are with the capacity to make choices, produce policies, bear an impact on scales and constantly define the places they inhabit, even if they do not necessarily push forward social justice!

[3] Founded in 1922, the Jewish Agency is a public agency, whose board includes Israeli citizens as well as representatives of the Jewish Diaspora. Through its local offices worldwide, the Jewish Agency has organised immigration to Israel since its establishment until now. It also manages absorption centres in Israel, as well as decentralised cooperation projects between Jewish communities and Israeli cities.

One question that remains, and which I intend to answer in the conclusions of this work, is whether the 'singularity' of those cases means that they constitute particular cases, leading to better understanding of broader phenomena, or exceptional cases that do not stand comparison?

3.1 Contributing to a better understanding of rescaling and place-making processes through agency

If we were to ask what a thesis in social geography brings to a better understanding of the transformations of statehood and power, the answer lies in an analysis framed through the concept of scale. In fact, the concept of scale makes it possible to capture the multiple interests that collide when one comes to decide upon the development strategies of a bounded territory. The spatial element is methodological: it determines the place under scrutiny. But the rescaling processes I study do not so much fall in a geographic space, but rather a socio-political space.

The rescaling of statehood has often been studied from a top-down perspective: with the withdrawal of the State and the growth of a free market ideology, places compete to reach resources. The rescaled responsibility, Brenner or Leitner argue, is a strategy of the State to avoid taking the blame for its failure (Brenner, 2004; Leitner in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008). However, what is the role of the actors on which these new responsibilities are transferred? My project contributes to a scholarship which attempts to fill this void and address the role of subnational levels of government in the production of scales, rather than their simple reaction to what is depicted as an inevitable devolution of power.

Through a constructivist grounded approach, I hope to document several possibilities of this scalar production. I do not pretend to draw a typology, a rule determining — provided I can define a range of variables — what local governance will look like. Instead, I will provide empirical cases, each one constituting one possible way cities present forms of agency to rescaling the political system. Informed by actors, and by the history of the place that they administer, scales of power and responsibility are produced, reproduced and contested. The city does not simply replace the State where the latter has stepped back, but new interests drive new attitudes, sometimes beyond the city's formal responsibilities.

Perhaps each of these constellations, of these possibilities, can become part of a larger 'assemblage'. Assemblage, such as proposed by urban theorist Colin McFarlane (2011), enables the researcher to look at the city as an 'on-going construction', and to take into account the history, the materialities of the city, while connecting it to the future, to its multiple potentials.

And in fact, if I bring back to the analysis 'neoliberalism' as an ideological framework that impacts on rescaling processes, geographer Jamie Peck or anthropologist Aihwa Ong harness 'assemblage' to enable their analysis. For Peck:

> [...] the hegemonic grip of neoliberal ideology continues to be manifest in the form of unrelenting political pressure for market-oriented and voluntarist modes of governance, based on the principles of devolved and outsourced responsibility, along with a correspondingly circumscribed regulatory solution space. (Peck, 2013, p. 147)

In that context,

> [neoliberalism] designate but one strand of a diffuse complex of individualized post-social governmentalities, a never more than small-n, flexible assemblage of technologies, routines, and modes of conduct, as more 'deflationist' and particularized analyses are more inclined to argue. (*Ibid.* p. 135)

The singular cases that constitute my 'fieldwork' — the places where I walked around, took pictures, met with people, the places I read about in the news, in articles and in books for the time of this doctoral research — offer empirical specific analyses. Those analyses feed into a broader picture of worldwide trends that are sometimes adopted, sometimes contested, but usually reinterpreted and filtered through the specificity of the places where they occur. Their aggregates then provide scholars and other practitioners with threads to follow to understand the transformations of the State and of power at work in our contemporary society.

One major contribution is therefore the analysis of the interrelated processes of scalar production, place-making and social actors' gain of power.

3.2 Contributing to a better understanding of the peripheral, mid-sized city

A second attempt, through this work, is the reinstallation of small and mid-sized cities, located outside the core social, economical and political networks, as relevant objects of study. Here, I agree with Jennifer Robinson — and with a new scholarship which revisits towns — when she states: "I want to achieve a collective refusal of the categories and hierarchising assumptions that have left poor cities playing a punitive game of catch-up in an increasingly hostile international economic and political environment" (Robinson, 2006, p. 6).

Places located in the periphery surely undergo different processes than those in large metropolitan areas. But the fact that they have less power does not mean that they do not have

the possibility to induce changes at all. When tackling immigration issues, towns, periurban and rural areas have become more important sites of immigration settlement than before. Dramatic restructuring and demographic change in small towns, in parallel with new immigration, have triggered processes of othering and racialization, or 'negotiations of difference' (Leitner, 2012; Walker & Leitner, 2011).

Since "Space and place clearly matter in the construction and daily experience of citizenship and belonging" (H. Smith & Ley, 2008), immigration settlement in places at the margin is not a minor issue:

> Drawing on the insights of these studies, we find that in order to interpret how geography matters in anti- or pro-immigrant initiatives attention must also be paid to the history of social/power relations (broadly conceived) in particular places, which in turn help to construct and reconstruct belief systems such as race thinking as well as conceptions of nation and place. Recognizing that place is more than location helps to understand why places occupying the same type of location (suburbia) might be associated with contrasting imaginaries of community and place, which are rooted in contrasting imaginaries of the nation. (Walker & Leitner, 2011, p. 165)

On top of re-establishing small and mid-cities for what they can produce, I also believe that speaking of margins, of peripheries, or of frontier towns presents the additional advantage of speaking of the national level. Indeed, because of the rescaling processes I just mentioned, practices developed in those towns do hold something of the national level — its ideology, its strategies, its actors and resources.

3.3 Contributing to a better understanding of immigration and integration policy processes

A final proposal lies in the example I chose to draw the analysis from: immigration and immigrant integration policies. Immigration policies and immigrant policies refer respectively to policies elaborated to define entries of foreigners into a nation-state, and to policies designed to deal with the presence of foreign-born populations in this state (Penninx *et al.*, 2004; Martiniello & Rath, 2010). Immigration and immigrant policymaking and policies have been the object of intense research in the past decade, leading to the fast development of a field of study in its own right.

In this rather fertile context, the question of the extent to which cities engage in immigration and immigrant policies can be redundant, but it is not very well documented when it comes to small cities. Second, if in fact small and mid-sized cities start to engage with immigration

policymaking, do they diverge from national policies, and how? Are they more accommodating, or does 'local conservatism prevail'? And more importantly, what are the reasons why those towns get involved in immigration issues, and who are the actors producing new logics and new rationalities?

The case of Israel can be enlightening: firstly because at least for Jewish immigrants, Israel has a policy favouring an immigration of settlement; secondly, immigrants are part of the decision-making process. The Israeli case makes it possible to look at policymaking without an obvious majority/minority dichotomy. Immigrants participate in politics – they work at the ministries, they are elected members of parliament, but as I have mentioned, in the periphery, they are also councillors and members of immigrant parties. A final reason lies in the relations between urban planning and immigrant settlement. As geographer William Berthomière has argued: "the immigrant policy for Former Soviet Union immigrants, implemented by the Israel government as 'direct absorption', permits immigrants to chose freely their residence, and therefore, enables to measure the relation between State logics and immigrants' logics"[4] (Berthomière, 2002).

Very little has been done in Israel on those topics. Gedalia Auerbach (2001, 2011) and Erez Tzfadia (2005, 2006) have looked at the 'local autonomy' gained by towns through their mayoral and municipal activities, but their work mainly focuses on the 1990s. On the use of municipal services by immigrants, Gila Noam (1994) has shown that 50% of new immigrants did not know that there was a department of absorption to turn to at city level. Users did not rate those departments positively, as they denounce heavy bureaucratic procedures, high costs and discourteous treatment (Noam, 1994). Much more recently, Orna Yehuda Abramson shows that those services are more present and more used, but her survey exclusively purports to describe the new organisational developments in municipalities (Yehuda Abramson, 2013).

Israel's Jewish immigration is too often considered 'unique', and little critical research work on immigration and immigrant policy processes in Israel has been carried out. When presenting my work to Israeli scholars, they have encouraged me and assured that *Aliyah* is like any other immigration. I myself think the contrary: any immigration is like *Aliyah*. In fact, immigration always holds the hope that life will become better, especially for the second generation. Immigration always represents a moral ascent — this is precisely what the term *Aliyah* means — ; it always encompasses a desire for emancipation. Once they settle, immigrants often experience the backlashes of uprooting and relocating in a foreign place. Much as in other places in the world, Israel has paid the price of ignoring the crises induced by immigration, and of enforcing

[4] Translation of the author.

assimilationist policies. As new developments have occurred in the past few decades, maybe there is indeed something to learn from the Israeli experiences.

4 Conceptual framework: Scale, place and people

Even though the first part of this volume does follow this order, here, for simplicity's sake, I will start with the concept of agency, since deep encounters provide the main methods of enquiring local immigration and integration policies. I will then speak of the concept of place, anchored in a humanistic school of thought, which has endowed place with a broader sense than a simple geographical location, including the feelings and collective imaginary attached to it. Finally, I will briefly detail the way I have harnessed the concept of scale, since I have already presented its development in the first section.

4.1 Agency

A first choice I made was to put forward the voices of people. This thesis work is based on sixty in-depth encounters with elected politicians, government officers and other stakeholders involved with immigration integration issues, or with economic development issues in the four cities under scrutiny — Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona.

This concern with the role of agency in the production of places and of scalar processes fits in with a humanistic and constructivist tradition. In fact, both humanistic geographers and theorists of constructivist grounded theory have argued in favour of including everyday lives within the analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Tuan, 1976; David Ley & Samuels, 1978; D. Ley, 1981; Adams, Hoelscher, & Till, 2001; Charmaz, 2001).

To that end, I have based my analysis on the life stories, narratives and biographies that I heard and recorded during the year I conducted fieldwork. I believe that those narratives are a hermeneutics, an interpretation of the social life that is produced and constructed by the multiple actors meeting around — in this case — immigration issues. As Christine Delory-Momberger, who has largely worked on the biographical method, argues:

> We never stop *biographying*, that is to fit our experience in orientated time schemes which organise mentally our moves, our behaviours, our actions, following a narrative configuration's logic. This biographisation activity could be define as a dimension of human thinking and acting which, in the form of *practical hermeneutics*, enables individuals, in the conditions of their socio-

> historical settings, to integrate, to structure, to interpret situations and events they live.[5] (Delory-Momberger, 2009, p. 30)

But next to an orientation toward the past, where participants in the research restructure past events, those narratives also hold a powerful orientation toward the future. This future is what lies in the 'potential' or in the 'possible'. Here in particular, since I meet with people in governments, the political significance of the chosen words is substantial.

More particularly, I will emphasise the narratives produced by those who deal with immigration matters, but who also have experienced immigration themselves. Here, as I suggested before, the Israeli case offers the possibility to look at immigrants who have access to politics and to analyse the impact of their stories in the public sphere. I believe that their language will reflect their position of 'mediators'. For instance, political scientist Marco Martiniello has explored the role of ethnic leaders in Belgium, and defines them as privileged actors who mediate with the State and polity (Martiniello & Rath, 2010). I argue that, through their participation in governmental affairs, they produce new discourses and logics of immigrant integration.

4.2 Place

A second aspect of the theoretical and methodological framework I adopted is to ground the research in places. In fact, people's narratives are essential, but their analysis needs to be situated and contextualised in time and in space.

Beginning with frontier towns, I have scaled the analysis at local level. Those towns are not simply administratively bounded places. Following John A. Agnew's theory, places include three dimensions: a location, or a site in space, typically a city or another settlement; a series of locales where everyday life activities take place; and a 'sense of place', that is the feeling to belong to a unique community and a unique landscape, therefore following an Aristotelian tradition which sees place — contrarily to space — as being unique (Agnew, 1987, 2011). Agnew's account has had a profound impact in geography. The deep changes experienced over the past decade in our contemporary societies have led scholars to fine-tune this definition, and counter the attacks of some who have assessed that places are obsolete in the global world of *non-lieux* (Augé, 1992) and flows (Castells, 1998; Bauman, 2013). Thus feminist geographer Doreen Massey has argued that places can host multiple, often conflicting identities; they foster a sense of place that is extroverted, open to the world; and the spatial organization itself impacts the divisions within the place (D. Massey, 1991).

[5] Translation of the author.

The openness of places means that they are 'external forces' that define places. Agnew points out the crucial role of the modern territorial State which organises the local administration and decides upon redistribution (Agnew, 1990). This remark leads me to the third aspects of my approach: scale.

In fact, places represent the methodological scale at which the enquiry is conducted. However, scales also appear in places. As geographer Izhak Schnell suggests:

> This means that different scales may all be represented in the local as a hologram in which the part maintains the structure of the whole in different scales. The local, in this conception, becomes the hologram reality that mirrors the ensemble of forces, operating in a unique combination of horizontal and vertical or scalar orders that participate in shaping the place. (Schnell, 2007, p. 259)

4.3 Scale

The concept of scale has emerged from the analysis as particularly relevant to address the production of new governance devices, rules and norms by the actors located in the places I inquire.

In this work, I try to break free from a conception of scales as hierarchical spatial ensembles, to turn to a more fluid approach of scales. In fact, geographers have renewed the concept of scale, under conditions of globalisation and intense capitalism, therefore following larger claims in social sciences to give up 'methodological nationalism'. At the end of the 1990s, Erik Swyngedouw (1997) and Roland Robertson (1997) both coined the concept of 'glocalisation', breaking up the hierarchical order of scales, while Peter Taylor proposed a world city network with both regional and hierarchical tendencies (Taylor in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008). Here, I agree with Neil Brenner who reaffirms the chaotic results of processes affecting the scalar architecture of capitalism, which he defines as "a mosaic of superimposed, tangled, crosscutting, and unevenly overlapping interscalar hierarchies whose units are rarely coextensive or isomorphic" (Brenner in Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 33). Scales are defined here as hierarchies of power, authority and responsibility. Rescaling processes are therefore the transformations of these hierarchies.

More importantly, scales are produced, reproduced or contested by the actors themselves. This aspect is marginal in the major works addressing scale issues — mostly because they are produced by critical theorists who focus on macro levels of analysis. However, as Schnell argues when addressing the scalar forces affecting places, "while agents are practicing, they play an active role in response to these external forces" (Schnell, 2007, p. 260). Understanding agents'

logics and strategies, but also the cooperation and conflicts between them, sheds light on the governance of immigration and integration issues in those cities.

All through my fieldwork, the multiplicity of actors and their organisational belongings have led me to discover a multiscalar landscape, where local actors such as municipalities gain power. But with each programme or policy on which their responsibility increases, their dependency on other actors (usually the sponsors) increases accordingly. In fact, the more local actors see responsibilities devolved, the more dependent they become. From this interconnected web of 'endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors' (Di Meo, 2008) dealing with immigration and integration issues in the towns, the analytical category of scale has proved to function as a pointer of the power — certainly relative, but existent — of local actors in places at the margin.

5 Outlines

Firstly, let us recall that the main question I address, through the analysis of the particular immigrant integration policy domain, is: do mid-sized cities located at the margin of capitalist economical networks govern the social life of the places they administer, or are they being governed?

The first part of this thesis addresses the theoretical and methodological choices supporting the analysis. More specifically, it tackles the intersections within the triptych scale, place and agency. The first chapter of this part is an attempt to brief the scholarly debates on scales, places and agency, and to locate my research within these prolific fields of study. The following chapter, focusing on the 'places' I chose to enquire, aims at presenting the specific context of Israel on the one hand, and of mid-sized cities located away from the centre, close to the country's borders on the other hand. I argue that those frontier towns are relevant pointers of the transformations of the State, and of the transformations of the local, as well as the national. The methodological implications of the theoretical and empirical choices I made are detailed in the last chapter of the first part.

The second part of this work addresses the motives driving local immigration policymaking. The first set of motives, detailed in chapter 5, is grounded in place. Immigration is perceived as one mechanism leading to local (in-place economic) development. Immigration changes the course of a place, the dynamics of its social relations, the way social life is organised. The chapter shows that participants to the research strongly believe that these disruptions can lead to positive change, can entail the rescaling of local development strategies, and support the repositioning of the city. The second set of motives, presented in chapter 6, is grounded in the actors. The social engagement of actors with the multiple aspects of life in the city, and more importantly the

engagement of actors in government, actors who take decision for larger groups, has a significant impact on the production or reproduction of realities in this city. The immigration experiences of leaders make them more sensitive to the issues, but also more inclined to 'choose' immigrants they perceive as more contributing.

The third part of the work addresses the processes of policymaking and policy implementation, when it comes to immigrant integration. The first chapter of the third part presents a grounded definition of integration. Through the deconstruction of the concept of immigrant integration itself, the meanings of integration, as expressed by the policymakers themselves, are unveiled. Finally, in order to switch from discourses and symbolic policies, to actual public actions, I look at the organisation features of immigrant integration governance. The last chapter will therefore offer an opportunity to map the actors, their activities, and the relations between them. The entanglement of actors, institutions, policies, supervision tools and funding opportunities will support my understanding of scales. 'Split' responsibility in a context of 'unfinished' decentralisation leads to a complex multiscalar governance of immigrant integration.

Part I: Setting the stage

Chapter 2 ◊ To govern or to be governed? Re-introducing agency and place to account for rescaling in mid-sized cities

When I first came up with a title for a doctoral project in 2013, I wrote down: “local policies for the economic integration of new (Jewish) immigrants in peripheral Israel”. This title quite strongly implied that I was about to carry out yet another research project on local integration policies, another monographic work, or at least a comparative study between several cities that have implemented (so-called) local immigrant integration policies. As I grew convinced that this was not what I aimed at, I had to change the title accordingly. In fact, this project does explore immigrant integration policies as formulated by four city governments. However, the aim is not only to unpack the different variables that establish distinctive types of policies, but also to ask the next question one may have in mind: how does this inform the changes that affect our political system, and ultimately the potential for local democracy to function? Therefore, the objective I have set up is markedly different. I chose to explore immigration and integration politics because, although they usually constitute a minor policy domain for local governments (already struggling with many newly decentralised responsibilities ranging from education, economic development to physical engineering), their potential to reveal sensitive issues of identity, belonging or citizenship is great. Thus, analysing immigration policies brings out the very meanings of what constitutes the uniqueness of a city, but at the same time its permeability and openness to the outside.

Immigration and integration policies formulated by the cities I investigated became more and more a pretext to look into the transformations of the State, and its administrative and political system, in a context of neoliberalisation and increased devolution of responsibilities. Moreover, as I looked at a policy domain profoundly affecting populations that usually stand at the margins, I wondered if local governance offered a better path for immigrant participation in democratic decision-making. Unfortunately, the cities I have explored have not proved to be more democratic that the State system. Nevertheless, I will show that they have gained in power and capacity to participate in the political deliberations that concern them.

In order to come to a deeper understanding of these transformations, I gave particular attention to three concepts that I will develop extensively in the following pages: scale, place and agency. Geographer Bob Jessop (2008) argues that the last decades have shown a growing interest for four distinct spatial lexicons — territory, place, scale and networks. In particular, there is increasing interest in investigating two or more dimensions of sociospatial relations. This

growing interest is illustrated by the use of such neologisms as "glocalization, glurbanization, neomedievalism, territorial networks, scaled places, virtual regions, polynucleated cities, graduated sovereignty, network states, multilevel governance, global city hierarchies […]" (Jessop, Brenner, & Jones, 2008, p. 392). Nevertheless, he argues, scholars have focused on their new developments rather than "exploring the mutually constitution relations among those categories[6] and their respective empirical objects" (Jessop *et al.*, 2008, p. 391). This work is therefore an opportunity to explore the mutual constitution of scale and place. Another claim that had a significant effect when I planned this research has been mostly made by human and social geographers, concerned with the role of agency and its impact on sociospatial relations.

With that in mind, the main question is: do mid-sized cities located at the margin of capitalist economical networks govern the social life of the places they administer, or are they being governed? Additionally, five questions structure the investigation:

- To what extent can an enquiry 'at the margin' provide the researcher with the possibility to identify "practices, identities and autonomies" (Carrier & Demazière, 2012, p. 141) that either reproduce or produce specific scalar spaces of politics?
- Is immigration considered a possible lever for city economic development and social change? Is there a positive correlation between cities that are engaged in actions aiming at rescaling their development strategy and cities that proactively address immigration issues?
- Do city officials' own immigration experiences affect the immigration discourse brought to the council and the public? If so, what are the discursive performances I attended, and how do they differ from other discourses on immigration and/or immigrant integration?
- What is the immigrant-integration-narrative framing at work and how do these narratives impact the formulation of immigration integration as an issue for public action?
- How do the strategies deployed by social actors involved in immigration and integration policy formulation and implementation transform the urban governance that targets specifically this policy domain into a multiscalar and fragmented political space?

[6] To explore these mutually constitutive relations, Jessop develops the TPSN (Territory, Place, Scale, Network) model. The model allows research to focus on "contradictions, conflicts, dilemma, marginalisation and volatility"(Jessop, Brenner, & Jones, 2008). It acknowledges the variation of structures and practices of each sociospatial category along time, from a fix — for instance the Fordist-Keynesian spatiotemporal fix —, to a crisis, strategies of crisis resolution, to a shift and therefore a new fix — for instance the postnational, unevenly developing global economy — (*Ibid.*, p. 397).

The main hypothesis is as follow: if I were to draw a theoretical model to understand local policy responses, it might take the following shape. On the one hand, I would represent the agency and will of social actors in formulating policies for the city; and on the other hand, the sense of place and the collective imaginary of place linked to the city, where immigration finds its meaning. To put it bluntly, a proactive immigration policy (that is a set of communication actions and matching public actions, which openly welcomes immigrants to settle in the city and offer them support) is much more likely to be found if actors involved in the governance of immigration and integration in the city have the will and capacity to act upon immigrant integration actions; and they govern a place that is characterised by an inclusive collective imaginary of place, where diversity is positively connoted.

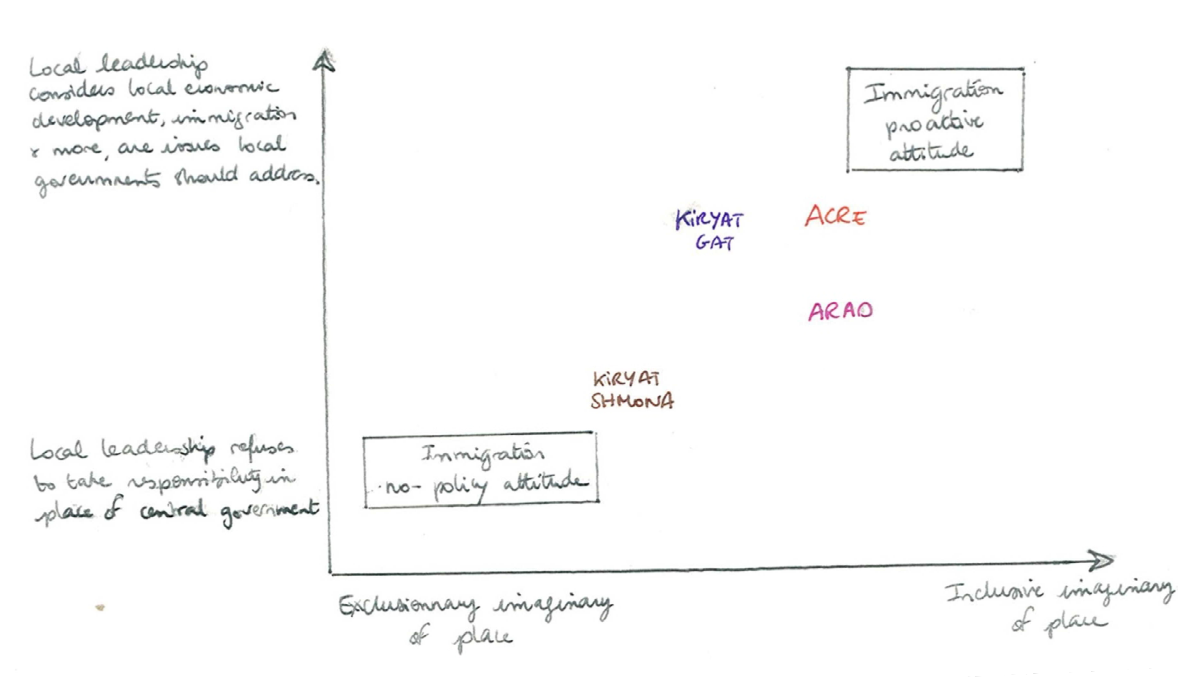

Figure 2.1. Local policy response, depending on leadership style and sense of place. Realised by Amandine Desille

The following sections focus on defining the concepts of scale, place and agency, as well as on explicating the theoretical and methodological possibilities they allow.

1 Transformation of scales of State power, authority and responsibility

This first section aims at presenting the core concept of this doctoral research: scale. The spatial lexicon ‘scale’ has gained a growing interest the last decades to address sociospatial transformations (Jessop *et al.*, 2008). I will first present a brief state-of-the-art based on both an Anglo-Saxon and French-speaking tradition of geography, which have addressed the epistemology and heuristics of scales. Then, I will describe more particularly the extent to which this core geographical concept is useful to address the deep transformations of State power and government experienced by nation-states the last decades.

I will locate my analysis at the city level, the city having become a strategic site in the light of these transformations. Indeed, the contemporary restructuring of the space-economy has consecrated the city as a prime site for economic development and social change. The second subsection will therefore describe the reason why subnational spaces have gained increasing attention — this doctoral project itself participates in the rise of city-based research —, and the consequent shift from an urban/local government to urban/local governance.

Finally, I will argue that immigration and integration policies — although often deemed marginal in urban policymaking — do offer a rich angle to understand the rescaling of statehood: deeply rooted in identity, belonging and nation-making matters, immigration and its corollary immigrant integration are litmus tests to ‘reveal society’.[7]

1.1 Scales, rescaling, scalar fixes and scalar flux

The notions of scale, and therefore of scaling, rescaling, scalar fixes and scalar flux, have undergone tremendous ontological and epistemological changes in geography. Inherited from cartography and geomorphology where they simply indicated a reduction or enlargement of a spatial unit, scales are now “socially produced […] dimensions of particular social processes” (Brenner, 2004, p. 9). This subsection therefore aims at giving a brief overview of the evolution of research on scales, as well as proposing a working definition of scales for the purpose of this research project.

Indeed, scale is not to be reduced to a level of government and society phenomena — global, transnational, national, local and body — but it means a process of transformations — from

[7] Eminent French sociologist Maryse Tripier has written a short essay entitled “The immigrant as an analyst of our society” (Translation of the author) where she draws a parallel between immigration research and the national crises in France (Tripier, 2004).

scalar fixes to scalar flux — of State power, authority and responsibility, not fixed in a bounded space. In that sense, it helps methodologically isolate a certain spatial level for the purpose of the enquiry, while at once offering the possibility to capture the multiplicity of actors, institutions, socio-historical legacies and ideological frames that superimpose, overlap and compete for power at this specific level of analysis.

1.1.1 From spatial envelopes…

Geographers have started using scales, long restricted to the practice of cartography and geomorphology, to determine the extent of the reduction or enlargement of observed spatial units. Thus, a scale represents the mathematical relation between the distance on the map, and the distance in the field.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, scales were examined with more attention by positivist physical geographers. More particularly, they questioned the relation between scales and reality. However, as they were preoccupied by an approach to spatial phenomena ruled by scientific laws and measures, they addressed the methodological aspect of scales, and determined that each order of magnitude corresponded to a different reality (Orain, 2004). This was revolutionary in itself, as it proposed that the scale of observation did influence observation itself.

The end of the 1960s and the 1970s were in line with these new debates on scales. On both sides of the Atlantic, the use of scales shifted from methodological implications to a theory of geographical structures. Scales were not limited to observation stances, but led to the creation of spatial ensembles. Scales gained substance (Orain, 2004). Essentially mobilised to describe the width of frame used for research projects, scales were reified 'space envelopes' (Lefebvre in Herod, 2011, p. 6), boxes or containers ranking from the global/international scale, to the national, regional, urban, neighbourhood and individual scale. In this sense, scales corresponded to the Kantian approach where space and time are "subjective constructs through which humans make sense of the world" (Herod, 2011, p. 6).

This is precisely the subjectivity of scales that was central to the profound questioning that took place from the 1980s on. As both materialist and humanistic scientists worked toward substantiating positivist approaches of sociospatial phenomena, the ontological and epistemological status of scales started to be scrutinised.

Geographer Peter Taylor (1981) first addressed the entanglement of scale with capitalism through a world-systems analysis. His model incorporates three scales: a global scale, that of the

world economy, which he defines as the scale of reality; the scale of the nation-state, defined as the scale of ideology; and the local scale of experience. He explores the roles that those various scales play under capitalism. Neil Smith also provided an account based on Marxist materialism (Flint & Taylor, 2011; Herod, 2011, pp. 6–8).

Anthony Giddens (1984) introduced, through his structuration theory, the dialectic of structure and agency. Basing his analysis on 'regionalisation', he argues there is a scalar differentiation of space, between core and periphery (or in his words, front and back regions). He adds that scales result from everyday practices, and therefore are constantly renegotiated (Herod, 2011, p. 11).

The French-speaking social geography that first developed in the 1980s is more in line with Giddens's proposal and emphasises social representations and the central role of actors that 'live' space (Di Meo, 2008). Olivier Orain (2004) rightly refers to the publication in 1980 of a 'discreet' paper of Jean-Bernard Racine, Claude Raffestin and Victor Ruffy who denounced 'scalar realism'[8] and advocated a new heuristic role of scale. They argued that scale corresponds to an experimental frame, and endowed it with a function of 'coherent denial'[9] ('*oubli cohérent*' in French) (Racine, Raffestin, & Ruffy, 1980, pp. 89–90). They give the reader a simple example: the description of an itinerary from point A to point B. Through this example, they show that a person describing how to reach a destination voluntarily omits details and focuses on a bounded space that is rich enough for a person to navigate, although it does not contain all the space. Describing an itinerary aims at efficiency. Focusing on a scale is a similar exercise they argue, as the researcher will voluntarily overlook certain details to focus on a specific sociospatial experience. I will return later to this proposal, as it offers a highly relevant methodological frame, in the constructivist approach of grounded theory I adopt along this work.

Even though Andrew Herod locates the moment when scales are rethought and become a core concept of geographical thought with the publications of Taylor, Smith and Giddens, he also pinpoints the limitations of those first contributions. They rightfully acknowledge the social production of scales, but they are not yet concerned by their construction, and by the crucial role of actors in their production. Scales were still fixed constructs which were studied *a posteriori* relative to their existence.

Additionally, scales continued to follow a global/national/local bounded hierarchy. Escaping the reification of scales is probably the most difficult task for any theorist concerned with the status of scales. The terminology limits the possibility to think out of a spatial/areal hierarchy. Even

[8] Translation of the author.
[9] Translation of the author.

Herod's volume *Scale* (2011) is divided into five parts — the body, the urban, the regional, the national and the global.

1.1.2 ...To a de-territorialised process?

New contributions by geographers at the end of the 1990s brought some light on the social production of scales. Moreover, they addressed the spatiality of scale, previously bounded in space, to acknowledge its fluidity, unboundedness and intricacy.

This evolution was coincident with that of other fields of the humanities and social sciences. Indeed, just looking at the new conceptual frameworks that emerged in the field of citizenship and/or migration studies, which were often summoned in the framework of this thesis, numerous calls from social theorists have been made to go beyond 'methodological nationalism' (see for instance the work of Glick Schiller & Salazar (2013), and for claims to a postnational or transnational citizenship, see for instance Soysal (1994)).

In this intellectual context, Erik Swyngedouw (1997) and Roland Robertson (1997) both coined the concept of 'glocalisation', which makes it possible to think out of hierarchical order of scales, and shows that under political economic forces driving globalisation, the global scale as well as the subnational regions become more important scales in the geography of economic change (Sheppard & McMaster, 2008, p. 16; Herod, 2011, p. 18). Since then, the 'glocal' concept has been addressed repeatedly, mainly to show the need to acknowledge the constant negotiation between the different levels of governance to acquire or regain more power or to shift responsibilities to other levels (see for instance Vanier (2015)).

Kevin Cox (1998) adopted a 'networked — rather than areal — vision of scales' (Herod, 2011, p. 23). In his view, social actors moved from one scale to another through developing networks of association and navigating between 'spaces of dependence' and 'spaces of engagement' (*Ibid*.). In this proposal, the hierarchical vision of scales is questioned again. Cox also engages with different geographical concepts — here scales and networks constitute one another. Peter Taylor has also implemented a network approach, in order to produce a typology of European cities. He argues that European cities represent a world city network with both regional and hierarchical tendencies. Some cities are global, like London, some international, like Frankfurt while others have only a regional influence over Western or Eastern Europe. For instance, he shows that London has more links with the United States that with other European cities (Taylor in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008, pp. 213–235). Taylor re-establishes a hierarchical vision of space, but also acknowledges its fragmentation at regional and national level.

Even though those proposals have permitted a scalar approach that partially abolished the bounded character of scales as envisaged until the 1980s, I have mostly established the working definition I will propose in the next subsection following the reading of Neil Brenner's seminal work *New State Spaces, Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood* (2004). This volume investigates "the relationship between the rescaling of state space and the rescaling of other institutional forms — in particular, capitalist economies and urban systems" (Brenner, 2004, p. 9).

His core proposition is as follows: 1) geographical scales are "socially produced [...] dimensions of particular social processes" (e.g: state regulation) (*Ibid*.); 2) "the institutional configuration, functions, history, and dynamics of any one geographical scale can only be grasped relationally, in terms of its upwards, downwards and transversal links" (*Ibid*., p. 10); 3) scalar organisations follow a mosaic pattern, and not a pyramid pattern; 4) social life is enframed within "provisionally solidified 'scalar fixes'", [...] composed of temporarily stabilised geographical hierarchies" (*Ibid*., p. 10); and 5) those scalar fixes are transformed in a "[process of rescaling which] occur through a path-dependent interaction of inherited scalar arrangements with emergent, often highly experimental strategies to transform the latter" (*Ibid*., p. 11). Contributing to the volume *Locating Migrations, Rescaling Cities and Migrants*, Brenner reaffirms the chaotic results of processes affecting the scalar architecture of capitalism, which he defines as "a mosaic of superimposed, tangled, crosscutting, and unevenly overlapping interscalar hierarchies whose units are rarely coextensive or isomorphic" (Brenner in Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 33).

His theory paves the way to the study of cities and their governance through a scalar lens, unveiling the relations of power occurring at different scales, but colluding at the city scale. Even though in the next sections I will deplore the marginal role of 'agents' in this process, and attempt to re-establish it (within the limits of this doctoral work), Brenner's constitutes a powerful proposal to study the rescaling of power, authority and responsibility.

1.1.3 Rescaling as a process of transformation of the State and society

The concept of scale as I have described it in the previous two subsections, together with the debates that have surrounded its definition, have provided a fertile ground for this doctoral research. The intellectual stimulation I have benefited from followed a two-step process. First of all, and in a constructivist perspective, the local and/or urban scale (I will explain why I use both adjectives interchangeably in the following section) has become the level of geographical space I chose to frame my enquiry. It has therefore provided a methodological frame, nevertheless

anchored in a solid theoretical field that recognises the city as a subnational strategic space. As argued by Racine, Raffestin and Ruffy, it was scale that made possible a stance of 'coherent denial', where I focus on the city to conduct the research.

However, once this methodological choice made, I opted for a fluid and unbounded approach of scale. I mean that I operated a scalar assessment of the socio-political space I surveyed — city-level local politics and policies[10] of immigration and integration. The emphasis is therefore on political and social agents that influence the collective social life of the city, and particularly of new and settled immigrants.

The urban scale is not a mere zoom-in, a bounded spatial envelope or a reduction of a reality that could occur at national level. At this scale of observation, layers of historical legacies and of collective representations superimpose, social agents located at various scales, inside or outside government, intervene. The eyes must look out of the physical boundaries of the city and grasp the 'upwards, downwards and transversal links'.

Additionally, those scalar fixes are just momentary. Rescaling occurs, which informs processes of transformations of hierarchy of authority, power and responsibility. These rescaling processes are not new, but as a result of neoliberal logics at work (for a definition of the disputed term 'neoliberalism', see annex 1), they occur at a speed never experienced before.

The next subsection will therefore expose the reasons why I chose to focus *a priori* on the city scale. Then, I will take a more in-depth look at the emergence of new modes of urban/local governance, consequent of the rescaling of State power and authority.

1.2 The city: a multiscalar political and social space

This subsection is a concise discussion of the rising importance of the city in a context of statehood rescaling.

With the hegemony of capitalism, cities have become the consequence but also a platform for capitalist accumulation. Even with the rapid development of information and communication technologies, and the consequent de-territorialisation of the economy, cities remain strategic

[10] Maurice Tournier and Simone Bonnafous (both members of the research laboratory 'Lexicométrie et textes politiques' in Saint Cloud, France) define politics as the art to govern a group of citizens, and therefore emphasise the power of politics to organise and manage collective social life (Tournier & Bonnafous, 1995). Policies in turn, refer to a set of rules or principles issued by organisations like governments, usually translated into an action plan or working procedures, whose aim is to guide decisions or to achieve specific results. In that sense, it is different from politics, although politics influence policymaking and policies.

spaces for a free market economy, concentrating the activities of modern capitalism — financial institutions, dematerialised economy industries, services, media, communication companies… — and creating the conditions for their reproduction. Globalisation and Europeanisation have fostered the development of mega cities, also called city-regions, metropolises or global cities. Today, as more than 50% of the world population are urbanites, cities have gained an increased attention. Evidently, mega-cities represent only a fraction of cities, and most of the population lives in small and mid-sized cities. This doctoral project focuses on these 'ordinary cities' often forgotten (Amin & Graham, 1997; Robinson, 2006), but I will return to those distinctions later on.

Many aspects come to mind when talking about the city. As French urban theorist Patrick Le Galès summed up, the city has various faces: the material and physical city; the cultural city of representations, imaginations or arts; the economic city of labour, trade, consumption and production; the social city of riots, social movements, inequalities and everyday life; but also "the politics and policies of the city in terms of domination, power, government, mobilisation, public policies, welfare, education".[11] This is this last set of aspects that I will focus on. As I briefly mentioned in the previous section, the transformations of the hierarchy of power have led to growing responsibilities in the hands of the city. Rescaling is not just a delegation of power straight from the central administration to the city government. It is a complex process, leading to a fragmented and multi-actor political and social space, the main outcome of which is 'new local/urban governance' .

1.2.1 Strategic subnational spaces

The 1970s and 1980s witnessed substantial changes in the political and administrative landscapes of virtually every country in the world. Decentralisation reforms took place, either forced and conditioned by the Structural Adjustment Plans in the South, or conducted in the name of administrative efficiency in the North (Taylor in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008, p. 218). Provincial, regional and municipal levels of government were created or were given new responsibilities and power. Autonomy increased: subnational levels of government changed from local administration only, to government with more initiative and immunity (Clarks, 1984, quoted in Flint & Taylor, 2011, p. 264).

In 1988, two seminal works are published which systematically explore the renewed role of subnational State in the United States. Kevin Cox and Andrew Mair published the article

[11] See the syllabus of Le Galès's class "Cities are back in town" at https://www.coursera.org/learn/urban-development

"Locality and Community in the Politics of Local Economic Development". The same year, Peter K. Eisinger published his volume *The Rise of the Entrepreneurial State, State and Local Economic Development Policies in the United States.* For Cox and Mair, the contemporary restructuring of the space-economy in the United States generated rapid changes in the structures of the different local economies — deindustrialisation, unemployment and more —, which led to an increase in planning local economic development. Local economic development is described as a highly territorialized policy, which praises competition among localities. Cox and Mair adopt an approach based on 'local dependence'. Local State institutions are dependent on local taxes paid by existing firms. Therefore, retaining or attracting investors becomes a central task to be carried out (Kevin R. Cox & Mair, 1988, p. 311). To enhance the chances of the local level in attracting investors, subnational institutions may use federal grants, or public-private cooperation.

Similarly, Eisinger defines: "Economic development policy refers to those efforts by government to encourage new business investment in particular locales in the hope of directly creating or retaining jobs, setting into motion the secondary employment multiplier, and enhancing and diversifying the tax base" (Eisinger, 1988, pp. 3–4). Eisinger adequately underlines that this type of policies belongs to a tradition of intervention, of 'strong State' usually attributed to European or Japanese economic development (while the United States' economic development policy is usually one of a 'weak State'). A discrepancy is to be observed between interventionist subnational strategies and 'weak State' national economic strategies (*Ibid*.). Following Cox and Mair, and Eisinger, the entrepreneurial character of subnational governments gained in popularity: in 1989, David Harvey came up with the 'transition to entrepreneurial urban governance' (Brenner, 2004, p. 2); later on Jessop (1998) gave a new lease of life to the phrase 'entrepreneurial state' (Galès, 2011, p. 326).

Brenner in turn framed his argument with a political economic approach, emphasising the fact that the State deliberately displaces development strategies. City-regions became key institutional sites in which a major rescaling of national State power unfolds (Brenner, 2004). He argues that post-Keynesian competition states mobilise diverse institutional realignments and regulatory strategies to "[enhance] fiscal constraints and competitive pressures upon cities and regions, impelling their regulatory institutions to privilege the goals of local economic development and territorial competitiveness over traditional welfarist, redistributive priorities" (Brenner, 2004, p. 176). He calls those new urban policies 'urban locational policy' as they target cities and urban regions. In responses to globalisation and European integration (in the case of European countries), a multiscalar geography of economic development, which "promotes economic development by positioning a particular scale strategically within broader,

transnational interscalar hierarchies and networks" prevails (*Ibid*., p. 206). This new geography leads to a pattern which he calls 'Archipelago Europe' (*Ibid*., p. 178), linking those subnational strategic sites through a transnational urban network, and therefore creating new — or reinforcing existing — zones of marginalisation and exclusion. Saskia Sassen's popular 'global cities' also gained power through translational politics anchored in strategic localities (Sassen, 2005).

The different founding works I just mentioned are based on a political economic analysis, where the rise of cities is explained through its economic role in a capitalist economy. The 'entrepreneurial city' is trapped in worldwide competition to attract resources — whether they be investments, cheap labour or talents — and has no choice but to develop strategies to take part in the competition, if it is not to ultimately decline and fail. Those accounts leave little space for autonomous responses from the cities. They describe an imposed displacement of responsibilities toward the city, where local agency is virtually absent (which is obviously the central concern in a political economy analysis, mainly preoccupied by structure).

Another school has focused more on the bottom-up responses provided by subnational institutions. Theorists of the New Urban Politics (NUP) focus on "the decline in importance of the public provision of social services, housing and other good of collective consumption, and the simultaneous growth of entrepreneurial forms of urban governance" (DeFilippis, 1999, p. 974). As transferred resources rarely matched the newly inherited responsibilities, new forms of entrepreneurial activities emerged (Feser, 2014). In a context where capital is globally mobile, there are two ways of looking at it: either cities have lost their autonomy, or cities compete to attract this capital. Partisans of the latter view, whom DeFilippis calls 'new localists,' are themselves divided into two schools: the new localists who recognise the importance of place-based characteristics in investment decisions; and regime theorists who argue that local politics matter. In their opinion particular, local, political coalitions of urban governance shape local policy outcomes (*Ibid*.). Even though the premises of their analysis are very similar to the works I mentioned in the first part of this subsection, they introduce new actors: local political actors.

Another interesting point of the NUP theorists is the broader sample of cities they look at. For instance, Craig Young and Sylwia Kaczmarek assess local economic development policies in Polish communes (2000). After 1989, Poland established local self-government and initiated decentralisation. Local economic development policies were understood as plans and strategies to orient the growth of their local economies, what DeFilippis called 'new localism'. Nevertheless, Polish communes face several problems — compared to bigger cities —, including lack of industry, entrepreneurs and new technology, poor quality of the commune infrastructure,

level of public finance, demographic and social factors, problems with attracting direct foreign investments (Young & Kaczmarek, 2000). Young and Kaczmarek's survey of Polish communes shows what local institutions actually do. They are mainly involved in the planning and management of resources; the development of infrastructure, one of them being the creation of a new municipal department in charge of local economic development; promotion and marketing — 91% of them are engaged in place promotion! — and cooperation with other organisations, including European networks, other Polish communes, private actors and more (*Ibid*.). Even in small and medium cities, Young and Kacsmarek acknowledge the role of local actors in producing scales. Indeed, "As local government constructs policies which reflect their own priorities they are both shaped by an already existing set of institutional resources, and in turn themselves shape (to a degree) geographical variation in development" (*Ibid*.).

It is with these preliminary remarks on institutions and actors that orient policies — whether they be economic development policies, or what will interest me more all along this work, immigration and integration policies — that I turn to the recently defined concept of governance.

1.2.2 Urban/local governance

> But there is one further point here, which you may already have thought of yourself. This is that 'cities' in themselves are not actors. 'Cities' as singular entities do not really design strategies for 'themselves'. (D. B. Massey, Allen, & Pile, 1999, p. 116)

Among the many dimensions of the city, I chose to explore its political facet more in depth, and more particularly those who govern and organise the social life of the city. Many have done so, as reflected in the broad lexicon used to name those strategic actors who represent the interests of the city (and their own interests) and work toward their advancement: local State, local statehood, urban regime, arena and urban governance.

Flint and Taylor define a world system divided into three scales, where the local scale is the scale of experience. However, they distinguish the local scale from the local State. They coin 'local State' as for them, "The term 'government' merely implies imposing authority in a locality whereas 'State' suggests a wider set of relations in which to view the formal politics of a locality" (Flint & Taylor, 2011, p. 261). The local State is no longer a simple administrative arm of the national government, neither is it entirely autonomous. It reflects "The particular balance between the local State as an instrument of the State and as an instrument of the locality [...]" (*Ibid*., p. 262). The local State is one of many actors involved in local politics. The sum of these actions is what they call urban, local, or city governance. In this governance turn, actors create

strategies for cities around the notion of 'growth' that react to and reinforce the dominant discourse of neoliberalism. Governance rather than government is therefore closely correlated to mandatory development at subnational levels.

Brenner uses the term statehood, rather than State. 'State', he says, does not reflect the polycentric, multiscalar, and non-isomorphic configuration of 'statehood' (Brenner, 2004, p. 4). He also coins the term 'urban governance', which represents the constellations of social, economic and political forces that shape the process of urban development. Moreover, national State institutions continue to play a key role in urban governance, participating in its multiscalar character.

Kristin Good in *Municipalities and Multiculturalism* bases her argument on Clarence Stone's urban regime. Although the concept of 'urban regime' was criticised for not being as wide-ranging as 'urban governance' (which includes non-State actors), Good argues it still includes the private sector, and is therefore a more flexible concept than what was criticised. Urban regime represent "informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to make and carry out governing decisions" (Stones, 1989 in Good, 2009, p. 18). Stone defines urban regime through three components: a capacity to achieve policy goals, i.e. the 'power to, not power over', a set of actors and a relationship (*Ibid*., p. 20). Stone follows a 'growth machine' perspective, where we find a disproportionate representation of the business community. What is interesting, however, is that it permits a micropolitics of policymaking in cities. In her volume, Good acknowledges political agency, as local leaders' choices are embedded in social structures and the political economy (*Ibid*., p. 22).

Taylor and Flint, Brenner, and Stone therefore define urban governance (or regime) through a set of actors, public and private, often located at different levels, whose (sometimes conflicting) interests converge toward the governing of the city. Moreover, they all locate the strategies of multiple actors in an economic perspective, at the heart of which lie economic growth and socioeconomic neoliberalisation.

If I look at French schools of thought, and even though the capitalist economy, globalisation and increased communication are still taken as causes for the city fragmented governing system, urban governance is more envisioned through the transformations of its regulatory system rather than in terms of economic outcome.

Patrick Le Galès identifies three schools that mobilise the concept of governance (*gouvernanc*e in French). The first derives from an economic approach where governance means the

improvement of firms' efficiency. Second, economic sociology and political economy take into account power conflict (politics, state regulation), social groups' interactions (social structures, regulation through cooperation) and control mechanisms (market, regulation by the market). For those theorists, governance is a process by actors, social groups and institutions' coordination to reach collectively discussed and defined goals. Governance is therefore the institutions, networks, directives, rules, norms, political and social political uses, and public and private actors which contribute to the stability of society and its political regime, its orientation, its capacity to lead, its capacity to provide services and ensure its legitimacy (Galès, 2011, pp. 64–65). The regulation of society is thus closely linked to politics. The third school is that of political sociology, for which governance relates to the government. Governance does not replace the government but it shows the transformation of the state's role and of such political regulation modes as were attached to it. Through governance, the emphasis is on horizontal interactions with other actors, interdependencies, regularity and rules of interactions and exchanges, the autonomy of sectors and networks vis-a-vis the State, temporal dimension, coordination processes of political and social acts and sometimes, constraints linked to decision (*Ibid*., p. 66).

As Clint & Taylor and Brenner suggest, governance comes from globalisation and 'europeanisation' which disrupted traditional political communities and led to a reconstruction of scales and actors, outside the nation-state (*Ibid*., p. 152). Actors became interdependent, governmental organisations fragment, leading to polycentric and multileveled European governance. In this political scene without government, Le Galès argues, there are norms, representations, rules, resolution modes and regulations: therefore, governance (*Ibid*., p. 153).

The centrality of cities in the new governance mode is derived from its tradition of democracy and legitimacy, which naturally provides them with the resources to 'play the role of the government'[12] (*Ibid*., p. 156). In fact, in this constellation of actors, identifying the boundaries of the case can be sometimes problematic. Administrative and political boundaries are not always similar (Dupuy & Pollard, 2012; Giraud, 2012). Philippe Gervais-Lambony, in his study of South African government reform, shows that a new political structure does not always fit in with the territorial identification of urban dwellers, leading to a dysfunctional local democracy (Gervais-Lambony, 2010).

One of the founders of social geography in France, Guy Di Meo, links the territorialisation and scaling of public action. Public actions are territory-oriented, as they target a specific territory but also lead to its fragmentation. In his opinion, actors aggregate to form governance regime.

[12] Translation of the author.

Those actors are located at different scales, so that endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors are spread throughout the territory for which they intend to form policies. Those actors may be located in different governmental institutions (regional, department and city councils, but also other forms of regional authorities) or can be private actors (Di Meo, 2008, pp. 6–7). Di Meo's social geography is not far from Le Galès's political analysis, but it extends the understanding of governance to its connection with a territory, which informs — as much as it is subjected to — the strategies of actors.

In general, the multiscalar, polycentric, non-isomorphic character of city governance is a result of what Olivier Giraud (Giraud, 2012) has called an 'unfinished decentralisation'[13] or Monica Varsanyi (Varsanyi, 2008) a 'fragmented, incomplete, contingent devolution' of responsibilities. Decentralisation is not a straightforward devolution of power and responsibilities. The many actors in this multiscalar environment are involved in a constant bargaining process to retain, regain or gain power and resources. Decentralisation is not a solution for interscalar cooperation, coordination and articulation, says Martin Vanier (Vanier, 2015), and it did not lead to the implementation of more 'coherent' policies (*Ibid.*).

Then "how to isolate local cases in a context of multiple interdependences?"[14] (Pollard & Prat, 2012). In this doctoral work, I do not look at the entire spectrum of policies designed by the institutions at the city scale. Instead, I focus on a particular 'policy domain', which Eisinger defines as follow: "A policy domain is an arena[15] in which actors seek to craft and implement solutions and responses to one or a set of given public problems" (Eisinger, 1988, p. 6). The basic assumption of this work is that the study of a particular policy domain — immigration and integration policy — occurring at city scale will inform the transformations of State power and explicit the multiscalar character of urban governance.

1.3 Understanding rescaling of the State through immigration and integration policies in the city

Immigration and integration policies have become a field of research in its own right from the 1990s onwards. Most of this field is occupied by a North American and European scholarship,

[13] Translation of the author.
[14] Translation of the author.
[15] Eisinger's use of the term 'arena' is not isolated. Indeed, it has been employed as a methodological tool in socio-anthropological research. Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan characterises "An arena [as] a place of concrete confrontations of social actors in interaction around common stakes. It falls under a 'local' space [...]" (Olivier de Sardan, 2010, p. 179). Place — as the territory in Di Meo's proposal — is used as an anchoring, a grounding concept, but the arena is unbounded, multiscalar and changing with time. Indeed, Olivier de Sardan affirms that arena is a transversal space, "a space of 'play' and 'stake'" — hence a place of conflicts. Moreover, an arena is interactionist (*Ibid.*, p. 178-179).

focusing on Western receiving society (even though 40% of international immigrants settle in the 'global South' (UN, 2013)). It is a multidisciplinary field, invested by economists, sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, historians, geographers and urban theorists.

In this subsection, I return to core definitions: what is immigration, what is integration, and what are immigration and integration policies, specifically at city scale? Moreover, I will propose a very brief overview of the various monographic works on immigration and integration policies in the city. Second, I will present previous works that have deeply influenced my doctoral project, and have addressed immigration and integration policymaking and policies through the concept of scale. Finally, I will address some of the limitations which have challenged me in my project. In particular, I will speak of the fact that most research focuses on global cities rather than 'ordinary cities'; the differentiated ground in which those policies emerge; and the absence of agency in a process that is generally viewed through structure.

1.3.1 Immigration and integration in the city

My doctoral research addresses the rescaling of State power through the case of immigration and integration policies in mid-sized cities. By immigration, I mean international immigration as defined by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM): "A process by which non-nationals move into a country for the purpose of settlement". Therefore, I deliberately ignore in and out-migration within the state borders.

The concept of 'integration', together with its substitutes — assimilation, incorporation, absorption, acculturation (each one of them introducing a different take on the ultimate purpose on integration) — is an object of research in itself. I aim at providing a grounded theory of this loaded concept, which I will develop in one chapter in particular. However, an annex, which includes a brief state-of-the-art of the notion, is available at the end of this volume (see annex 2). Here, I will mainly focus on the governance of integration, which I understand as the intervention of public agencies toward the integration of immigrants. This work is therefore meant to be in line with integration definitions provided by sociologist Adrian Favell. Favell conceives of "[…] integration as a collective societal goal which can be achieved through the systematic intervention of collective political agency […]"(Favell (2003) reprinted in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, pp. 374). This collective social goal is therefore contextual and profoundly connected to nation-making. One year later, Rinus Penninx, Karen Kraal, Marco Martiniello and Steven Vertovec introduced their edited volume *Citizenship in European Cities* with their definition of integration: a "process of becoming part of the society" (Penninx *et al.*, 2004, pp. 1–16). They argue that the process occurs at three levels: individual, collective (e.g: immigrants'

associations) and institutions (*Ibid.*). Again, governmental institutions or agencies are considered central to integration.

'Immigration policies' therefore relate to policies managing the admission, entrance and expulsion of immigrants. 'Integration policies', also called immigrant policies, cover a large spectrum of policies related to immigrants and their position in society (Hammar in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, pp. 51–52; Borkert & Penninx in Zincone, Penninx, & Borkert, 2011, pp. 14–15). I will focus on the study of these policy domains. For this purpose, Penninx suggests:

> The study of policies is fundamentally different from the study and understanding of those processes that policies aim to address. The essence of policies is their intention to guide and steer processes in society — in our case processes of immigrant integration. Explicit policies are part of a political process of a normative nature in which the topic of integration is formulated as problem. The problem is given a normative framing (What do we want to be the outcome of the integration process?) and concrete actions are designed and developed to reach the desired outcome. Therefore, the systematic study of policies should investigate the framing and normative elements as well as practice and what relation these have (or do not have) with the process of integration as empirically measured. Ideally, this should be done using a terminology that is independent of policy concepts. (Penninx, 2013, p. 18)

Penninx therefore refers to the 'governing' of the integration of immigrants, i.e. the setting of rules and their translation in administrative terms by subnational governments. Anouk Flamant, in her doctoral work on French cities and integration policies, speaks of '*mise en administration*' (Flamant, 2014, p. 18).

Both Penninx and Flamant have chosen to frame their studies at city scale. Indeed, in the last two decades, scientific productions on immigration policies and the city, as well as repeated claims by politicians and international organisations' leaders dealing with immigration issues, have seemed to acknowledge that cities have become the scale of integration (Caponio & Borkert, 2010; Penninx *et al.*, 2004; Schiller & Çağlar, 2010). Local officials are depicted as 'pragmatic' figures who understand the realities that immigrants face, and are therefore skilled to design an integration policy that would be coherent and efficient (see for instance an analysis of IOM director's discourse in 2015 in Ahouga (2015)). The devolution of responsibilities to the local level is not only seen as the result of administrative and political decentralisation, but is a response to a reality in the field. Immigrants settle in cities, they live, study, work, build up social relations in cities. City is the place of their integration, and the local government needs to take its responsibilities.

It is quite impossible to quote all the monographs and comparative cases that have been produced since the 1990s on local immigration and integration policies. However, I will try to mention some works that have helped me start exploring the topic.

In Europe, I found a quite abundant literature, particularly among the publications of the IMISCOE network (Caponio & Borkert, 2010; Garcés-Mascareñas & Penninx, 2015; Heelsum & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2013; Penninx *et al.*, 2004). Founding father of IMISCOE Rinus Penninx has worked extensively on the question, one seminal publication being *Citizenship in European Cities* (2004), with the collaboration of Michael Alexander, Romain Garbaye and Hans Mahnig, among others*.* Another important volume is the one edited by Nina Glick-Schiller and Ayse Çağlar (2010), but I will come back to their contribution in detail later, as they adopted a scale approach. Before those, a first founding article focusing on European local immigration policies[16] was written by John Friedman and Ute Angelika Lehrer and extensively described the emergence of a local multicultural policy in Frankfurt (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997). A determinant of this policymaking was the participation in the city council of German Green Party member Daniel Cohn Bendit.

In France[17], although municipalities do not have authority over immigration issues, Olivier Masclet (2001) and Elise Palomares (2005) have studied the evolution of municipal policies in suburban towns which face large immigration. Françoise de Barros (2008) has taken an historical stance, and analysed the production of administrative categories by local officials, also in suburban areas. An important argument here is therefore the production of administrative categories, which then become operative as categories of belonging, by municipal clerks, even though French municipalities do not have immigration discretionary power.

In Canada, the situation is similar to France, and immigration is considered a federal issue. Nevertheless, Kristin Good's (2009) comparative study in Vancouver and Toronto metropolitan areas has provided me with a rich analytical frame to understand the formation of municipal policies from the municipal officials' intervention. In the United States, several works produced by geographers have adopted a scalar approach to immigration and integration issues (Varsanyi, 2008; Walker & Leitner, 2011). I will come back to them in the following subsection. Els de Graauw (2013) has studied the emergence of a local citizenship for undocumented immigrants in large American cities. Finally, studying the development of a 'pro-immigrant' policy in

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[16] Other research works in Europe over the past few years concern Danish cities (Jørgensen, 2012), Danish and Swedish cities (Emilsson, 2015) or Dutch cities (see Myrte Hoeckstra's on-going thesis, or Foner (2014)).

[17] Other research works focus on French large cities, such as Nantes, Lyon, Strasbourg or Calais, especially another work on categorisation conducted by Charles Suaud and Anne Gotman (2013) and two PhD theses by Anouk Flamant (2014) and Mélanie Pauvros (2014).

Philadelphia, Hilary Sanders (2015) shows the importance of the figure of the mayor. In both cases, De Graauw and Sanders document 'sanctuary cities'.

In Israel, studies on local immigration policies primarily focus on the constitution of a local policy for non-Jewish immigrants in Tel Aviv, the second largest city in the country. Alexander has conducted his doctoral thesis on the topic, but others have worked on the involvement of multiple actors in the particular administration of those immigrants that do not fall under the Law of Return (Alexander, 2003; Berthomière, n.d.; Raijman & Kemp, 2002; Schnell, 2013). Regarding Jewish immigration, Erez Tzfadia and Gedalia Auerbach have produced some works on the municipal response to the large immigration from the former Soviet Union (FSU) in cities located in the southern district of Israel, where they emphasise the role of the mayors and new processes of decentralisation and autonomy at work (Auerbach, 2011; Tzfadia, 2005). Finally, Ester Hertzog has studied another kind of street-level bureaucrats involved in immigrant integration, that are not municipal workers but workers at an 'absorption centre' (Hertzog, 1999).

Although I will focus more particularly on those among them who have taken a scalar approach to immigration and integration policymaking, all those studies have comforted a city-level approach to immigration and integration policies, and helped me understand the different elements inherent to policymaking in the city. Second, they have enable me to identify various actors that are involved in policymaking, from the mayor figure to street-level bureaucrats.

1.3.2 Scales as a core concept: founding works on scales, immigration and integration

Over the past twenty years, geographers have produced analyses of rescaling processes, which profoundly affect statehood, migrations and urban spaces. I will first mention the volume *Locating Migrations, Rescaling Cities and Migrants* edited by Nina Glick-Schiller and Ayse Çağlar (2010). But Helga Leitner (1997) has already used a scalar approach to analyse European immigration policies. In the United States, Mark Ellis (2006), Monica Varsanyi (2008), and Kyle Walker and Helga Leitner (2011) have adopted a scalar lens to analyse the fragmented politics of immigration and identity, a result of a devolution of responsibilities from the federal State to states and cities.

A contributor to the edited collection *Locating Migrations, Rescaling Cities and Migrants,* Brenner states: "Ayse Çağlar and Nina Glick-Schiller propose, a scale-attuned approach [that] has the potential to generate new perspectives on the urban dimensions of rescaled migration processes and on the role of migration in the ongoing rescaling of urban spaces" (Brenner in Schiller &

Çağlar, 2010, p. 24). And indeed, the main proposal of the volume is to figure out how neoliberal projects — understood as the "reduction in state services and benefits, the disinvestment of states in urban economies, the diversion of public monies and resources to develop private service-oriented industries [...], and the relentless push toward global production [...]" (*Ibid*., p. 4) — result in "a qualitative transformation of the hierarchy of authority and power of a set of relationships geographers refer to as scalar" (*Ibid*., p. 5).

The authors advocate a dialectical relation where "migrants as social actors [...] both are shaped by and participate in these forms of power" (*Ibid*., p. 7). Apart from their adoption of a scalar approach, Glick-Schiller and Çağlar therefore introduce two important aspects that fed my conceptual framework: they take into account the meaningful interventions of social actors — here the migrants — in the production of scales; and — I will come back to that in the next section of this chapter — they also connect immigration and placemaking, arguing that cities position and market themselves in order to attract migrants, themselves neoliberal agents. Indeed, they claim that "When it comes to urban studies, the robust literature on the neoliberal remaking, reimagining, and competitive marketing of cities is strangely silent about migration" (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 2). Yet, "Migration, when considered locally, is part of this global restructuring and reimagining of urban life" (*Ibid*.). Therefore, they call for a more systematic enquiry of the relations between migrations and city promotion and branding. One year later, Walker and Leitner published a paper on the role of the imagining of place in the differentiated responses of local governments to the devolution of immigration policies (Walker & Leitner, 2011). They defined an exclusionary imaginary of place versus an inclusive imaginary of place, the latter being much more responsive to immigrants' settlement. Setting the descaling of power against a sense of place helps account for variations in policy responses.

Other geographers have addressed immigration policies through a scale approach. Leitner (1997) has studied the rescaling of immigration policies from the national to the supranational scale in the European Union. She claims that transnational immigrant organisations and networks, as well as nongovernmental organisations have been important agents of rescaling (Leitner in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008, p. 241). She follows an analytical line that was already adopted by other theorists who addressed mutual transformations of scales and networks: Yasemin Soysal and James Hollifield have shed light on the role of transnational networks in rescaling personhood, notably networks of organisations working on human rights and immigration. Indeed, conditions of membership transform and become more and more attached to a universal conception of rights rather than citizenship-based (Hollifield, 1992; Soysal, 1994).

Monica Varsanyi addresses the rescaling of immigrant policies in the United States arguing that Law plays a major role in the rescaling processes associated with neoliberalisation: she believes in a legal production of scales, where law-making — particularly welfare law — causes the "partial, incomplete and contingent devolution" of immigration power to the local State (Varsanyi, 2008, p. 882), in turn constraining spaces of personhood (*Ibid*., p. 888). In many countries in the world, as in the United States, the devolution of responsibilities linked to immigration — immigration issues, but also welfare, education and more — is a legal and administrative process, fragmented, but most importantly, rarely accompanied with the necessary funds (Ellis, 2006). As Ellis argues, "States and localities have no control over who enters or exits but bear a considerable degree of responsibility, some of it mandated by federal law, for all who are residents. In this sense, immigration is a huge unfunded federal mandate".

All those studies by Glick-Schiller and Çağlar, Leitner, Varsanyi and Ellis have been of considerable help to explore immigration and integration policymaking in scalar terms. They address scale production at various levels: by supranational and transnational institutions (e.g: the European Commission and its networks), by transnational immigrant networks, by national governments and the laws they issue, or by migrant themselves. Nevertheless, subnational governments — which seem to become more important actors in the rescaling of power — are not analysed as potential producers of scales, but always as products. Analyses usually acknowledge the descaling, although the question of rescaling is critical, with the adoption by local actors of a more hands-on attitude to immigration-related issues. My project aims at filling this void and addressing the role of subnational levels of government in the production of scales, rather than their simple reaction to what is depicted as an inevitable devolution of power.

1.3.3 Current limitations addressing the production and transformation of scales: ordinary cities, placemaking and agency

In a review of the founding article "Modes of immigration policies in liberal democratic states", by Gary Freeman (Freeman, 1995), Roger Brubaker (1995) points out how little importance Freeman has given to place. Brubaker urges Freeman to recognise differences across countries, regions and even municipalities. He argues that the different histories of places lead to differentiated responses. Since Brubaker's review, many other scholars have insisted on the divergences in immigration and integration policies across cities, due to their particular history, legacies and relations to immigration (see for instance Walker & Leitner (2011) in the United States or Zincone (2011, pp. 382–391) in Europe). The emergence of a literature on immigration and integration policies in cities has partially filled this gap, nevertheless, mostly in 'world-cities', 'global cities' or 'transnational cities'.

Studies concerned with immigration and small and mid-sized cities, in rural areas and in peripheral areas, are much scarcer. The suburban areas have been more investigated, notably in France (see works on Paris suburbs and integration policies by Barros (2008) and Cartier *et al.* (2010)). Kristin Good (2009) also explores suburban towns in the Toronto and Vancouver metropolitan areas. Research works focusing on rural areas or mid-sized towns and immigration have been conducted, but they do not inform policymaking (Fonseca, 2008; Leitner, 2012). And yet, those areas do receive immigration (*Ibid.*). Indeed, the restructuring of the economic traditional industrial and agricultural activities in rural and periurban areas has led to higher demand for a cheap labour, often provided by foreign labour. In the case of Israel, peripheral mid-sized towns were established to host immigrants and are until today mainly inhabited by first and second-generation immigrants.

One reason why scholars usually discard those towns is the little leeway they are perceived to have when it comes to immigration settlement issues. For instance, in Glick Schiller and Çağlar's chapter *Downscaled cities and migrant pathways. Locality and agency without an ethnic lense* (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 190–212), a 'downscaled city' refers "to its relative positioning within emerging national, regional, and global hierarchical configurations of power" (*Ibid.*, p. 191). Scoring very low in those new hierarchical configurations of power, those 'downscaled cities' can sometimes benefit from immigration, particularly when it comes to the regeneration of a deserted town centre, or the demographic growth necessary to the maintenance of public services. However, Schiller and Çağlar argue that they often suffer from new settlements and have to carry the burden of the extra resources immigrants require.

Relevant though those arguments might be, it does not mean that mid-sized cities are not appropriate areas to study when looking at immigration, city transformation and statehood rescaling. On the contrary, it seems absolutely urgent to look at those specific places and understand the rescaling of governance in areas less equipped to adapt to the devolution of responsibilities and to face mandatory economic development. Indeed, issues of immigrant integration, development strategies, including placemaking, are usually framed in a 'you play or you lose' fashion, where towns either adopt the rules of the neoliberal game, or barely survive at the margin. I argue that those processes are more complex and I believe that a deeper understanding of immigration and integration policies, as well as associated identity and placemaking issues in mid-sized cities, located away from large economic centres, can be enlightening to better understand power rescaling processes.

Finally, these processes must include strategic social actors that intervene in urban governance. The role of actors — politicians, civil servants, civil society and community representatives — in

the production of scalar fixes has been overlooked, denying their autonomy and resistance to a perceived relentless neoliberal project. Agency has been discarded in an academic tradition dominated by critical theorists. In the third section of this chapter, I will refer to humanistic and social traditions of geography, concerned with the agents and their interventions in the making of spatial transformations such as scale or place.

2 Social agents sit in place, therefore are informed by it

> The geography of place has more recently reappeared within this important school of economic and political geography through a variety of concerns. These include, among others, a re-examination of the struggles around the reconfiguration of scale by state, capital, and social movements in ways that challenge the pre-eminence of the global (Swyngedouw, 1998); a renewed interest on "the production of place" through a complex, and often contradictory, set of spatial dynamics of capital and governance; attention to the impact of neo-liberal policies on the reconfiguration of places and regions, such as inner cities or model urban development schemes and local responses to them; and a keen theorization of scale and scalar politics (Swyngedouw 1998, 2000; Peck, 2000). […]. Needless to say, some of these tendencies are in tension with each other, if not in outright conflict. (Escobar, 2001, p. 145)

Section two addresses one set of the limitations I mentioned in the last paragraph: to which extent does place — and particularly those places I conduct my enquiry on, mid-sized peripheral cities — influence rescaling processes? The main goal is to show that place — as a nod of social interactions anchored in space — informs local politics of identity and belonging on the one hand; and on the other hand informs the type of relations with the 'centre' — a centre which they aim at resembling, and challenge at the same time. The mutual constitution and transformations of place and scale will be more particularly looked at. The impacts of immigration and integration issues on the rescaling of statehood and on the production of places are intertwined and in tension.

I will first attempt at defining the geographical concept of 'place', or '*lieu*' in French. While I give a working definition of place, for the purpose of this work, I will explain the reasons that led me to define the mid-sized cities I base my analysis on as places, therefore conflating town boundaries with place boundaries.

Secondly, I will focus on definitions of placemaking, especially in a context of globalisation, increased mobility and transnationalism. Indeed, placemaking, as I have mentioned when addressing the demand for mandatory economic development faced by subnational spaces, is seen as an activity carried out by local actors to foster social cohesion and economic

development. I will try to discuss the extent to which local immigration policies, placemaking and economic development are connected. More particularly, I question how much those marginalised spaces challenge identity and placemaking politics. My idea is to show that resistance to the neoliberal project is not always 'losing' or failing to adopt, but could be an attempt at inventing new ways of living together.

Following this remark, the last subsection will question the exclusionary or inclusive collective imaginary of place that can emerge from placemaking activities, therefore linking scale, place and immigration integration issues.

2.1 From place to (the mid-sized) city

This subsection presents the definition of 'place' I retain. Place has been a fertile ground for research, especially with the structuration of a humanistic school of geography, led by Anne Buttimer, James Duncan, Yi Fu-Tuan, David Ley or Edward Relph, and deeply interested in issues of territory and place production. In parallel, a French social geography led by Bernard Debarbieux or Guy Di Meo, among others, has also fostered great interest in the concepts of '*territoire*' and '*lieu*'.

This subsection aims to explain the reasons why I use the concepts of place and city interchangeably. Doing so, I do not mean to ignore the existence of other 'places' within or outside city boundaries. However, in the numerous interviews I have conducted, and during observations, city identity is strong enough to methodologically conflate the place and the city. Therefore, I will look at the city as a place, a crucible of networks of social relations, at a specific moment, built on historical layers of social relations.

I believe it is a possible methodological position because I study small cities, which host 20,000 to 50,000 residents, are isolated geographically, far from the central Jerusalem-Tel Aviv axis (although this distance is to be relativized, given the small size of Israel) and socially and politically marginalised. Therefore, the last part of this subsection will address more particularly the specificities of those spaces I visited during the months of fieldwork.

2.1.1 Place, locale, locality

I have previously established that scale is the core concept I rely on to assess the transformations of the State, through the example of immigration and integration policies. In the rescaling of statehood and power, subnational spaces — cities — emerge as strategic sites. Urban governance is a concept that enables us to grasp the dynamics of politics at this

subnational level, where multiple actors are engaged, at various scales, primarily toward the economic development of the city. However, I believe that to understand those dynamics, place is required to 'ground' scalar processes. Indeed, place is key to take into account history, layers of development, of decisions, of interactions, which shaped and still shape the space overseen by urban governance.

In actual fact, several lexicons exist to describe the crystallisation of social relations, everyday life, common sense and meanings in a specific spatial area: locale, place, and locality. These lexicons reflect the different schools of thoughts which have addressed place — from a neo-Marxist school to humanistic, post-colonial of feminist approaches of place. Very bluntly put, theorists mobilising the concept of localities emphasize their role in the world-economy while theorists mobilising the concept of place, in a more humanistic framework, emphasise aspects of culture and identity. Indeed, 'locality' was defined by Kevin Cox and Andrew Mair (1988), James DeFilippis (1999) as well as Colin Flint and Peter Taylor (2011). 'Place' emerges more from a humanistic tradition, initiated by Yi Fu-Tuan but also by John Agnew, who coined the well-known concept of 'sense of place' (1987).

Cox and Mair define the locality as the space of dependence, the space where firms, people, State institutions are tied and dependent on each other (Kevin R. Cox & Mair, 1988). These same actors may develop ties out of the localities in what they call the space of engagement (Herod, 2011, p. 23). They therefore provide a definition that primarily focuses on the economic relations that bring economic and political actors together. However, their theory brings to light the possibility for actors to be involved in various localities.

Flint and Taylor describe a locality as the 'daily urban system' (Flint & Taylor, 2011, p. 248). Apart from its economic role, the locality is also the place where different mixes of social groups live, therefore generating different patterns of social relations. Those previous patterns lay the ground for different experiences for the populations. The locality as a node of social relations is also linked to politics. Indeed, localities present a collective social energy defining new strategies and futures. Lastly, Flint and Taylor draw on a literature concerned with culture and the city, arguing that "everyday life is embedded within place-specific social settings" (*Ibid.*, p.250). Nevertheless, Flint and Taylor do not see scales and localities as separate geographical concepts. They argue that localities are nested within a hierarchy of other scales, and discard an analysis based on "exploring the mutually constitutive relations" of the different geographical core concepts of place, scale, territory and network (Jessop *et al.*, 2008, p. 391).

DeFilippis lays his argument out in a distinct way, originating from autonomy and the locality, rather than the capital production of space. In his article "Alternatives to the "New Urban Politics": finding locality and autonomy in local economic development", he defines locality as "the scale of experience, constructed through unequal power relations and conflicts between those social actors and structures that are functionally immobile as they try to create a 'common sense' and define their position in the relations with the supra-local world" (DeFilippis, 1999, p. 978). Similarly to Flint and Taylor, he conflates scale and place.

Even though those scholars focus more on the capital production of place, commonalities are found between those accounts and the theories I will present later on. Places entail social relations, although the latter involve power and conflicts; they imply experiences and everyday life; and they bear common sense or meanings.

The notion of 'place' has found its more enthusiastic supporters in a humanistic approach of place (Adams *et al.*, 2001). One of its eminent representatives, Tuan, claims: "How mere space becomes an intensely human place is a task for the humanistic geographer; it appeals to such distinctively humanist interests as the nature of experience, the quality of emotional bond to physical objects, and the role of concepts and symbols in the creation of place identity" (Tuan, 1976, p. 269).

In an attempt to close the divide between neo-Marxist and humanistic geographers, John Agnew has largely contributed to the development of the concept of 'place', anchored in a belief in human agency, which requires that the experience of this place exist. For Agnew, the definition of place follows three dimensions: a location, or a site in space, typically a city or another settlement; a series of locales where everyday life activities take place; and a 'sense of place', i.e. the feeling of belonging to a unique community and a unique landscape, therefore following an Aristotelian tradition which sees place — contrarily to space — as being unique (Agnew, 1987, 2011). As place has been often attacked for becoming irrelevant in a globalised society, Agnew (2011) has reaffirmed the unbounded character of places and the central role of mobility in defining places.[18]

French social geography has revisited the Anglo-Saxon debate on places (Clerc, n.d.). Di Meo's definition of territory or *territoire* can be compared to place. Indeed, a territory is seen through

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[18]Geographer Tim Cresswell has explored more particularly the mutual constitution of mobility, immobility and place. More precisely, he has studied the evolution of mobility from the threatening character of the hobo to the contemporary positively connoted image of the cosmopolitan traveller. Once regarded as social deviance, mobility is now desirable — although different kinds of mobility are sanctioned with more or less openness. Indeed, immigrants are part of a modern place as much as they define its boundaries, its limits (Cresswell, 2006).

the social relations individuals have, their lived experience (or *vécu* in French) of the place, and the collective social representations of the places in the territory (Di Meo, 2008; Di Meo, Sauvaitre, & Soufflet, 2004). Similarly, Debarbieux has defined places or *lieux* through single or small ensemble of buildings, or other material spatialities. His definition of territory is also closer to what the Anglo-Saxon scholarship has called place. The territory is a location in space, but also includes forms, and practices. The different places that constitute the territory constitute legitimate visual symbols of the territory (Debarbieux, 1995).

Despite those different contributions to place, many have been convinced by a literature that has reduced place to a reactionary, self-closing and defensive response to a globalising world (D. Massey, 1991). Geographers interested in places in a postmodern world — where the argument that globalisation leads to the spread of '*non-lieux*' (Augé, 1992) — have had to demonstrate that places were always subjected to instability, permeability and power relations. In order to complete this subsection, I would like to present briefly two more authors whose arguments I was especially appealed by: the definition of place by development anthropologist Arturo Escobar and the one by Feminist geographer Doreen B. Massey. Against the reduction of place, Escobar believes in an open and networked character of place, whereas Massey advocates a 'progressive sense a place'.

In fact, Escobar argues that "[…] we understand by place the experience of a particular location with some measure of groundedness (however, unstable), sense of boundaries (however, permeable), and connection to everyday life, even if its identity is constructed, traversed by power, and never fixed" (Escobar, 2001, p. 140). His work is an appeal to consider the production and making of place — not by capital and global forces —, but from "the 'senses' or, more generally [through a] cultural construction of place — how places are endowed with meaning and the constitution of identities, subjectivities, difference and antagonism, following phenomenological, interpretivist, and constructivist paradigms" (*Ibid.*, p. 153). The concern with mobility and deterritorialization should not erase place but should help recognise the open and networked character of social relations grounded in place.

By place, Massey does not particularly mean a space enclosed by administrative and political boundaries. She encourages scholars to think of "networks of social relations and movements and communications in one's head, then each 'place' can be seen as a particular, unique, point of their intersection. It is, indeed, a meeting place. Instead then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings" (D. Massey, 1991, p. 28). Massey argues that places can host multiple identities, often conflicting ones; they foster a sense of place that is extroverted, opened to the

world; and the spatial organization itself impacts the divisions within the place. I will leave most of Massey's account on place for the next subsection, as in *City Worlds* (D. B. Massey *et al.*, 1999), she thinks of places and cities quite interchangeably.

Following those definitions, place is conceived as a variable of difference. Place is the crucible of networks of social relations, at a specific moment, and is therefore built on numerous layers of social relations. The history of these social relations, their conflicts and their relations of power, informs today's relations. In Israel, several geographers, Israeli and French, have studied places and their transformations due to globalisation processes (Berthomière, n.d.; Fenster, 2004; Ram, 2007; Rozenholc, 2014). They have all included immigration settlement in their analyses. Indeed, looking at the particular topic of immigration and integration, relations between locals and immigrants along the years can be particularly important in defining today's 'communal imaginary of place' and the model of living together supported by the residents.

2.1.2 When is the city a place?

As I briefly mentioned in the introduction of this subsection, I made the methodological choice of conflating the sites of the towns I explore with place. In that sense, towns or small or mid-sized cities are considered places: they correspond to a location, in space, that someone can point on a map, and even draw the boundaries of; they are places because everyday life takes place, people reside, and mow their grass, they grab lunch or a coffee with friends, join their neighbours at the local synagogue, attend an art class for amateur painters, and shop at the local store; finally, they share a collective imaginary of belonging, as their residents insist in our encounters: "I am proud to be a resident of Kiryat Gat" or "The people of Kiryat Gat, this is who we are", completing those statements by illustrations of a characteristic that they believe all residents share. The singularity of the place is contrasted with the multiplicity of belongings, which residents synthesise and make one.

In that sense, cities are not uniform. They are made up of many locales, symbolic places and different neighbourhoods — the latter being depicted by interviewees through their imagined borders and their perceived demographic homogeneity. Those symbolic places are even shared with other towns, connecting them through a particular architectural style that was typical to the different periods of building extensions. In that sense, many collective representations and the narratives supporting them can overlap: some that are nationally shared, some that are typical of the city, although one city can host different representations from the various groups and interests that co-reside, and some narratives are linked to a specific neighbourhood, a locale, a building or a religious site.

I mentioned in the previous part that Massey used city and place interchangeably. Indeed, even though in 1991 she argued that places are "[…] articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings" (D. Massey, 1991, p. 28), in *City Worlds*, Massey described "the city as an intense focal point or a node of social relations in time and space" (D. B. Massey *et al.*, 1999, p. 97).

In her opinion, several dimensions are important to take into account: first, places do not house single communities, but are arenas of multiple identities in conflict. As those identities fluctuate, places are not static: "if cities are places of cultural mixing, then the social terms of that mixing will vary both historically and geographically. […] and even [the glorious 'mixity' evoked by the likes of Jane Jacobs] will have its terms, its power relations" (*Ibid*., p. 104). Second, places are processes. Massey supports "a sense of place which is extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local" (D. Massey, 1991). In this context, cities are essentially open, they are places of wider interconnection. Finally, "geography (or 'space') may also be of fundamental importance in the expression and organization of this urban 'mixity'. The important point here is that these divisions within the city are not just the result of mapping already existing, different communities on to distinct spaces. It is also that the spatial organization itself — the geography — is important in maintaining, maybe even in establishing, the difference itself" (D. B. Massey *et al.*, 1999, p. 105).

This last remark, which must not be mistaken for spatial determinism, can be connected to a Simmelian frontier where internal social borderlines exclude certain member groups of the society from the whole. Residential dispersion, or concentration of groups in segregated areas located beyond those social frontiers, reduce their mobility, their social everyday practices and their participation in politics (Groupe Frontière, 2004). And in fact, the four towns that my analysis is based on, if looked at from a national perspective, are spaces of exclusion, to the point that social theorists have even largely discarded them.

The following subsection will therefore discuss the particularities of these small and mid-cities.

2.1.3 Ordinary cities? Specificities of small and mid-sized cities

The four cities that I have observed for the purpose of this research occupy a particular position in the urban and national hierarchy of the country. In this sense, they can be looked at through different lenses. First, they are small cities, with a 20,000 to 50,000 population. As such, they have limited resources, and limited influence toward their hinterlands. Second, they are located

at the geographical frontiers of the country, close to Lebanon, Syria, and the Gaza strip. In the chapter dedicated to the Israeli context, I will come back in detail to the establishment of these cities and their exclusionary and segregated character. But for now, I just mean to simply underline their 'peripheral' character, geographically, socially and economically. In a process of rescaling of power, only certain subnational spaces are considered strategic and drive economic growth, leaving entire regions of countries out of the most productive economic networks.

As I want to emphasise the potential of autonomy and creativity of these cities, I will not develop in too much detail the different approaches that have developed in geography to study those cities. In a nutshell, the past century has seen the progressive transformation of analytical frames from a centre/periphery perspective based on a functionalist school to a centre/periphery perspective that is similar, yet based on the capitalist production of space, and led by theorists of dependence, to a networked approach of 'archipelagos', linking the capitalist production of space with globalisation, mobility and the rescaling of political governance. However, the new approach of cities, as networked rather than contained within the boundaries of the nation, has not eliminated old hierarchies (Leitner in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008, pp. 236–255).

No matter what approach has been adopted, the scholarship has mostly focused on the centres, the large cities, rather than the small and mid-sized cities, remote from the metropolitan areas, located 'at the margin', in every sense of the term. From the 1930s' Chicago, to Los Angeles and the postmodernist world-cities, global cities or transnational cities that have been at the centre of scholars' attention, research has largely ignored the "variegated, fragmented and incoherent nature of contemporary urban life" (Amin & Graham, 1997, p. 416). Indeed, Ash Amin and Stephen Graham argue that a small group of urban examples became paradigmatic, and that urban studies have been largely based on generalisation from these cities. Moreover, the definition of a city itself is problematic, they claim, when 'multiple spaces' can coexist, and sometimes locate in extending urban spaces (*Ibid.*).

Bringing back 'ordinary cities' into research is therefore crucial. Recovering the concept of 'ordinary cities', Jennifer Robinson puts forward an argument for post-colonialising urban studies. She suggests to leave behind the hierarchy and categories of cities that have separated an urban scholarship focused on Western, 'modern', creative, dynamic cities; and a scholarship she calls 'developmentalist', which has considered cities in developing countries mostly as subjects of development projects. She states: "I want to achieve a collective refusal of the categories and hierarchising assumptions that have left poor cities playing a punitive game of catch-up in an increasingly hostile international economic and political environment" (Robinson,

2006, p. 6). Instead, she argues that theorists should call for autonomy, diversity, creativity and innovation in all cities.

Without rejecting the argument that capitalism, neoliberalism and globalisation have reshaped our space in a way which left important areas at the margin, small and mid-sized cities can take advantage of the lack of dedicated policies to participate in rescaling from below. Indeed, as renewed enthusiasm for mid-sized cities has emerged across urban studies in the past decade, they are now seen as sites of innovation. Several special issues of scientific journals have been dedicated to mid-sized cities. For instance, in 2011, *Urbanisme* published *Mid-sized cities strike back*[19] edited by Antoine Loubière. In 2012, the *Revue d'Economie Régionale et Urbaine* published a special issue devoted to the progress of research in the analysis of economic dynamics of small and medium-sized towns edited by Mario Carrier and Christophe Demazière. In 2017, *Espaces et Sociétés* will publish a special issue on *those cities we hardly talk about.*[20] In *Urbanisme*, the authors claim that, as there is no national policy dedicated to them, mid-sized cities are places of innovation (Béhar in Loubière, 2011, p. 16). Similar accounts can be found in Israel, with research work conducted by Nachum Ben-Elia for instance, who argues that a "faltering, ineffective central government and increasing pressing local problems, encouraged the emergence of more assertive, entrepreneurial and effective local governments" (Ben-Elia, 2006). Carrier and Demazière most crucially state:

> Studying small and mid-sized cities would mean demonstrating that a daily level continues co-existing with the effects of goods, capital, people and symbols' international flux. It would mean examining local practices, identities and autonomies. If we draw from works on "the ordinary city" (Amin & Graham, 1997), we can say that small and mid-sized cities, even much more than big cities, are simultaneously connected to other urban spaces, crossed by flux, influences, but also rooted in history, in heritage. This inclusion and this distancing of the world make small and mid-sized cities complex research objects, at least as sensitive to analyse as very big cities.[21] (Carrier & Demazière, 2012, p. 141)

The potential for autonomy and innovation held in small and mid-sized cities could be analysed in the light of James Scott's seminal work on subaltern politics. In his essays on 'little tradition' and 'resistance', Scott (1977) brings in a 'folk' or 'little tradition' (a term first coined by Robert Redfield) perspective. He explains, "Any transfer of ideas or institutions from one group to another entails a shift in meaning [...]. The particular category of cases which concerns us is that of the transfer of ideas *within* the same society: from elites to non-elites, from the city to the

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[19] Translation of the author.
[20] Translation of the author.
[21] Translation of the author.

countryside, from the centre (socially and spatially) to the periphery" (Scott, 1977, p. 5). For Scott, the social and spatial periphery's politics differs because "Ideological principles are replaced most often by an identification (positive or negative) with concrete social groups and by political reasoning from the immediate experience of family, job, and friends" (*Ibid.*, p. 6). Scott's proposal can also be found in Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony when he claims that "marginal groups tend to adopt not a systematic consciousness comprising incompatible values and ideas rooted in hegemony-seeking social groups but ideas that spring from more their direct, everyday life experiences" (Gramsci in Schnell & Mishal, 2008, p. 244). The periphery is therefore a place of political dissidence, of normative opposition to the political tradition of the ruling elite (*Ibid.*, p. 4). Scott believes that this political dissidence is different from the one that characterises the proletariat — as its political culture is not a consequence of its relationship to the means of production (*Ibid.*).

However, relations between the periphery — the 'little tradition' — and the centre — the 'great tradition' — is a mix of collaboration and tension. Indeed, the local administration of peripheries usually operates in the framework of a political project that supports hegemony (Agnew, 1990). Scott elaborates and explains that the little tradition is culturally dependent on the elite. Folk culture admires and aspires to elite culture. This stratification of culture corresponds to a stratification of power and wealth. Therefore, deference and loyalty are expected of peripheries. But subordination is negotiated: domination is accepted against protection. And the elite may suffer the consequence of a lack of protection. Additionally, the counterpoint to the great tradition is a symbolic opposition, which may provide the cultural basis for movements of political and cultural dissent (Scott 1977). This is a crucial point in my opinion: subordination is always negotiated, contingent and political dissent expected.

In that sense, Scott's theoretical framework provides an appealing argument to look at small and mid-sized cities in peripheral Israel not only as the victims of what Colin Flint and John Taylor have called 'uneven development', and the last ladders of the 'hierarchy of spaces' (Flint & Taylor, 2011, p. 258), but also as places of autonomy and agency.

2.2 Rescaling and the making of place(s)

The activation of the multiple social interactions in a physical site, itself defined by multiple layers of urbanistic and architectural decisions, to establish a place, is not a mere incident. Scales appear in places. As geographer Izhak Schnell suggests:

> This means that different scales may all be represented in the local as a hologram in which the part

> maintains the structure of the whole in different scales. The local, in this conception, becomes the hologram reality that mirrors the ensemble of forces, operating in a unique combination of horizontal and vertical or scalar orders that participate in shaping the place. (Schnell, 2007, p. 259)

On top of the structural issues that define the attractiveness of a place at certain periods in history, there are many agents involved in the making of place, at various scales and with diverse interests. Schnell argues that scalar forces affect places, but that agents also affect scales: "while agents are practicing, they play an active role in response to these external forces" (*Ibid*., p. 260).

In the context I have described so far, placemaking aims at repositioning the city in its wider relations with other spaces. In that sense, it could mean the rescaling of development strategies — like those I have extensively described in the subsection on subnational strategic spaces — but in the particular case of immigration policies, cities can engage in placemaking in order to renegotiate their position within the national and even transnational map, and therefore to become an attractive place for immigrants to settle. These placemaking activities can include construction of narratives of diversity, immigrant-friendly services and their marketing, and for the small cities located far away from economic centres, spreading discourses aiming at the reduction of the perceived distance from the centre. Those are the various assumptions that this project aims at testing.

In this section, I would like to briefly return to the notion of placemaking, and to link a political economy analysis of rescaling and placemaking more directly. Indeed, as subnational spaces become more strategic, there are expected to take part in 'interlocality competition', where placemaking becomes a positioning tool, its public result being known as city branding. A similar logic applies to immigration issues, where the marketing of the city aims at putting forward cheap labour and/or high-skilled migrants, both groups participating in the neoliberalisation of the economy.

Adopting this perspective directly brings the autonomy of those places into question. Indeed, in the last subsection, I would like to make a parallel with the last remarks I concluded with in the previous section, that is the questions of innovation, contestation and resistance in marginalised cities, and to question the placemaking strategies that emerge from below, the local innovations and grassroots social movements that produce new scales.

2.2.1 Placemaking for economic development

When tackling the concept of placemaking, three main and contrasting dimensions of the process seem to appear. The first dimension, which I can refer to as the 'pragmatic' dimension, is the activity of placemaking as envisioned by international organisations, many consulting offices working with developing countries, and countless workers in the development apparatus, which socio-anthropologist of development Olivier de Sardan calls 'development brokers' ('*courtiers du développement*' in French). They promote planning activities led by various stakeholders at city level to encourage its positioning in a larger region, or even worldwide, and increase its potential to compete nationally and internationally for investments, resources and residents. The result of these activities is often called 'city branding' and it goes hand in hand with the rise of an independent sector of local economic development, which has seen the emergence of specialised professionals, independent municipal departments and consultants the last forty years (Feser, 2014). As a case in point, Young and Kazmarec have shown that the most important tool of local economic development deployed by communes in Poland is 'place promotion' (Young & Kaczmarek, 2000).

Second, it is this very approach that has been criticised by a political economy scholarship concerned with the effects of the relentless neoliberal project that affects space and the social and economic life of its inhabitants. Indeed, what development brokers try to promote as a community-based project which aims at harnessing the perceived (by participants in the process, usually decision-makers and very often even external consultants) potentials (usually economic) of the community, and leveraging them toward community-based development, is really the result of the 'interlocality competition' resulting from the rescaling of statehood. In the 'pragmatic' approach, placemaking relies upon the idea that, for a city to be well integrated in the economic networks, what matters is not the actual resources it possesses, but the resources that the 'community' (the residents) can create in a deterritorialised, dematerialised economic order.

Cox and Mair, whose definition of place I have already endorsed, situate placemaking in a perspective of local dependence (although they speak of 'community-making'). They argue that places go through a process of reimagining of community, understood as a focal point of 'modern' social relations grounded in the locality. They trace the origin of this remaking of place in the necessity to reinvent social bonds whilst traditional social relations are destroyed. Business-oriented local governance will virtually create a new sense of place, recasting the concept of community. Cox and Mair characterise this place promotion as a 'local form of patriotism' (Kevin R. Cox & Mair, 1988). Forging local communities is in their view a strategy by

local business coalitions to fill the voids of modern local dependence of people (Kevin R. Cox & Mair, 1988, p. 315). In that sense, Cox and Mair, but also DeFilippis, acknowledge that community-based development is a very entrepreneurial vehicle of local economic development. They are usually not emancipatory, as a naïve belief in what is locally formed could appear to be, but those forms of local control can be as oppressive and exclusionary as any other (DeFilippis, 1999). Community-based development, including placemaking activities, is not an act of resistance, but another feature of the neoliberal logics of economic development.

Controlling the kind of people who can settle in a city can also derive from strategies to position the town, in a context of mandatory development. Immigrants can be seen as actors in the economic development of the city, as workers, as residents and business owners in urban revitalisation programmes… etc. The role of immigration in economic growth has been well acknowledged for some decades. Theorists of international migrations, whether belonging to a neoclassic school or to critical schools (dual labour market theorists and world systems theorists) all believe in the entanglement of economic globalisation and immigration (D. S. Massey *et al.*, 1993). As argued by Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack, "the new industrial reserve army of immigrant workers is a major stabilising factor of the capitalist economy" (Castles and Kosack, 1972 in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, p. 36).

In the volume I mentioned before, Glick-Schiller and Çağlar deplore the fact that "when it comes to urban studies, the robust literature on the neoliberal remaking, reimagining, and competitive marketing of cities is strangely silent about migration" (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 2) Indeed, "migrants respond to the differential opportunities provided by the positioning of cities. These opportunities include variations in regulatory regimes, local infrastructures and possibilities for entrepreneurial activities, employment, education, housing, and entrance into local political and cultural life" (*Ibid.*, p. 3). The main problem with the rather scant literature available on this topic, although it has became of growing interest, is the instant success met by those who write about it, even if (or because) the analysis is superficial. Richard Florida's 'creative class' (Florida, 2003) has met with enthusiasm among policy makers who have selected bits of his work to justify the promotion of their cities toward high-skilled migrant workers (even though Florida did not directly refer to immigrants, but rather to artists, high tech managers and engineers… etc), and the promised economic growth that this new diversity entails (Hoekstra, 2014).

A third dimension of placemaking is less concerned with the structural aspects that impose placemaking as a quasi survival strategy. It is addressing the on-going placemaking process that any place in space engages with, if it is to remain an actual living place. Here, the main idea is

that placemaking aims at repositioning the city in its wider relations with other spaces. Massey's description of the articulations between both is particularly accurate, e.g.:

> It is, precisely, *a reorientation of the City within a restructured wider geography.* And that restructuring of the wider geography, of the networks within which the City is set, provokes effects within the City itself. Moreover, among those effects are what Jacobs calls 'active placemaking events'. That is to say, the reconstruction of spaces and places within the City was an active part of the reordering of the wider relations within which the City is set and the aim was that the local reconstruction would respond to—and hopefully even influence— the remaking of the wider relations. (D. B. Massey *et al.*, 1999, p. 107)

Massey further argues that cities are at the meeting of networks of social relations, at their intersections. Nevertheless, she goes on to say:

> the mere criss-crossing of wider networks of social relations (their simple intersection) is not enough to produce a city. At best it might result (using an example of economic relations) in a staging post, a transhipment point, a locus of simple exchange. For development towards city-dom what is needed is positively activated *interaction.* This could mean the bubbling-up of new activities, it could mean specific policies to trade on or maintain the potential effects of intersection (to turn it into interaction). (D. B. Massey *et al.*, 1999, p. 115)

To activate interactions and expand connectedness, she says that cities conduct strategies. These strategies can be commanded by a new economic order, as mentioned in the previous subsection, or can be the result of activation from below. In both cases, they are a result of rescaling, and they produce scales.

2.2.2 Placemaking and resistance at the margin

In this second stage, I wish to address again the autonomy or structural constraints that weigh on the small and mid-sized cities, distant from 'centres', that are at the heart of my analysis.

Indeed, I have explained that the first definition of place is that it is a location in space. The fact that the places I study are located far away from the metropolitan areas that concentrate economic and political power, affects them deeply. Indeed, I have presented Gramsci or Scott's theoretical models, where peripheral groups deal with the constant tension of reaching out to the centre, to the hegemony, while being involved in negotiation, dispute, contestation and resistance from this same hegemonic centre they aim at resembling.

A French tradition of scholarship concerned with placemaking in small cities has also addressed the marketing strategies put in place by cities (partially) excluded from the economic dynamics of large metropolitan areas. In a context of 'interlocality competition', 'territorial marketing' was adopted by most, even though the resources they put in these communication activities is scarce and the results very modest. Hélène Mainet underlines that these small cities adopt discourses that aim at resembling the major cities, while claiming for a rural-urban character (Mainet, 2011). However, French scholars have shown that those remote areas put in place innovative strategies and support systems to improve their connectivity and develop economic activities (Carrier, Thériault, & Véronneau, 2012; Tallec, 2012)).

DeFilippis agrees that autonomous development originated in places, and, because it aims at rescaling power, can be as anti-democratic and oppressive as other entrepreneurial forms of urban governance directed at growth. Bearing that in mind, DeFilippis explores economic initiatives aiming at anchoring capital in localities, thus countering the capitalist and globalising economy. He advocates "forms of local economic development that offer actors working within localities the potential to realize autonomy in their relations with the supra-local world" (DeFilippis, 1999, p. 974). His definition of autonomy is as following: "the ever-contested and never complete ability of those within the locality to control the institutions and relationships that define and produce the locality" (DeFilippis, 1999, p. 980). Instead of thinking that cities should work on attracting a mobile capital, DeFilippis advocates for alternative forms of development organised around 'reclaiming' capital or anchoring capital within localities such as worker-owned cooperatives, community land trusts, mutual housing associations or community development credit unions. These organisations aim at improving social justice at the local level.

Bridging with this idea of social justice — and if I look more at the political autonomy of places, rather than their economy — is also central for Escobar, who makes a plea to "make visible the manifold local logics of production of cultures and identities, economic and ecological practices, that are ceaselessly emerging from communities worldwide" (Escobar, 2001, p. 158). Those practices, in his opinion, pose important and original challenges to capitalism and Euro-centred modernities. What is interesting in Escobar's account is that he explicitly argues that it is possible to "enact(ing) a politics of scale from below". He says: "Social movements engage in the politics of scale by engaging biodiversity networks, on the one hand, and through coalition making with other place-based struggles" (*Ibid*., p. 161). Not only does he make a case to bring back locality or place, but also the strategies linking those places with larger networks, which participate in rescaling. It is not only the devolution toward subnational levels and the a posteriori reaction of local actors, but also strategies emerging from places that participate in rescaling processes. Escobar describes

> subaltern strategies of localisation by communities and, particularly, social movements. These strategies are of two kinds: place-based strategies that rely on the attachment to territory and culture; and glocal strategies through meshworks that enable social movements to engage in the production of locality by enacting a politics of scale from below. (Escobar, 2001, p. 161)

Escobar does not discard the capitalist production of scales, but "social movements and progressive NGOs often times also create networks that achieve supra-place effects that are not negligible" (*Ibid.*, p. 166). In this context, attachment to places is not reactionary but definitely in line with modernity and transnationalism.

An important assumption for this doctoral work is that place is not only a capitalist production — where locale surrenders to globalisation — nor do I believe in the uniquely cultural construction of place (which derivates from a history of relative isolation). As Escobar points out:

> Surely places and localities are brought into the politics of commodification and cultural massification, but the knowledge of place and identity can contribute to produce different meanings — of economy, nature and each other — within the conditions of capitalism and modernity that surround it. (Escobar, 2001, p. 164)

Understanding that agents in places request "development in their own terms"[22] is therefore a first step to analysing rescaling processes. However, at the present time, the autonomous strategies of placemaking essentially refer to economic development, and less to identity, sense of belonging and immigration issues (apart from brief comments by Glick-Schiller and Çağlar). The next section will therefore aim at reconciling issues of placemaking with 'racialised imaginaries of place' (Leitner, 2012), in the context of small and mid-sized cities.

2.3 Inclusive and/or exclusionary imaginaries of place

In this subsection, my aim is to briefly introduce the assumption that immigration issues are fundamental for placemaking (and the resulting sense of place), and that the adoption of placemaking strategies that are either inclusive or exclusionary will also inform immigrant integration policies. Those questions are to be asked through a historical long-term placemaking process, but also through the micro-politics of current placemaking activities. Indeed, the

[22] Emancipatory social movements are hardly captured as planning agents (Lopes de Souza, 2012, p. 326). Marcelo Lopez de Souza therefore calls for the recognition of the political power of James Scott's resistance theory. This critique of urban critical theory by Lopes de Souza is part of an issue of City (2012) in which Sharon Meagher also contributed. Meagher studies rural Mexico. She mentions a Mexican-Indian activist woman, and she says: "she and her community do not resist all economic development; rather, they want development on their own terms" (Meagher, 2012, p. 478).

production of differentiated places — inclusive or exclusionary — goes through complex interactions of historical, political and social dynamics.

I have previously mentioned Glick-Schiller and Çağlar's (2011) account on cities' response to this relation. Indeed, they question the extent to which immigration is part of the global restructuring of cities. To attract immigrants, they argue, cities can develop a certain set of policies. When it comes to small cities, "The mutual constitution of cities and migrants within processes of restructuring and rescaling is found in such "forgotten cities" as well more powerful cities" (*Ibid.*). "In cities that have been unsuccessfully struggling for capital, political clout, and representation, migrants may provide flows of capital and labour that would otherwise be unavailable", but they can also contribute to the city's decline (*Ibid.*, p. 191-192). Leitner also studied immigration in small cities in America. She argues similarly that "migrants may prove to be active agents of the reconstitution of urban life" (Leitner, 2012, p. 211). More and more immigrants settle in these towns, providing a new labour force in areas of important out-migration; occupying vacant business sites in the city centre; or changing the housing features.

If both those studies portray small and mid-sized cities potentially appealing to immigrants, and potentially harnessing immigration benefits for their development, it partially examines the distancing of mid-sized cities from national policy frames through their "practices, identities and autonomies"[23] (Carrier & Demazière, 2012, p. 141). Continuing in this direction could only provide research with invaluable elements to better understand placemaking from a social as well as cultural point of view.

Basing their argument on place (or locale), Walker and Leitner assess local immigration policies in the United States. Some cities and states have adopted inclusive immigration policies, while others have adopted jurisdiction aiming at excluding immigrants or driving them out (Walker & Leitner, 2011, p. 157). One of the hypotheses Walker and Leitner test is the extent to which "ideological conservatism and strong nationalistic sentiments are positively related to attitudes supporting immigration restrictions" (*Ibid.*, p. 158). They assert that drawing on 'locale' and 'sense of place' helps describe the distinct spatial imaginaries of social and cultural belonging. And indeed, in their textual analysis of policy documents and local media, they argue:

> Two contrasting imaginaries of community and place emerged from these texts: (1) an inclusive imaginary that celebrates and values cultural diversity and an open and constantly emerging community, place, and nation; and (2) an exclusive imaginary that values and appreciates cultural homogeneity and a clear bounding of place, community, and nation. (*Ibid.*, p. 172)

[23] Translation of the author.

Walker and Leitner urge us to reconcile social and cultural productions of places and the narratives they generate, they suggest more attention should be paid to "the history of social/power relations [...] in particular places, which in turn help to construct and reconstruct belief systems such as race thinking as well as conceptions of nation and place" (*Ibid*., p. 165).

Leitner also conducted another study assessing the relations between place and racialised imaginary of place in small-town America (Leitner, 2012). Her work is of utmost importance here because it focuses on a small 20,000 town, which underwent tremendous socio-economic transformations but also demographic transformations. She studies the processes of othering and racialization, or in other cases the 'negotiations of difference' through 'encounters' (*Ibid.*). In that sense, she draws on 'everyday life experiences' to assess values and ideas.

This section mainly aimed at explaining how I have framed 'place' as a grounding concept for rescaling processes. Indeed, place is first and foremost a location in space. This location at a certain time in history, and in a certain social, economic and political system, informs the accessibility of the place to social, economic and political resources. Its social agents can therefore engage in strategies to reposition the place within a broader network of cities, displacing for instance the scale at which they view their interventions. Thus, a city can engage in transnational activities, even though it is 'peripheral' at national level. Immigration in this context could be perceived as a potential engine for the rescaling of interventions and the positioning of the city. Second, a place is a site where everyday life activities occur. Residents feel they share a common experience, and perceive the other is at reach, they can meet with all others in multiple encounters. Those everyday experiences are considered an important factor to understand local politics. People in marginalised places tend to aim at resembling the dominant groups, but at the same time, they also advocate economic development or politics in their own terms. Lastly, place involves a 'sense of place', a series of representations and narratives, that bring forward certain values and meanings. Here again, they inform politics and might be the base for autonomous and innovative actions, as I have mentioned in the particular case of small and mid-sized cities remote from centres.

Those three dimensions cannot make us oblivious to the fact that places are open, and constantly affected by rescaling processes, while at the time affecting them (Schnell, 2007). The dynamic process of placemaking informs the constant production and reproduction of places. The making and remaking of places, in a political economy perspective, is often seen as a result of the capitalist production of space. However, I have argued here for the consideration of the role of social agents in these processes of production of places, and the resulting rescaling that occurs. The meaningful interventions of those actors could inform the potential of autonomous

innovation in cities, especially when it comes to urban immigration and integration issues. Strategic agents can act and 'make history'. However, those agents represent specific interests. Their intervention is not necessarily more beneficial to the residents of these cities, and not devoid of power relations.

3 Social agents produce and transform scales of power, authority and responsibility

I have introduced the concept of scale, which leads me to address the transformation of the State power. The concept of place is a grounding concept, which anchors research not only in a methodological local scale, but in a space of social interactions, of history and therefore a 'political space' (Lefebvre 1974). However, the main challenge is to 'bring back agency' (Desille, 2015). Indeed, Leitner claims that "Theorising the politics of scale requires recognising the dialectical relationship between structure and agency as played out in a variety of realms of society" (Leitner in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008, p. 241). In the context of this doctoral research, my main hypothesis is that actors, taking part in the local governance of immigration and integration, based on their own motivations (biographical) and the history of the place, make sense of immigration and integration, form policies and therefore produce scale. The 'rescaling of statehood' (Brenner, 2004) is not only the result of neoliberal logics: people in place have autonomy, they resist, they negotiate, they interpret, and therefore, they participate in those transformations. In this section, I aim at acknowledging the role of elected politicians and street-level bureaucrats in the production and transformations of the State.

This section will therefore include a definition of the concept of agency, as well as offer a glimpse into the methodological choice that results from a focus on social agents' interventions. Indeed, through an analysis of strategic agents' personal and professional backgrounds, my purpose is to understand their take on city sovereignty when it comes to immigration issues, as well as on the role of the city government and other stakeholders in immigration and integration issues, and the translation of this role into public actions.

My next step will be to present the social agents I choose to focus on. First, my enquiry emphasises the role of local officials, whether politicians or elected government officials. Those are mainly the mayors and the members of the city councils, especially those who deal directly with immigration issues in the city. Next, I also address the interventions of municipal agents, often referred to in the literature as street-level bureaucrats. Here, two levels of hierarchy are targeted: the municipal departments' directors and staff. Other non-elected stakeholders, working at city level, from other organisations, also take part in the local governance of

immigration and integration. Very often, those work for public organisations (such as the local office of a ministry) or public-funded NGOs. I have found very few private initiatives, which very often benefit from public funds.

From language to actual planning and service delivery, these agents act, sometimes reproducing State power, sometimes challenging it, and reinventing other spaces for politics. Giraud suggests that defining the social actors involved in the definition of the 'public issue', and then involved in the treatment of this issue, helps understand the politics of scales (Giraud, 2012). By intervening, actors produce a scalar space, he says (*Ibid*.). An important question remains, to be addressed in the last subsection: do immigrant officials and agents influence this scalar space of integration politics differently?

3.1 Agency, meaningful interventions and politics

Ontological and epistemological accounts of agency, also debated in 'action theory', can be traced back to the Enlightenment debate — I think, therefore I am (Descartes 1637) —, and later on to a Kantian philosophical tradition, both endowing individuals with the capacity to make rational choices. In geography, the renewal of agency occurred in the early 1970s with the emergence of a 'humanistic geography', responding critically to the prominence of the positivist approaches that prevailed until the 1960s. Humanistic geographers, Buttimer, Duncan, Tuan, Ley, or Relph, all believe in man's capacity for thought and critical reflection on his acts (Adams *et al.*, 2001; D. Ley, 1981; David Ley & Samuels, 1978; Tuan, 1976). They emphasise the social construction of history and of collective memory. Indeed, Tuan argues: "People have history; [...]. History is not only the passage of events but their conscious reconstruction in group memory for current purposes" (Tuan, 1976, p. 272). This first orientation is crucial to studying immigration and integration, and it strongly impacts the politics of belonging at work in specific places, and the identification of an Other. The methodological implications of bringing back man's understanding of the world at the source of his actions are manifold. Most importantly, humanistic geographers suggest:

> Expressed belief and behaviour often conform, but they sometimes do not. Opportunity, for the humanist, lies in attempting to understand in depth the nature of beliefs, attitudes and concepts; the strength with which they are held; their inherent ambivalences and contradictions; and their effects, direct as well as indirect, on action. (*Ibid.,* p. 273)

Humanistic geographers are one group among social theorists who reaffirm the centrality of human agency, but they are not the only ones. In the following paragraphs, I will draw on contributions from other fields of social sciences. But all share a common understanding of

agency as the capacity of individuals to engage with their surroundings, across space and time, and intervene in a meaningful way to try and change the conditions of their life.

3.1.1 Defining agency

Emirbayer and Mirsche provide a comprehensive definition and propose “to reconceptualise human agency as a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented toward the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to conceptualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)” (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 963). Several remarks can be made on the basis of this definition. First, they see agency as a process of social engagement. By that, they mean that agency is relational — “agency *toward* something, by means of which actors enter into relationship with surrounding persons, places, meanings and events” (*Ibid*., p. 973). Actors engage in and disengage from different contextual environments and their orientation might change accordingly. In this work, their engagement with the various stakeholders as well as the beneficiaries of immigrant integration policies will be predominantly scrutinised, as well as the meanings of these interventions and policies.

Secondly, they acknowledge three temporal dimensions of agency. The first dimension is the iterational dimension of agency, i.e. its orientation toward the past through the mobilisation of pre-existing patterns or schemas. This dimension has probably been the most important focus of agency. Pierre Bourdieu has theorised the strategic mobilisation of preconscious expectations in accordance with the contingencies of particular empirical situations (*Ibid.*, p. 978). Another theorist concerned with the mutual constitution of agency and structure, Giddens, turns his attention to the activation of rules and resources or structures within social practices (*Ibid*.,). Emirbayer and Mische specify that habitual action is agentic, but largely unreflective and taken for granted. Nevertheless, “as actors encounter problematic situations requiring the exercise of imagination and judgment, they gain a reflective distance from received patterns [...]” (*Ibid.*, p. 973). Emirbayer and Mische list the main empirical studies conducted on this topic. Particularly, research on life course development conducted by Berteaux (1981), Elder (1985), O’Rand and Krecker (1990) and others “explores the connection between social structures and socio-psychological development, as manifested in the life trajectories resulting from particular intersections of biography and history” (*Ibid.*, p. 982). Those social agents I met during this research project mobilise various pre-existing patterns, from their personal life and their different professional experiences. They can also ground their acts in the collective memories of the different groups they belong to, whether they be national, transnational, local or even at the smaller scale of the peers and family. However, as they face specific problems, they may also

innovate and patterns may bifurcate. This leads me to the next dimension described by the two authors.

The projective dimension of agency, i.e. the one oriented toward the future, includes scopes of project, problem solving, experiment and 'changing the given'. Emirbayer and Mische argue that one dominant tone of projectivity is 'narrative construction', that is the "construction of narratives that locate future possibilities in relation to more or less coherent causal and temporal sequences" (*Ibid.*, p. 989). All social groups possess repertoires of stories, they say. This aspect is also crucial for my methodology in the sense that it posits narratives and collective narratives as important patterns on which the future is forecast.

The present dimension of agency, which they call the practical-evaluative dimension, has also led to empirical research, notably research on resistance, subversion and contention like the one conducted by James Scott or by Charles Tilly. In those cases, practical evaluation consists in watching for opportunities and mostly values improvisation. Other empirical works in the field of political decision-making and deliberation in publics have addressed this practical-evaluative dimension of agency.

Those clarifications, even though they assume the central role of agency of social actors in provoking and producing changes, still acknowledge the existence of an influencing environment providing meanings, collective narratives, for other people to interact with at certain times and in certain places. And indeed, Giddens's structuration theory maintains that structure and agency are mutually constitutive. Giddens asserts: "The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual action nor the existence of any form of societal totality, but social practices ordered across space and time" (Giddens, 1986, p. 2). Emirbayer and Mische add: "We might therefore speak of the *double constitution of agency and structure*: temporal-relational contexts support particular agentic orientations, which in turn constitute different structuring relationships of actors toward their environments" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 1004). Social theorists who bring human agency to the heart of social life, even though they acknowledge the influence of structure, emphasise the fact that individuals "attempt to live society instead of being passively lived by it" (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 3).

Ferrarotti argues that the object of sociology should be "the living substance of men and women in society, their memories and their life experiences; that is, history in the making" (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. xxix). 'Making history' has also be coined by Giddens as "the conjunction of a linear view

of time with the idea that, through expanding the knowledge of their past, agents can change their future" (Giddens, 1986, p. 202). Thus Ferrarotti believes:

> Human behaviour is inspired by instincts but also by the project, and is teleological. That is to say, it sets itself a goal, turns back critically on itself; it thus accumulates memories and on this basis of collective memory is able to formulate the meaning of man's own decisions and evaluate them. (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 7)

Those are precisely what interests me here: to which extent social agents, through their meaningful interventions, can change the course of history, even at a micro-level: i.e. a policy, a vision of immigration in the city, and the impact of this immigration on the urban landscape. How can I, in the context of a doctoral research, reconstitute the many dimensions that underlie decision-making processes from past experiences and collective patterns, to present judgements and future imagined possibilities?

3.1.2 A quick glance into methodology

The question I have just asked might well never be fully answered. However, I will attempt to briefly explain a first and fundamental proposal I attempted to follow during the data collection stage, and when using the data to write this thesis work. The proposal is the following: the collection of narratives by decision-makers, elaborated in a context of interaction with the interviewing researcher, when contextualised in space, time and in the collective patterns that interact in these places and times, can enlighten the making of political decisions.

Indeed, narratives are means of expression of the agentic processes underlying decision-making. Christine Delory-Momberger asserts:

> We never stop *biographying*, i.e. channelling our experience into orientated time schemes which mentally organise our moves, our behaviours, our actions, following a logic of narrative configuration. This biographying activity might be defined as a dimension of human thinking and acting which, in the form of *practical hermeneutics*, enables individuals, in the conditions of their socio-historical settings, to integrate, to structure, to interpret situations and events they live.[24] (Delory-Momberger, 2009, p. 30)

To understand human agency, she submits human experiences to stories and narratives. For her, "the narrative is the place where human existence *takes shape*, where it elaborates and experiments in the form of a story"[25] (*Ibid.*, p. 29). Delory-Momberger is one representative of a

[24] Translation of the author.
[25] Translation of the author.

growing trend in scholarship that redefines the role of biographical methods in research nowadays, usually to be found among social psychologists and sociologists.

The study conducted by William Isaac Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (1918, in Bessin, 2010) who tell the story of a Polish peasant migrating to the USA is usually referred to as the pioneer of biographical method. Several studies based on biographical materials by Chicago sociologists follow (*Ibid*.). Nevertheless, the soon-to-arrive positivist stance in social sciences was to put the collection of life stories to a halt (*Ibid*.). Studies on the biological methods were renewed in the 1960s with the works by Everett C. Hughes, Anselm Strauss or Barney Glaser (*Ibid*.). In France, Marc Bessin drew attention to the important role of Daniel Bertaux (1976)'s work in bringing back biographical methods. However, one more time, the relevance of this method was questioned, notably by Pierre Bourdieu (1986), who coined the term 'biographic illusion'[26] (*Ibid*.). However, that criticism worthfully included the relations with the researcher in the production of this material, as well as other power relations that participate in discourse control. From then on, the debate continued, and the illusion of objective life stories was replaced with the concept of narratives (*des histoires de vie aux récits de vie*) (*Ibid*.), which acknowledges the intervention of the storyteller, who bends information to explain his acts to himself, and to whom one listens. In this sense, I have collected data with special emphasis on biographies, but I have tried to situate the encounters within the broader stakes of the research (see annex 3 on joint research), within the broader relations of the interviewee with other actors, comparing the different narratives, as well as within the broader national and local contexts, as I have collected daily news articles from the national and local press, as well as through social networks.

Indeed, as Didier Demazière and Olivia Samuel argue, the spatial and political contextualisation of biographic performances is too often a superficial exercise in empirical research (Demazière & Samuel, 2010). Places inform agency. Indeed, Emirbayer and Mische and Delory-Momberger consider that the biographical activity is a process, oriented in time schemes, but also oriented in space, as space provides forms and meanings (Delory-Momberger, 2009, p. 49), and in relation to a social world.

The opposite is also true. Places are meetings of social relations. Therefore, they are constructed by people, through narratives: people are not passive recipients, they shape the places they live in; places are rendered meaningful by people — through their knowledge, their language, their artistic production (Escobar, 2001, p. 151). If places are nodes of multiple interactions, then places are crossed by multiple narratives that juxtapose (*Ibid*. p. 164).

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[26] Translation of the author.

Focusing on narratives can then open the way to analyse power-filled social relations, reconciling the political economic and cultural constructions of places. But whose narratives did I select? How does this selection influence the way the research is conducted?

3.2 Identification of social agents: the State, its elected and technocratic institutions, and the immigrants

If I have defined agency, I have not yet identified the social agents that are at the heart of my work. The scholarship that has focused on immigration and integration policies, bringing people back into the core of policymaking and policy implementation processes, has highlighted several categories of strategic actors: 1) elected politicians (see for instance works by Gary Freeman, Peter Schuck or Kristin Good, who have emphasised the economic benefits of immigration envisioned by politicians;[27] works by Friedmann and Lehrer in Frankfurt, or by Michal Alexander in Tel Aviv, who all show that politicians are driven by the increased attention for 'universalistic rights',[28] rather than citizenship rights; and works by Good, Myrte Hoekstra,

[27] When it comes to immigration policies, several theorists have shed light on the 'gap' which makes it possible that more immigrants enter receiving countries every year. For them, the economic argument dominates against a hostile public opinion to immigration. Gary Freeman's article *Modes of Immigration Politics in Liberal Democratic States* is often considered the cornerstone of immigration politics and policies' study. Freeman argues that, in-between election times, politicians are influenced by pro-immigration lobbies, mostly representing employers, thus designing looser immigration policies than what they promised to a more anti-immigration public opinion when elected (Freeman, 1995). A similar argument was made later by Peter Schuck: organisations which benefit more from immigration (employers, pro-immigration organisations) are better organised and lobby to politicians, while the ones which experience more the costs of immigration (workers) are not organised and do not influence politics (Schuck, 2007). James Hollifield's volume *Immigrants, Markets and States* contributes to this argument, complementing it with a more detailed and balanced analysis, claiming: "The attraction of markets (including the demand for cheap labour) and the protection given to aliens in right-based regimes taken together explain the rise in immigration and its persistence in the face of economic crises, restrictionist policies, and nationalist (anti-immigrant) political movements" (Hollifield, 1992, p. 216). More practically, Kristin Good's work on Toronto and Vancouver metropolitan areas in Canada shows a relatively current use of the relations between immigration and economic growth: specifically, Vancouver's greater responsiveness to immigrants is clearly identified with a 'proactive economic-development regime' (Good, 2009, p. 144). Good also shows that municipalities find it easier to raise funds from foundations for clear immigration/economic growth initiatives (*Ibid.*).

[28] In fact, both James Hollifield and Yasemin Soysal have shown that a more universalistic view of rights has an impact on immigration and integration policies. Soysal argues that a more universal concept of citizenship has unfolded, based on universal personhood. This new postnational model means that incorporation into a system of membership rights does not inevitably require incorporation into the national collectivity. If the transformation of national rights into more universalistic entitlements including non-citizens undermines the categorical dichotomies patterned after the national citizenship model — more particularly Marshall's model (1964) —, the debate over how well they adjust and their cultural otherness intensify. And indeed, in the last chapter of her book *Limits of Citizenship*, Soysal argues that universalistic status of personhood and post national membership coexist with assertive national identities and intense ethnic struggles (Soysal, 1994, p. 135). Universal personhood does not mean that nation-state boundaries are fluid, but that that they are characterised by "increasing interdependency and connectedness, intensified world-level interaction and organizing, and the emergence of transnational political structures, which altogether confound and complicate nation-state sovereignty and jurisdiction"

Hilary Sanders or Alexandre Tandé[29] focusing on a desire from politicians to increase 'diversity' in their city); 2) institutions and their staff (see for instance Virginie Guiraudon, who highlights the role of European technocrats and the decision processes in the European institutions in the formation of immigration policies, or Christina Boswell, who highlights the role of institutions dealing with immigrants in legitimising the State); and 3) what I will call the civil society, which includes social movements, grassroots organisations but also national and transnational organisations that constantly challenge and shape immigration politics, although they are not themselves elected or designated by the State (see for instance Monica Varsanyi (2008) and Davide Gnes (2016) in the US, or Céline Cantat (2015) in Europe).

Here, I will focus primarily on the first two categories, and more specifically at city level. In the first subsection, I will explain more in-depth why I chose to focus on local officials in municipalities. In the second one, I chose to look at the institutions at large — which have a culture, a language and norms of their own — as well as at their staff. Municipal agents, ministry staff or workers in non-governmental organisations who work toward the settlement of immigrants are not elected, but are hired as professional technocrats. They can be at odds with the politicians, but they can also serve similar interests. Finally, I will dedicate a paragraph on the specificities of immigrant officials and immigrant workers, who make up a majority of the interviewees. Indeed, three of the four mayors immigrated to Israel, as well as all interviewed deputy mayors and/or municipal councillors. Among municipal agents dealing with immigration issues, a large majority were themselves immigrants, particularly in the municipal department of immigration and integration.

3.2.1 Local officials

The main argument advanced to explain the devolution of integration policies to local policymakers is that the city level is the 'pragmatic level'. For example, a the Conference on Migrants and Cities organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on 26 & 27 October 2015, its director general William Swing asserts that "Mayors get it", therefore reinforcing the belief that local politicians offer the most pragmatic responses (Ahouga, 2015). As immigrants live in cities, city officials should know best how to address their needs. This belief is not unique to international organisations like the IOM. However, my argument is distinct. I do not believe that mayors or other local officials are more pragmatic. My point is that, in a context

(*Ibid*., p144). For instance, sending countries hold claims vis-à-vis their emigrants. Also, Soysal witnesses a proliferation of transnational arrangements, grounded in human rights discourse (*Ibid*., p145-151).

[29] CityDiv project at the Max Planck Institute in Germany collects data among French and German large cities to analyse their understanding of diversity and its impact on economic development, but preliminary results show that, even though the benefits are acknowledged, measures are still very limited (Tandé, 2015).

of rescaling of power, with decentralisation being one phenomenon informing this rescaling, local officials inherit a new responsibility to carry out programmes emerging from national policies, as well as a responsibility to design city policies. Between a national policy frame and its actual implementation in the city, there is room for manoeuvre, or a 'room for interpretation' (Jørgensen, 2012, p. 250). It is this local reinterpretation that I will be addressing.

And indeed, among scholars looking at immigration policies, the local leadership is what Giovanna Zincone calls a 'pilot of policy change' (Zincone *et al.*, 2011, p. 389): a new leadership with a strong vision — may it be inclusive or exclusionary — will have an impact on immigration and integration policies. She warns the readers that politicians are constrained by electoral cycles, changes in political parties' and coalitions. In that context, the period during which mayors and their councillors are in office is important. The political system also has a profound effect, and it is not totally surprising that what cities have witnessed the formation of immigration policies, against national frames, should all be located in federal countries, such as the US, Germany, Switzerland or Spain, where regions are granted autonomy in many fields that govern social life.

Here, what is interesting is this idea of a vision: local officials that are convinced of the necessity to act toward immigration issues will be actors. Indeed, Di Meo, who focuses on the French territorial system of government, claims that there are many actors that constitute the government of local territories: mayors and their deputies, departmental and regional council members, members of parliament and senators, but also entrepreneurs and heads of large non-governmental organisations (Di Meo, 2008, p. 6) — what I have called governance. Nevertheless, "the status of actors falls within a position, a behaviour and a will, an intentionality associated with a more or less strategic position within the territorial complex, at different scales, rather than a clearly defined and established function" [30] (*Ibid.*).

The mobilisation of the concept of agency is fundamental when addressing the role of individuals who are elected or appointed to introduce changes — or even to maintain continuity and avoid major disruptions — in a larger community. For the local politicians, the municipal agents or other stakeholders I interviewed during fieldwork, the habitual patterns they base their action on, the practical evaluation they conduct at the moment of taking decisions, the future projects they built are not only for themselves. Their interests conflate with the interests of their institution, and of their community. Commenting on the development of individual autonomy in a context of enhanced complexity of roles, Emirbayer and Mirsche quote the sociologist Rose Laub Coser who argues that "actors who are located in more complex relational

[30] Translation of the author.

settings must correspondingly learn to take a wider variety of factors into account […]" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 1007). Drawing on Laub Coser, Emirbayer and Mische suggest: "Actors who are positioned at the intersection of multiple temporal-relational contexts can develop greater capacities for creative and critical intervention" (*Ibid.*).

Perhaps it is not very different from the multiple roles that we endorse when being a family member, working in a company, coaching a sports team or volunteering in a local association. However, the impact of these 'people in government''s actions on many 'institutions' — in the broad sense of the term — can be great: for instance, choosing the contents displayed in the local museum, or the civic activities organised for school, or, in the specific case of this project, deciding upon a policy for the accommodation of newcomers, all these will influence the collective representation of the city, even, or even more, when those activities encounter resistance and counter-discourses among the residents.

Those interventions will 'make sense' of particular issues raised in the public domain. In this sense, an actor involved in a particular public issue, whether he be a city councillor, the director of a department designing a working procedure, the municipal agent in charge of operating this procedure and providing his director with feedback and monitoring, all will make sense of what they see through their own experience, as well as through the context in which they are located. But they can also draw from other contexts in which they encountered similar issues. The result of those confrontations of interpretations and of meaningful interventions amount to institutionalisation of values, of a working method, of a know-how…

Various works have put the mayors and councillors at the centre of policymaking processes. Documenting the creation of a department for multicultural affairs in Frankfurt in Germany in the early 1990s, Friedmann and Lehrer tell the story of Frankfurt's local government — made up of a social democrat/green coalition — concerned with two aspects of multiculturalism: dealing with the reality of a large and diverse immigrant population entitled to rights independent of their status (housing, public services); but also working toward implementing of a transformative ideal of 'mutual adaptation' (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997). To this end, their political objectives range from fighting against racism to improving civil and political participation of migrants. Frankfurt initiated one of the first experiences of local citizenship with the election of a municipal foreign resident advisory board. The goal set by the political party member in charge of this initiative — Daniel Cohn-Bendit, later to be Member of European Parliament— was to ultimately influence the national agenda toward immigration and integration.

Judith Goode and Hilary Sanders have worked on the immigration policies of Philadelphia in the US (Sanders, 2015; Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, pp. 143–165). Analysing the formulation of an immigrant policy in Philadelphia, Sanders emphasizes the role of its mayor Michael Nutter in office from 2008 to early 2016, himself an Afro-American.

Another example is the case of Tel Aviv mayoral policy, documented mainly by Michael Alexander, as well as Rebecca Raijman, Adriana Kemp or Izhak Schnell. Tel Aviv initiated a municipal-funded project for its non-Jewish immigrant populations — Messila —, therefore dramatically distancing itself from the exclusionary immigration policy of Israel. Drawing on his negotiating power as mayor of the economic capital of the country, Ron Huldai initiated the only clear policy linked to public service delivery in the country (Raijman & Kemp, 2002; Alexander, 2003; Schnell, 2013).

Enlightening though those cases might be, they have not gone as far as to explain why these mayors and municipal council members — Daniel Cohn Bendit, Michael Nutter or Ron Huldai — had the motivation to bring these issues on the local agenda.

3.2.2 Institutions and their staff

It is very important to understand that when talking about institutions, there are in fact two types of actors: institutions proper, and the people hosted by those institutions. In that sense, there are two different kinds of analyses to be carried out. On the one hand, an analysis focusing on the culture and the discourses of the institution (for instance the municipality) dealing with immigrant integration. Indeed, "the anthropologist is interested in the way in which, from practices and discourses of its representatives and agents, the institution builds its territory, performs activities, and depending on the ideas it generates, defines a political space"[31] (Bellier, 1997). It is possible to find an institutional discourse, as it will be the 'authorised discourse',[32] the one that is stabilised and free of conflict (Krieg-Planque & Oger, 2010). This discourse might be recurrent among interviewees of a same institution, and it will be the one brought about by the institution's spokesperson, or lodged in symbolic sub-institutions, like the municipal museum. On the other hand, leaders and agents also manoeuvre outside of the institutional framework and perform independently: discretionary practices of street-level bureaucrats have been at the centre of several works.

Guiraudon's article "The constitution of a European immigration policy domain: a political sociology approach" analyses the logics of immigration policymaking in European institutions

[31] Translation of the author.
[32] Translation of the author.

(Guiraudon (2001) reprinted in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, pp. 141–164). Guiraudon argues that immigration policymaking follows a three-step dynamics: First, "a group of actors vie to become the legitimate policy interlocutors against other similar groups"; next, actors suggest a "preformatted set of solutions depending on their expertise"; lastly, actors succeed in validating a policy "by momentously seizing upon an emergent broader policy frame" (*Ibid*., p. 158). In this case therefore, she believes that experts employed by the commission, outside of democratic elections, are policymakers.

Boswell also claims that immigration and integration policies are not the result of a political debate by democratically elected representatives, but a field exploited by institutions, non-elected but rather technocratic. Boswell answers the question "Theorizing migration policy: is there a third way?" by showing that the main immigration policymakers are institutions, seeking for legitimacy, which she defines as a "function of the computability of political actions and practices with the expectations and values of a particular public (Deutsh, 1970)" (Boswell, 2007). This quest for legitimacy involves four aspects: security, accumulation, fairness and institutional legitimacy, all of which are at odds with immigration issues. Depending on the positioning of the institutions on this question, Boswell identifies five types of policy responses. Similar to Guiraudon, she recognises the importance of experts in justifying policies (Boswell, 2008).

The benefits of such a policymaking method are that it is less liable to be affected by an anti-immigrant public opinion. Policymaking behind closed doors seems to foster the formation of more liberal policies toward immigrants (Bonjour, 2011). However, by introducing subjectivities, institutional agents can also interpret policies. Several works inform discretionary practices in institutions: Françoise De Barros looked into archives in French towns to see how categories of foreigners were formed a century ago (Barros, 2008). Living in an absorption centre for Jewish Ethiopian immigrants in Israel in the 1980s, Esther Hertzog provided an ethnographic account of street-level bureaucrats and integration policies (Hertzog, 1999). Maria Bruquetas-Callejo also accounted for discretionary practices when it comes to immigrants' access to welfare systems (Bruquetas-Callejo in Heelsum & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2013, pp. 21–33).

As mentioned before, the methodological choice of focusing on city politics, rather than national politics, arose during an on-going debate to determine whether national policies are symbolic, and object to a local interpretation which generates variations among cities; or whether cities adopt their own symbolic policies which they — sometimes — translate into action plans. In his study of four Danish cities, Martin Jørgensen argues that this room for interpretation is what

constitutes a Political Opportunity Structure. Symbolic policies at national level find themselves up against institutional logics at local level (Jørgensen, 2012). Depending on the Political Opportunity Structure, he found out that two cities were more accommodating than what the national policy provides, and two were less so. The three works I just mentioned, which focus on discretionary practices, are all located at city level.

Responses given by institutions and their actors also evolve. With time, agents, street-level bureaucrats and professionals build competencies, by participating in conferences, seminars or other informative events (Boswell, 2008), by being involved in transnational networks where experiences are shared (Flamant, 2014; Jørgensen, 2012; Leitner in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008, pp. 236–255).

The benefit of analysing immigration and integration policies through the agents is that it makes the researcher familiar with the more direct actions implemented in the city (and therefore in a better position to compare them with political discourses). Following the different domains of action mentioned by Rinus Penninx (Penninx *et al.*, 2004; Heelsum & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2013; Penninx, 2013), interventions can take place to improve the legal-political dimension,[33] the socio-economic dimension[34] and the cultural-religious dimension.[35]

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[33] The legal-political dimension encompasses the establishment of representative structures of the different immigrant groups present in the city, their participation in local elections, irrespective of their legal status, their participation in policymaking; but also initiatives linked to local citizenship. Friedmann and Lehrer in Germany, Good in Canada, and other studies in the USA and in the Netherlands have documented the establishment of local government-led agencies aiming at fostering representation at local levels, especially for immigrants whose status prevents them from participating in local elections (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997; Good, 2009). The participation of immigrants in policymaking is usually studied in terms of non-participation: it is considered that representatives of the receiving society deal with immigrant policymaking (Penninx, Kraal, Martiniello, & Vertovec, 2004, pp. 1–16). The most advanced policy is the issuing of documentation linked to a 'local citizenship', permitting full access to local public services, irrespective of legal status. Several cities in the United States have initiated such local citizenship (de Graauw, 2013).

[34] The socio-economic dimension includes access to welfare, actions aiming at providing similar education opportunities for all, access to decent employment, or entrepreneurship programs. Bruquetas-Callejo has documented the access of immigrants to the Spanish welfare system, showing the difficulty to provide continuous and decent access to services, due to decentralisation, discretionary practices of street-level bureaucrats and outsourcing to non-governmental organisations (Heelsum & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2013, pp. 21–35). Access to employment and entrepreneurship is a much explored field. I can briefly mention Noah Lewin Epstein et al who studied the different institutional settings determining access to employment in Israel and in Canada (Lewin-Epstein, Semyonov, Kogan, & Wanner, 2003), as well as the comparative study by Eran Razin who shows the differential participation of immigrants in entrepreneurship, and policies set for this objective, in Israel, Canada and the United States (Razin, 1990). There has been renewed interest in the role of immigrants in the local economy (see for instance in New York and Amsterdam (Foner, 2014) and in urban regeneration in particular (see in Philadelphia (Sanders, 2015; Goode in Schiller & Caglar, 2012), and in the Hague (Santocki in Heelsum & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2013) .

[35] The cultural-religious dimension comprises actions to recognise the artistic production of immigrants, support to festivals or cultural events, actions to increase mutual respect when it comes to religious

Examining the actual delivery of public services helps assess the extent to which symbolic policies are translated into actual items in the local government's budget and in its human resources. The reverse process is also possible, particularly in my work. In fact, mid-sized cities hardly publish immigration and integration policy papers: assessing the available services can inform the overall immigrant policy. However, I should keep in mind that symbolic policies are usually set by politicians, who follow a particular calendar. Agents implement programmes and actions. Their time constraint is different.

3.2.3 Immigrant officials and agents

The influence of immigrant policymakers on policies has been generally overlooked and a large proportion of this work should bring light to the effect of immigrants' participation in policymaking. At most, the role of immigrant representatives is identified as a majority/ minority relation where immigrants are marginal to policymaking (Penninx *et al.*, 2004, pp. 1–16; Penninx, 2013). A crosscutting topic of my thesis is therefore to understand the extent to which the participation of immigrants in the political institutions has modified the way immigrant and integration is defined as a public issue in Israel. I have primarily focused on the political and bureaucratic institutions in the city, although I acknowledge that immigrants can be involved through other forms of political activities.

Good interviews immigrant representatives in councils in Canadian cities. An important result of her research is a typology of policy responses based on immigrant participation in local governance. "In [her] study, municipal responsiveness to immigrants and ethnocultural minorities refers to *whether municipalities have adapted their services and governance structures to facilitate immigrant and ethnocultural-minority access to and participation in local governance*" (Good, 2009, p. 48). Among the different municipal multiculturalist policies she identifies, she mentions the establishment of "a separate unit of government to manage diversity and organisational change" or the possibility for immigrants to "enter council deliberations on policy matters" (*Ibid.*, p. 53).

The integration of ethnic minorities, immigrant populations and more generally vulnerable communities has been a major concern of urban planning. Dominated by the Chicago School of thought, integration has been largely understood as a result of intercontact with other social groups. Therefore, there has been persistent belief that dispersion is key to integration (Ellis, 2006) (or that integration is a matter of de-segregation (Ruiz-Tagle, 2013b)). Nevertheless,

beliefs and practices as well as support to arrange venue and religious buildings; and more. Eltje Bos has explored the government support toward immigrant art in the Netherlands (Heelsum & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2013, pp. 123–141).

there are many accounts proving that concentration means power (Ellis, 2006; Penninx *et al.*, 2004, pp. 1–16): in cities where large immigrant communities reside, their voices are better relayed. Concentration means access to politics, but it can also increase pressure to respond and provide access to welfare, education, employment and more. In the volume edited by Penninx et al, Romain Garbaye compares political participation in Birmingham (UK), Lille and Roubaix (France). Each city has immigrant local politicians on the council; nevertheless, depending on the political parties as well as previous community organisations, their participation as well as the type of power[36] they have differ. In Birmingham, the Labour party has allowed the elections of representatives from boroughs with high immigrant concentration. In Lille, immigrants occupy 'token' positions, as the socialist party does not facilitate their entry into the municipal council; while in Roubaix where political parties are weak and community organisations predominate, the entry of immigrant representatives has been easier (Garbaye in Penninx *et al.*, 2004, pp. 39–56). Assessing the municipal electoral campaign and the promotion of 'diverse' candidates in a suburban town in France in 2008, Marie Cartier et al show similar results (Cartier *et al.*, 2010). In the latter two cases, however, immigrants grew up in receiving countries, or even are second-generation immigrants (provided such a reality does exist). The participation of non-citizens usually occurs through parallel structures (for instance, the constitution of immigrant committees in Canada, the Netherlands or Germany, recognised by the municipalities but not constituent of the council).

Assessing the participation of immigrants in council deliberations, in policymaking, and then in their implementation could bring to light new aspects of the formation of immigration and integration policies. Moreover, analysing the extent to which immigrant politicians have a voice, and have the capacity to mobilise their experience and introduce changes in the political treatment of integration is also a measure of democracy, of the possibility to participate,[37] not as a simple representative bringing in voters, but as part of the polity.

[36] Obviously, these examples are locally anchored. The historical development of political participation, through grassroots organisations, church associations, and formal political participation is unique. Lille and Roubaix for instance are located quite close to each other but have developed two very different patterns of immigrant political participation (Garbaye in Penninx *et al.*, 2004, pp. 39–56).

[37] Giving an account of Nancy Fraser's participation theory, Estelle Ferrarese exposes Fraser's definition of participation. "A measure or a society is fair to the extent that it makes participation possible for all members, that it ensures a parity of participation in the construction of institutionalized value patterns, in processes of deliberation about the rules of redistribution; and more generally, in all forms of social interaction" (Ferrarese, 2015, p. 5). Social justice therefore means parity in participation. But participation is not a simple expression of ones' needs or opinion. "The participation the individual is entitled to is a matter of taking-part in the construction of the world, of cultural values, of norms, of two-way relations, of the political community, and so on" (*Ibid.*, p. 6).

4 To govern or to be governed?

The main question I address, through the analysis of the specific field of immigrant integration policy, is: do mid-sized cities located at the margin of capitalist economic networks **govern** the social life of the places they administer, or are they **being governed**? The autonomy of their governance is, I assume, relative, in a context of overlapping, crosscutting, unbounded and fluid scales. However, challenging their autonomy and their capacity to address immigration, to reinterpret a national policy and adapt it to what they define as their local needs and interests, represent an important step to recognise the purposive agents who organise the social life of these cities. In this context, five specific questions provide a frame on which this thesis is organised:

- To what extent can an enquiry 'at the margin' provide the researcher with the possibility to identify "practices, identities and autonomies" (Carrier & Demazière, 2012, p. 141) that either reproduce or produce specific scalar spaces of politics?
- Is immigration considered a possible lever for city economic development and social change? Is there a positive correlation between cities that are engaged in actions aiming at rescaling their development strategy and cities that proactively address immigration issues?
- Do city officials' own immigration experiences affect the immigration discourse brought to the council and the public? If so, what are the discursive performances I attended, and how do they differ from other discourses on immigration and/or immigrant integration?
- What is the immigrant-integration-narrative framing at work and how do these narratives impact the formulation of immigration integration as an issue for public action?
- How do the strategies deployed by social actors involved in immigration and integration policy formulation and implementation transform the urban governance that targets specifically this policy domain into a multiscalar and fragmented political space?

I elaborate briefly on these questions, each one them corresponding to a chapter of this volume.

4.1 Conducting an inquiry 'at the margin' provides a rich angle to address State rescaling processes

At several points of this chapter, I have deplored the fact that social theorists working on issues of immigration, development and cities have discarded a large number of the urban places that constitute our world. Those small and mid-sized cities, located away from political and economic centres and networks, are in fact urban, even though they do not fit the archetype of the large

metropolitan areas that have been a central focus of urban studies or of immigration studies. Through this doctoral project, I therefore hope to make a modest contribution to the renewed research field of 'ordinary cities'.

Doing so, I do not mean that small cities provide a similar urban experience than global cities. I acknowledge the lack of resources due to their size or their location away from subnational strategic spaces. However, their 'peripherality' (marginality or downscaled position) is usually associated with a perceived reduced room for manoeuvre. They are seen as left behind, forced to play a "punitive game of catching-up" (Robinson, 2006, p. 6). I actually believe that even remote small cities have the ability to produce complex modes of governance, making them as sensitive objects of study as large cities (Carrier & Demazière, 2012, p. 141).

In that theoretical context, my question is: to what extent does an enquiry 'at the margin' provide the researcher with the possibility to identify "practices, identities and autonomies" (Carrier & Demazière, 2012, p. 141) that either reproduce or produce specific scalar spaces of politics? In that sense, as different scales collide in a place — the place being what Schnell (2007) has called a hologram —, those peripheral places could to some extent inform the national and its mechanisms of reproduction and/or contestation.

The following chapter is an attempt to answer this question. It focuses on the Israeli experience of immigration and integration and the evolution of its politics. It underlines more particularly the powerful relations between immigration and the production of places — first by the State and its actors, and then the reproduction and production of places by their inhabitants. The State of Israel has established immigrant settlements, generally known as 'development towns' (or 'new towns', to adopt an international planning lexicon, therefore referring to a post-war planning and architectural movement). Those places have been, up till today, places of difference. Throughout the years, they have been maintained at a geographical, political, economical and social frontier, because of the very spatial organisation of space and of immigration settlement. Their geographical position at the borders meant that they were deeply affected by the conflicts in Israel and at its border. Their political and socioeconomic position, away from the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv axis, but also away from the networks constituted between rural settlements (notably *Kibbutzim*) and the centre, have reinforced their status of 'trapped' communities, between a European Ashkenazi hegemony and a socially constructed Arab enemy (Yiftachel & Tzfadia, 2004; Yiftachel, 2000; Tzfadia, 2007; Tzfadia & Yacobi, 2007, 2011).

Nevertheless, it is this entrapment that I aim at deconstructing. As I have argued, drawing on Scott's theoretical models, residents of peripheral places constantly mean to resemble the

hegemony, while at the same time challenging it. Political dissidence always exists, even in marginality. Acknowledging the power of people located in these relegated places to produce changes, and to influence the on-going transformations of statehood, is a first step out of their marginality.

4.2 Immigration issues participate in the rescaling of city development strategies

The economic benefits and costs associated with immigration have been studied from different angles: in receiving countries, economists have produced a large body of knowledge on the economic impact of immigrants on the labour market, on wages and on the national insurance scheme for instance, as well as on entrepreneurship; while other fields of social sciences have focused more on the measures of labour market and employment integration of new immigrants. In sending countries, the main focus has been on the circulation of human, financial and social resources, through immigrants and their networks that impact the economy of origin areas. Nevertheless, those fields of studies have not provided me with a relevant framework to understand the motives to design immigration policies in receiving areas. This is why, all along this chapter, I have turned to literature concerned with the rescaling of power toward subnational sites, particularly for economic growth purpose, on the one hand, and literature concerned with place and placemaking on the other hand.

I wonder if, in a context of 'interlocality competition' — over State resources, private investments and residents (whether they be talents, cheap labour, residents who consume or residents who invest) —, the cities I examine envision immigration as a possible resource. Indeed, immigrants have been described in the literature as agents of economic change, but also of social change, associated with an increased use of the rather vague notion of 'diversity'. In this constellation, immigrants are:

> active agents in the neoliberal transformations of the cities: (1) as part of the labour force upon which cities build their competitiveness; [...]; (3) as agents of neoliberal urban restructuring who contribute to or contest the changing status and positioning of neighbourhoods and cities; (4) by facilitating privatisation and neoliberal subjectivities [...]. (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 12)

If I look more particularly at decaying cities, immigrants have been considered potential actors for urban regeneration, and a labour force in regions that suffer from out-migration. Indeed, following a belief that placemaking is a tool that fosters development, certain cities have engaged in activities to reposition themselves, writing new narratives of diversity, promoting

immigrant-friendly services, or producing discourses aiming at reducing the perceived distance to economic centres.

Examining four mid-sized cities located at the borders of Israel, populated with a large immigrant population, my question is: to what extent is immigration considered a possible lever for city economic development and social change? Is there a positive correlation between cities that are engaged in actions aiming at rescaling their development strategy and cities that proactively address immigration issues? This first chapter of the second part of this work thus addresses the entanglement between immigration and socioeconomic development, an overall motive found in most interviews.

In this chapter, the motives leading to consider immigration as a dimension of the city's positioning in national and transnational political and socioeconomic networks are here dominated by 'place' issues: bringing the city 'closer' to the centre, redeploying everyday life and the practices associated to it, and altering the meanings and identities in the place. The next question also addresses the motives of the city engagement in immigration issues, but it challenges the actors that inhabit these places and their narratives.

4.3 Local leaders' belief in the potential of immigration to drive development impact the production of scales

Undeniably, there are two ways of understanding policymaking: through the projected outcome of a policy on the social life and the place/territory it targets (what I have described in the previous paragraph), and through the people who came up with this projection, based on their own understanding of the issue they examine. Moreover, mapping the institutional actors that should be relevant to policymaking is not sufficient. As Di Meo has suggested, an actor becomes such only if he or she acts upon an issue. My concern is thus to find out why a person becomes an actor and how he/she positively intervenes in order to form a policy and to implement it.

Here, I have developed the conceptual framework that brings agency at the centre of scale and place production. Transformations of power occur through the interventions of actors located at different scalar fixes, who induce scalar flux or rescaling processes. My main hypothesis is that, through language, through their discursive performance, the storytelling of their immigration experience, strategic social actors take an active part in designing the collective patterns of immigration narratives (although they are not necessarily representatives of these experiences).

In fact, agency is a social engagement, a conscious reconstruction of events that affect group memories. 'Biographisation' is an activity that is at the basis of the human existence itself. No place, no social group, no people exist without language, and therefore without stories (of course, narratives is not the only means through which experience is analysed. Urban theorists for instance have intensively studied the urban practices of city dwellers, from walking to affecting the physical aspects of buildings, public spaces and more). Even though these narratives are to be contextualised in collective patterns, time and space, they do have a capacity to inform as much as to produce.

Throughout this doctoral work, I seized the opportunity to hear from the ones that experienced immigration first-hand, and whose narratives become public. I therefore assume that their stories set the political frames that regulate immigration experiences. Hence my question: do the city officials' own immigration experience affect the immigration discourse brought to the council and the public? If so, what are the discursive performances I have attended, and how do they differ from other discourses on immigration and/or immigrant integration?

The second chapter of the second part draws on the biographical performances of selected immigrant local elected officials. I was a main recipient of the life stories they reconstitute and tell to the public. But I also had the opportunity to compare these performances with other texts and third-party accounts on their lives. I assume that immigrants who have made it to a public office will adopt a rather conservative approach of immigration, where they will support more easily values of self-reliance, at least when it comes to economic integration. Nevertheless, I also believe that they might help foster a multicultural approach to immigrant integration, at least when it comes to their sociocultural identities and practices.

4.4 As local leaders define integration, they influence the dimension and scale of the transformation of immigrants' into full-fledged members of their society

Through the biographical method, I have made a first step towards understanding the normative framing of immigration and integration policies. Indeed, policymaking raises various questions: what does one want the consequences of integration to be? Through which concrete actions can those consequences be achieved? In the first chapter of the third part of this work, I will be basing my argument on all the encounters I elicited during fieldwork.

That chapter will again put a great emphasis on language practices. In the previous sections, I have repeatedly mentioned the article edited by Friedmann and Lehrer, exploring the

establishment of a multicultural policy in Frankfurt in the early 1990s. The authors framed the analysis of the policy as a 'symbolic policy', which corresponds to 'communicative action', as defined by the Frankfurt-born philosopher Habermas. To defend what has been depicted as a purposeless policy, they argue: "a symbolic politics aimed at creating a multicultural city in which people can live peacefully with each other at close range therefore seems an entirely appropriate response" (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997). Symbolic policies refer to what Alexander (2004) calls 'attitudes' or 'assumptions' toward immigrants, and the declarations, policy papers and other slogans it might encompass. Its 'communicative' effect might be positive, especially to achieve cultural transformation of the receiving society (although the conditions of this process, and the results they aim at like lower racism and discrimination are blurry).

Here, I do not so much defend the possibility for public declarations, policy papers, or in the case of this research, storytelling and narratives, to have an impact on the cultural transformation of the places I analyse. However, I do believe that these communicative actions have an impact on the formulation of immigration and integration as public issues, and objects of public actions. By staging their own integration experiences, and by defining how they conceive of immigrant integration, interviewees participate in the normative framing of immigrant integration. This is not new, and I have cited several works that have explored the formation of an immigration issue, before it was transformed into policy. However, I ask: does this normative political process differ when immigrants are included in deliberation? Or in other words, what is the immigrant integration narrative framing at work and how do these narratives impact the formulation of immigration integration as an issue of public action? Moreover, contextualising narratives, does this normative political process differ when the places under scrutiny have a long-standing history of immigrant settlement?

Comparing the various definitions found with definitions of immigrant integration found in the literature (see also annex 3 on 'integration') can shed some light on the production of meanings and the consequent possible interventions at the city level, and more generally the impact of these transformations of immigrant integration.

4.5 Immigration and integration issues become public actions and create a multiscalar governance

The last chapter of this volume is an attempt to understand the institutional and organisational features of the local governance of immigration and integration in each city. I have claimed that I focus on the local scale, as it provides me with methodological frame of observation; but when it comes to analysis, I adopt a fluid and unbounded approach of scale to assess the socio-political

space. Actors located at multiple scales occupy this space. The analysis therefore focuses on grasping the "upwards, downwards and transversals links" (Brenner, 2004, p. 10), and identifying the endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors that cross the places for which they intend to form policies (Di Meo, 2008, pp. 6–7), more particularly immigration and integration policies.

Apart from identifying the actors, the main task is to understand the connections, the cooperation relations or the conflicts between them. It makes the reconstitution of the transformations of power possible. At the time of observation, I have the option to unveil scalar fixes, but at the same time, the interviewees inform scalar processes.

That last chapter is based on the interviews that were conducted in the four cities. For each interview, I have identified the stakeholders that are mentioned, and the context of their identification by the interviewee. The programmes and activities conducted by each stakeholder are equally identified and mapped. Through the institutional and organisational features of the immigration and integration policy domain, I can get a more concrete image of policy implementation.

Additionally, mapping the actors, the relations between them and their 'location' in multiscalar governance, is a possible way to analyse the transformations of statehood. More particularly, it can show complexity in mid-sized cities that are usually seen as dependent on the central administration, for finance, planning and more. Hence my question: how do the strategies deployed by social actors involved in immigration and integration policy formulation and implementation transform the urban governance that specifically targets this policy domain in a multiscalar and fragmented political space?

Conclusions

In this first section, my purpose was to lay the theoretical framework of this doctoral dissertation. The core proposal of it could be summed in this way: actors, taking part in the local governance of immigration and integration, based on the history of the place and their own (biographical) motivations, make sense of immigration and integration issues, form policies to address them and therefore actively participate in the production and reproduction of scalar processes.

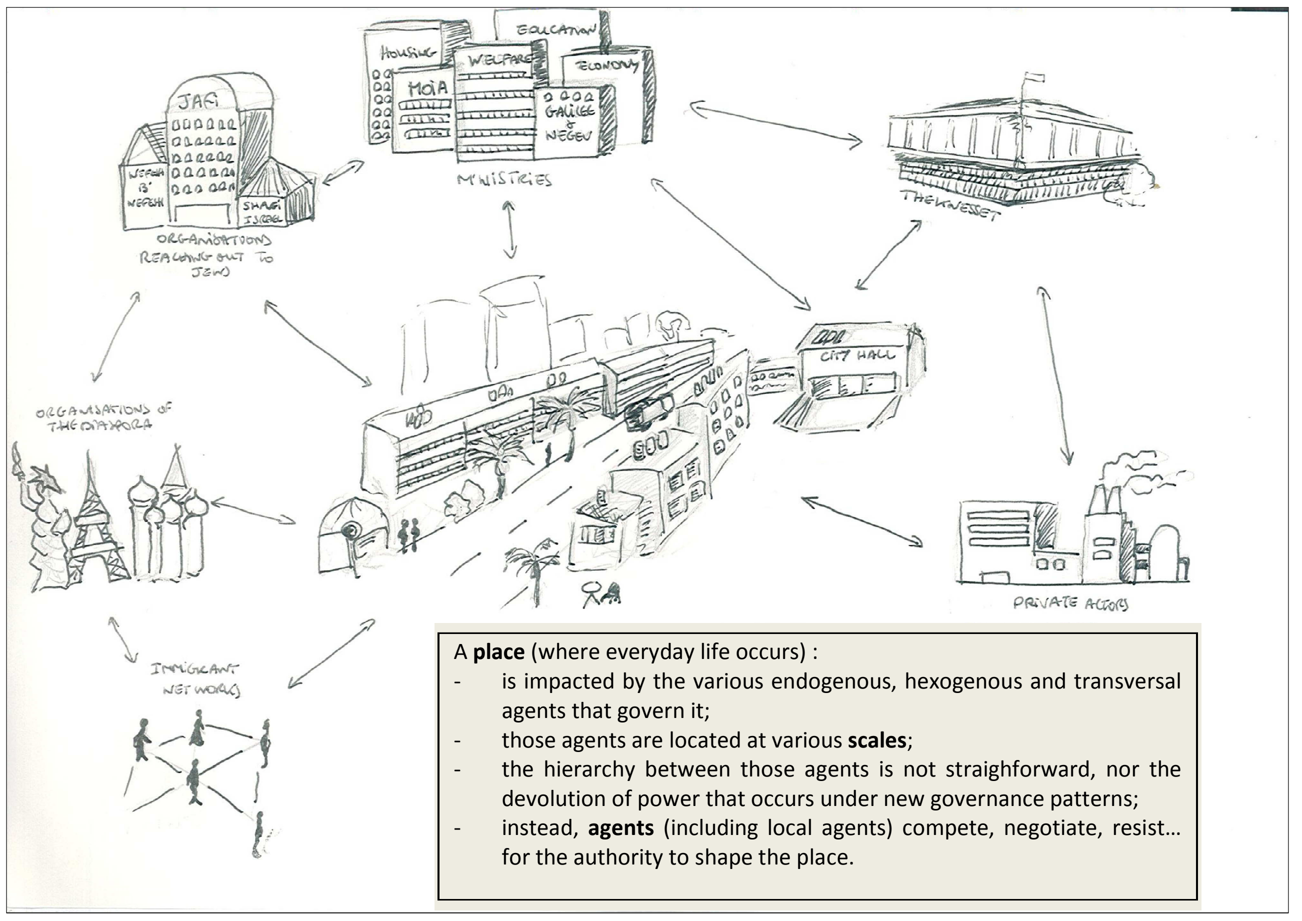

Figure 2.2. Conceptual framework: a dialectic between place, scale and agency. Realised by Amandine Desille

Scalar processes, I have argued, are process of transformations — from scalar fixes to scalar flows — of State power, authority and responsibility, not fixed in a bounded space. In that sense, addressing immigration and integration issues through scales makes it possible to methodologically isolate a certain spatial level for the purpose of the enquiry, while at the same time offering the possibility to capture the multiplicity of actors, institutions, socio-historical legacies and ideological frames that superimpose, overlap and compete for power at this specific level of analysis.

I have framed 'place' as a grounding concept for rescaling processes. In this analysis, I define towns or small or mid-sized cities as places, methodologically speaking. First, places correspond to a location in space that someone can point on a map, and even draw the boundaries of. Places are unique, matchless. Their location at a certain time in history, and in a certain social, economic and political system, informs the accessibility of the place to social, economic and political resources. Moreover, "the spatial organization of places is important in establishing and in maintaining the difference itself" (D. B. Massey *et al.*, 1999, p. 105). However, the production

of differentiated places — inclusive or exclusionary — goes through complex interactions of historical, political and social dynamics. Social agents in a city engage in strategies to reposition the place in a broader network of cities, displacing for instance the scale at which they view their interventions. Thus, a city can engage in transnational activities, even though it is 'peripheral' at national level. Immigration in this context could be perceived as a potential engine for the rescaling of interventions and the positioning of the city.

Second, places are where everyday life takes place, where people reside, work, study and carry out activities. Residents feel they share a common experience, and perceive the other is at reach, they can meet with other people in multiple encounters (even if this never occurs). Those everyday experiences are considered an important factor to understand local politics. People in marginalised places tend to aim at resembling the dominant groups, but at the same time, they also advocate economic development or politics in their own terms.

Finally, people in places share a collective imaginary of belonging, representations and meanings. This 'sense of place' informs politics and might be the base for autonomous and innovative actions, as I mentioned when discussing the specificity of small and mid-sized cities remote from centres.

I would like to add, at this stage, that one town does not only fit one place. The cities I study are not uniform, but they accommodate multiple locales, groups and identities. This has always been true. Places were always subjected to instability, permeability and power relations, therefore they are processes.

Immigration issues are fundamental for the production of places, just as much as the adoption of inclusive or exclusionary placemaking strategies inform immigrant integration policies. Those questions are to be asked through a historical long-term placemaking process, but also through the micro-politics of current placemaking activities.

Reflecting on the intersections between scales, places and agency, I wonder if cities govern or are being governed. This discussion is based on the case of immigration and integration policies in mid-sized cities located at the frontier of Israel. The following chapter will therefore aim at presenting the specific context of Israel on one hand, and of mid-sized cities located away from the centre, close to the country's borders on the other hand (part 1, chapter 3). The methodological implications of the theoretical and empirical choices I made will be addressed immediately afterwards (part 1, chapter 4).

The second part of this volume will address the motives that support local immigration policymaking. The first set of motives is grounded in place. Immigration changes the course of a place, the dynamics of its social relations, the way social life is organised. Believing that these breaks can lead to positive change may well lead to the rescaling of local development strategies, and support the repositioning of the city (part 2, chapter 5). The second set of motives in grounded in the actors. The social engagement of actors with the multiple aspects of life in the city, and more importantly the engagement of actors, who take decisions for larger groups, in government, has a significant impact on the production or reproduction of realities in this city (part 2, chapter 6).

The third part will address the processes of policymaking and policy implementation, when it comes to immigration issues, but more particularly with immigrant integration, i.e. at the moment the immigrant choses to settle in a particular place. The formulation of a normative frame for policymaking calls for the deconstruction of the concept of immigrant integration itself, through unveiling the meanings of integration, as expressed by the policymakers themselves (part 3, chapter 7). However, as I do not conduct a longitudinal study, but focus on the leadership and its accomplishment between 2014 and 2016, I decided to look at the organisation features of immigrant integration governance, in order to switch from discourses and symbolic policies, to actual public actions. The last chapter will therefore be an opportunity to map the actors, their activities, and the relations between them. The entanglement of actors, institutions, policies, supervision tools and funding opportunities will support my understanding of scales (part 3, chapter 8).

Chapter 3 ◊ Immigration and frontier towns in Israel

From the first European Zionist movements in the late 19th century to today, Jewish immigration to mandatory Palestine and to Israel has played a central role in the renewal of a Jewish identity, its territorial anchoring in *Eretz Israel*, the making of an independent State, and nation-building in general. In that context, Jewish immigration has been conceived first and foremost as a settlement immigration similar to early European settlement immigration in the United States, Canada or Algeria; and second, as a return migration, albeit imaginary, of alleged descendants of the Hebrews in biblical Israel. In that sense, Jewish immigration played and still plays a central role in establishing Israel's sovereignty — despite Palestinian, Pan-Arab and growing international accusations of illegal occupation —, and in establishing Israel as a Jewish state. Moreover — and I will get into details in the following sections —, immigrants who were settled in the peripheral mid-sized cities that are at the core of this work have been the main backers of a 'Neo-Zionist' anti-democratic ideology that supports the Jewish ethno-national character of the state, and discards solutions for a long term peace.

I conducted my doctoral research project between 2013 and 2016. Those years were marked by relatively low immigration in Israel. Despite an increase in the immigration of European Jews, and more particularly French and Ukrainian Jews, to Israel from 2014 onwards, there were no more than 25,000 immigrants arriving in the country every year, a much less disrupting number than that experienced by Israel at its establishment in the 1950s, or following the fall of the USSR in the 1990s. Nevertheless, Israel keeps on deploying efforts to rally Jews of the world to Israel. The worsening of the security situation in major European cities as well as the on-going conflict in Ukraine have given Israeli leaders opportunities to call on Jewish members of the diaspora to "return home", and reassert the fact that "Israel only is a safe haven for Jews"[38].

Immigration is still an issue in Israel, albeit not as central as it used to be. Even though it is true that there is less debate among ministries and at the Knesset (see "Tables of Netanyahu's meetings with ministers 2013-2014," 2015), and that immigration was not a highly debated issue during the national election campaign in March 2015, some related topics such as the integration of Ethiopian-Israeli second generation[39], the conversion law[40] or the nation-state

[38] See articles in the Israeli press on French, Danish, Ukrainian and even Ethiopian Jews (Lebor, 2014; *Courrier international,* 2015; Farkash, 2015; *Haaretz.com,* 2015; Hasson, 2015; Lior, 2015; *TheMarker,* 2015; Rabid, 2015).

[39] This series of articles highlight the debate that surrounded the adoption of a comprehensive plan for the integration of Ethiopians. However, they also came at a time when several large-scale protests were organised by Ethiopian-Israeli youth in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem mainly, to call for public attention regarding police violence toward Ethiopian-Israelis as well as wider issues of integration in education, the

law[41] were the objects of intense public debates between 2014 and 2015 and were widely covered by the media. Lastly, immigration is a topic of debate during municipal elections, as I had the opportunity to witness in June 2015 in Arad municipal elections. This last point raises questions around the growing role of municipalities in immigration issues in a context of decentralisation.

The latest research works published on the topic of municipal responsibilities and immigration were mainly based on the 1990s immigration from the former USSR (Auerbach, 2001, 2011; Tzfadia, 2005; Tzfadia & Yacobi, 2007; Yacobi & Tzfadia, 2009). More recently, the Union of Local Authorities in Israel ordered a survey to establish a picture of immigration and integration issues in local authorities in Israel (Yehuda Abramson, 2013). This assessment has shown that a large number of municipalities have established independent departments for immigration and integration, or units under the authority of welfare or education departments.[42]

This chapter therefore aims at a more in-depth presentation of the national and local socioeconomic and political contexts on which those new developments are based. Following the triptych I presented in the previous chapter, I will focus on people, places and the process of production and reproduction of specific sociopolitical scalar spaces. More particularly, I will put greater emphasis on the role of mid-sized cities in peripheries in welcoming new immigrants, the production of places of marginality — in space, but also in terms of social, economical and political status —, and the specific challenges met by those peripheral places in a neoliberalising national context.

The first part will present a brief historical review of immigration to Israel. Next, I will show the extent to which the State established places of difference, through planning, housing and employment policies, which have shaped social differences up to today. I will illustrate this point by presenting the four cities that constitute my research field, each of them describing a particular outcome of the production of space. Finally, I will turn to the transformations of the Israeli State and power. The peripherality of these places, located outside socioeconomic and

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army and more (Cahn & Spigel, 2015; Kashti, 2014, 2015c, 2015d; Li, 2016; Lior, 2015a; Orfez, 2015; Skoop, 2015).

[40] The conversion law was finally put on hold during the March 2015 elections, and cancelled in July 2015. However, it did bring into the public debate the issues faced by new immigrants who benefited from the Law of Return although they do not fit the *Halacha* definition of Judaism (Atinger, 2014; Idelman, 2014; Lis, 2014a, 2014b).

[41] The nation-state law aimed at strengthening the Jewish identity of the State. Opposition to the law led to the dissolution of the government, and eventually to new elections four months later (Gross, 2014; Lis, 2014c, 2014d, 2014e, 2014f; Verter, 2014).

[42] I have conducted a phone survey in December 2013 in municipalities located in the Northern, Haifa and Southern districts and I have found similar organisational features.

political networks, persists until today, although local leaders challenge their status and develop new strategies to reach out to the centre.

1 People: Immigration in Israel

Jewish immigration to Israel is usually referred to as *Aliyah,* a Hebrew term meaning 'ascent', which conceives of Jewish immigration to Israel as a moral imperative. Immigration, in turn, is translated by the Hebrew term *hagira*, therefore distancing Jewish immigrants from non-Jewish immigrants. And indeed, only Jewish immigration is the object of a national law, the Law of Return, and has a Ministry dedicated to the settlement and absorption of Jewish immigration, the Ministry of Immigration and Absorption (*Misrad haAliyah vehaKlita* in Hebrew, later in the chapters MOIA). Other immigrants in Israel[43] are under the control of the Ministry of Interior and its discretionary regulations. In a comparative perspective, and as the Law of Return is the only national immigration policy in Israel, my work addresses mainly Jewish immigration to Israel.

The first subsection aims at introducing immigration to Israel, from the first *Aliyah* in 1882 to now. Next, I will briefly describe the involvement of the State and its institutions in a matter that was considered crucial to nation-building.

1.1 A brief history of immigration to Israel

Ottoman Palestine was already home to Jewish residents before the 19th century. Those were mainly found in the cities of Jerusalem, Tiberias, Safed and Hebron. The immigration of ideology-driven Jews who participated in the establishment of new Jewish settlements, or the *Yishuv* in Hebrew, following the growing claim for founding a Jewish home in Ottoman and then British Palestine, started at the end of the 19th century. From then on, several milestones have shaped the curves of Jewish immigration. The following subsections will describe those moments, from the acceleration of immigration after the Balfour declaration and before and after the second World War, during which six millions Jews were assassinated; to the establishment of the state and the 'ingathering of the exiles', witnessing the arrival of hundreds of thousands of European, African and Asian Jews; to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the cold War, and the massive arrival of Soviet Jews from 1989 to now.

[43] Other immigrants usually — but not only — fall into these categories: migrant workers, whose visas depend of their employer (in the sectors of agriculture, care, construction and food service industry) and whose stay is limited to five years; asylum-seekers, who benefit from temporary group protection, granted by the State to specific groups (in 2016, immigrants who originated from Sudan, Eritrea and Congo); and foreign partners of Israeli citizens, whose visas depend on their involvement in a relationship with an Israeli citizen, and whose stay and occupation is unlimited.

The following graph illustrates and quantifies Israel's history of immigration. Nevertheless, I have used continents of origin[44], as adopted by the Central Bureau of Statistics, therefore it does not represent the diversity of Jewish immigration. Second, this graph takes into account arrivals only, although remigration to country of origin or to a third country is far from negligible (for figures on remigration, see for instance: (Sitton, 1962; Beenstock, 1996; Lipshitz, 1998; Portnov, 1998).

[44] Nowadays, central Asian Republics of the Former Soviet Union are classified under 'Asia'. Indeed, since 1995, Mountain Jews from Azerbaijan, Georgian Jews and Bukhara Jews from Uzbekistan fall under their own categories, and not FSU immigrants anymore.

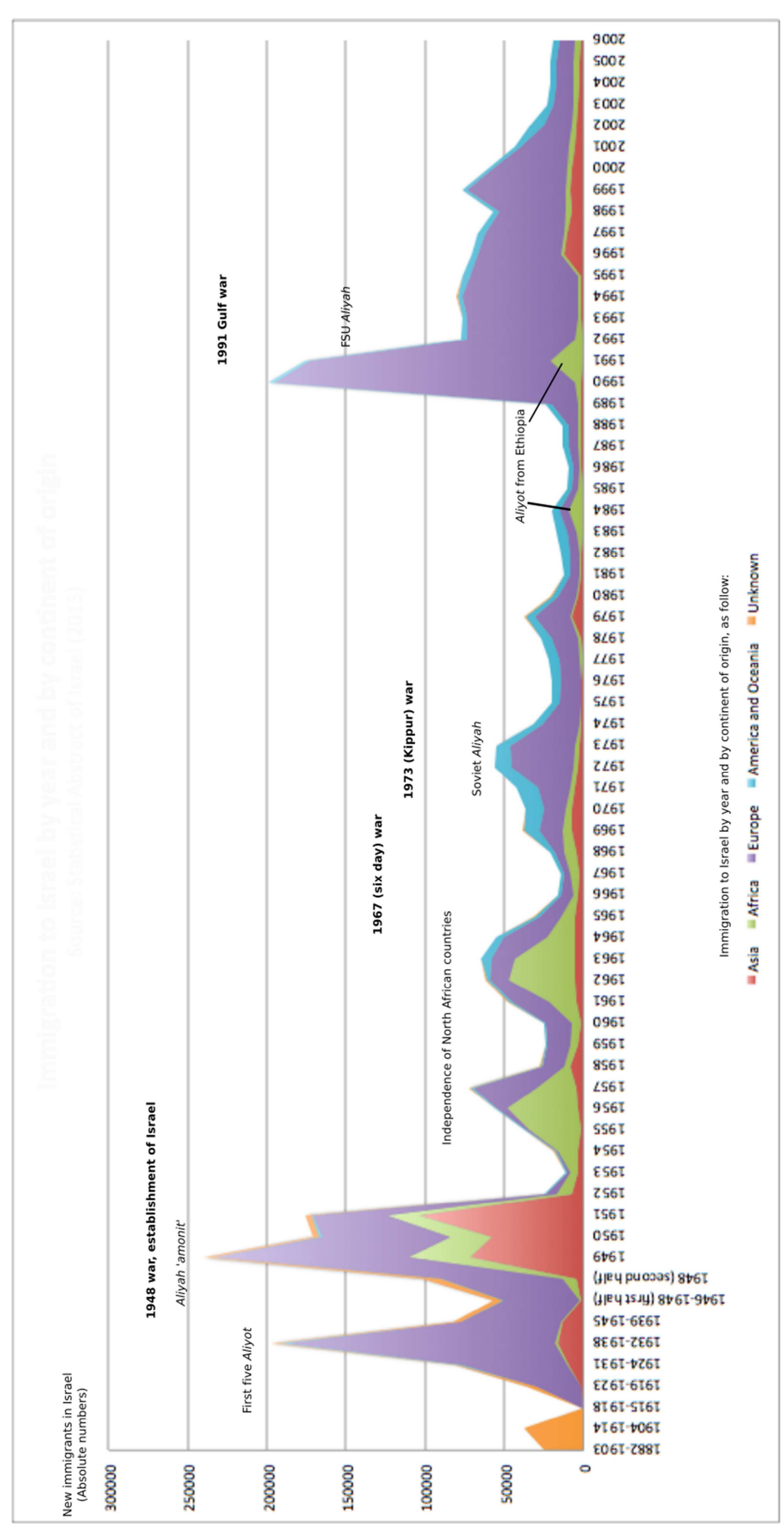

Figure 3. 1. Immigration to Israel by year and by continent of origin. Source: Statistical abstract of Israel (2015). Design: Amandine Desille.

1.1.1 Immigration before Statehood

In his volume *Israël Immigration et Croissance*, Shlomo Sitton (1962) reminds the reader that Jewish immigration has been historically marked by religious, political and economic persecutions. Even in a more recent history, at the end of the 19th century, 2.5 million Russian, Romanian, Austrian-Hungarian Jews fled the pogroms and persecutions and found shelter in Western Europe and in the United States.

Even though such massive migration has channelled only a comparatively small number to Ottoman Palestine, the very nationalist movements that emerged in the regions from where Jews escaped substantially influenced the emergent Zionist movement (*Ibid.,* p. 26). Indeed, founders of the Zionist ideology aimed at finding a collective solution through the ingathering of the Jewish Diasporas in a Jewish national home. Second, it aimed at the regeneration of Jews through labour, and more particularly agriculture. A cultural renewal was also envisioned through the revival of Biblical Hebrew as a modern language (*Ibid.,* p. 27). Political Zionism is usually associated with the figure of Austrian Journalist Theodore Herzl as well as with the organisation of a series of Zionist Congress, the first of which took place in Basel in 1898. The return of Jews to the Holy Land, *Eretz Israel,* and the establishment of a national home, the *Yishuv*, became a concrete undertaking.

In this context, 25,000 Jews from the Zionist movement associations, *Hovevei Zion* and *Bilu,* emigrated from Russia and Romania to Israel. This 'first *Aliyah'* founded the *moshavot*[45] Petach Tikva, Rishon leZion, Zichron Yaakov and Hadera (Sitton, 1962; Lipshitz, 1998).

The 'second *Aliyah*' took place between 1904 and 1914, when 40,000 members of the Labour Zionist movements emigrated from Tsarist Russia to Israel. They founded numerous rural settlements or *moshavim*[46] and *kibbutzim*[47] (*Ibid.*).

Following the 1917 Balfour declaration, stating that Great Britain supported the establishment of a Jewish home in mandatory Palestine, 35,000 young (intellectual) from the USSR, Poland and

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[45] A *moshava* (plural *moshavot*) is a Jewish settlement established in Ottoman Palestine by members of the first and second *Aliyot*. 28 *moshavot* were founded in Israel.
[46] A *moshav* (plural *moshavim*) is a rural settlement, where land and property are private. *Moshavim* were established from the 1920s on. After the establishment of the State, they absorbed large numbers of immigrants from Northern Africa and the Middle East, and are believed to have provided better conditions for these newcomers to access the middle-class than the development towns at the heart of this doctoral work. Today, there are more than 440 *moshavim* in Israel.
[47] A *kibbutz* (plural *kibbutzim*) is a collective communal rural settlement, where land, property and means of production belong to the community. Established from 1909 on, they synthesise communist and Zionist ideologies. Today, there are 270 *kibbutzim* in Israel, but many have gone through privatisation, unable to survive in a free-market economy.

the Baltic area, newly trained for agricultural work, emigrated to Israel between 1919 and 1923 (*Ibid.*).

Between 1924 and 1931, the 'fourth *Aliyah*' brought to Israel around 85,000 Jews from Poland, but also the USSR, the Balkans and even the Middle-East. Those middle-class Jews were driven out by discriminatory economic policies. Once in Israel, they occupied positions in commerce, crafts and the industry (*Ibid.*).

Lastly, in the decade starting just before the Second World War, up until the establishment of Israel, the 'fifth *Aliyah'* was made up of 270,000 Jews from Germany and Poland, who mainly settled in Haifa and Tel Aviv metropolitan areas (*Ibid.*). Following the Second World War, thousands of European Jews were displaced and large groups gathered in camps. Their transfer to British Palestine was almost impossible, with the exception of some illegal rescuing missions, many of them ending in the repatriation of the refugees in camps on the island of Cyprus. In 1948, Israel finally received the displaced populations.

These first five *Aliyot* have played a crucial role in the proto-structuration of social and spatial relations in Israel. Indeed, European Jewry established communities in the main urban centres of the country, as well as in rural settlements. *Moshavot* and *kibbutzim* developed quasi-government structures outside the British mandate's institutions. At the establishment of the state, they were organised in decision-making networks which subsisted even after hundreds of thousands of newcomers settled in the new nation. The second and third *Aliyot* in particular were the groups that would make up the core of the future nation for the leaders at the time — both in government and in intellectual spheres (Ram, 1995).

1.1.2 Immigration from 1950s to 1980s

> Accordingly we, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish Community of Eretz-Israel and of the Zionist Movement […] hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel. […] The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience,

> language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.[48]

As early as in the Proclamation of Independence, the newly established state of Israel declared the country 'open for Jewish immigration and the Ingathering of the Exiles'. In 1950, the Israeli parliament — the Knesset — ratified the Law of Return. The Law of Return is Israel's one and only immigration policy and is conceived as a return migration policy. Indeed, it provides that every Jew who expresses the desire to immigrate to Israel can do so.[49] As stated by the Israeli sociologists Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled "[The Law of Return] became the most important legal expression of Israel's self definition as a Jewish state. It establishes ethno-nationalist citizenship that, in principle, encompassed all Jews, and only Jews, by virtue of their ethnic descent" (Shafir and Peled in Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004). Two years later, the State ratified a second law, the Nationality Law,[50] granting new Jewish immigrants immediate access to Israeli citizenship.

At a time when approximately 700,000 Palestinian fled to neighbouring countries as a result of the 1948 war,[51] 'Jewish immigration and the Ingathering of the Exiles' started at a high pace. 687,000 new Jewish immigrants settled in the country within four years of its establishment. They were as numerous as the established population in the country at the time (CBS, 2015d). Immigrants came from Europe but, also, from Middle East countries. Indeed, many Jews living in predominantly Muslim countries in the Middle East and North Africa made their way to Israel. The Jewish communities of Yemen, Iraq and Libya were almost integrally displaced and resettled in Israel. Several factors explain their immigration, among them the religious meaning of the establishment of a Jewish state on the biblical land, the potential threat to those communities in countries which did not support the creation of a Jewish home in the region, as well as the logistic and financial help offered by the Jewish Agency and other organisations involved in their immigration.

In the 1950s, immigration started to slow down, and the institutions in charge of immigration put greater emphasis on communities directly threatened. Immigrants from North Africa, Romania, Poland, Hungary and Egypt settled in Israel. In 1958, ten years after its establishment,

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[48] Extract of the official English version of the Proclamation of Independence of the State of Israel, 14 May 1948, available at: https://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm

[49] English version of the Law of Return is available at: https://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/return.htm. The Law of Return was amended in 1970 and right of return was extended to a child and a grandchild of a Jew, the spouse of a Jew, the spouse of a child of a Jew and the spouse of a grandchild of a Jew.

[50] English version of the Nationality Law is available at: http://www.israellawresourcecenter.org/israellaws/fulltext/nationalitylaw.htm.

[51] See www.unwra.org.

Israel had received 936,000 immigrants, approximately half of them coming from Europe and half from Asia and Africa (CBS, 2015d). Nevertheless, it is estimated that over the same period, 100,000 immigrants headed back to their countries of origin or remigrated some place else (Sitton, 1962, p. 94).

In the 1960s, immigration mostly came from Eastern Europe, notably Romania, North Africa, with the quasi-entire emigration of Algerian Jews to France and Israel, and India. Another source of immigration came from ideology-driven, often Marxist, youths from America. However, immigration numbers were to soar again with the immigration of Soviet Jews. This new wave of immigration was initiated at the end of the 1960s. Indeed, since 1923, Zionist activities had been illegal in the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, between 1967 and 1970, a timid loosening of the iron curtain allowed 5,000 Jews to leave the USSR. At the same time, the Law of Return was amended (1970) to include a larger definition of Jewish descent. After 1971, and as the Soviet government was looking for a more favourable opinion from the West (Jones, 1996, p. 18), more and more visas are attributed to Jewish candidates to emigration. During this period of 'détente', two peaks were registered in 1973 and in 1979. In total, between 1968 and 1985, 260,000 Jews left the USSR, 165,000 of them reaching Israel (Storper-Perez, 1998, pp. 18–19).

The encounter between USSR Jews and earlier immigrants in Israel was not an easy one. Indeed, twenty years after its establishment, the country could afford to offer better conditions for new immigrants, while neighbourhoods and peripheral cities were left with poor infrastructures and housing. This led to intercommunity tensions and is considered one of the triggers of the social movements initiated by African and Asian immigrants in the 1970s.

Between November 1984 and January 1985, a comparatively new immigration made it to Israel. 7,000 Beta Israel, or Ethiopian Jews, were transferred to Israel during the so-called 'Moses operation'. Even though 6,000 Ethiopian Jews had already made it to Israel before them, this first operation holds a more symbolic start of Ethiopian immigration to Israel. 11,000 new Ethiopian immigrants arrived in Israel after this operation. Lastly, in May 1991, as Israel was already experienced an unprecedented immigration from the former Soviet-controlled area, Israel conducted the second operation, 'Solomon operation', an airlift which brought 14,300 Ethiopian Jews to Israel in 36 hours (Noam, 1994; Berthomière, 1996; Anteby-Yemini, 2004; Elias & Kemp, 2010).

Even though the Ethiopian immigration to Israel has profoundly impacted the Israeli society, its numbers were rather low. With the end of the cold war, and the collapse of the USSR, hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews made their way to Europe, North America, and Israel.

1.1.3 1990s FSU mass immigration

From 1989 to 2000, 850,000 Former Soviet Union immigrants settled in Israel, challenging again Israel's absorption system and its possibility to provide them all with housing and professional prospects (Berthomière, 2002).

Indeed, the combined effects of *Glasnost* and the failure of *Perestroika* led to mass emigration of Soviet Jews. Even though in the 1980s the United States was the first destination of these immigrations, the end of the cold war led the country to re-evaluate its political refugees programme. As early as 1989, Soviet Jews were no longer considered refugees in the United States. Therefore "Washington effectively sanctioned Israel as the only viable destination for those Jews who wished to leave the Soviet Union" (Jones, 1996, p. 52).

This tremendous wave of immigration has fascinated a generation of migration scholars, who had the opportunity to concretely analyse the repercussions on wages, employment, housing and more on the host society. Moreover, as they represented a large number of the Israeli population, they have weighted on many societal transformations over the past three decades.

First of all, the FSU immigration caused a new demographic burst in Israel. However, the State had just adopted a 'direct absorption' policy, where immigrants had a choice to settle in the country (details of this policy change to be developed in the following sections). Therefore, it was not long before Israel adopted a new National Outline Plan, the NOP 31, which provided housing in areas where the State wanted to favour settlement. This had the effect of slightly favouring immigration settlement in peripheral towns, in comparison to other immigration countries where FSU immigrants settled. However, the large cities, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem and Beer Sheva, and their metropolitan areas, remained the primary sites of settlement. Immigrants who settled in the peripheral districts were older and less skilled than average, and suffer from relatively higher unemployment (Lipshitz, 1998; Lewin-Epstein, Semyonov, Kogan, & Wanner, 2003). In the periphery, the southern district benefited more from the settlement of FSU immigrants than Galilee (Berthomière, 1996, 2002). Lastly, geographer William Berthomière notes the substantial influx of FSU immigrants beyond the green line (*Ibid*.).

The FSU immigration had an important impact on the education sector in Israel. Contrary to the large immigration of the 1950s, where newcomers had lower educational credentials than their hosts, the FSU immigrants were largely educated, with 50% holding academic degrees (CBS, 2013). As such, they have provided the country with the needed manpower to develop the economy, and notably, the boom of the high tech sector in Israel has been largely attributed to

this flow of skilled immigrants. Nevertheless, the State experienced a "partial failure to take advantage of the human capital of the immigrants who had arrived by the end of 1993 [which] produced a loss of $2 billion to the national economy" (Eckstein 1994, in Lipshitz, 1998). Indeed, the labour market's demands and the new flux of immigrants were rather different. Additionally, several academic degrees — such as medical degrees — were not recognised and many had to get equivalent degrees in Israel.

And indeed, a large proportion of the immigrants suffered immediate professional downgrading, and for some, this remained a long-term situation, profoundly affecting their life satisfaction in Israel (Amit, 2009). Indeed, even though the institutional efforts provided by the State to recognise education and stimulate employment resulted in FSU immigrants experiencing lower rate of unemployment than in the USA or Canada (Lewin-Epstein *et al.*, 2003), only 34 % of the newcomers worked in the same profession as the one they had abroad (CBS, 2013).

Apart from education and employment, the third dimension of integration that mattered for the newcomers is culture (Galper, 1995). FSU immigrants reported being frustrated by the lack of cultural activities in Israel, mainly because those activities are concentrated in Israel's few large cities, were much more expensive that in the former USSR, and catered for a Hebrew-speaking population (*Ibid.*). FSU immigrants, particularly the *intelligentsia* (Storper-Perez, 1998), supported by State institutions, therefore put a lot of efforts in fostering a vibrant cultural world, usually segregated and Russian-speaking.

Altogether, FSU immigrants have largely challenged the absorption system, and even more strongly, issues related to the adoption of an 'Israeli identity'. They have participated in the weakening of the 'national ethos', and have contributed to the reactivation of the Ashkenazi/Oriental split (Berthomière, 1996). However, they have also suffered stereotyping from the Israeli old-timers, particularly as they were portrayed as motivated by push factors, with a weaker Jewish identity, even though studies have often demonstrated the contrary. For instance, the survey conducted by Gildas Simon, William Berthomière, Lisa Anteby, Yehudit Rosenbaum Tamari and Natalia Damian has shown that FSU immigrants came to Israel out of choice and that they feel strong about their Jewish identity and optimistic about their future in Israel (Simon *et al*, 1996). A majority of them integrated the secular lower middle-class of Israel, and adopted a right-wing nationalist political view (Lerner, 2015). Desire to remigrate seems to be more prominent among 1.5 generation immigrants who grew up in Israel, one or two of whose parents are not Jewish in the eyes of Rabbinic Law. Indeed, even though the Law of Return was amended in the 1970s to adopt a larger definition of the potential beneficiaries, once immigrants are in Israel, the Rabbinic Law does not recognise them as Jewish. Around 30% of

the FSU immigrants therefore benefited from the Law of Return, although they were not *halachically* Jewish. These 'unclarified' immigrants (Lerner, 2015) are therefore permanently challenged by the administration.

Apart from the religious differences among those immigrants, many other differences — in terms of education, professional background, language… — make the category 'FSU immigrants' a rather fragile and questionable category. Indeed, it lumps together immigrants from Russia, Eastern Europe but also the Caucasian republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and so on. But only in 1995 did immigrants from Georgia, Caucasus Mountain Jews and Bukhara Jews benefit from a special status.

1.1.4 Immigration in Israel today

At the time when this research project was conducted, immigration in Israel was far from a major concern. Numbers were more or less steady, Israel welcoming around 16,000 immigrants every year, with a peak at the time of fieldwork with more important arrivals from Ukraine — a conflict opposing Russia and Ukraine since the Ukrainian revolution in 2014 — and from France.

	Asia	**Africa**	**Europe**	**America and Oceania**	**Total**
2010	1415	1937	9128	4155	16635
2011	1104	2934	9286	3567	16891
2012	1137	2643	9361	3417	16558
2013	1029	1562	10848	3488	16927
2014	817	394	19093	3807	24111

Table 3.1. Immigration by year by continent of origin. Source: CBS (2015d).

As shown in this extract of the Central Bureau of Statistics' statistical abstract of Israel published in 2015, Jewish immigration persists in Israel today, mainly from countries of the Former Soviet Union, France and the United States. Among these newcomers, 40% of them 'chose' to settle in the Southern district, Haifa district and the Northern district (CBS, 2015c).

Some groups are overrepresented, like the Ethiopian immigrants, 99% of whom settle in the periphery. Indeed, Ethiopian immigrants are still welcomed within two years of their arrival in 'absorption centres' organised and funded by the Jewish Agency and the MOIA, and located in the periphery of Israel. Part of new Ethiopian immigration is constituted by 'Falash Muras', members of the Beta Israel community who converted to Christianism. They usually come to Israel under family reunification, and as such, fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of

Interior, which administers the entry of non-Jewish immigrants, rather than the jurisdiction of the MOIA. In 2011, 125,000 Ethiopian Jews were living in Israel, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics.

The non-Jewish immigrants have been a concern in Israel since the immigration of Soviet Jews. Indeed, 30% of the FSU beneficiaries of the Law of Return have only one Jewish parent, or no Jewish parents at all, and do not fit the *halachic* definition of Judaism. This has caused the national divide between Jewish and non-Jewish to shift more and more towards a non-Arab and Arab dichotomy (Lustick, 1999).

Since the 1990s, Israel has instituted labour migration quotas to make up for the dwindling numbers of Palestinian workers in Israel. Additionally, asylum-seekers from Eritrea, Sudan and other African countries have made their way to Israel, by foot, to escape the violence in their countries. In 2016, Israel hosted 43,537 asylum seekers, 88,329 foreign workers, and 16,736 undocumented foreign workers, while 78,500 tourists have exceeded their stay (Population and Immigration Authority in Israel, 2016). Despite the rather low levels of non-Jewish immigration, and apart from the granting of group protection, the government has opposed all attempts to deal with these arrivals within a human rights framework. In fact, a humanitarian approach prevails (Kalir, 2014). As such, a guest-worker policy — which is not sustainable — still predominates when addressing non-Jewish immigration in Israel (Alexander, 2003). Asylum-seekers are urged to voluntarily remigrate, while foreign workers see their stay limited to five years, and totally depending on their employer. As of today, Tel Aviv is the only city which has shaped a municipal policy aiming at dealing with the pressing problems met by non-Jewish immigrants in the city (Raijman & Kemp, 2002; Alexander, 2003; Elias & Kemp, 2010; Schnell, 2013). Nevertheless, other cities in Israel host non-Jewish immigrants. Among the four cities I study, Arad is the residence of several hundreds of African asylum-seekers. At the time of my fieldwork, the social services just started mapping them to better understand their needs and the possible interventions of the municipality (Interview 42, 2015).

To sum up, Israel's demographic growth has been largely impacted by large influx of immigrants, with very notable peaks after the establishment of the state and following the collapse of the USSR. In total, Israel has received more than 3 million immigrants between 1948 and 2010 (CBS, 2011), making it indeed a nation of immigrants.

However, despite common assertions that *Aliyah* poses a lot fewer issues than other immigration settlement in the rest of the world, leading decision makers, scholars and the public opinion in general have tended to minimise the sociocultural issues generating by the uprooting

of large groups and their settlement in a (despite its Jewish character) foreign land. The settlement of newcomers in Israel has brought intense social, cultural, economic and political disruptions in Israel. Indeed, the organisation of immigration settlement was organised by the ones who settled in the early days of the *Yishuv*. I will describe more in depth those actors in the following subsection. The encounters between a European Ashkenazi elite, with values linked to the interests of nation-building and pioneering, and new immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East, were a source of social and cultural violence, reinforcing the European hegemony, and discarding the newcomers as 'backward'. This had tremendous implications on the social stratification of the state, already profoundly divided between Jews and Palestinians, exacerbating divisions among Jews themselves, between European Ashkenazi Jews and newcomers from Muslim countries.

1.2 Immigration and its institutions

In the early years of Israel, Jewish immigration was regarded as a State enterprise. A large number of governmental and semi-governmental organisations were involved in reaching out to Jewish communities abroad, to organise transportation to Israel and eventually to organise their settlement and their participation in the socio-economic development of the country. This bureaucratically organised process was — and still is — named *klita*, a Hebrew term for absorption. This huge effort required tremendous resources, making Israel highly dependent on external relations.

1.2.1 State-organised immigration settlement: Immigration institutions before the 1980s

Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, founder of the Israeli school of sociology and its leader until the 1970s, also a member and contributor of Parsons's functionalist-structuralist school, has developed an outline of the development of the Israeli society around immigration to Israel. "To each aliya is assigned a specific functional contribution in the nation-building process and a consequent location on the centre-periphery continuum" (Ram, 1995, p. 31). In Eisenstadt's model, the second and third *Aliyot* represent the core of the 'social system' necessary for modernisation, while the mass migration of the 1950s represents the periphery. The 'centre' is ethnically Russian and Polish, and bears the universal interests of the society at large, explains Ram, whereas the periphery is mostly made up of non-European Jews, from Africa and Asia, and has no orientation toward the future (and even the present, argues Eisenstadt). As such, the latter has a 'marginal' role in nation-building: they were meant to be assimilated within the core culture in order to create a 'unified and homogeneous nation' (Frankenstein, cited by Ram, 1995, p. 38). This assimilationist position has been referred to as the 'melting pot' (*Kur Yituch* in

Hebrew).

Eisenstadt viewed three aspects of a successful absorption of 'traditional' immigrants to 'modern Jews':

> Acculturation — learning of the various norms, roles, and customs of the absorbing society; personal adjustment — strengthening of the mental makeup of the immigrants, building confidence and satisfaction in them; and institutional dispersion — the proportional dispersion of immigrants in the various institutional spheres, residential locations, and so forth (S. N. Eisenstadt, 1954a:10 15). 'Absorption' was designated in terms of the "diffusion" of values, norms, and roles, from the modern absorbing society to the traditional immigrants, until they were entirely immersed. (*Ibid*., p. 38)

The official policies were very much in line with this sociological interpretation. "State agencies were thus advised to relate to 'absorption' as a process analogous to 'adult socialization' […]" (*Ibid.,* p. 40), and to create personal contacts to immigrants, in order to create identification and participation (*Ibid*.).

The main institution involved in the organisation of Jewish immigration is the Jewish Agency.[52] The Jewish Agency was founded in 1922. Through an expanded network of representatives, it reached out to Jewish communities and organised their immigration to Israel, by boat through the Mediterranean, or by air. The World Zionist Organisation, mainly in charge of raising the substantial funds necessary for those initiatives, assisted it in its work. The Jewish Agency also cooperated with other Jewish organisations such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (also Joint or JDC), which assisted in evacuating displaced Jews from camps in Europe.

The flow of immigrants after the establishment of the state soon dried up all available resources. In 1952, the Jewish Agency put a halt to its activities to redefine its objectives. The Agency decided to focus its efforts in countries where there was immediate threat to the Jewish communities. In other cases, priority will be given to young workforce under age 35 — who should represent 80% of immigrants.[53] These newcomers were requested to dedicate the first

[52] Nowadays, the Jewish Agency is still in charge of processing immigration applications of Jewish candidates to immigration. It also coordinates decentralised cooperation between Jewish communities abroad and Israeli cities.

[53] Even though this policy seems quite contradictory to a belief that any Jew of the Diaspora is welcome in Israel, it is certainly not the first time in the history of the region. Indeed, the first waves of Jewish immigration to Ottoman Palestine, even if they involved Zionist organisations in charge of encouraging and assisting their settlement, prevented 'penniless' Jews from immigrating to Israel (Shilo, 1994). Candidates to immigration had to be independent, to rely on their own resources and to contribute to the economic development of the *Yishuv*. The first time in history that Zionist organisations organised a large

two years after their arrival to agricultural work. Immigration candidates who were relying on their own resources were welcomed. Combined with a slowdown in Jewish immigration, this new policy considerably reduced the number of arrivals.

Apart from the Jewish Agency, the new state of Israel was also highly interventionist. Great efforts were deployed to direct new immigrants to the rural areas of the country to participate in agricultural production. This was a legacy from Labour Zionism, which encouraged land cultivation and self-sufficiency. But it also followed the economic need to supply for a population that grew twice its size in a short period of time (Sitton, 1962). And more importantly, it participated in the policy of population dispersion toward the Galilee and the Negev region, in order to gain sovereignty over those lands, as well as to ensure security. As the geographer Gabriel Lipshitz has put it, the population dispersion policy was more of an 'immigrant dispersion policy' (Lipshitz, 1998).

Nevertheless, the high influx of immigrants within a very short timeframe at a moment where Israel did not have much in terms of own resources meant that there was a crucial lack of organisation. A lot of immigrants themselves resisted this policy as they wished to live in bigger cities at the centre. The low social status and the social unrest among immigrants from Africa and the Middle East was attributed by the leadership as well as by sociologists to their lack of 'positive predisposition' to assimilation into the core (Ram, 1995, p. 39). In this context, the attribution of cheap housing became a coercive mean to achieve population dispersion. The public construction company Amidar was therefore a key institution. It was — and still is nowadays — in charge of providing public housing.

1.2.2 Direct absorption and individual responsibility: Immigration institutions after the 1980s

The highly interventionist approach of Israel in immigration matters changed quite radically in the 1980s. Indeed, with the adoption of free-market policies — an issue I will address in the last section of this chapter —, the State revaluated its role toward the settlement of new immigrants. A new integration policy was adopted, referred to as 'direct absorption'. Immigrants who arrived in Israel were free to settle wherever they wanted. From then on, they were granted a six-month allocation called 'absorption basket', as well as subsidised Hebrew classes and a range of various discounts.

immigration of penniless Jews was in 1911, when 1,500 Yemenite Jews were brought to Israel to become a cheap Jewish workforce (*Ibid.*).

With this break, two main institutions remain and play a major role in immigration and immigrant integration in Israel today: the Jewish Agency for Israel and the MOIA.

The Jewish Agency for Israel has offices spread all around the world and is the main organisation facilitating and organising immigration to Israel from origin countries. Every municipality in Israel that organises outreaching activities is in regular contact with Jewish Agency representatives. In the United States, the Jewish Agency no longer has active representatives for immigration, as it has been replaced by the non-profit organisation Nefesh benefesh established by Tony Gelbart and Rabbi Yehoshua Fuss in 2002. Since 2005, Nefesh benefesh has received State funding to organise Jewish immigration. Similarly, the small non-profit organisation Shavei Israel has organised immigration of "'lost' and 'hidden' Jews".[54] Other private actors organise immigration to Israel. One example concerns French immigration, where those immigration entrepreneurs act as go-betweens between municipalities, mainly beyond the green line, and French families through the programme known as '*Aliyah de groupe*'.[55]

The second key actor is the MOIA, created in 1968. The Ministry funds the absorption basket, a six-month allowance received by all Jewish immigrants benefiting from the Law of Return. The Ministry has regional branches and local branches all around the country. In almost any city in Israel, immigrants can reach out to a councillor and obtain all entitlements, from the absorption basket to training vouchers and Hebrew classes. The Ministry's main program, elaborated in cooperation with municipalities and the Jewish Agency, is called 'group Aliyah'.[56] It funds immigration coordinators in municipalities who are in charge of outreaching, welcoming the immigrants and organising activities at the city level. Even though the MOIA is a major contact for new immigrants, it is a rather small ministry.

Other ministries are involved in specific immigrant policies. The Ministry of Housing provides immigrants with discounts after arrival. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Welfare have special programmes for immigrants. They also transfer special budgets for immigrants to municipalities. The Ministry of Economy, through the employment service, or through entrepreneurship programmes, supports the economic integration of immigrants. More recently, the Ministry for the Development of the Galilee and Negev established several programmes

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[54] See 'our goals' at http://shavei.org/about-us/

[55] For more information on French immigration to Israel, see for instance the work of William Berthomière, Marie-Antoinette Hily and Yann Scioldo-Zürcher (forthcoming). Through the MIFI project, funded by the French National Institute for Research CNRS, in the framework of the programme "Project terrorist attacks-research", they enquire the immigration of French Jews to Israel, particularly after the terrorist attacks that affected French cities at large, and the Jewish communities in France in particular, between 2014 and 2016.

[56] See http://www.moia.gov.il/English/ImmingrantToIsrael/FirstStepsList/Pages/Group-Aliyah-and-Absorption.aspx

including encouragement of the settlement of immigrants in peripheral areas. It also expanded its youth centres, many of them having hired immigration coordinators.

There are numerous non-profit and private organisations all around the country to represent the interests of immigrants. Some of them are national and represent certain groups, as Nefesh benefesh works for English-speaking immigrants, AMI is the organisation of French immigrants, OLEI of Spanish and Portuguese speakers and more. Some have lobbying activities in the Knesset. Some provide socio-cultural services, employment services, entrepreneurship services, training services or education services. Many charities also support immigrants facing difficult economic situations. Nevertheless, there is a concentration of those organisations in the central area of the country.

Immigration-linked activities have also benefited from the support of the Diaspora. First and foremost, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC or Joint) started many pilot projects, which are today adopted by central and local administrations, like youth centres, employment centres for Ethiopian immigrants, mediation and dialogue centres in the community and more. The Jewish Agency also implemented a twinning programme between Jewish communities in the United States and cities in Israel (partnership2gether). Foundations as well as individuals from the Jewish diaspora donate funds to carry out sociocultural activities for immigrants, to support existing ones or to upgrade infrastructures.

The emergence of the municipality as a relevant actor is therefore obvious. The MOIA designs programmes, such as 'Group *Aliyah*', where it transfers funds to the municipality to hire immigration and integration agents. It also transfers funds to organise socio-cultural activities. The municipalities establish direct contact with the Jewish Agency. Municipalities adopt pilot programmes targeting immigrants in their cities… The following chapters of this work will therefore describe in more detail this growing actor in the immigration and integration field.

The tremendous implication of the State and its institution bears witness to the importance of immigration in the making of the Israeli nation. Indeed, immigration was not only conceived as a demographic issue, but also as a political and geospatial issue, as well as a sociocultural and economic issue. The following section will address the role of the State in the sociospatialities of immigration today. In fact, until the 1980s, the location of immigration settlement was in the hands of the government, from the encampment of newcomers, their forced settlement in areas decided upon by the State, and the dependence of immigration subsidies to areas of settlement. Even though the direct absorption policy has enabled the free choice of residence, Israel

continued to hold tight on the land planning and housing policies, using them as powerful tools of population dispersion.

2 Places: establishment of the state and structuration of its peripheries

In the first section, I briefly presented the various influxes of immigrants that make up today's Israeli society. The first immigrant groups to pre-state *Yishuv* have largely contributed to a proto-structuration of the society. After the establishment of the state, the sociospatial structuration based on group origin was reinforced and has indeed underlain group conflicts. The Eisenstadt-led functionalist approaches en vogue until the 1970s in Israel explained this concentration of Jews from the Muslim world in peripheral areas by chronological factors — European Jews arrived first and therefore got into vacant housing in existing cities — and by social capital factors — European Jews were better adapted to the labour market of the central areas (Tzfadia, 2007; Achouch & Morvan, 2013).

Nevertheless, since the 1970s, there has been a consensus within Israeli academia supporting an ethnically-based segregation orchestrated by the State (Smooha & Peretz, 1982; Ram, 2000; Shafir & Peled, 2002; Yiftachel, 2000; Khazzoom, 2005; Tzfadia & Yacobi, 2011). The Eastern European Jewry had already settled in the future decision centres, while the population dispersion policy initiated in the 1950s was indeed the dispersion of African and Asian Jewish immigrants to the frontiers. The emergence of an Easterner, oriental (*Mizrahi* in Hebrew) discourse stemmed from "The territorial dispersion of many oriental immigrants into peripheral communities [that] helped create a sense of ethnic peripheral solidarity against the central, European-origin core" (Gradus, 1983).

The large-scale immigration that took place in the 1990s, after the collapse of the USSR, reactivated the long lasting Ashkenazi/*Mizrahi* divide. However, it also occurred when alternative identity discourses have finally made their way to the political scene, fuelling into new multicultural and pluralist approaches of the society.

The upcoming section will therefore address the spatial organisation of immigration, and the role of the State, and its planning functions. Next, I will emphasise in particular how this politics of difference have triggered distinct paths of integration in those cities located out of the core decisional networks. Finally, I will illustrate the 'common destiny' but also the diversity of these immigrant towns, located at the frontiers of the State, through the presentation of the four cities I have chosen to focus on for the purpose of this doctoral work. I will not mention the reasons

why I have selected those cities at the moment, as the next chapter will describe more in detail the methodological framework of this work.

2.1 Spatial organisation of immigration

The constitution of Israel's geography lies at the crossroads between two histories, so far impossible to reconcile: a history of the emancipation of the Jewish people, through the access to an independent territory, deeply connected to the biblical holy land; and one of violent colonisation and long-lasting oppression of the inhabitants of this territory, Palestine. Immigration to Israel occupies an important section in both those histories, as it has made possible the quick populating of the new country. More importantly, each wave of immigration has seen the production of territorial myths, rewriting a history of occupation of lands as pioneering and conquest over a hostile nature (Kellerman, 1996).

In order to get impression feel of the transformations of immigrant towns between their establishment to today, I looked into the large map collection at the university. The librarian helped out and showed me scanned maps she had stored on her computer. When looking at a folder entitled 'Kiryat Gat', she was excited to see that one map was an aerial photograph of the area dated 1948, before Kiryat Gat's first stone was laid. She opened the file and looked in astonishment at a village, there, where Kiryat Gat was later to stand. She could not make up her mind which village was there. I explained that Kiryat Gat was built on the ruins of the Palestinian village of Iraq-al-Manshiya. She did not answer.

The school librarian is herself an immigrant from the former Soviet Union. Although she works at a major academic institution, and thus has access to a broad range of scientific materials, she is not immune from the collective representation of Israel as an empty land, conquered by early pioneers, whose work was continued by each new wave of immigration brought to the country.

In this subsection, I will emphasise more particularly the production of new places according to immigration settlement planning. I have already mentioned the spatial organisation of the first five *Aliyot*, preceding statehood. Therefore, I will start with the establishment of the state, and the draft of a crucial planning instrument for the geography of Israel, the Sharon plan, in 1950. Drawing on the failure of the population dispersion policy, the largest immigration wave experienced by Israel in the 1990s saw the adoption of a new approach to regional planning, with the National Outline Plan 31 (or NOP 31, in Hebrew *Tama* 31). Finally, I will discuss some new instruments to encourage the settlement of immigrants in the Northern and Southern peripheral districts.

2.1.1 The Sharon plan

The spatial organisation of immigrant settlements quickly became a cornerstone of Israel's immigrant absorption policy. This organisation followed national goals, which evolved between the 1950s and the 1970s. Indeed, the settlement of immigrants at the borders in the 1950s corresponded to the necessity to strengthen security borders of state. In the 1960s, the main goal was the quick populating of the sovereign territory and the coordination of many development projects. After the six-day war in 1967, new national goals were defined, for the "occupation as rapidly as possible of areas beyond the green line" (Efrat, 1988). The State aimed at establishing new security belts, socioeconomic consolidation of established settlements and the expansion of infrastructure.

In the first months following the creation of the state, immigrants reaching Israel were hosted in transit camps, before being redirected to emptied Palestinian houses. Indeed, after the flight of 700,000 Palestinians as a result of the 1948 war, the State adopted a policy of 'absentee property' (Monterescu & Rabinowitz, 2007). Vacant Palestinian properties were rented by the government to thousands of immigrants in Jaffa, Haifa, Lod, Ramle and Yavne. They became rapidly crowded and immigrants were then sent over to Beer Sheva, Ashkelon (former Medjdal), Acre, Safed, Beit She'an or Tiberias. In the mid-1950s, all properties appropriated by the State under the law of absentee property were distributed (Orni & Efrat, 1973, p. 318). It is estimated that 120,000 immigrants were relocated in Palestinian housing (Sitton, 1962, p. 154).

As immigrant camps became overwhelmingly crowded, the State took two major steps. One of emergency, building temporary transit camps or *maabarot* close to urban centres or in rural areas where their inhabitants could participate in the labour force; and the forming of a long-term masterplan, the Sharon plan, which defined the future of agriculture and water, industry, roads, parks and forests, and more importantly for our matter, new towns (Lipshitz, 1998).

The *maabarot* were made up of shacks, built of metal sheets, or even of tents. The Jewish Agency provided the shacks and the basic furniture, and inhabitants could occupy them for a token rent. Some of those *maabarot* then became towns, like Kiryat Shmona. Contrarily to immigrant camps, *maabarot* were established next to existing towns or to agricultural settlements, providing the immigrants with jobs. Other jobs were public work ordered and financed by the State, whenever possible (Sitton, 1962, p. 155). Job swelling was a particularly important phenomenon (Lipshitz, 1998). Even though the *maabara* was thought of as a temporary camp, in 1958, there were still 117,000 immigrants awaiting permanent housing (Sitton, 1962, p. 156). Another striking fact is

that immigrants were not directed to two other kinds of existing settlements in Israel: the *kibbutz* or the *moshava*, but rather to *moshavim* or to camps next to *moshavot* (Efrat, 1988).

In parallel, the Sharon plan was adopted in 1950. Arieh Sharon, one of the main figures behind the plan, a student of the Bauhaus school, is said to have been strongly affected by the garden-city movement of British politician Ebenezer Howard at the end of the 19th century, and by central place theory, developed by German geographer Walter Christaller and German economist August Lösch in the 1930s (Achouch & Morvan, 2013; Berthomière, 2003, 2004; Gradus & Lipshitz, 1996; Lipshitz, 1998). As much as Eisenstadt's sociology has served the definition of the absorption policy, up to the 1980s, geographers in Israel were dedicated to nation-building and national planning (Schnell, 2004). In particular, they adopted logical positivist models to regional planning and population dispersion. Schnell argues:

> Israeli geographers' commitment to national goals channelled them toward a search for a research agenda that served the promotion of national identity and technical control through planning and developed those interpretative schemes that served these interests. […]. Since the 1950s, with the establishment of the national planning authority and the planning of new regions for the masses of new immigrants, the adoption of logical positivism as a paradigm that is highly oriented toward the praxis of technical control became unavoidable. (*Ibid*., p. 564)

Following their principles, the Sharon Plan aimed at establishing new towns in rural areas, where they would act as service centres. 29 new towns, called development towns, were therefore built between 1950 and 1962, mainly in the periphery of Israel. Each of them was planned to fulfil specific economic purposes: for instance, Arad and Dimona were planned to serve as residence for Dead Sea industrial workers, and to develop chemical industries (Orni & Efrat, 1973, pp. 308–312). Many other smaller settlements were also planned, and pre-state settlements, notably the ones in the central area of the country, reached town and then city status.

The Sharon Plan was one of the facets of Israel's population dispersion policy. Indeed, those new towns and settlements were thought to gain sovereignty over the new land, and to increase security at the borders. Nevertheless, "the Israeli population dispersion policy of the 1950s was essentially an immigrant-dispersion policy" (Lipshitz, 1998, p. 39). From 1954 onward, immigrants are directed 'from the boat to the development zone', in camps or in permanent housing, without getting through immigrant camps (Sitton, 1962, p. 160). And a great majority of the immigrants settled in new towns, was from Africa and Asia.

Map 3.1. Development towns in Israel, by time of establishment. Sources: Orni & Efrat (1978), Lipshitz (1998). Realised by Amandine Desille.

As early as the 1960s, those new towns were already experiencing tremendous difficulties. They did not reach the demographic goals set for them. Although those towns were heavily subsidized, and teams of planners were working hard to impose them as regional economic and service centres, their failure was quickly admitted. Indeed, provided services — like housing or education —[57] were insufficient or of poor quality; the social consequences of the uprooting of immigrant populations and their resettlement in remote areas in an unknown country were not anticipated; the economic projects, mostly relying on a poorly skilled workforce and on the agricultural products of neighbouring rural settlements, survived only thanks to governmental support.

Most importantly, the majority of the immigrants settled in those urban centres were Jewish immigrants from North African and Middle East countries, and to a lower extent, from Eastern Europe. The sense of deprivation was rapidly coupled with a sense of ethnic segregation (Gradus, 1983; Chetrit, 2000; Ram, 2000; Yiftachel, 2000; Tzfadia & Yiftachel, 2004; Yiftachel & Tzfadia, 2004; Khazzoom, 2005). As Oren Yiftachel (1998) claims, "The development towns and the frontier neighbourhoods quickly became, and have remained, distinct concentration of segregated, poor and deprived *Mizrahi* population". The fact that the newly established State primarily dealt with population dispersion, without considering the social question linked with the forced settlement of immigrant population is at the root of today's main social cracks in the Israeli society (Berthomière, 2003).

Nevertheless, the overall planning of immigration settlement remained more or less the same until the 1980s. The Soviet immigration from the 1970s has exacerbated the unequal distribution of resources, and led to the uprising of North African and Middle-East immigrants in Jerusalem and in other Israeli towns, which I will describe in the next section. However, it has not fundamentally changed the logics behind immigration settlement.

As I mentioned earlier, in the mid-1980s, Israel was forced to adopt free-market approaches to its administration, and immigration settlement policy shifted toward direct absorption. The massive immigration from the former Soviet Union, which started in 1989, was a first test to direct absorption.

[57] For many youngsters, especially Moroccans and Iraqis, the education provided in development towns was even more mediocre than when attending school in their country of origin (Sitton, 1962, p. 84). This situation is even more paradoxical knowing that education was an important means of 'modernisation' in the eyes of the running elite. However, development town pupils were mainly enrolled in the national religious system. Indeed, and this trend will continue even until today, religion is thought of as a way to 'correct' perceived deviant immigrants (Djerrahian, 2015).

2.1.2 The National Outline Plan 31

In fact, between 1990 and 1994, the country needed to provide approximately 215,000 new apartments at a moment when Israel was building around 20,000 a year (Lipshitz, 1998). Israel had to engage in large-scale building, even though immigrants could now choose where to live.

In 1992, the National Outline Plan 31 (NOP 31) was adopted, providing the new vision for spatial and housing policies. This short-range statutory plan confirmed the abandonment of the population dispersion and new towns approach. The need for a high pace immigration absorption policy would be done following a metropolitan approach (Shachar in Gradus & Lipshitz, 1996). Apart from Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, Beer Sheva became the fourth metropolitan area. This metropolitan approach meant the "fall of the geostrategic value of the peripheral areas" (*Ibid.*). In this new context, what is the role of peripheries? How can we justify the "continuous stream of public investments that allows these peripheral localities to survive?" (*Ibid.*). The NOP 31 therefore provided that the State will be responsible for public building in the periphery, a policy which proved more favourable for the Southern district, but it would focus on "building in development towns located within the community range from metropolitan employment centres" (Lipshitz, 1998). The private sector will be responsible for building in the centre. Therefore "neo-conservative free market approaches to regional development became more prominent" (Razin in Gradus & Lipshitz, 1996).

The major dilemma was that the public housing built mostly in the southern towns did not match with employment opportunities. To this end, the State introduced government-guaranteed loans to finance industrial development, and in parallel, changed the map of development zones. In this context, cities like Kiryat Gat were downgraded — or upgraded, depending on the angle — from priority area B to priority area A. This has explained why an international company like Intel had set up a branch in Kiryat Gat's industrial park in the 1990s, attracted by the fiscal opportunity of this downgrade.

Still, investments did not increase accordingly, and a third of immigrants preferred central areas, while low-income Israel families left to the periphery in search of more affordable housing (Portnov, 1998).

2.1.3 Nowadays

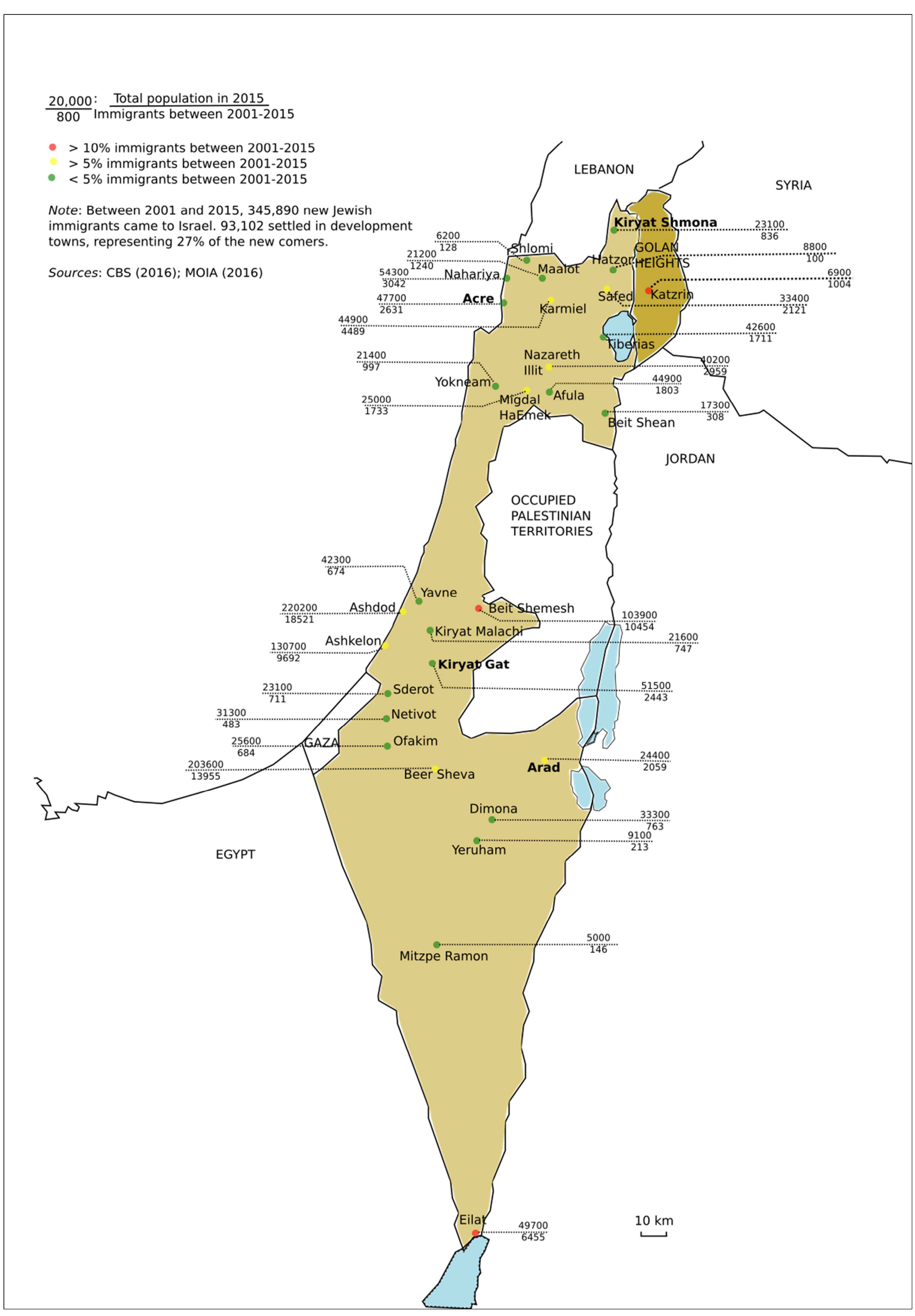
Today, most new immigrants still benefit from the 'direct absorption' policy. Nevertheless, certain groups originating from developing countries, especially Ethiopian immigrants or Indian immigrants, are first assigned to absorption centres where they stay for approximately two

years, before being directed to specific neighbourhoods in determined cities, where they are offered more favourable terms to access property. Once again, subsidies are contingent on the settlement locality.

For immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Europe or America, direct absorption prevails. However, public housing is more easily available in peripheral cities. Immigrants with lower incomes, at age of retirement, single-parent families or disabled people are therefore overrepresented in those cities, while younger active professionals find their way to the centre (Aymard & Benko, 1998; Lipshitz, 1998).

To rebalance this unequal distribution of immigrants, several programmes are supported by the government, the Jewish Agency, the MOIA and other ministries such as the Ministry for the Development of the Galilee and the Negev. For instance, the 'Go North' and 'Go South' programmes provide for higher absorption baskets and personal accompaniment for newcomers who accept to settle in peripheral areas. Similarly, the Jewish Agency, the MOIA and municipalities have partnered to establish the programme 'group *Aliyah*': I will elaborate further on this particular programme in the following chapters, as it funds a large part of immigration integration programmes I have found in the cities I explore.

The following map shows that development towns are still important sites for first settlement of new immigrants. In fact, 27% of immigrants made their way to those towns between 2001 and 2015, providing an average of 4% demographic growth. Some cities, such as Katzrin, Beit Shemesh and Eilat, count more than 10% immigrants from 2001 among their residents.



Map 3.2. Immigrants' arrival by developments towns, in absolute numbers and as a proportion of the total number of residents, from 1 January 2001 to 30 November 2015. Source: CBS (2016), MOIA (2016). Realised by Amandine Desille

As I have described, immigration has played an instrumental role in the structuration of Israeli space. In particular, the establishment of development towns to absorb the numerous newcomers that reached Israel after 1948, while at the same time ensuring the Israeli presence at the borders of the state, have definitively marked off Israeli peripheral urban settlements as places of relegation and difference. Deserted by its own inhabitants, shunned by Israelis belonging to the centre, the State has relentlessly attempted at repopulated those areas through planning and housing policies. Up to today, mechanisms — although much less coercive — are maintained to encourage the settlement of newcomers in frontier towns. However, the results of these incentives are rather limited. The perception of oppression of the inhabitants of these towns, often *Mizrahi*, but also FSU immigrants, has led them to adopt aggressive attitudes towards Palestinians and Arab neighbours altogether. Those that have coexisted with Moslems for centuries have therefore become their first enemies, in an attempt to distance themselves from Arab populations. It is this issue that will be discussed in the next subsection.

2.2 Periphery, Mizrahi identity and politics

The 'ingathering of the exiles' and *Aliyah* were a cornerstone of the newly established state of Israel. In that context, new immigrants reaching the country met up with a paradoxical discourse of integration into the Jewish state, on the basis of their differences in their origin regions; while being requested to abandon their language, their cultural and religious practices, as well as their previous professions and statuses. Instead, they had to adopt new norms and values, as defined by the European founding fathers.

As early as the 1960s and 1970s, growing resentment and social unrest shook the integration frame set by the founders. This period saw the emergence of an Easterner '*Mizrahi*' political movement, representing immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East mostly: the second Israel (*Israel hashnia* in Hebrew). But there are two sides to those emerging social and political movements: if they aim at protesting, they do not necessarily produce an integration path outside the one set by the elite, instead straining to become part of the majority group and to resemble the elite. This situation of in-between is what led post-colonialist Israeli scholars to develop the concept of 'trapped communities', which I will develop in the second subsection. The social movements did not immediately crystallise into political parties. Finally, in the 1980s and 1990s, new political parties grew stronger to represent Sephardic religious Israelis, and later on, immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

Those parties represent the new divisions of Israeli society. Stratifications occur following multiple divides: a Jewish/Palestinian national divide, an Ashkenazi/Sephardic or *Mizrahi* divide

within the Jewish population, but also a religious/secular divide, and lastly, in terms of politics, a democratic post-Zionist/nationalist neo-Zionist divide. Those divides are even more challenged today, with the new voices of Ethiopian Israelis, non-Jewish FSU immigrants and their offspring, non-Jewish immigrants from Asia and Africa and more. As Israel comes to resemble other immigration countries, integration frameworks are constantly challenged.

2.2.1 Rehabilitation and adoption of a modern, new Jewish identity

In an attempt to analyse whom the Israeli citizens are, the sociologists Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled have shown that Israel has adopted three different discourses of citizenship. On the one hand, Israel has adopted a liberal citizenship discourse, where all the inhabitants within the borders of Israel are granted citizenship and the bundle of rights associated to it. But it also adopted a republican conception of citizenship, primarily based on pioneering through physical labour and agricultural settlement, and later on based on compulsory military service. Lastly, it adopted an ethnonationalist approach to citizenship, best expressed by the Law of Return, which provides that all Jews can take part in the nation. Therefore, Israel's incorporation regime is defined by "a collectivist republican discourse, based on 'pioneering' civic virtue, an ethnonationalist discourse, based on Jewish descent, and an individualist liberal discourse" (Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004; Shafir & Peled, 2002).

In this context, Jews from Africa and Asia, even though they were integrated in the ethnonational project, were not considered as pioneers as the European Jews who settled before the establishment of the state in the collective farms (*kibbutzim*). They have no right to define the collective national project (Ram, 1995; Shafir & Peled, 2002). They were downgraded to the status of *mehagrim*, i.e. regular immigrants, were regarded as 'traditional', and were therefore the target of the absorption policies which I defined earlier, to integrate the values of the pioneers (Ram, 1995).

In his publication *Israël et ses juifs. Essai sur les limites du volontarisme*, the French sociologist Haroun Jamous (1982) interprets voluntarism in the first years of the establishment of Israel. In his research, he focuses on Jews from Asia and Africa who were directed to peripheral new towns. Jamous denounces the assimilationist policy of Israel, which has defined new immigrants as 'primitive', and has justified their rehabilitation toward the adoption of a modern, new Jewish identity. The book exhibits the growing resentment of these 'reluctant pioneers'.[58] Based on the

[58] 'Reluctant pioneers' was first coined by Alex Weingrod (1966), and refers to those immigrants who were given housing at the frontiers of the State, particularly in development towns.

collected stories of the inhabitants of Dimona, Kiryat Shmona, Karmiel and the Lachish region, Jamous argues:

> Thus we understand this paradox of a society where everything seems to aim at and aspire to integration, where everyone is constantly invited to participate, to take a close part in collective… only provided that one stays in one's place. To content oneself with internalizing the values and conceptions of the founding fathers.[59] (Jamous, 1982)

Altogether, this period of forced assimilation has played the major role of erasing the socio-cultural diversity among new Israelis — the new generation does not speak any of the previously spoken languages, those adopting a religious life follow Ashkenazi traditions… etc. — while reinforcing the difference between Jews from Europe and Jews from Asia and Africa. Therefore, Israelis who could have a chance to bridge and mediate with the Palestinian populations are indeed their fiercer enemies, in an attempt to distance themselves from an Arab 'Other' (Yiftachel, 2000; Yiftachel & Tzfadia, 2004).

2.2.2 *The 'second Israel' and the rise of a* Mizrahi *consciousness*

The pre-eminence of nation-building goals over dealing with the social issues that could arise from the uprooting of large communities has created the fault line between an European Ashkenazi core and an African-Asian *Mizrahi* periphery (Berthomière, 2004). Indeed, individuals left on the sidelines began to constitute a more coherent group, and forged what became the 'second Israel' (*Israel hashnia* in Hebrew).

The first well-know uprising occurred in Haifa, in the neighbourhood of Wadi Salib in 1959. However, it is the major second protest that more or less constitutes the emergence of *Mizrahi*[60] consciousness: "Although the Black Panthers did not formulate an alternative world view,[61] they were heralds of a new *Mizrahi* discourse" (Chetrit, 2000, p. 53).

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[59] Translation of the author.

[60] Harvey Goldberg and Chen Bram provide a comprehensive chronology of the emergence of *Mizrahi*. *Mizrahi* is usually understood as Sephardic Jewry. Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews existed before, but Sephardic related to Jews of Iberian origin, speaking Ladino, thus differentiating between Sephardic and Middle Eastern Jewry. Before 1948 in Israel, Jews were referred to by their community of origin: e.g Mugrabi or Urfeli. After 1948, the administration in charge of immigrants used a 'shortcut', designating Jewish immigrants by their country of origin, therefore lumping Jews of Casablanca and the Atlas Mountains under a common Moroccan identity. The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics even began to lump them together them by continents (Goldberg & Bram, 2007). The category "African and Asian Jew" still persists today in CBS reports. Finally, the terms *edot hamizrah* (Eastern communities) and later on *Mizrahim* (Easterners) emerged, but Shlomo Swirski argues that *Mizrahim* is more appropriate as it is a denomination from the bottom, from society, and not from the hegemony. Other terms like Arab Jews were promoted (Shenhav, 2006).

[61] Nevertheless, the Black Panthers did question the occupation of Palestine. Indeed, "The Panthers […]

At the time, the Jerusalem district of Musrara was a slum, neglected because of the military situation. After the 1967 war — also known as the six-day-war —, the military situation ended but nothing was done to better accommodate the residents of Musrara. The Black Panther movement emerged from a perception of injustice between the precarious and overcrowded homes of 1950s immigrants, and the newly built housings reserved for the 350,000 newcomers arriving between 1970 and 1979, most of them from the USSR (Shama & Iris, 1977; Chetrit, 2000; S. Cohen & Shemesh, 1976). Shalom Cohen describes the protests of 1971 as "a huge explosion of popular discontent, a grass roots explosion" (S. Cohen & Shemesh, 1976). Demonstrations gathered 10,000 to 15,000 people who wanted to change things. In 1972, the Black Panthers created the Israeli Democrats-Black Panthers movement, later on Black Panther Party.

The Black Panthers movement started in Jerusalem and was rather restricted to Jerusalem and the centre. Indeed, "The relative detachment of the towns from the major political struggles of Israeli society was conspicuous in the early 1970s, when the Black Panthers movement mobilized many *Mizrahim*, especially in Jerusalem's poor neighbourhoods, but managed to rally only scant support in the towns" (Tzfadia & Yiftachel, 2004, p. 6). The Black Panthers have probably failed to mobilise a large number of the *Mizrahim* in Israel, and votes for the party were very low (S. Cohen & Shemesh, 1976).

Erez Tzfadia and Yiftachel studied other kinds of social movements in the new towns where residents are mostly of African and Asian descent. They found 345 acts of protest between 1960 and 1998, with picks during the mid 1960s, the late 1970s, the mid 1980s, the late 1980s, and the mid 1990. 62% of the acts of protest dealt with economic issues, 22% with political issues, 11% with planning issues and 5% fell into the "other" category (Tzfadia & Yiftachel, 2004, p. 6). As they explain that social protest "demands resources from the state and economic forces, while attempting to maintain control over the local 'turf'" (*Ibid.*), they state:

> The public protest by *Mizrahim* in the towns has voiced demands for a fairer share of Israel's public resources, falling within the 'legitimate' boundaries of Zionist political discourse. In local election campaigns, however, the *Mizrahim* raised a more intense political voice, focusing on competition against the large number of 'Russians' immigrants who arrived during the 1990s. (*Ibid.,* p. 2)

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were also the first Mizrahim in politics to make the connection between the occupation of the Palestinian territories and the difficult economic and social plight of the Mizrahim" (Chetrit, 2000, p. 53).

In general, the main problem those protests aimed at addressing was the unfair allocation of State resources (S. Cohen & Shemesh, 1976, p. 22). In that sense, the *Mizrahi* discourse was not so much a discourse of contest and production of an alternative path for integration. It rallied a need to take part in the European Ashkenazi dominant group. Indeed, when they study the entrapment of *Mizrahi* Israelis, Israeli scholars show that their unity mainly emerges from a feeling of deprivation:

> Seemingly, the imposition of a new ethnic identity appears to be one of the main victories of the Zionist project. The creation of this new identity involved the de-Arabization of the Mizrahim, the near total erasure of their cultures, the nationalisation of their politics, and their assimilation into Israel's economy and expanding middle-class. Yet, as Shenhav demonstrates, Mizrahi identity has been preserved at the social and economic peripheries, not as a distinct cultural orientation, as a diffused sense of origin and solidarity, fuelled by persisting marginality and hardship. (Tzfadia, 2007)

In that sense, *Mizrahi* populations are trapped in between their desire to achieve the modern, new Jewish identity that has been imposed on them from their immigration, while at the same time distancing themselves from the Arab 'enemy' Israel has created:

> There is a clear nexus connecting the de-Arabization of the country with the marginalisation of peripheral Mizrahis, who have been positioned culturally and geographically between Arabs and Jews, between Israel and its hostile neighbours, between a « backward » Eastern past and a « progressive Western future. (Yiftachel, 1998)

Even though the *Mizrahi* movement has not immediately produced new integration paths, it has introduced the first fault lines at local levels of the Zionist project of *Aliyah* and ingathering of the exiles. Indeed, blaming an unequal distribution of resources, the Law of Return is not accepted by all.

2.3 Towards a more complex stratification of Israel society

In the next subsection, I will introduce the deep fault line that is usually dated 1977, the year Likud accessed the parliament, overruling the founding Labour party. The changes it induced, together with the mass immigration from the FSU, have had tremendous impact on the development towns I study. The four cases have their own micro-histories, but they also bear the marks of the social, political and historical changes of the country as a whole. They combine the uniqueness of the place, with policies, plans and decisions made at different scales, adopted, reproduced and sometimes contested.

The city of Acre is typical of the existing Arab towns which were extended to absorb immigrants. Acre is an old urban centre, and its old city, predominantly Palestinian-Israeli, includes remains of the crusaders' period, the Ottoman period and Jewish life which attract international and Israeli tourists. I will present this city first.

The second 'category' of city, includes the towns of Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona. Both of them are typical of the former *maabarot*, transit camps, which became development towns. However, their evolution has differed. Kiryat Shmona, located at the Lebanese border, has been in a constant war situation from the 1970s to the mid-2000s. Its economic basis is low and it is very dependent on the government's transfers. Kiryat Gat has strongly beneficiated from the NOP 31, and now hosts a large technological park, a landmark of which Intel Fab 21 is.

Finally, Arad is an example of the second-generation development town, where planners insisted on organising a better population mix, with old-timers and newcomers settling together, and making sure that new residents will be able to adapt to the local labour market. Even though this kind of planning has long been perceived as more successful, Arad has been through tough times over the last three decades, sometimes put down to its relative geographic isolation, to its leadership or to the 10,000 immigrants who made their way to the city in the 1990s.

Through those portraits, it is one facet of Israel that appears. This facet of the country is often absent from the nation's collective imagination, particularly outside the borders of Israel. However, their weight on its history and on Israeli politics is far from marginal.

2.3.1 The development towns as backers of new social and political positions

The emergence of a *Mizrahi* consciousness based on class and ethnicity, the sad predicament of development towns' residents grounded in "geographic marginality, persisting deprivation and demographic instability" (Tzfadia & Yiftachel, 2004, p. 1), the failure of the Kippur War in 1973, and the economic crisis in the 1970s led to a loss of legitimacy of the Labour party, traditionally Ashkenazi. In 1977, thanks to the votes of African and Asian immigrants, Likud came to power in the Israeli parliament and Menachem Begin became Prime Minister. This election initiated a more complex stratification of Israel society, along socio-economical, political, ethnic and religious divisions (Berthomière, 2004).

Indeed, the Labour party, formerly *Mapai*, successfully penetrated immigrant settlements in the 1950s and 1960s. However, with the failure of immigrant integration in development towns, the party was held responsible for the disintegration of the family unity, the loss of religious symbols and overall discriminations (Bensimon, 2006). The right-wing party Likud, on the

contrary, has almost continuously dominated Israeli politics until today (Arad, 2015; Kashti, 2015a; Levinson, 2015; Spigel & Saidler, 2015).

Likud will endlessly promote a neoliberal approach to the State, burying the socialist experience of Israel and favouring a market-oriented economy. Ironically, the first to suffer from this new approach were the residents of development towns, whose transfers from national governments would decrease every year. Daniel Bensimon (2006) believes that its success is due to a discourse based on status. He argues:

> seeking a rewarding status is sometimes unconscious and provides the ground for a theatrical political style which does not aim at solving existing problems, but rather at providing its audience with a feeling of importance, of being at the centre of society.[62] (*Ibid.*)

This election was also to confirm the split of Israeli politics into two new opposed blocks: the post-Zionists, mobilising more largely Ashkenazi secular Israelis, advocating a liberal, secular Israel alongside a Palestinian state; the neo-Zionists, mobilising more *Mizrahi* and religious groups, believe in a Jewish ethnonational state (Ram, 2000; Shafir & Peled, 2002; Berthomière, 2004; Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004). The latter is extremely nationalist, racist and anti-democratic. It uses a populist discourse fed on the conflict and on hatred of a Palestinian other (*Ibid.*). This last block — although itself divided between a more Zionist and a more religious blocks (Acosta, 2014) — has been gaining weight in the past two decades in Israel.

Likud is not always the only alternative to *Mizrahi* voters. In development towns, they will give their voices to a "range of political movements,[63] which promote local patriotism, and especially Mizrahi Jewishness (Ben-Ari & Bilu, 1987). Most notable has been the successful ultra-orthodox movement of Shas" (Tzfadia & Yiftachel, 2004). *Shas* (Sephardic Guardians of the Torah) was originally formed in Jerusalem in 1983 with the support of Rabbi Schach, and led by Rabbis Ovadia Yosef and Aryeh Deri. *Shas* aimed at representing Sephardic Jews in Israel, as well as facilitating their access to resources to carry out their activities. It has a social agenda, particularly successful in a context of welfare vacuum. Their success surprised the leaders themselves. But *Shas* has been extremely resilient and has managed to secure a diverse base of voters up to today (Berthomière, 2004; Zrehen, 2004; Hecker, 2006).

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[62] Translation of the author.

[63] Indeed, after the failure of the Black Panther party, a new *Mizrahi* party rose: TAMI was established in 1981 and led by Aharon Abuhatzera (Chetrit, 2000, p. 56). Like the Panthers, TAMI did not offer an alternative worldview. It appealed to a collective *Mizrahi* memory. Ultimately it failed but it had paved the ground for *Shas*.

As immigration intensified and the NOP 31 was adopted, a large amount of FSU immigrants settled in new towns. This second encounter between Soviet Jews and *Mizrahi* inhabitants of the development towns was not smoother than in the 1970s. Once again, protests and social movements relating to the perceived unequal distribution of resources were registered in those areas (Tzfadia & Yiftachel, 2004).

Besides changing the face of those towns, the 1990s FSU immigration also had a profound influence on Israeli politics. The first national elections in which newcomers took part occurred in 1992. The immigrants' votes ensured the victory of the left Labour party, and consecrated Izhak Rabin as prime minister. Indeed, a majority of FSU immigrants were disappointed by the immigration absorption process led by Likud and favour Labour (Storper-Perez, 1998).

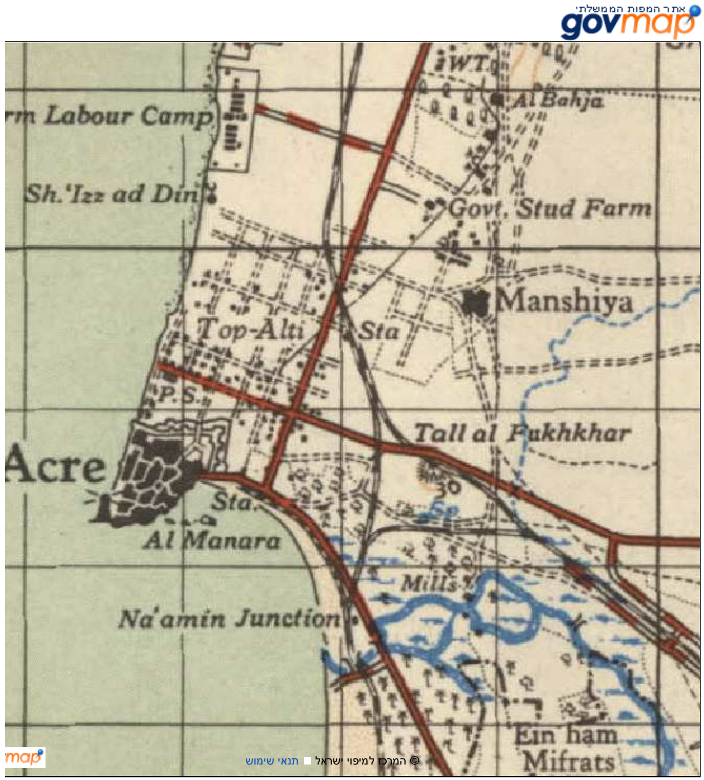
In 1995, *refuznik* and Soviet immigrant from the 1970s Natan Sharansky founded the Russian right-wing party *Israel beAliyah* (a pun meaning 'Israel on the rise' as well as 'Israel in immigration'). At the 1996 elections, half of FSU immigrants voted for this party, securing seven seats in the parliament. Following political conflicts, *Israel beAliyah* was to disappear to leave *Israel Beitenu* (Israel our house) to enter the political scene. The Moldavian immigrant Avigdor Lieberman founded *Israel Beitenu* in 1999. It represents Russian-speaking immigrants and is primarily secular, nationalist, Zionist and adopts a hawkish position with regard to the conflict. The adoption of a nationalist approach is analysed in terms of similar 'entrapment' as for the 1950s and 1960s immigrants. Indeed, "the act of immigration 'upgrades' the Russian Jews from Ethnicos in the Soviet Union to Ethnos in Israel" (Tzfadia & Yacobi, 2007). *Israel Beitenu* benefits from an expanded local 'network'. Indeed, since the 1980s, political actions got more and more local (Gradus, 1983) and ethnic and religious parties became important actors in the local governments. Local politicians in charge of immigration and integration issues in the local councils are in majority members of *Israel Beitenu*.

The first town I present is not particularly well-known for its intense immigration activities, but rather for the cohabitation of Palestinian-Israelis and Jewish Israelis. However, its deputy mayor belongs to *Israel Beitenu*, which represents the interests of tens of thousands of immigrants from the FSU.

2.3.2 Acre, from an old Palestinian urban centre to an immigrant settlement town

The old city of Acre is a popular tourist attraction for Israeli and foreign tourists. A mere hour and a half train ride from Tel Aviv, along the coast and through Haifa, brings the visitors to the 46,300 town. From the train station, it is hard to imagine that the city includes the vestiges of the

crusader city of Saint Jean d'Acre. The main thoroughfare leading to the seafront promenade is almost empty, lined by timeworn three-storey buildings. Dozens of soldiers wait for the local bus to the nearby military base. It is therefore tempting to hop in one of the taxis offering to drive you straight into the old city. Some of the bravest do decide to take the 20-minute walk to the battlements of old Acre. Two routes are possible: through the city centre where one will walk between the small local shops serving the local population; or past the imposing conservatorium and municipal buildings to the newly renovated seafront promenade. There, some restaurants and cafés put up English signs to attract tourists.



Map 3.3. Acre in 1940. Source: govmap.gov.il (2017).

Acre is one of the oldest cities in the world, one that has been continuously inhabited for the last four millennia (Orni & Efrat, 1973; Shoval, 2013). However, tourist attractions represent mainly three of the city's temporal strata: the crusader city, with the Knights Hall and the crusaders' tunnel; the Ottoman city, with the embellishments made by the Ottoman governor Ahmad Pasha Al-Jazzar, at a time where Acre was a large trading centre, especially for the cotton produced in the area (Philipp, 2001) — one can visit Acre's walls, the Al-Jazzar Mosque, the Turkish bath and the Khan al-Umdan caravanserai; and the more recent Jewish presence, illustrated by the synagogues or the ethnographic museum. The Palestinian inhabitants of the old city have little representation in this historical overview of the city. Indeed, Palestinians inhabited Acre before

the establishment of the state. After 1948, many fled to the neighbouring countries. The old city absorbed remaining Palestinian residents from the surrounding villages while a new city developed around the city walls, absorbing immigrants. At the end of the 1960s, the Jewish population was twice as large as the Palestinian Israeli residents (Orni & Efrat, 1973).

Picture 3.1. Old city of Acre. Credit: Amandine Desille (2015)

Picture 3.2. Acre's harbour. Credit: Amandine Desille (2015)

Today, the municipality not only continues to promote a stippled historical account of the city development, where the Palestinian presence is perceived as almost accidental, but it also

expands its activities to integrate the whole city — outside the Ottoman walls — as a potential tourist destination. Indeed, the modest budget dedicated to tourism has been invested in new tourist maps, including attractions all around the city: synagogues of the different ethnic groups represented in the city, parks, the Bahai Baha Hulla temple, but also sites as "the train's iron bridge built by the Jews of Akko in 1922" or "the old railroad station (beg. Of the 20th century) About 10,000 Jews came here from Lebanon during the 2nd World War". 22 out of the 35 sites indicated on the maps are labelled "Jewish sites". The immigration and integration municipal department also distributes this map to newcomers to the city. The city has also published a book including descriptions of the different sites as well as recipes given by local residents. Those efforts are part of a broader initiative to reposition the city. The new branding "Acre, city of the Mediterranean Cultures" includes tourism, but also activities linked to the cohabitation of Jewish and Palestinian Israelis in the city, as well as to immigrant-oriented activities. As of 2014, 47,500 residents lived in Acre, including almost 31% of Palestinians holding Israeli citizenship, and around 20% of immigrants who arrived after 1990, most of them from the FSU (including 3, 100 individuals who were not Jewish according to the administration) (CBS, 2015b).

Additionally, the city has engaged in restoring the image of the city in terms of economy and security. Acre's main activities are tourism, mid-tech factories and services. Its socio-economic rank is 4 on a scale from one to ten. In 2011, 34% of municipal incomes came from the central government's transfers.[64] A situation the city wants to overcome. Indeed, the spokesperson tries to publicise the new steps the city takes. When we first met, he said:

> it was important for them to show that Acre was certainly the city of the old city, and hummus and Knafe, but also a modern city and that this combination is the key. Today, Acre hosts 54,000 residents. 2000 units are in construction. Some years ago, Acre was evaluated as "dangerous for investment" but today, it ranks 10th for safe investment. Acre is a city of art, with the philharmonic, the opera, the conservatory… 10% of the students study music. (Interview 3, 2014)

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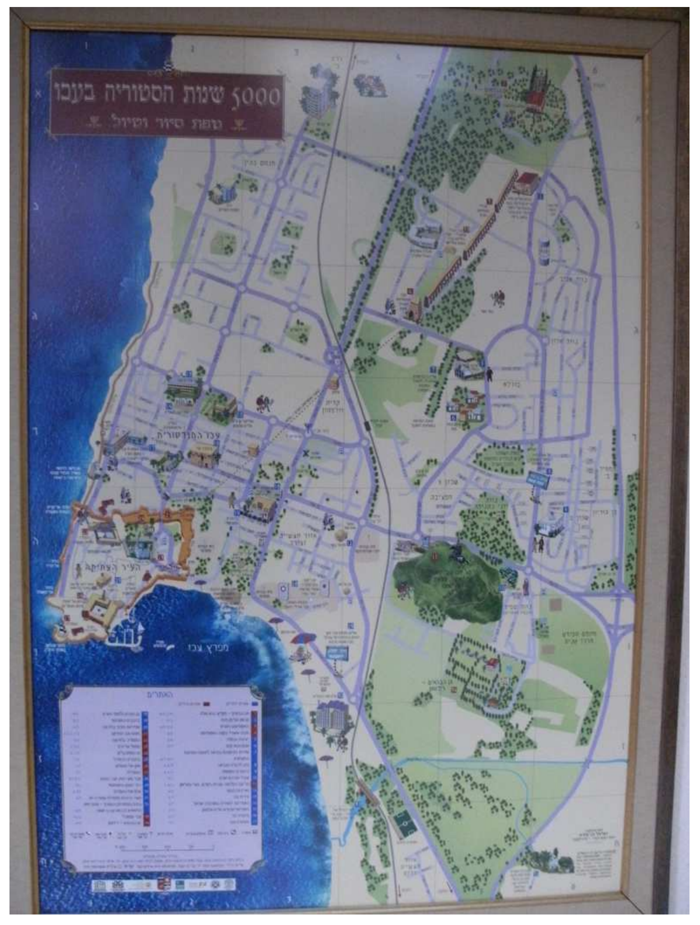
[64] Data collected on the central bureau of statistics Website: http://www1.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local_authorities12_1573/pdf/276_7600.pdf



Picture 3.3. Tourism map of Acre, taken in the mayor's office. Credit: Amandine Desille (2015).

In this new endeavour, the mayor of Acre has an ally: the industrialist Michael Strauss, former CEO of the Israeli food manufacturer Strauss-Elite. Strauss assists the mayor in bringing new investors to the city, or in convincing potential donors to support the city's development.

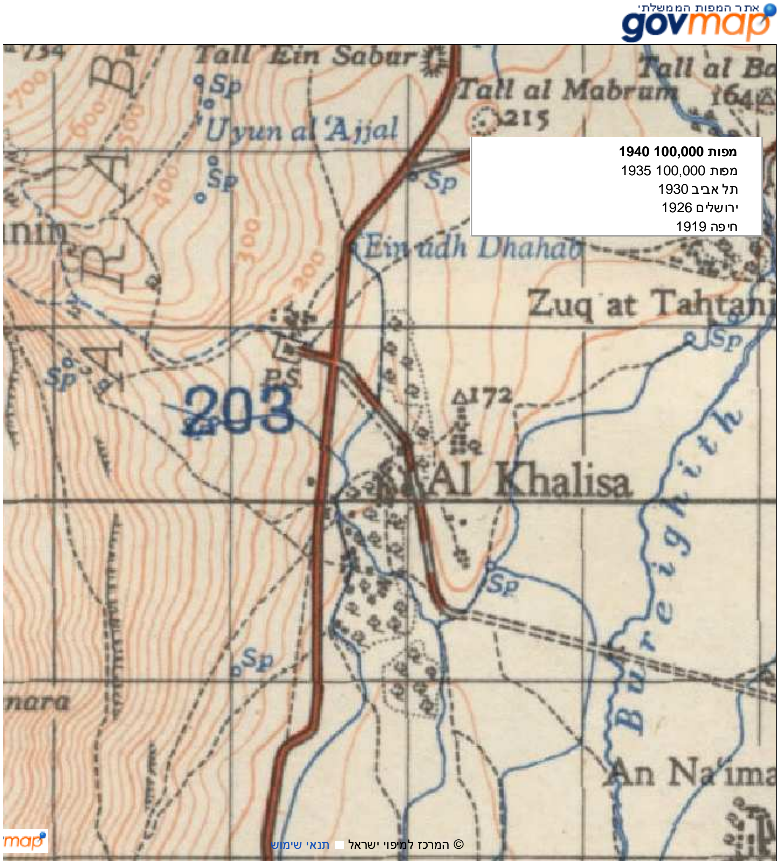
Shimon Lancry, Acre's mayor since 2003, has brought a new lease of life to the city. Before his term, he was the director of the centres for culture, youth and sport (*matnass* in Hebrew). Since his first election in 2003, he has been re-elected twice, with more than 70% of the votes. The face of Acre is slowly changing: new buildings can be seen in the eastern and southern areas of the city, where new communication infrastructures allow fast commuting to the Haifa metropolitan area. New sociocultural infrastructures can be found too: between 2015 and 2016, the city built a new youth centre, a centre for the Caucasus Jews of Acre, a new leisure park and more.

The mayor, together with one of his deputy mayors Zion, member of *Israel Beitenu* and himself an immigrant from Ukraine, has pushed forward an immigration agenda. Today there are six municipal agents employed by the municipality dealing with immigration issues. Their jobs are

mainly funded by the MOIA, but also by the municipality. Those agents are in charge of attracting immigration candidates to Acre. Moreover, they are in charge of the administrative, social, cultural and economic accompaniment of the newcomers. The number of immigration agents is the highest among the four cities studied, and this does not include other municipal agents in other departments whose job descriptions specifically request command of Russian and other intercultural skills. Additionally, the mayor and his deputy travel several times a year to regions where Jewish families are present, mostly in Russian-speaking countries, to convince them to settle in Acre.

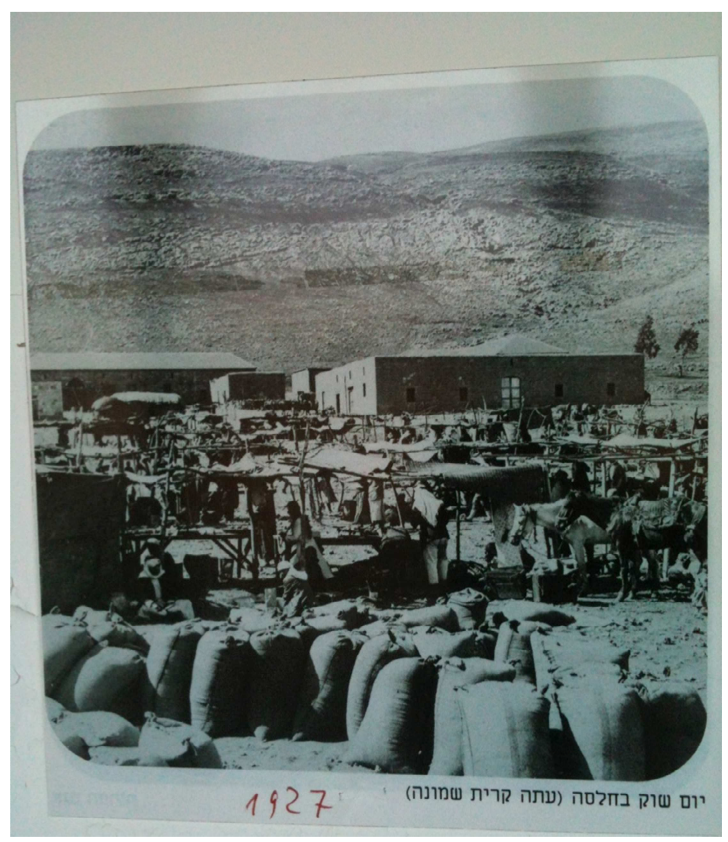
2.3.3 Kiryat Shmona and Kiryat Gat: from the maabarot to cities, two distinct paths

Kiryat Shmona is located in northern Galilee, a few kilometres away from the Lebanese border. It was established in 1949 on the lands of the former Arab village Al Khalisa, first as a *maabara* and then as a development town, absorbing Asian and African Jews. From Al Khalisa, little remains: the local restaurant Mama Khalisa is reminiscent of the former Palestinian village, as well as the mosque which today hosts the little municipal museum.



Map 3.4. Kiryat Shmona in 1940. Source: govmap.gov.il (2017)

Picture 3.4. Market of Al Khalisa in 1927. Snapshot of a photograph hanging out of the Youth Centre (2015).



Picture 3.5. The Maabara. Credit: municipal museum of Kiryat Shmona.

Picture 3.6. The municipal museum of Kiryat Shmona. Credit: Amandine Desille (2014).

I visited the municipal museum with a former teacher of history, now volunteering at the museum. We went through the collection of pictures and newspapers conserved here. Hopefully, this little museum will soon be turned into something bigger. Indeed, Tel Hai College and the municipality are putting together a national project for a *maabara* museum. The museum is designed as a branch of the Israel museum, and aims at bringing back the *maabara* into the narratives of Israeli nation building. A way for the residents of Kiryat Shmona to be proud of their past, shifting from reluctant pioneers to nation builders, says the initiator of the project (Interview 56, 2015)

This is a hard task for a city used to telling a story of remoteness and oppression. Kiryat Shmona's residents have always blamed the establishment and the neighbouring *kibbutz* members for the socioeconomic depression of the town. Tensions between Kiryat Shmona and the surrounding *kibbutzim* already existed in the 1960s (Jamous, 1982), and are still reported today. Indeed, the regional council owns the newly built commercial centre; residents reaching higher socio-economic levels leave to establish in the newly built '*archavot*'[65] of the villages around. Those difficulties are also linked to the fact that Kiryat Shmona had been 'under fire' from the first attacks in 1973 until the second Lebanon-Israel war ending in 2006. Three decades of constant firing and Hezbollah attacks have discouraged all investors, leaving Kiryat Shmona with very few employment opportunities.

[65] New neighbourhoods built in kibbutzim where non-members live

Therefore, the city has suffered constant out-migration for years, each wave of immigration to the country enabling the city to counterbalance this out-migration. The latest mass migration wave from the Former Soviet Union brought thousands of newcomers to the city. In 2014, Kiryat Shmona had 23,100 residents (CBS, 2015a), 16% being FSU immigrants. Lately, the local branch of the MOIA records only a handful of arrivals every year. The mayor of the city, Nissim (Likud), does not emphasize immigration in its political program. Therefore, the deputy mayor (*Israel Beitenu*) — himself a FSU immigrant — took over this issue and until recently was in charge of the *Aliyah* and absorption portfolio of the municipality. It mostly provides sociocultural services to the existing communities.

The socio-economic rank of the city is 5.[66] However, the municipality has required reassessing this indicator, arguing that it is too high and prevents the municipality from receiving tax transfers in order to develop the city. Indeed, the city has few industries, mainly low tech, commerce and services. In 2011, the city received more than 50% of its budget as transfers, being the second peripheral town benefitting from these transfers, after Migdal HaEmek.

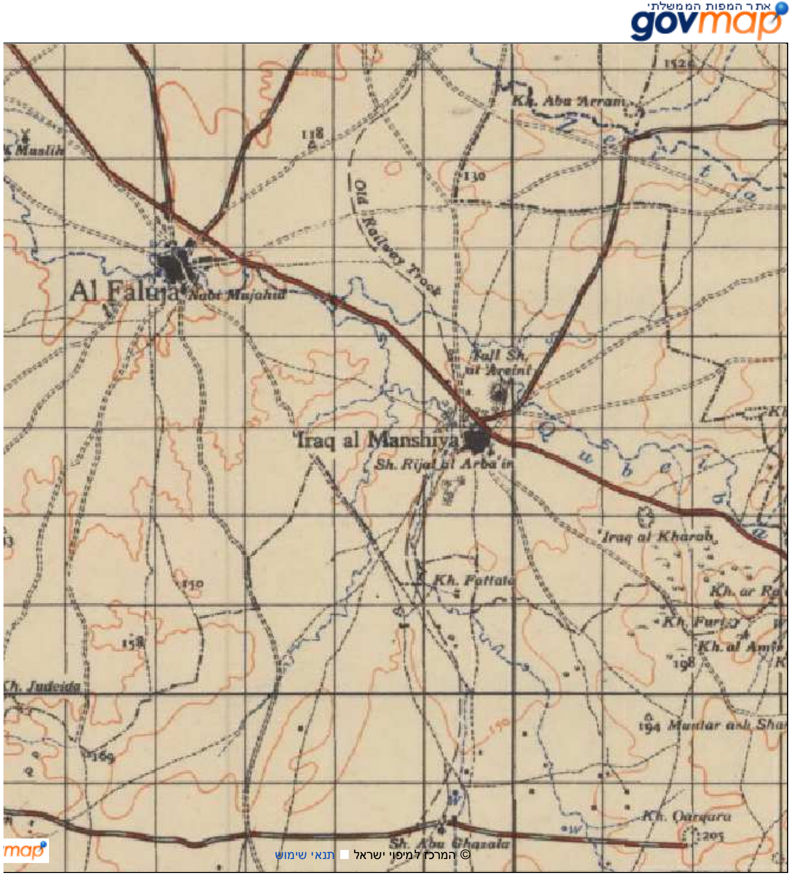
Today, the city still suffers from out-migration, especially of youngsters who look for opportunities in the centre. If the city does not carry out outreach programmes for immigrants, it does have a policy for demographic growth. The Youth Centre, under the aegis of the Ministry for the Development of Galilee and Negev, is the main organisation in charge of demographic growth. Its mission is to retain youths who grew up in the city, to attract young families who left the city but could potentially settle back, and to attract new families. The centre does so through assistance in job hunting, education but also through its involvement in the development of new real estate, like the newly transferred lands where the Yuvalim neighbourhood will soon develop (Ben Esher, 2015).

The Yuvalim project is certainly a win for the municipality, but it does not compare with Kiryat Gat's new development, even though they were both established under similar conditions.

Kiryat Gat was named after the antique Philistine city-state of Gath, the city of biblical giant Goliath. Nevertheless, archaeological excavations conducted since 1996 locate Gath some kilometres away from Kiryat Gat, in Tel Zafit national park. Kiryat Gat was founded in 1955 on the ruins of the Palestinian villages Iraq-al-Manshiya and Al-Faluja, whose inhabitants were forced to flee during the 1948 war.

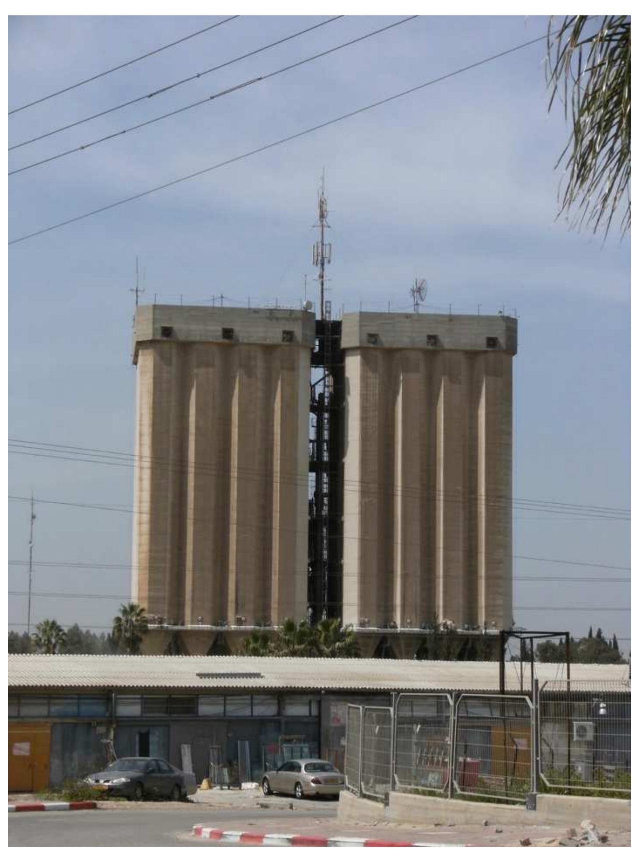
[66] Information collected on the central bureau of statistics Website: http://www1.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local_authorities12_1573/pdf/315_2800.pdf

Map 3.5. Kiryat Gat in 1940. Source: govmap.gov.il (2017)



Kiryat Gat was established in 1955 as a development town and the service and industrial centre of the planned Lachish region (Jamous, 1982). Mainly populated by African and Asian Jews, Kiryat Gat crystallizes my own representation of the 1950s immigration planning. Indeed, my acquaintance with the Lachish region started when I arrived in Israel in 2010, three years before I engaged in my research project. From 2010 to 2013, I worked at the Weitz Centre for Development Studies in Rehovot. “Mr. Development” Raanan Weitz, under the aegis of the Jewish Agency, established this non-profit company in 1962. The Settlement Study Centre has based its work on the integrated regional development approach, for which Lachish has been a flagship project. Indeed, Weitz has been involved in the planning of Kiryat Gat and the Lachish region together with other planners. Even though I worked right in the midst of books published by Weitz, I never had the chance to meet him. However, I did met another planner involved with the Lachish team, Izhak Abt. Abt explains that the specificity of Kiryat Gat’s planning was to involve a team of planners who would also live on-site, together with the newcomers. Kiryat Gat was planned to be the service centre of this agricultural region. Therefore, the team implemented agricultural and agro-industrial projects in parallel: the Sugat manufacture transformed the sugar beet planted in the area. Some years later, the Polgat industries transformed the growing cotton into textile.

Picture 3.7. Shikun in Kiryat Gat. Credit: Amandine Desille (2015).



Picture 3.8. The silo in Kiryat Gat. Credit: Amandine Desille (2015).

Polgat industries have been a symbol of Kiryat Gat's industrial sector for decades in Israel. The first factory was established in 1961. Its establishment is part of the founding myths of the city. The industrialist Polack who founded the Polgat group was brought from the airport to Kiryat Gat on a Shabbat morning, his driver driving at high speed on the empty road, creating the

illusion that Kiryat Gat was only 15 minutes from Tel Aviv. They say that Polack was not fooled but decided to build the factory anyway. While we drive around the city of Kiryat Gat, Abt also shows me other innovative projects implemented after the establishment of the city, like the experimental Glickson neighbourhood planned by German-Israeli architect Arthur Glickson to enhance social mix.

Kiryat Gat displays this paradox of having been a flagship project of the Settlement Study Centre and the ministries promoting its activities, while being considered a socioeconomic periphery, with the financial and political dependence it means for the town. Indeed, Abt tells me stories of national and foreign politicians who came to Kiryat Gat to hear about their planning approach. The Settlement Study Centre has conducted training programmes and projects based on the Lachish case for decades — I was myself involved in the dissemination of this approach between 2010 and 2013. Thousands of professionals from all around the world have been trained in Israel following this model.

The Lachish approach as promoted outside Israel is far from the conclusions of scholars who emphasise the relative failure of Kiryat Gat's role as a regional town (Aymard & Benko, 1998; Achouch & Morvan, 2013; Auerbach, 2012).

Contrary to other development towns, Kiryat Gat could at least count on several strong industries, like the Polgat textile factories, to provide local jobs. However, in the 1980s, Polgat started to slowly outsource its activities first to Jordan, then to China. The last factory closed in 1995. Today, some of the brands still have local shops, but all the clothes are labelled "made in China". The relocation of factories where a majority of Kiryat Gat residents were employed left many without any perspectives. The director of the immigration and integration unit of the municipality of Kiryat Gat, before being employed by the municipality, had worked in the Polgat compound for 23 years. When Polgat closed he was laid off, only to be asked to star in a TV documentary shot in 1992, featuring the unemployment situation in the city.

At the time, Kiryat Gat was therefore dealing with high levels of local unemployment, while receiving hundreds of new immigrants from Ethiopia and from the Former Soviet Union. As defined by the national plan NOP31, Kiryat Gat was located in the nearby periphery of two metropolitan areas, Tel Aviv and Beer Sheva. Therefore, new construction projects for the settlement of immigrants took place, while the area was downgraded to high priority development area.

Today, Kiryat Gat is home to 47,400 residents, 25% of whom are new immigrants, mainly from the FSU but also from Ethiopia and some Western immigrants.[67] Ultra-orthodox Jews have recently settled in the city, but so far without any animosity or fear from the local residents. It is quite heterogeneous in terms of ethnic and religious background.

The main symbol of the NOP31 is the installation in 1995 of Intel factory Fab28. The microprocessor international manufacturer represents both the saviour and the devil. Indeed, the development of a high tech sector in peripheral Kiryat Gat has been a source of pride: Kiryat Gat takes part in "the start-up nation". However, many believe that the development of a high tech sector does not benefit the local workforce, a majority of whom is not educated to fit in this industry. Several reports published in the news, or the documentary filmed by Ayelet Berger "Close, yet Far", all show the yawning gap between the industrial park and Kiryat Gat residents, arguing that managerial positions are held by residents of the centre, commuting every day to work (Ayad, 2002; Berger, 2003; "Intel's inside - Features - Jerusalem Post," n.d.; Sinai, 2005). However, it is estimated that 45% of the industrial park's workers are from Kiryat Gat, even though many of them are employed in low-skilled jobs or as providers (transportation, catering…), rather than high-level and mid-level management (Interview 31, 2015). The presence of Fab38 and the other companies that settled later have had considerable impact on the region (Shachar, Krakover, Razin, & Gradus, 2005), and it is argued that, even with the current challenges, Intel has 'saved' Kiryat Gat. Today, local politicians still report that 60% of the population benefit from discounts or even exemptions of municipal taxes (Interview 2, 2014; Interview 19, 2014). The city's socio-economic rank is 4.[68]

Kiryat Gat does not have an immigration-outreach program. The municipality employs an immigration and integration coordinator, under the welfare department, as well as a coordinator for Ethiopian immigrants, whose office is located in a northern neighbourhood with a high concentration of Ethiopian-Israeli residents. However, the city does carry out a huge development project to increase its demography.

The Karmei Gat development project is the result of years of negotiation to obtain land plots from the regional councils surrounding Kiryat Gat. Those plots, located in the northern part of the city, were transferred and will have a capacity of 8,000 new units. The project is presented as a way to improve the socio-economic level of the city, by developing residential units for sale and rebalancing the public housing-private construction balance of the city. However, the

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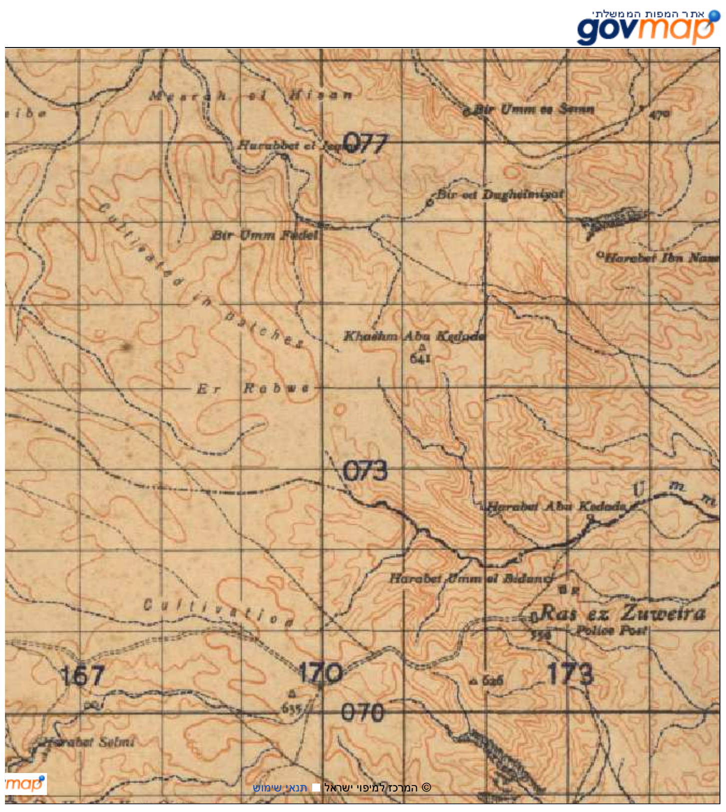
[67] Information collected on the central bureau of statistics Website: http://www1.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local_authorities12_1573/pdf/303_2630.pdf

[68] Information collected on the central bureau of statistics Website: http://www1.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local_authorities12_1573/pdf/303_2630.pdf

project has been criticised by experts for being a neighbourhood disconnected from the city, therefore not solving the lack of investments and infrastructures in the run-down city centre (MIT department of urban studies and planning & TAU Laboratory for contemporary urban design, 2012). Recommendations to build on available plots within the city have not been taken into account. Even the promotion of the new units has been done in such a way that it is difficult to connect Karmei Gat project with the city of Kiryat Gat. Banners hung on the main highway of the country, radio spots, Karmei Gat's website: the aggressive marketing done between 2014 and 2015 to sell the yet unbuilt houses do not mention that the district will be part of Kiryat Gat. The development has also been the object of indirect promotion as it was at the heart of the housing debates during the March 2015 national election campaign.

2.3.4 Arad: a minority becomes a majority

Arad is located in the northern Negev, close to the Dead Sea. Between the summer of 2014, when I started fieldwork, and 2016, access to Arad was considerably improved. The State has been investing in communication infrastructures in the Northern and Southern areas of the country, bringing Arad a bit closer to the centre. In January 2016, road 31 was finally opened, a four-lane road connecting Arad to highway 6.



Map 3.6. Arad in 1940. Source: govmap.gov.il (2017)

Picture 3.9. First houses in Arad. Source: The Israeli Physical Masterplan (1964, p. 58).

At the entrance of the city, the Inbar Hotel, quite an unusual phenomenon in development towns, reminds us of a better time. A mottled crowd walks about in the pedestrian city centre, behind the hotel: black and white dressed Ultra-orthodox Jews, Bedouin residents of the neighbouring villages, English-speaking Black Hebrews, Ethiopian residents of the nearby absorption centres, Eritrean and Sudanese asylum-seekers working in the Dead Sea hotels and residing in Arad, and of course, Hebrew and Russian speakers. The population mix of the centre is rather different from the description given by the interviewees, who seem to identify two main groups: the Israeli old-timers and the Russian-speaking immigrants. This rather simplified image chimes in with the founding myth of the 'pearl of the desert', until it developed into a Russian city — a city where a minority became the majority.

Arad was funded in 1962 by former *kibbutz*[69] members. Arad belongs to a second generation of development towns, together with Karmiel. It was built a decade after the first development towns and the main improvement in planning was to ensure that a group of already established Israelis would settle together with new immigrants, instead of isolating immigrants alone. Immigrants themselves were interviewed and selected on the basis of their professional competences and the possible match with the local industry (Jamous, 1982; Berthomière, 2003).

[69] A "kibbutz is a rural collective locality where production, marketing and consumption are collective" (CBS, 2011)

Interviewees have all explained the economic prosperity of Arad until the 1980s by this careful selection. The existence of a selection committee is still very contemporary in Israel, as many rural settlements located in the central area of the country have developed new neighbourhoods to attract urbanites and organised careful selection processes for the new owners.

Picture 3.10. Arad. Credit: Amandine Desille (2014).

And almost all of them made a parallel between the difficulties encountered by Arad since the late 1980s with the numerous arrivals of FSU immigrants in the 1990s, and the more recent settlement of Hassidic Jews. Indeed, Arad has received a very high proportion of immigrants from the Former Soviet Union. Even though Arad hosted 12,400 residents in 1983, there were 20,900 in 1995 (CBS, 2015a).

Arad's mayor at the time, Betzalel Tabib, has strongly encouraged immigration, reaching out to Soviet Jews. However, in 2003, newly elected mayor Mordechai 'Moty' Brill put an end to all outreach programmes. Immigration continued to Arad through social networks, however, the municipality no longer encouraged it. Despite remigration in the 1990s, a large group of Russian-speaking immigrants stayed. In 2014, Arad had 24,200 residents (CBS, 2015a), 40% of them being immigrants who arrived after the 1990s, mainly from the FSU.[70] Their presence has permitted the election of the first mayor issued from the 1990s immigration, Tali. An immigrant from Moldova who arrived in 1991, Tali was elected under the banner of *Israel Beitenu*. Many other activities are reminiscent of this great wave of immigration, from the numerous cultural

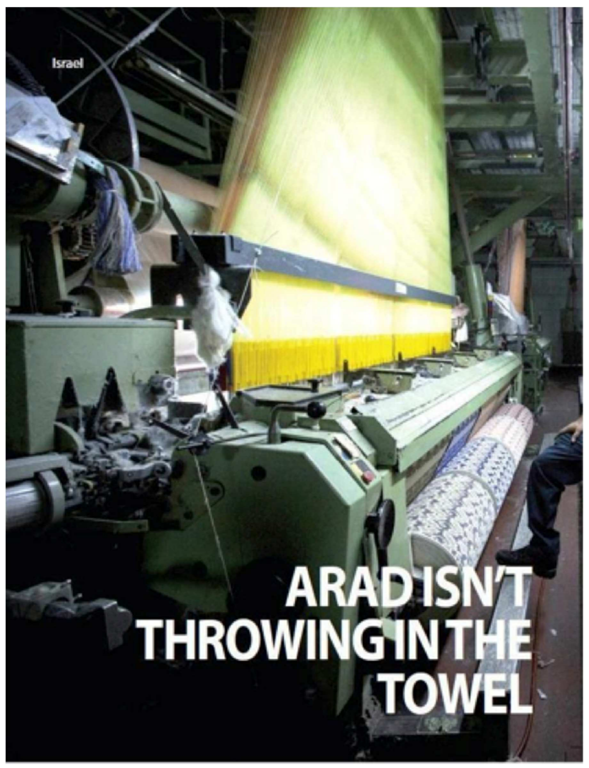
[70] Information collected on the central bureau of statistics Website: http://www1.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local_authorities12_1573/pdf/282_2560.pdf

activities in Russian funded or organised by the municipality and the MOIA, the huge Russian book collection of the municipal library, and the many signatures of Russian artists who wrote on the *matnass*' walls after their performance in the desert city.

Picture 3.11. Houses built to host immigrants in 1990 in Arad. Credit: Amandine Desille (2014).

At the end of her term, Tali had also renewed outreach activities to immigrants, and organised a first trip to Moldova. However, she was elected Member of Parliament in March 2015. She left the municipality. New elections were organised in June 2015. Nissan Ben Hamo, now the new mayor, ran under the banner of the anti-religious party *Yesh Atid* (There is a future), leading an aggressive campaign against the settlement of ultra-orthodox Jews in the city, for which he blamed the *Israel Beitenu* former mayor, therefore discrediting her potential replacement. Nissam Ben Hamo has not renewed outreach activities. Some days after getting in office, he has even prevented the entrance of asylum seekers in the city (Lior & Ben Zachari, 2015), against the previous implementation of a mapping programme by the municipality to identify the social needs of this community (Interview 42, 2015).

Aside from these various intercommunal tensions, the city is also experiencing a severe backlash in its economy. In October 2014, Arad towels, which hired 200 workers, closed down (Bior, 2014; Mirovski, 2014). This is one of many economic woes for the city in recent years. The city leaders are therefore looking for solutions to create employment. In the summer 2014, I listened quite sceptically to an external consultant who was bringing together a tourism masterplan, rebranding the city and encouraging adventure tourism initiatives (Interview 17, 2014). And indeed, despite a slow departure, a new association has been created, new events were organised and the city is working hard to improve tourist facilities. Today, Arad's socio-economic rank is 5.[71]



Picture 3.12. Arad isn't throwing the towel. Credit: Jerusalem Post (2014)

Other initiatives are on-going, so that Arad can benefit from the relocation of the military facilities in the region. The new road 31 also brings hope that the commuting time between growing Beer Sheva and Arad will be cut to a mere 20 minutes.

The brief portraits of these four cities therefore give a hint of the destiny of these immigrant new towns expanded or established in the 1950s, at a short distance from the moving borders of the state. Even though they share a common history of immigration, marginalisation, socioeconomic

[71] Information collected on the central bureau of statistics Website: http://www1.cbs.gov.il/publications14/local_authorities12_1573/pdf/282_2560.pdf

woes and cultural oppression, they are also places, and by that, I mean that they are unique and produce and reproduce their own sense of place. National decisions, local leadership but also the residents themselves keep constantly affecting these places, introducing changes and innovations in these mid-sized cities, usually stereotyped as backward and slow to catch up with the high pace of development experienced by Tel Aviv and its metropolitan areas.

The next section will discuss the effect of rampant neoliberalisation in the country, which brought with it a rather important withdrawal of the central administration on the one hand, but also, maybe, the possibility for local governments to take control over their future.

3 Rescaling of State power: abandonment or opportunity?

Immigration has always played a major role in the making of Israel as a Jewish home in Ottoman Palestine, during the British Mandate, in the first crucial decades of its establishment, and up to now. The heavy involvement of the State from the 1950s onwards resulted in the participation of institutions in the Diaspora, the most important and sustainable one being the Jewish Agency, in immigration organisation and settlement. Today the Jewish Agency, together with the MOIA, are still central actors. However, new actors of immigration have made their way into the immigration landscape of Israel — I have already mentioned Nefesh beNefesh but there are also smaller organisations such as Shavei Israel, or even private actors. The municipality has become a new hub where those actors meet. For instance, municipal workers work directly with the Jewish Agency to reach out to newcomers and attract them to their city. Shavei Israel negotiates with the municipalities where small groups of Indian Bnei Menashe immigrants settle — such as Acre or Kiryat Shmona’s municipalities — to plan their arrival, their integration in the labour market and in religious communities. One French immigration ‘entrepreneur’ also negotiates with receiving municipalities to reach agreements where municipalities agree to put extra efforts and resources in housing, education or employment for newcomers.

Why would these traditionally decayed areas get involved in immigration outreaching? Do they believe in the potential of immigration to generate a demographic burst, a fresh start after years of marginalisation? Indeed, in the case of the cities I presented in the preceding section, those places were produced at the frontiers, near areas that could provide jobs, with the purpose that those areas might become the hinterlands of these new towns. Nevertheless, they never achieved this aim. Instead, they stayed out of economic and political networks, remaining rural settlements directly reaching to the centre, without the intermediation of development towns. But, as the core/periphery dichotomy is less relevant and looks more and more like an

archipelago, networked geography of powers, do local leaders take a chance and believe they can break through?

As I explained in the previous chapter, those questions are at the core of my doctoral work. The following section aims at providing a context for the hypotheses I formulated. The first part will briefly discuss the rescaling of statehood in Israel, from independent 'Jewish republics' in the pre-state *Yishuv* (Gradus, 1983; Elazar, 1988; Razin, 2003), to a centralised semi-socialist planned economy between the 1950s and the 1970s, to a break in the 1980s, leading to a free-market economy and a more and more disengaged central administration. In that context, it seems that local leadership becomes more crucial in understanding the orientations of cities. I will therefore make some preliminary remarks based on the existing scholarship on the role of cities in immigration outreaching on the one hand; and the development of new integration paths on the other hand. I will conclude this chapter with these thoughts.

3.1 Evolution of City-State relations in Israel

Even through its short history, cities, towns and rural settlement have taken on various functions and have constantly evolved in Israel: from small Jewish political units under the Ottoman and then the British rule, to dependent localities under a centralised political and economic system, to a free-market economic and neoliberal system (see annex on neoliberalism) that rewards certain localities and a de *facto* decentralisation. Today, the main responsibilities of municipalities are engineering (local roads for example), planning and water and sanitation. Welfare and education are still national prerogatives but municipalities assist in implementing them and partly co-fund them. Municipalities also partly administer health and religious affairs. Lastly, they deal with topics they are not legally in charge of, like Local Economic Development, and immigration and integration (Razin, 2003).

To look back to the evolution of city government, I will start with pre-state Jewish settlement. In fact, the Zionist ideology provides a territorial democracy that secures political power for Jewish communities in a Jewish state (Elazar, 1988). *Moshavot, kibbutzim* and *moshavim* were virtually autonomous communities in the pre-state days. In the 1920s and 1930s, several municipal ordinances issued by the British mandate consolidated the power of local councils (*Ibid*.). However, at the establishment of the state, public functions and leadership turned toward the offices of the newly established state administration, reducing the role of local governments (*Ibid*.).

At the end of the 1950s, the State decided to strengthen local authorities again (*Ibid.*). Cities, urban settlements and rural settlements were divided into three different categories of local governments (CBS, 2011, p. 31): municipalities or city councils govern cities over 20,000 population; local councils are formed for smaller cities and for cities that are populated by Israeli Palestinians; and rural settlements are represented in regional councils, whose administrative boundaries are not necessarily continuous.[72] In 2014, according to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics in there were 76 municipalities/city councils, 11 of them being mostly inhabited by Palestinians holding Israeli citizenship.[73] The remaining 65 municipalities governed cities located in the central district (17), the northern district (12), the Southern district (11), Tel Aviv district (10), Haifa district (9), the Palestinian Occupied Territories (4) and Jerusalem district (2). Those cities host 74.9% of the Israeli population. Moreover, in 2014, 21,945 of the 24,112 new immigrants settling in Israel chose one of those cities as their first residence. The remaining 125 small cities (including 70 Palestinian-Israeli cities) are governed by local councils. Villages are lumped together in 54 regional councils, three of them being exclusively Palestinian-Israeli.

Among those three categories, Elazar (1988) identifies different 'forms' of local governments: mayors and councils, party coalitions, special authorities (such as water authorities or economic corporations. In the case of immigration, the immigration and integration authority in Haifa falls under this category, as it is detached from the municipality of Haifa), workers' councils and neighbourhood committees.

In the 1970s, local governments started to gain in power. In fact, Israel does not have a law on decentralisation. However, it has been argued that this legal gap does not mean that *de facto* decentralisation has not taken place (Razin, 2003, p. 9). Indeed, since the late 1970s, lack of resources at national level, difficulties to impose new policies, not to mention conflicts between ministries, have pushed local governments to take over (*Ibid.*). Political decentralisation started with the first elections of mayors independently of the municipal council, a law voted in 1975 and applied for the first time in 1978 (Gradus, 1983; Elazar, 1988; Razin, 2003).

Second, decentralisation accelerated with the disengagement of the central administration. The access of the right-wing Likud to the Israeli parliament is usually associated with a disruption period, characterised by the adoption of new political and economic orientations inspired by Thatcher and Reagan. Nevertheless, in the first years, Israel experienced only symbolic disruption as public expenditures increased (Kay, 2012).

[72] Therefore, in upper Galilee the municipality of Kiryat Shmona, with the local councils of Metula, Rosh Pina and more, coexists with several regional councils including *moshavim* and *kibbutzim* of the area.
[73] Um-El-Fahem, Taybe, Tira, Tamra, Kfar Kesem, Nazareth, Sachnin, Kalensuwa, Ra'hat, Shefa'Amr and Baka-El-Garbiya.

Israel definitely adopted a new administration style in the mid-1980s. A combination of the costs of war, economic disruption and fuel price increase led the 1970s Israel to a spiral of inflation. At that time, the Chicago university-trained free-market advocate Dan Patinkin, accompanied by his students, the Patinkin boys, started to increase their visibility in the Israeli media to lobby for economic changes (*Ibid*., p. 107). The Likud, elected in 1977, was then promoting, at least in its discourse, a pro-market ideology. Kay describes the meeting of the economist Milton Friedmann with Likud leader Menachem Begin. Friedmann submitted a reform proposal for Israel to move forward to a market economy. But these recommendations were followed by only marginal changes in policy, and public expenditures actually rose during that period (*Ibid*., pp. 108-109).

Inflation and public expenses led to a situation such as "by mid-1984 Israel was totally dependent on the United States for its economic survival" (*Ibid.*, p. 111). The United States applied some pressure but seeing that there was no change, the country decided to freeze all monetary transfers to the country. This ultimatum had the expected effect. In 1985, the government adopted Israel's 1985 Economic Stabilisation Plan.

The Economic Stabilisation Plan had an immediate impact on municipalities. Equalizing grants provided by the Ministries to municipalities were reduced and municipalities required to raise an increasing share of local resources — their main resource being local taxes on businesses and residences (Razin, 2003). Nevertheless, this new management accelerated the marginalisation of peripheral local governments, where few industries and businesses settle. In fact, the industrial sector in these areas was not as subsidised as it used to, as the State had reduced incentives of the 'Encouragement of Capital Investments Law' (Razin in Gradus & Lipshitz, 1996). Indeed, increased decentralisation and cuts in transfers to municipalities led to a situation where "local authorities are trapped in a Darwinist environment" (Ben-Elia, 2006).

But more importantly for our matter, immigration absorption policy changed entirely, from State responsibility to individual responsibility. Indeed, at the end of the 1980s, the MOIA adopted a 'direct absorption' policy where new immigrants can settle freely, and are responsible for looking for a job, while the State provides them with short-term allowance called 'absorption basket'. As French geographer William Berthomière has argued, the absorption policy of immigrants from the 1980s onwards, implemented by the Israel government as "direct absorption", allowed immigrants to freely chose their residence, and therefore, *makes it possible to measure the relation between State logics and immigrants' logics* (Berthomière, 2004). The NOP 31 that I presented earlier became a crucial policy for immigration settlement, where construction and availability of housing were foreseen as influencing the choice of residence of newcomers.

These new provisions were put to the test on a very large-scale very soon. Indeed, the mass migration from the Former Soviet Union in the 1990s was the first time the new 'direct absorption' policy had been applied at a national scale. However, the housing policy imposed to local governments by the State generated strong resistance and Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) types of reactions, which I will describe now.

3.2 Immigration and the city in nowadays Israel

In the 1990s, the accommodation of new immigrants did not fail to entail reactions from the local governments. Indeed, even before the implementation of the NOP 31, ministries faced considerable resistance from local politicians in their attempts to build temporary and permanent housing for the newcomers (Auerbach, 2001, 2011) Although in Israel land ownership, land administration, urban planning, approval of statutory plans, and inspection and control of construction are mainly centralised functions, Gedalia Auerbach identifies a form of 'local autonomy' against a regional policy of mobile home and caravans for immigrants. He explains this autonomy by a vacuum left by the ministries mainly involved —Interior, finances and housing — which experienced tremendous difficulties in coordinating activities (*Ibid.*). Second, fearing those temporary housings will become slum-like areas, "Assertive, charismatic mayors managed to organise a range of political, legal and bureaucratic actions and to mobilise public opinion" against the installation of caravans (Auerbach, 2011). Indeed, in the first mid-1990, 57 local governments were approached to set temporary housing for FSU immigrants. This demand prompted a NIMBY kind of opposition. A great number of local governments refused while others dragged their feet. In the latter half of 1990, the ministries of Interior and of Housing wrote to 150 councils. 40 mayors answered, 20 of those plans were assessed as feasible (*Ibid.*). But the proposal made by the ministries was refused by those local governments. Eventually, a number of projects were implemented in rural councils that had weaker leadership and were forced to accept (*Ibid.*).

A study sponsored by the Union of Local Authorities in Israel shows that a large number of local authorities have established independent municipal units for immigration and integration (Yehuda Abramson, 2013). The MOIA publicised the fact that 72 municipalities participate in the programme 'Group *Aliyah*', meaning that those cities have municipal agents recruited for the programme, and matching funds completing transfers of the MOIA. But other cities can develop their own programmes based on their resources.

My own pre-fieldwork survey shows that, apart from immigration and integration municipal departments, immigrants have representation in city councils. Some councillors together with

immigration department agents actively outreach to Jewish communities abroad, even travel there, and try to attract them to their towns. I have mentioned that since the 1970s, political parties have intensified their local actions. The immigrant party *Israel Beitenu* has extended its network of local representatives. Today, immigrant politicians represent the interests of the FSU immigrants in almost every municipality hosting a significant number of immigrants. Together with the fact that, between 2009 and March 2015, Sofa Landver, member of *Israel Beitenu*, was the minister of immigration and integration, one can believe that adopting a local immigration policy and obtaining the funds to implement it, became an internal party affair. Nevertheless, the party is losing ground, ridden by corruption scandals, an ageing electorate (Gleizer, 2015), and a perception of alienation as fewer and fewer Russian representatives are on the list.

So far, very few studies document the existence and the operation of immigration integration programmes in municipalities in Israel. Several scholars have worked on Tel Aviv non-Jewish immigrants' policy (Raijman & Kemp, 2002; Alexander, 2003; Schnell, 2013), nevertheless, it provides only a specific and narrow answer to the rescaling of immigration policy in Israel, focusing on non-Jewish immigrants who do not benefit from the Law of Return. Other studies provide descriptions and analyses of the local governments' response, like the decentralisation of immigration services to a non-governmental organisation in Haifa (Mesch, 2002), or the reaction of mayors to the imposed settlement of immigrants in their development towns (Aymard & Benko, 1998; Auerbach, 2001; Tzfadia, 2005; Tzfadia & Yacobi, 2007; Auerbach, 2011). However, those works analyse what occurred in the 1990s, and generally focused on the activities of the council. Moreover, they do not provide details on the programmes elaborated, nor the work of street-level bureaucrats.

In this context, this work aims at better understanding the motives of municipalities to bring together financial and human resources and invest in immigration. It seems that it is linked to the rise of a discourse of 'autonomy', where local governments become more professional and request resources from the State to be responsible for their development. For instance, the 1990s saw an increase in local and regional strategic and economic development plans (Shachar in Gradus & Lipshitz, 1996). Cities started to claim additional lands from rural councils surrounding them in order to carry out development projects, such as new industrial areas, commercial areas or residential neighbourhoods (Razin & Hazan, 2001). Observing those claims led Eran Razin and Anna Hazan to state that development towns' leadership changed "from ethnic brokers to capable entrepreneurial and independent mayors" (Razin & Hazan, 2004). This trend continues nowadays (see numerous claims published in the Israeli newspapers in September 2014).

Nevertheless, cities located in the periphery often claim that the central administration should take responsibility for the social and economic predicament they meet. As factories close and peripheries fail to stimulate employment through small and medium enterprise creation, local politicians blame the government for abandoning the remote new towns it had once created. A recent example is enlightening: during a strike organised in the southern district on 24 February 2015, Beer Sheva's mayor declared that the government only intervened in the South for security issues — notably military interventions — but never to remediate the employment crisis.[74]

Municipalities seem to navigate between discourses and actions emphasising their newly acquired autonomy and the possibility to adopt local policies; and discourses and actions expressing their perceived abandonment and the impossibility to solve local issues on their own.

3.3 New integration paths in peripheral mid-sized cities in present day Israel?

As I look at cities hosting a large population of immigrants, I also question the role of municipalities and their partners in implementing immigrant integration policies, programmes and actions. Therefore, I wonder if municipalities of immigrant cities, which have been defined by immigration, and which have elected immigrants as mayors and council members, might adopt a more pluralistic approach to integration.

Earlier in this chapter, I mentioned the role of *Mizrahi* immigrants and then of FSU immigrants in defining alternative citizenship discourses. The latter in particular have conveyed very strong claims to participate in the nation-state 'on their own terms'. For instance, social anthropologist Deborah Golden (2001) documents organised encounters between old timers and newcomers in the 1990s. She shows that newcomers refused to declare their faith in an imagined better future, as well as refused paternalism from veteran Israelis. Instead, they demanded to be equal partners in their integration process. In another study documenting more intimate organised encounters — workshops on Israeli culture which took place in Jerusalem —, she explains the difference between the fact that Russian-speaking immigrants were granted a 'need for culture', leading to the organisation of sociocultural activities by the government, with government funds, while immigrants from Asia and Africa were not considered as having 'culture' (*tarbut* in Hebrew), but heritage (*moreshet* in Hebrew), which often simply meant folklore (Golden in Storper-Perez, 1998, pp. 222–223).

[74] See http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/local/1.2573286

Perhaps another factor that eased the adoption of a relatively pluralistic approach to sociocultural expressions of new immigrant groups was the very accession of Israel to contemporary neoliberalism. In this context, sociocultural expressions can be freely adopted as soon as immigrants form a productive part of the country. Indeed, I mentioned in an earlier chapter the thesis adopted by social scientists Yasemin Soysal or Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas on deserving, productive, active and participative citizenship (Garcés-Mascareñas, 2015; Soysal, 2012). Similarly, Israel has long adopted a republican discourse of citizenship based on pioneering (Shafir & Peled, 2002). Even though the days of pioneering are over, pioneering and volunteering values were transformed by the neoliberal forces at work in Israel today. Indeed, compulsory military duty duplicates the sacrifice to the homeland as required by the republic (*Ibid.*). Participation in the armed forces is one argument advanced by immigrant interviews to prove their Israeliness and the impossibility to deny their belonging. This explains the success of a discourse adopted by emerging political parties like *Yesh Atid* (there is a future) questioning the membership of ultra religious Jews or of Palestinian Israelis, both groups being exempted from army service. Apart from the military, values linked to individualism and financial autonomy are predominant today, hence the success of the label 'start-up nation' (Senor & Singer, 2011) to designate Israel. The book whose title inspired the label 'start-up nation' actually dedicates a large section to the contribution of FSU immigrants to the development of a world leading high tech sector in Israel.

Providing that newcomers participate in the major socialisation institutions of Israel — school, the army, the national economy —, more leeway can be given to new immigrants when it comes to preserving their languages or cultures.

However, this apparently more tolerant view of immigrant integration is still extremely exclusionary and restricted to Jewish immigrants. Immigrants who benefited from the Law of Return but are not Jewish from the point of view of the religious authorities, see their rights restricted, notably when it comes to marriage, burial and other individual rights. In fact, many rights are tied to an orthodox view of Jewishness. Conversion to Judaism is still perceived as a mean to 'correct' problematic immigrants.

To sum up, even though Israel is still a rather centralised country, and has not yet adopted a decentralisation reform, the central administration has clearly withdrawn since 1985, leaving more space to the market first, and to subnational governments. A municipal reform has been implemented, although transfers have dramatically declined, therefore favouring cities that already had the resources to increase their own budgets. Towns that were already excluded from the economic core were therefore trapped in a vicious circle of catching up, without the

capacity to evolve from a simple local administration to an actual government able to implement policies and leverage local assets for local economic development. However, I argue that this black and white portrait should be completed with the many shades of grey involved when addressing the transformations of power in our contemporary societies. Through some preliminary examples based on immigration and integration issues, I show that even municipalities in peripheral small cities have raised their voices and proved capable to negotiate with the central government, and challenge decisions. Moreover, they could be seen as fertile ground for social innovation, particularly considering their specific social trajectories.

Conclusions

This chapter aimed at presenting the historical, geographical and socioeconomic background of this research. More precisely, it highlighted the specific situation of peripheral, frontier, mid-sized cities of Israel. Those cities, in line with the urban planning movement of 'new towns', were established from the late 1940s onwards close to already existing Jewish rural settlements, with the dual objective of securing the sovereignty of the land and absorbing the large flows of immigration. In that sense, they represent a coercive, state-led production of places at an unprecedented pace. And like any other places, inhabited and crossed by people, they are subjected to instabilities, tensions, conflicts and power relations. These places are thus constantly reproduced, reinterpreted and transformed. Sometimes, their residents act in order to make them look like the centre, in that case the Ashkenazi European elite, adhering to a rather extreme nationalist ideology that rejects a possible pathway towards a liberal citizenship and a peace process with the Palestinian neighbour. Sometimes, those places are nests of innovation, of alternative paths for nation-building.

In the first section, I presented the different immigration layers that have made up the places I study. The actual demography of those places reflects a micro-history of immigration, with the most recent waves coming from Ethiopia and the Former Soviet Union countries. I therefore wonder whether the large number of immigrants living in these cities, and therefore the large number of residents having experienced migration, means that those places hold a more inclusive, open imaginary representation of place, therefore facilitating the making of 'living together' as a political objective. Moreover, I wonder whether this critical mass has fostered a better representation of immigrants in city democratic institutions, and therefore a better municipal responsiveness toward immigrant integration issues.

The second section focused in more detail on the State interventions that structured Israel around its places and people. Through a brief history of planning, I tried to make sense of the

geography of Israel, strongly characterised by the spatial distribution of its social groups. However, the same segregation that has been engineered by a dominant European elite, channelling new immigrants from northern Africa and the Middle East to peripheral areas of the country, has favoured the formation of a sense of solidarity among residents of the periphery. This sense of solidarity, of shared destiny, and moreover, of shared socioeconomic predicament, has fed what has become a political movement. Up to today, it continues to foster ethno-religious nationalist political parties, such as the immigration party *Israel Beitenu*. But paradoxically, it is also the principal backer of the Likud party, whose socioeconomic programme negatively affects the periphery.

Through the example of Acre, Kiryat Gat, Kiryat Shmona and Arad, I attempt at unveiling the growing autonomy of these marginalised places. At a moment when the core/periphery framework more and more looks like an archipelago pattern of power, I wonder if the new transformations taking place in Israel have affected frontier towns positively or negatively. Do their local governments have the capacity and will to govern? If so, how do they perceive immigration, a phenomenon that occupied such a great place in their short history? I have explained that the meeting of each immigration layer with all others has resulted in great tensions, and competition over resources: what does the cohabitation 25 years after the large immigration from the Former USSR look like? Moreover, do immigrants in these cities succeed in taking part in the deliberations that concern them, and if so, with what results? Do they conceive a different approach of immigration and integration, outside national frameworks?

The next chapter will focus more particularly on *how* I have decided to address those questions.

Chapter 4 ◊ Grounding the research in places, listening to the actors, accounting for scalar processes: methodological implications

Traditionally, the section dealing with the methodology adopted for the analysis follows the one addressing the theoretical framework. However, I have slightly departed from that tradition, first presenting the context in which this project took place. In fact, I advocated an enquiry at the margin, in four towns located away from the core geographical, political, economic and social networks of the country. I hope I have now convinced my reader of the theoretical and empirical contributions of such a choice. In this chapter, I would like to add one layer to the analysis: the methodological contribution of such an approach.

In fact, enquiring at the margin implies taking into account the specificities of those places, or, put differently, their 'singularity'. This 'singularity' can be that of a place out of the mainstream — hence the use of the concept of marginality; but it can also highlight the potential of their participation in the constitution of a core. Without what constitutes its exterior, there will be no possibility to identify this core. And indeed, in the previous chapter, I mobilised Ram's analysis (1995): the Israeli intellectual leadership at the beginning of Statehood had provided a role for the periphery, necessary in the process of nation-building. Those towns and their inhabitants are necessary to the constitution of the national, in their functionalist view. My objective is slightly different here. I do not aim at justifying the existence of the periphery to serve an elitist core. But what is left for us to see, inasmuch as immigration provides the boundaries of the nation (Sayad, 1999) is indeed the role of the centre in the production of those places; their attempts to resemble this centre; but also their autonomy. What is common to those places in their exposure to the many organisations, norms and logics of the State: the State is in disguise in those places, together with place-based produced organisations, norms and logics.

This has implications for the methods I adopted. For collecting and analysing data, the agency of social actors located in those places is crucial. Social actors take part in the production of the place, but their actions are also informed by the place itself. Second, if I look at scalar processes themselves, the analysis takes into account the role of social actors in producing or reproducing scales, but also the effects of scalar fixes and scalar jumps that cross the place under scrutiny. In sum, if I try to illustrate this methodological stance, the analysis of places implies looking at institutional decisions as much as the practices of the residents, which divert top-down planning; or the analysis of immigration and integration policies means understanding the

tensions between national absorption policies and the practices of street-level bureaucrats in local institutions.

To achieve an understanding of these dialectics between agency, place and scales, I have adopted a constructivist grounded theory methodology. I will describe its main principles hereafter, but I would like to highlight two important aspects: the absolute necessity of reflexivity and comparison, and their interrelations. In fact, "the comparatist spirit and tools are inseparable from the mirroring effects inherent to any reflexivity in social sciences" [75] (Remaud, Schaub, & Thireau, 2012, p. 18). In a comparative methodology, one should study actors, who themselves locate their actions in comparison to other social actors, and to their expectations. Their experience is analysed by them in comparison to what they had in mind, the meanings they attribute to things. We therefore study comparisons of comparisons (*Ibid.*).

This brings me to the method chosen to collect data: this project is based primarily on in-depth meetings, which highlight the relations between agency, language and reflexivity. As French theorists Emmanuel Désveaux and Michel de Fornel argue:

> The issue of human sciences in general could be summed up as the gradual complexification equivalent to the plural form of the equation between language and action. Which individual or which collective speaks for whom, and what action, to be undertaken individually or collectively? Which individual or which collective undertakes what, in response to the injunctions of which individual or which collective? What we see here is the meddling of the good old *generalist* spectres of convention and norm, sign and submission. [76] (Désveaux & Fornel, 2012, p. 26)

Next, I will explain the rationale for the selection of cases. Those four cases are bounded places where I attempted to gain knowledge, and to assess the relevance of existing theory, while at the same time I hope to see the emergence of new paths for analysis. Lastly, the last section will focus more on the data collection itself, and data analysis, more particularly in cities where there are no policy papers available.

1 Constructivist grounded theory

The formation of a coherent methodology, corresponding to an epistemological tradition, stemmed from various elements: a strong commitment to emphasise agency in an academic field dominated by structure; the privilege to be present in Israel for long periods of time, under the cooperation agreement between both Poitiers and Tel Aviv universities; and the participation in

[75] Translation of the author.
[76] Translation of the author.

the European Marie Curie Actions Integrim programme, which make it an obligation for its beneficiaries to present scientific outcomes at least once per semester. Therefore, I had the possibility to transcribe interviews within a few the days of conducting them, to compare the themes found in those transcripts with previous interviews, to constantly fine-tune the interview guidelines, and to adapt them to the evolving local contexts and to the knowledge I had accumulated, as well as to compare these findings with other academic works, and finally, present on-going analysis and get feedback on a regular basis. Retroactively, I elaborated on the rather intuitive and constrained methodology I had adopted, and I framed it more specifically through a constructivist grounded theory paradigm.

In this section, I aim at presenting the main principles that underlie a constructive grounded theory. Furthermore, I will explain how these guiding principles have enabled me to identify three overarching concepts: agency, place and scale.

1.1 Main principles

This subsection will provide the basic principles of constructivist grounded theory, which provided the framework for this research work.

Constructivism is part of an epistemological research paradigm, grounded in a Kantian tradition of knowledge, which claims that realities are social constructs of the mind. Individuals see the world through their experience resulting in as many individual constructions as there are individuals (although these constructions can be shared by groups). Constructivist theorists acknowledge the fundamental role of agency over structure.

'Grounded theory' is therefore a methodology strongly associated with constructivism. It is usually associated with the work of Barney Glazer and Anselm Strauss[77] (1967), and corresponds to the 'discovery of theory from data' (*Ibid.*, 1). This does not mean that each empirical study will lead to a new theory, but that data can challenge existing theories and enrich them (*Ibid.*). The field was also renewed by new accounts, a most seminal one being Kathy Charmaz's (2001). She reiterates important aspects of a grounded theory approach: the rejection of claims of objectivity, the located character of knowledge (and therefore the variations and differences it implies), the co-construction of meanings (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2008), the impact of the interactions between researchers and participants, and the fundamental role of reflexivity (Charmaz, 2001, p. 360). In fact, a crucial element highlighted by Charmaz is

[77] Following their seminal work, Glazer and Strauss took different paths, each one promoting different methods.

the co-production of knowledge by the researcher and participants to his research, as "people construct both the studied phenomenon and the research process through their actions" (Charmaz, 2001, p. 360). To address this particular issue, I have produced a brief annex on joint research and reflexivity (see annex on joint research).

The methodological implications of the adoption of such an epistemological stance are manifold. It lays emphasis on openness, where a clear theoretical framework emerges only after data collection started. Second, it gives space to comparison, as the researcher engages in on-going analysis of the findings, constantly compares between cases, and compares his/her findings with the scholarship. Finally, it affects the report of research findings, and its storytelling.

The openness and rather inductive logic implies that the analysis moves from the particular to the general. It does not mean that constructivist scholars achieve generalisation from isolated cases. Rather, it means that through comparison of a case with other empirical findings and with existing theory, researchers can see the emergence of new threads or issues that were omitted or not addressed before. In that sense, it re-establishes the role of specific cases, singularities, and located experimentations in reasoning (Passeron & Revel, 2005). A specific case will lead to the identification of emerging issues, it will provide boundaries in order to deepen knowledge, and it will allow the toing and froing between occurrences, and characteristics that make each case unique (*Ibid.*). The researcher constantly faces the dual singularity of the observed situation: the involved individuals, and the contingent time and place of the observation (Désveaux & Fornel, 2012, p. 13).

Case studies will be put to the test of comparison. In fact, "Grounded theory is a method of qualitative enquiry in which data collection and analysis reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent iterative process" (Charmaz, 2001, p. 360). Comparative research has always been an important part of social sciences, quite evidently when it comes to quantitative studies, but also very fundamentally in qualitative approaches. Scholars have considered the methodological and theoretical vitality of comparative research, mostly because comparison is fundamental to reasoning in social sciences, where the main objective is to reveal or to bring to light (Verdalle, Vigour, & Bianic, 2012). Several questions immediately come to mind: what can I compare? Is it comparable? To what extent does comparison allow the identification of convergences and divergences? And indeed, any researcher engaging in comparative research reflects on the contradictory appeal for generalisation while appreciating the specificities provided by each case (Dupuy & Pollard, 2012; Verdalle *et al.*, 2012).

Olivier Remaud et al (2012) argue that comparison and reflexivity are intertwined. They find

two different objectives for comparison: as an analytical resource, where the researcher brings things together or shows how they can be distinguished; or as the object of a research program, where the comparison leads to singularisation, or to generalisation (when findings are cross-referenced and lead to a general statement) (*Ibid*.). In both cases, comparing is seen as a reflexive approach, since comparing already amounts to interpreting *(Ibid*., p. 14), and leads to the production of fresh knowledge.

If I turn to grounded theory methods in particular, comparative analysis first occurs between data and data, data and codes, codes and codes, codes and categories, categories and concepts and so on (Charmaz, 2001; Mills *et al.*, 2008). This means that all the data in the hands of the researcher should be analysed. The researcher reads through data, and words or groups of words are given codes. The redundancy of codes leads to the definition of larger categories. Those categories then fit existing concepts. The main purpose of this comparison is to unveil variation and to deal with those differences along the process (Charmaz, 2001). Admittedly, I have not coded in writing every single sentences of the sixty interviews I have conducted, as well as the policy papers, news articles… etc. However, I took extensive notes after finishing the transcription of each interview, where I wrote for myself how I came up with specific categories.

I also engaged in comparison between the four cities I selected. Most comparative research projects, especially when it comes to immigration and integration policies, compare international cases, or look into one case, and its evolution along time (see for instance Penninx *et al.* (2004) or Zincone *et al.* (2011)). However, there are also some research projects focusing on subnational comparisons[78] (Good, 2009; Jørgensen, 2012; Flamant, 2014). These projects help identify similarities and contrasts, and address the underlying variables leading to convergences and divergences. This doctoral research therefore contributes to subnational comparisons, where the national frame is uniform, but important discrepancies are found at local levels. The work of the researcher lies in identifying those unique features inherent to places, while detecting the impact of the national and even the global: in that sense, the study of the singular can inform the national.

A final comparison has to be made between observation and existing theory. "This constant comparison of analysis to the field grounds the researcher's final theorizing in the participants' experiences" (Mills *et al.*, 2008, p. 27). This aspect in particular was constrained by the European Integrim programme, of which I was a beneficiary. Indeed, it required that analysis of collected

[78] However, the comparison between cities also has its limitations, as administrative and political boundaries are not always similar (Dupuy & Pollard, 2012; Giraud, 2012), and experiences can be dramatically different if the exploration takes place at city or neighbourhood level (H. Smith & Ley, 2008).

data be done and presented to a group of scholars at least twice a year. Apart from setting a clear time frame, it also provided me with regular feedback from experienced researchers. For example, it was the discussions in those forums that first led me toward a scale approach.

A final aspect of constructivist grounded theory is the reporting stage, through thesis writing or the edition of articles. As Jane Mills, Ann Bonner and Karen Francis have put it: "the storyline is the final conceptualization of the core category" (*Ibid.*, p. 30). In that sense, the writing of the thesis offers the opportunity to describe extensively the cases selected (Passeron & Revel, 2005), but also to reveal, in the form of a 'scenario', the final categories that emerged from the analysis and the comparison. The storyline of this doctoral project identifies two types of data: what I have considered the overarching concepts of place, agency and scale; and the empirical results of fieldwork which emphasise: the role of immigration in the socioeconomic development of small and mid-sized cities; the personal motives that lead local officials to draw policies in order to achieve socioeconomic development; the content of these policies and more particularly the underlying meanings of integration they imply; and the multiscalar character of the political space of immigration and integration policies.

1.2 Grounding the research project in place(s)

As I mentioned in the theoretical chapter, the local scale is the methodological scale I chose to frame my enquiry. It is in line with claims to escape methodological nationalism (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Kalir, 2013), and the acknowledgement that the city is a subnational strategic space. Based on this choice, I have explained that the city as a place is where I anchor my research. And in fact, Charmaz explains that a grounded theory means that the research is located, and recognises that historical, social and situational conditions exert constraints on people's actions (Charmaz, 2001, p. 360). Along with the dimensions of 'place' — first, a location in space; second, where everyday life deploys; and third, that which holds meanings —, how can I account for the production of knowledge?

First, I have explained that I focus on places that are located at the frontier, at the geographical, socioeconomic and political periphery of Israel. However, they do not necessarily form a general category of cities. Rather, this indicates a particular location in the urban hierarchy, or the urban network, that has led me to challenge the existing theory on cities, and to explore the possible autonomy of those cities that get lower attention — from the public administration but also from academia — despite the issues they face in a neoliberal economy.

Next, if places are sites of everyday life. I have agreed with theorists of hegemony that, even more markedly so in these 'little places', everyday life is crucial and inform policies. Understanding residents' practices of the city, of space, social interactions… etc., is a first step toward the understanding of the politics of place.

Lastly, as places hold meanings, I emphasise the importance of the history of the place, but also more recent developments. The milestones that shape the history of the city are relevant if they are part of the collective narratives. The interpretation of those events is crucial. The numerous layers of immigration experienced by the four cities for instance, can be staged differently through narratives, and influence the way officials look at immigrant integration today.

In order to get acquainted with these places, I mobilised several methods. First, and even though scientific production on Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona is scarce, I read secondary sources dealing with those places (Jamous, 1982; Aymard & Benko, 1998; Philipp, 2001; Shachar *et al.*, 2005; Auerbach, 2012; Achouch & Morvan, 2013).

Second, in order to remain informed on the municipality's activities, I delved into a daily collection of articles published in national and local newspapers on immigration, municipal governance and economic development in Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona. Newspapers are all available online and are: akkonet.co.il, local.co.il/akko, aradnik.co.il, kiryatgatim.co.il, local.co.il/kiryatgat, meida8.co.il, news8.co.il, mynet.co.il, but also haaretz.co.il, ynet.co.il and more. I also followed the official Facebook pages on those four municipalities.

Third, I had the opportunity to take part in a film school organised by the Marie Curie — Integrim programme in which I am a fellow. I shot a 16-minute documentary in Kiryat Shmona (Desille, 2015). Apart from the short documentary, I kept four hours of rushes shot on 17 March 2015, national Election Day in Israel, and 9 May 2015, Memorial Day of the WWII peace treaty. While during fieldwork, I also took numerous pictures in the four cities I worked on. In her book *Doing Visual Ethnography*, Sarah Pink (2001) distinguishes between shots that the researcher uses for observation, shots made by individuals who are the object of the research, and shots made by the researcher himself. I took the film and photographs I use during fieldwork. Therefore, they reflect choices I made myself, which are influenced by the importance I give to image production, as well as the framework of my research. Indeed, I took a series of shots that are — in my opinion — traces of immigration in the urban landscape. When I chose to photograph a shop bearing Cyrillic letters, it is subjectively an immigrant shop. Another shop may be owned by an immigrant but it has — what I believe to be — an 'Israeli' front window. However, I still believe they are part of the fieldwork. And, if the pictures themselves do not have

an autonomous meaning, “a reflexive approach to analysis should concentrate on how the content of visual images is the result of the specific context of their production and on the diversity of ways that video and photographs are interpreted” (*Ibid*., p. 114). This is why part of the photographs as well as the movie were shown to interviewees and used as ‘object’ for further debate.

Finally, I visited several museums in Acre, as well as the municipal museums of Arad and Kiryat Shmona. In Kiryat Shmona, I also met with two of the project coordinators of the future museum of *maabarot*, yet to be built (Interview 55, 2015; Interview 56, 2015). In Kiryat Gat, I had the opportunity to meet and visit the city with former city planners (Interview 13, 2014; Interview 27, 2015).

As important as the history of the place are the recent developments that alter discourses during fieldwork. Indeed, various events that affected the Jewish communities abroad — such as terrorist attacks that targeted the Jewish community in France in January 2015 —, the national frame — such as the national elections in March 2015, the debate on the nation-state law and the debate on the conversion law that took place in the months before the elections, or other decisions affecting resources distribution among cities and/or immigrant groups in Israel —, and local events — such as the municipal elections held in Arad in June 2015 — all had impact on the stories I was told by interviewees. They reflected on the news, and used the interview to give their opinion. The impacts of those events show the extent to which reality is fluid, evolving and open to change (Charmaz, 2001). The following figure shows the events — local, immigration-related, national and international — that occurred during fieldwork:

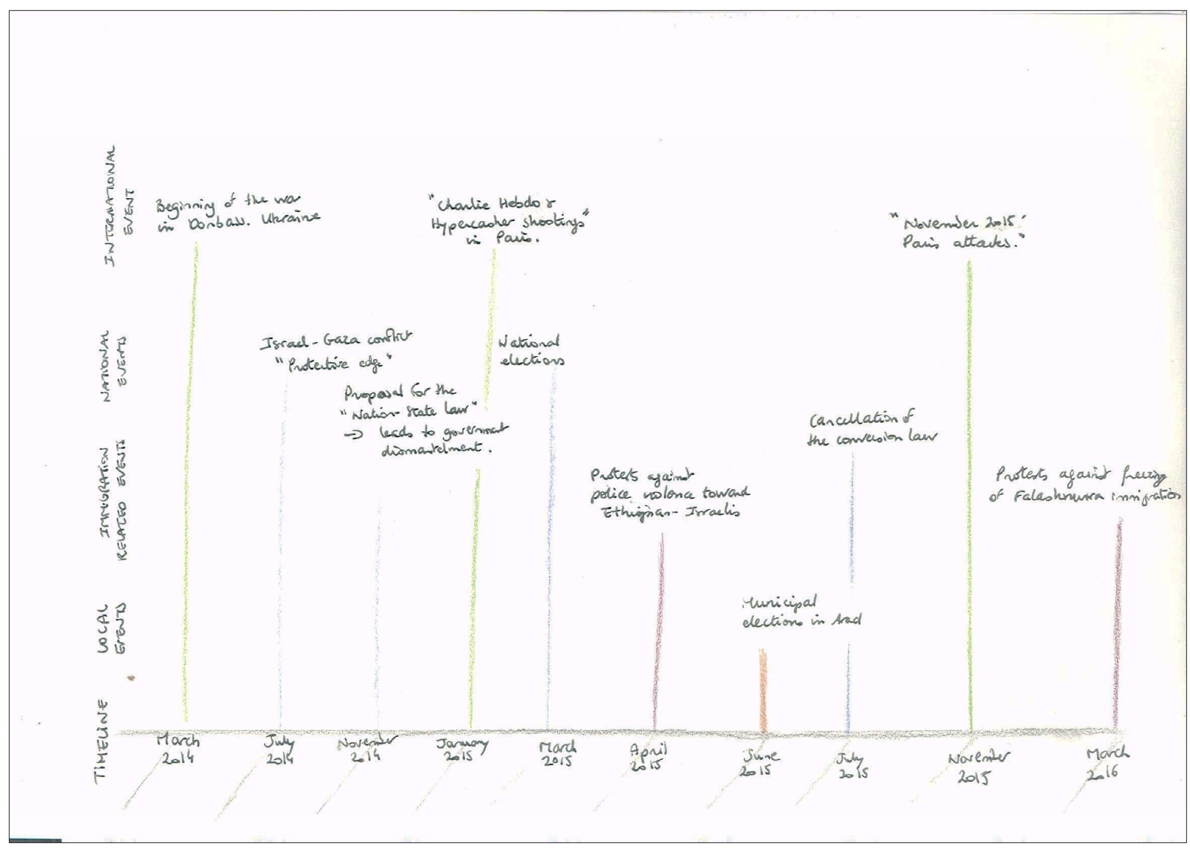


Figure 4. 1. Chronology of events occurring from 2014 to 2016, at international, national and local levels, that have affected narratives. Realised by Amandine Desille

1.3 Engaging with the actors

Constructivist grounded theory acknowledges the researcher's active role in shaping the data and analysis. Indeed, interviewees face the researcher, and therefore, their storytelling is situated. In the interactions I engaged in with local officials, municipal agents, or other stakeholders, I came to realise the extent to which the observer — myself — plays a crucial role. Interviews involve justification, appeal, detailed explanations but also judgment, reinforcement of superiority and more (see annex on joint research).

Indeed, within minutes of the beginning of the conversation, participants know I will be speaking of immigrant integration. As they are anxious to show and demonstrate their expertise in the field, they often punctuate the interviews with sentences such as "I provided you with all the information you need for a PhD", or on the contrary, they express their resentment toward the university, which is, in their opinion, disconnected from a reality that only decision-makers understand. Second, my presence reinforces their appeal to other people and bodies, and provides them with new arguments. In fact, if I turn to them to know more about immigration

integration in their city, I participate in reinforcing their authority on this matter. Third, as a foreigner, I force them to project on their own questions — and sometimes fears — toward immigrants. From explicit encouragement to convert, to less explicit silences, embarrassment or assurance that they accept my strangeness (see annex on joint research), our encounters are symptomatic of a relation of power.

In order to counter-balance this relation, I always tried to report to the participants after the interviews. I met with local officials at the end of fieldwork to explain the work I had done in their city, and to confirm results with them.

1.4 Toward the emergence of a scalar approach

When presenting my theoretical choices, I had to deal with their methodological implications. Indeed, I mentioned scale's function of 'coherent denial'[79] (Racine *et al.*, 1980, pp. 89–90); as well as the 'hologram' function of place, where scalar processes collide (Schnell, 2007). In this perspective, I deliberately put aside central administration policymaking to focus on the specificities of local policymaking. However, once this methodological choice made, I said, I opted for a fluid and unbounded approach of scale. I mean that I ran a scalar assessment of the socio-political space I surveyed — city-level local politics and policies of immigration and integration. Inevitably, policies formed by the central administration came back into the picture, but only the ones that bear an impact, directly or indirectly, on city immigration and integration issues.

The focus is therefore on political and social agents that impact the collective social life of the city, and particularly the lives of new as well as settled immigrants. It is precisely the variations found between interviews, and between places, that help understand the changing nature of this policy domain: the specificities of the place — as place is a node of relations — as well as their resonance across scales — as actors produce scales whenever they intervene. Discrepancies between the four cities and the length of interviews are extremely useful in the sense that they make it possible to define the boundaries of this policy domain, to imagine the density of actors involved in immigration and integration and to visualise their connections, their conflicts and their channels of cooperation.

The urban scale is not a mere zoom-in, a bounded spatial envelope or a reduction of a reality that could occur at national level. At this scale of observation, layers of historical legacies and of collective representations superimpose, actors/agents located at various scales, and in or out

[79] Translation of the author.

government intervene. The eyes must look out of the physical boundaries of the city and grasp the 'upwards, downwards and transversal links' (Brenner, 2004). Additionally, those scalar fixes are just momentary. Rescaling occurs, which informs processes of transformations of hierarchy of authority, power and responsibility.

Olivier Giraud (2012) proposes a methodology to compare public action at subnational level. In his methodology, he suggests that defining the social actors involved in the definition of the 'public issue', and then involved in dealing with that issue contributes to the understanding of the politics of scales. By intervening, actors produce a scalar space, says Giraud (*Ibid*.). In the same issue of *Revue Internationale de Politique Comparée* (International Review for Comparative Politics in English), Julie Pollard and Pauline Prat compare subnational politics in a multilevel environment and assert: "the focus on actors, their trajectories, their strategies, their resources and their positioning in a multilevel environment, constitute a prolific means to grasp the articulation between levels"[80] (Pollard & Prat, 2012). Through the example of local officials who are/were also national officials, they coin the concept of 'ferrymen' (*passeurs* in French) between levels.

Through the mapping of actors, I will be able not only to identify the actors involved in the field of immigration and integration, but also their activities, the relations they fostered with other bodies, as well as the nature of such relations (funding, supervision, partnership…). The identification of actors involved in the immigration and integration policy domain, and the definition of the relations between them, even when not verbally expressed, reveal its fluid, unbounded, intertwined scalar nature.

This first section has reasserted the methodological implications of a conceptual framework based on agency, place and scale. In a constructivist grounded theory perspective, each particular city will provide new avenues to challenge existing theory, and show the extent to which 'ordinary cities' are not only condemned to catch up, but, through their agents, actually produce and reproduce scales.

2 Selection of case studies

In every conference where I gave a paper, or even in interviews, when I presented the cities constituting my fieldwork, the inevitable question I was asked was: "Why did you choose those cities?" Not surprisingly, those scholars, urban planners and experts I met during fieldwork all suggested a different way to select the cities, according to the urban features they repeatedly

[80] Translation of the author.

took into account in their work. For instance, I met with a well-established consulting company director. This company works with Israeli cities to try and improve their image, as well as provide strategic plans for local employment creation projects. At the time of our encounter, the director was involved in a tourism project with Arad, which is why I organised a meeting with him. When I presented my research work, he said:

> How many cities do you need? I would probably have done things differently. There is data on migration. You can see how many come. So you take 120 cities, Jewish — I guess you don't study Arab migration — you look at them, Petah Tikva, Netanya, Hedera. You find out what the average [number of immigrants coming every year] is. Some cities receive less than the average, some more. […] What can we call high, or medium, or low? Ok? Look at the high ones: is there something that unites them? There could be a lot of reasons. We will talk about them later. And the low cases, where nothing happens, there are also reasons. Because sometimes the mayor says: I don't want Olim. It could be. Now, I would have looked at the two ends of the scale, what is going on? And I would have compared it with the average to see what is going on. What is the role of the city or of these factors? That's the first thing, I mean, if I am allowed to orient the work! (Interview 17, 2014)

The quest for success and the quest for the factors that lead to success are his obvious obsession. For this interviewee, it is clear that I should have gone about looking for 'best practices'.

What is important in this never-ending debate is to be aware of the elements which directed choices, to make them explicit, and to recognise the potential bias they might introduce in the research work, finding ways to engage with rigorous research and whenever possible overcome partiality.

In December 2013, I visited 39 cities (31 municipalities, seven local councils and one regional council), located in the Haifa, North and South districts of Israel. In each authority, I asked for the director of the department of immigration and integration. Ten directors accepted to answer my questions. The rest of the data was completed using the official website of the towns as well as data available on the website of the Central Bureau of Statistics in Israel, retrieved in December 2013. Collected data included:

- *General*: type of local authority, district, population, socio-economic rank, [81] main economic activities;

[81] The socio-economic rank is calculated for each city depending on the financial resources of the residents (from work, benefits, and other); Housing — density, quality, and other components of this aspect; Home appliances, e.g., air conditioners, personal computers, and VCRs; Motorization level — quantitative and qualitative; Schooling and education; Employment and unemployment profile; Various types of socio-

- *Local government*: name of the mayor, political party he represents, development town (yes/no), local authority annual revenues (including extraordinary, as for 2011), thereof transfers from central government, thereof expenses of welfare department (regular programmes);
- *Immigration*: population of immigrants (born abroad), population of Jewish immigrants who arrived after 1990, population of Jewish immigrants that arrived in 2009, represented ethnic groups;
- *Services*: branch of MOIA (yes/no), municipal department for immigration and integration (yes/no), number of workers in the municipal department, subsidized Hebrew classes (yes/no), small and medium enterprises (SME) support system available, MOIA's employment services (yes/no), other initiatives.

On the basis of this survey, I selected four cities. My choice is the result of a multiple construction, at the crossroads of different variables that enable to compare immigration policies: the status of the city — in terms of size and regional position; its demographic characteristic; its economic characteristics; and its political orientation. It does not focus on success, as hinted by the interviewee I mentioned, but is rather a sample of quite diverse cities, within a usually-seen-as-singular category of mid-sized peripheral cities.

2.1 The city in the urban hierarchy

In the previous chapters, I have consistently called for a focus on small and mid-sized cities, remote from economic and political centres. I have argued that the study of these peripheral towns can bring new light to issues of identity, belonging and integration on the one hand, but also issues of statehood, power and autonomy on the other hand. I acknowledge the differences between main gateway cities, and cities that are located outside the core networks, or 'downscaled' cities (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010), but I refuse to discard the latter on the basis of a vision of passivity. In order to understand the specific challenges met by these cities, I have opted for a comparative analysis of cities belonging to the same hierarchy.

The first implication was geographical. Israel is divided into seven districts: the Tel Aviv district, the Jerusalem district, the central district, the Judea and Samaria district, which corresponds to the settlements located beyond the green line, in the occupied territories of Palestine, the Haifa

economic distress; and demographic characteristics. 1/10 indicates cities in distress while 10 /10 indicates well-off cities (see the National Bureau of Statistics in Israel). It is of particular importance for local authorities and the Ministry of Interior. Indeed, budget, national transfers and staff decisions impacting local governments are taken by the Ministry of Interior based on this indicator.

district, the Northern district and the Southern district. When I carried out the initial survey, I excluded Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and the central districts, considering that they made up the core (although I fully admit that in an archipelago-networked conception of the core, this could be disputed. Indeed, cities with large Palestinian-Israeli citizens could be considered peripheries within the core district, as their access to resources is lower. Similarly, several cities in the centre suffer from low economic status, such as Lod or Ramle). I have also excluded the Judea Samaria district, as the occupation of Palestinian land involved an ideological frame that has a great influence on new settlements. I therefore focused on the Haifa district (here again, one could argue that Haifa is not a periphery, but based on the fiscal advantages of cities in the Haifa district, I suggest that the administration treats it as a periphery), the northern district and the southern district.

Second, I focused on cities governed by a similar type of council. I first identified cities with a municipality or city council, excluding towns governed by a local council, or settlements governed by a rural council. It implies that I excluded a type of settlement which, even though it is to be found in the periphery, is usually considered a core, in terms of its economy but also its access to political centres: the *kibbutz*. It also means that the cities I studied all host at least 20,000 residents. Since I have shown that the overwhelming majority of new immigrants settle in those cities, I believe that their exclusion does not bear any impact on the results.

Nevertheless, in order to 'compare what is comparable', I decided to look at cities that did not have a regional role. In that sense, I excluded Haifa or Beer Sheva. The four cities I selected have a number of residents ranging from 20 to 50,000. Even though it may appear as an important gap, their location means that they hold a rather similar regional position, which endows them with similar services and local ministry branches. All of them host a local branch of the MOIA and SME support systems. In fact, Kiryat Shmona and Arad are more remote and, although smaller in size, their isolated position sanctions them as service centres, whereas Kiryat Gat and Acre compete with neighbouring cities that can offer similar services within a thirty-minute drive.

Two other important features should be mentioned: the role of these cities since the establishment of the State in immigration settlement. Acre is part of the older urban centres that absorbed immigrants, while Kiryat Shmona, Kiryat Gat and Arad were respectively funded as 'development towns', with the main purpose of absorbing newcomers. The four cities also participated in securing the borders of the State: Acre is located at the Lebanon border, Arad close to Jordan, Kiryat Gat close to Gaza and Kiryat Shmona between the Lebanese and Syrian borders.

2.2 Demographic characteristics of the city

A second important variable, often mentioned in the literature when it comes to justify the forming of immigration policy, is the composition of the population. More importantly, the proportion of immigrants and the intensity of their settlement in a city over time, can inform the politics of immigration and integration. For instance, Walker and Leitner (2011) show that anti-immigrant resentment usually occurs in cities experiencing recent immigration peaks, rather than in cities with long-lasting immigrant settlement.

As a legacy of the 1950 Sharon plan, the four cities host immigrant families and their children and grandchildren, mostly from North Africa and the Middle East (in fact, I mentioned in the previous chapter that European immigrants settled relatively less in these cities, and those who did remigrated to other cities more readily than African and Asian immigrants). Moreover, they host a high proportion of Russian-speaking populations, most of whom arrived in the 1990s from the former Soviet Union. Kiryat Shmona has the lowest share of new immigration from the 1990s (16%), and Arad the highest (38%). Even though Acre is a mixed city, built around an Arab centre, it also started absorbing immigrant population as early as the 1950s, with a second substantial peak in the 1990s. Therefore, it holds similar demographic features like Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona, with the notable difference of 25% Palestinian residents.

Demographic variations are important at various levels: depending on their weight and status, each represented group can channel subsidies and public monies; they can draw political power; but they can also be used or neglected depending on the perception of the institutions in their contribution to the development of the city (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010).

Indeed, the rights attributed to immigrants differ from country to country. The MOIA draws specific policies for the different groups. Special groups can be recognised as immigrants for a longer period, therefore extending their entitlements to welfare, education and more. They get allowances for a longer period — up to two years instead of six months. They can study Hebrew in subsidised courses for a longer period: ten instead of five months. Access to grants in high education is also extended from three to ten years, or even for life in the case of Ethiopian immigrants. Finally, Ethiopian immigrants also get access to subsidised property in specific government-defined neighbourhoods. Indeed, Edna, director of one the local branches of the Ministry explains:

> Me: When I talked to [the person in charge of integration at the municipality], he told me that apart from Ethiopians, Caucasus, Georgian and Bukhara Jews were also considered ‘special populations’.

> Edna: After 1990, all these countries were still the Soviet Union. Immigration and the collapse [of the USSR] occurred in parallel, but actually, immigration was faster then the collapse. When I started working, I was writing "Tashkent, FSU". It was still together. Only later, they started to define them as 'Kavkaz' (Caucasus/Mountain Jews) because they are weaker. Ethiopians get 10 months of Hebrew classes and not 5. The entitlements to studies are different too. First, they identified only Ethiopians. Then, in 1996-1997, following the war in Chechnya, they started to define 'Kavkaz', and their sons will also get an extension. Indeed, regular immigrants who want to study get three years' subsidies. But it's 10 years for Caucasus and Bukhara Jews, while there is no limit for Ethiopians. Edna finds the procedure in her files. 'Kavkaz' entitlements are in a procedure dated 1997. Before that, Edna explained that the immigrant was listed as a FSU immigrant. Right after the war, they were refugees. They got residence in the integration centre. Then, they became 'special populations'. I asked how it is defined. Edna says that the main criterion is their residence (within the regions where Mountain Jews lived); that the immigrant ID should specify TAT or MOUNTAIN JEWS. Edna explained that their status can be updated up to 1/1/89 as the date of arrival in Israel. "A person can be in Israel for 10 years, arrived before the procedure existed and still get his rights". (Interview 18, 2014)

These 'special populations' also channel resources to the municipality. Indeed, welfare, education, employment or immigration and integration municipal departments can draw resources from the Ministries on the sole basis of the fact that they serve these populations. In Kiryat Gat, several municipal agents are hired to serve the Ethiopian population residing in the city. For instance, during the period of fieldwork, a unit for the integration of Ethiopians — *Moked Klita* — was created under the department of welfare. A director was appointed as well as workers. A building located in a neighbourhood with a higher concentration of Ethiopian immigrants was commandeered for this office. The creation of this unit followed the active lobbying of the two deputy mayors, Ayelet, herself Ethiopian-Israeli, and Alexander, a Caucasus Jewish immigrant, at the MOIA (Interview 38, 2015; Interview 45, 2015; Interview 46, 2015). Similarly, the presence of an important community from the Caucasus area in Acre caused the municipality to draw a large budget — 200,000 NIS yearly — and fund a position at the municipality for a 'Integration of Caucasus Jews' coordinator' (Interview 20, 2015).

Apart from channelling resources, those groups can also organise to elect representatives who will defend their interests in the local government. In Arad, FSU immigrants form almost half of the population, and had the power to elect an immigrant at the head of the city council. In the other cities, immigrant representatives usually negotiate with other candidates. Indeed, in an encounter at the municipality of Kiryat Shmona, the mayor describes his alliance with Abram, the local candidate of the Russian party *Israel Beitenu*, to win the local elections. Indeed, the mayor included Abram in his list because "he brings in the voters" (Interview 54, 2015).

2.3 Socioeconomic exclusion of the city

The statistics I collected included the economic rank of the city, on a scale from 1 to 10, 1 indicating economic distress and 10, wealth. As I presented in the footnotes, this indicator takes into account income, housing (including appliances), motorisation, education and employment features. I therefore chose to look at cities mainly characterised by the lower incomes of their residents, and their occupation in low and mid-tech industries. Arad and Kiryat Shmona rank 5, while Acre and Kiryat Gat rank 4. Even in Kiryat Gat, where the industrial park offers high tech employment, Kiryat Gat residents mainly include outsourcers, transport, maintenance and other low-skill jobs (Shachar *et al.*, 2005; Gazzar, 2006; Interview 31, 2015).

Their economic status entitles them to an equalizing grant from the Ministry of Interior as well as other advantages. Kiryat Shmona had the highest share of transfer, with 51.47% of its total budget being transferred from the central administration in 2011. Arad's budget was made up of 42.21% of transfers, as against a little under 34% for Kiryat Gat and Acre, (their larger population, and larger industrial parks meant that they also benefited from a municipal budget twice the size of Arad and Kiryat Shmona).

The four cities I selected are located in areas with fiscal advantages for industrial activities (area A, as determined by the NOP 31). Nevertheless, Kiryat Gat is the only city that managed to leverage this fiscal advantage and can count on the presence of a consequent high technology sector.

2.4 Political orientation of the city

The literature also states the importance of political affiliation, and party politics, which can lead to more inclusive, or on the contrary more exclusionary, immigration policies. I have already mentioned the role of the Greens in the city of Frankfurt in the making of a multicultural policies (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997), or the comparative study conducted in the US, showing that Republican vs. Democrat affiliations of local leaders lead to a differentiated landscape of politics of belonging (Walker & Leitner, 2011).

In the case of Israel, the political orientation of peripheral mid-sized cities is quite alike. Mayors and their deputies are all affiliated with the right-wing Likud party, or the extreme right, Russian secular *Israeli Beitenu* party. Former or current affiliation with the religious-nationalist party is also common in the council. Mixed cities such as Acre are an exception with the presence of Palestinian-Israeli officials affiliated with the 'Joint list', that is Palestinian parties. The left-wing

parties are either marginal or non-existent. Opposition in councils is very low. Big coalitions are very common, reducing the odds that a decision may not be voted (Interview 1, 2014).

Additionally, the leadership is rather stable. Most elected leaders are have been there for several terms already. Arad is the exception, as Tali gained mayorship in 2010 by default, as the previous mayor was having been dismissed. She finally stood for elections and won, but as she was elected to the parliament, she did not complete her term.

Lastly, the city councils respect a quite balanced ethnic mix. Among the cities I selected, in Acre, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona, the mayor is a Sephardic Jew — of Moroccan and Yemenite descent — and his deputy mayors are Russian speakers. In Acre, another deputy mayor is Palestinian and Muslim. In Kiryat Gat, another deputy mayor is Ethiopian-Israeli. In Arad, at the time of fieldwork, the mayor was born in Moldova, in the Soviet Union.

In sum, the selection of cities is the result of a complex construction, linking converging geographical, demographic, economic and political situations, with diverging characteristics that make each place unique. It is also the result of the assessment of immigration and integration policies based on the phone survey I conducted in December 2013, data collection and pre-field studies, which determined various levels of engagement: Kiryat Shmona quickly emerged as representative of the cities that are not proactive immigration policymakers, while Kiryat Gat, Arad and Acre represent various degrees of investments in immigration policymaking and different pathways to achieve so.

3 Data collection and analysis

In the theoretical chapter, I established that interventions that shape cities are the facts of actors. Policies that affect the territory of cities result from the interventions of multiple actors. Those actors are located at different scales, so that endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors cross the territory for which they intend to form policies. Those actors may be located in different governmental institutions (regional, department and city councils, but also other forms of regional authorities) or can be private actors (Di Meo, 2008, pp. 6–7).

The first section will present those social actors I have encountered, within the municipality — local officials and municipal agents — but also exogenous and transitional actors. In the second section, I will detail the biographical method, which guided those sessions. Nevertheless, as participants in the research project knew of my interest for immigration matters, they also talked extensively about their city's agenda and actions. Apart from narratives that are more personal and shaped by the individual, political and institutional discourses also formed a large

part of the data I collected. I will therefore explain in more detail the ways those discourses can be analysed.

3.1 Social actors

In the municipalities, I set up meetings with different actors, from the political to the technical levels including: mayors, municipal councillors in charge of immigration and integration, municipal spokespersons, directors of the following departments: immigration and integration, social affairs (more specifically community work), employment, municipal agents in those departments, specifically the ones in charge of new immigrants (e.g: community worker in charge of Caucasus Jewish community), director of the municipal economic corporation/industrial park, director of strategic planning, curator of municipal museum (Kiryat Shmona, Arad). In the local arena, and outside of the municipality, I set up interviews with: a representative of the MOIA's local office, representatives of the Jewish Agency in integration centres (in Kiryat Gat and in Arad), immigration coordinators in Youth Centres (supervised by the Galilee and Negev development authority), representatives of NGOs cooperating with the municipality (e.g: *Garin Ometz* in Acre, which assisted in the integration of Bnei Menashe immigrants), experts and private consultants who assisted in the strategic planning of the cities (e.g: 2SH in Arad, Eshhar in Kiryat Shmona). Lastly, at national level, I set up meetings with a civil servant at the MOIA, the director of community work in the Ministry of Social Affairs, the director of immigration and integration affairs in the Union of Local Authorities in Israel, and directors of NGOs working on similar topics (e.g: Jerusalem Intercultural Centre).

A first remark is that those actors are not all present in the four cities. Indeed, Kiryat Shmona does not have a department of immigration and integration. However it is the only city that created a position for strategic planning at the time of fieldwork. Even though Arad and Kiryat Gat have an absorption centre (a structure shared by the MOIA and the Jewish Agency For Israel to host Ethiopian immigrants the first two years upon immigration), it is not the case of Acre and Kiryat Shmona.

Secondly, some of the actors I identified do not deal with immigration. The youth centre of Kiryat Shmona does set goals related to demographic growth but they aim at attracting Israeli families through internal migration. Whereas Acre, Arad and Kiryat Gat's youth centres employ an immigration coordinator, dealing with the training, educational, housing and social needs of young immigrants.

3.1.1 Local officials and street-level bureaucrats in the municipality

I started fieldwork with a list of actors whom I identified as possibly involved with immigration and integration issues in the city: political actors like the mayor and the city councillors in charge of immigration and integration; municipal agents in departments of strategic planning, economic development, immigration and integration and social affairs; municipal agents in the economic corporation (c*hevra kalkalit* in Hebrew).

I experienced one major change in the identification of actors: during the first months, I met with representatives of the economic corporation and the industrial parks, thinking it would lead to immigrant-oriented policies and programmes for employment and entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, I soon realised that the economic corporations of those municipalities, contrarily to bigger cities like Tel Aviv, Beer Sheva or Haifa, did not deal with economic development. They were mainly mobilised by the municipalities to deal with existing industries, or even more simply, municipalities devolve some of their responsibilities to their economic corporation, to shorten bureaucratic processes and deal with higher efficiency with profit-generating municipal activities. For instance, economic corporations deal with renting advertising space. Nevertheless, I was referred to another range of actors, mostly dealing with social and cultural services for immigrants, like the municipal library, or the cultural centres, which I did not identify at the beginning.

3.1.2 Non-municipal stakeholders involved in city governance

At the beginning of my research project in 2013, I decided to look at the municipality as an 'entry point' to enter the field. Even though the first research proposal I submitted to the doctoral school mentioned the variety of actors I identified and wished to interview in the local arena, as well as the national actors and transnational actors possibly involved, the only interaction I considered was partnership. As I started my first interviews, the research proposal I re-submitted to the doctoral school also changed substantially. Indeed, in the proposal I submitted during summer 2014, I wrote:

> In this context, I choose to look at local authorities as an entry point to challenge the relevancy of the local scale in immigrant policymaking and policy implementation. I question the role of the municipality — not as a mere "zoom-in" or reduction of national government, but rather as an actor in its own right, operating in a multifold environment.

And indeed, the better acquainted I got with the organisations dealing with immigration and integration in the four cities, the more I realised I was not looking at independent bodies. Three

of the four cities constituting my fieldwork had a municipal immigration and integration unit or department. However, those are financially highly dependent on MOIA subsidies. In Acre, the salaries of the six employees of the department are paid by the MOIA, with only a small contribution by the municipality. In Arad and Kiryat Gat, salaries are paid by the municipality, but the activities are highly subsidised by the Ministry. The principle on which such transfers are done is that of public bids. Municipalities must comply with criteria defined by the Ministry to obtain funding. Therefore, I met with the official of the MOIA who supervises the programme funding municipal agents in charge of immigration outreaching and integration.

Another department that proved to be highly involved in immigrant integration is welfare services, and especially the unit dedicated to community work. Social community workers are directly related to the community work services of the Ministry of Welfare, which supervises their work, train them and provide a large amount of finances. The interview with the director of this unit at the Ministry showed a very different approach to immigrant integration, which is reflected at city level.

Both those examples show the extent to which decentralisation is 'unfinished' (Giraud, 2012), and 'partial, incomplete and contingent' (Varsanyi, 2008, p. 882).

Other actors located outside the municipality but with offices within the boundaries the city were tied to ministries, foundations, bigger NGOs or Diasporic philanthropic organisations. For instance, Ministry local branches, the youth centre (supervised by the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee), the centres for culture, youth and sport (or *matnass,* supervised by the Ministry of Education), local associations but also groups of residents like the religious groups *Garin Torani*, all were related to local, national and international bodies through funding, professional supervision, training and more.

3.2 Methods for data collection and analysis

The research project I carry out focuses on local policies formed for immigrant integration at present time. Therefore, it is almost impossible to assess the impacts of these policies on immigration in the cities. Nevertheless, I assume it is possible to start and understand the transformations of the State power through this policy domain. How can I define the local policy in a context of absence or obsolescence of written policies, relying only on the narratives and discourses of agents? Moreover, can I represent the scalar processes transforming this policy domain?

3.2.1 Absence or obsolescence of written policies

To determine the local immigration and integration policy, very little written material is available.

Websites can be a tool to find stabilised institutionalised discourse. However, the municipal websites and Facebook pages are usually edited by the spokesperson, and provide only very basic information. If I take the example of Acre's webpage (http://www.akko.muni.il), the two main texts which provide a vision is "a word from the mayor" and "our city's vision". Only the latter mentions that Acre is a multicultural city, as well as the objective of the mayor to "bring strong populations" to the city.

A second potential source of information on policies is the strategic plans that cities can write to guide their policies. Nevertheless, small and mid-sized cities in Israel seldom have such a document ready. In Acre, private consultants assisted the municipality and elaborated a strategic plan which concerns mainly tourism development, through a new branding "Acre the city of the Mediterranean cultures" — although focused on multiculturalism — but without much of a perspective on immigration. In Arad, a private agency was brought in to develop a tourism plan, at the time of fieldwork. In Kiryat Gat, the most important work realised over the past few years was done with a group of students from MIT, United States and Tel Aviv University's school of geography (MIT department of urban studies and planning & TAU Laboratory for contemporary urban design, 2012). However, it was made clear by the mayor and the spokesperson that those reports were meant to stay 'on the shelf' (Interview 14, 2014; Interview 19, 2014). Finally, Kiryat Shmona also had a strategic plan drawn up by a private agency. Nevertheless, in 2015, the Ministry of Interior authorised the hiring of a strategic planner. The first steps toward an in-house strategic plan have included the compilation of demographic and socio-economic data of the city, as well as a global vision. However, apart from a Power Point presentation, there was no availability of a comprehensive policy document (Interview 55, 2015).

When it comes to immigration and integration policies, none of the four cities have written documents with specific orientations or agendas. During an interview with a representative of the Union of Local Authorities in Israel (Interview 15, 2014), I was presented with a document issued by the MOIA for the attention of local governments, specifying the way to spend subsidies obtained from the Ministry (MOIA, 2011). However, when I mentioned this document to a director of immigration and integration, he admitted that he just used it to tailor-make the

project proposals *a posteriori* to enhance his chance to get the budget approved (Interview 16, 2014).

In that context, interviews were the primary source to identify the city's policy toward immigration, as well as the understanding of integration at the local level. Through the identification of actors, of the activities and programmes they carry out, for whom and with whom, and of the relations of conflicts and cooperation with other actors, one can start defining the symbolic policies, as well as the direct actions of the city.

3.2.2 The biographical method

The collection of life stories and their analysis through the biographical method have been the basis of numerous empirical studies in social sciences, across disciplines, and across topics. Migration studies in particular have been a fertile ground and researchers have extensively engaged in biographical methods with immigrants. Nevertheless, reflecting on his research career, Ferrarotti (2003) challenges the collection of biographies not only as illustrative material but in its 'subjective fullness of meaning' (*Ibid*., p. 25). Indeed, collecting life stories involves communication, some sort of interaction between the narrator and the observer. Through the storytelling of their lives, the researcher witnesses a re-appropriation, a mediation, a retranslation of the social by the individuals (*Ibid*.). In fact:

> Every account of an action or a life is at the same time an act, the totalising synthesis of lived experiences and a social interaction. A biographical account is not at all a news report, it is a social action by means of which an individual synthetically retotalises his life (biography) and social interaction in progress (the interview) in the midst of an account-interaction. (*Ibid*., p. 28)

Delory-Momberger similarly argues that narratives are a way to think and make sense of the world and of oneself in the world. Those narrative constructions through which one apprehends his life follow a particular syntax: it is organised around a beginning, a development and an end (Delory-Momberger, 2009). Ferrarotti correspondingly talks of 'organised knowledge' (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 57). Selecting, organising, rendering and interpreting past experiences, understanding 'what we do when we do it' are part of a process of reflexivity. Unpacking reflexivity, Giddens lays out the relations between agency and language and asserts: "To be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons (including lying about them)" (Giddens, 1986, p. 3).

And this is precisely what I asked them: to discursively elaborate upon the reasons for their actions in politics. Through a range of guidelines, taking the shape of an interview guide, I asked social agents to engage in storytelling, from their immigration experience, their access to local politics up to the description of a regular day at the municipality or in their organisation. Therefore, for my sake, participants engaged in narrative constructions during our sessions.

Indeed, when asked to speak freely about certain periods of their lives, interviewees selected certain events while discarding others. Some events were related in full detail while some were just briefly mentioned. More importantly, events were 'romanticised'. This process is part of what Delory-Momberger calls biographic performativity, where individuals reassemble fragmented experiences via reflexivity and subjectivisation. Indeed, life experiences are made of psychosocial transitions: some typical situations being from school to university, from university to the labour market, from an active professional life to retirement (Delory-Momberger, 2009, p. 61). Those transitions are even more crucial for an immigrant who settles in a new country. Indeed, immigrants find themselves in spaces of 'in between'[82] ('*entre-deux*' in French), more often cultural 'in betweens', where they navigate between different senses of the world (*Ibid.*, p. 70-71).

Piecing together a narrative arch despite those fragmentations and transitions is even an injunction in a neoliberal society dominated by the discourse of self-realisation (*Ibid.*, p. 109). Indeed, in our modern world, the subject is the central institution of society. Men are the entrepreneurs of their selves, argues Delory-Momberger. In that sense, she echoes the theories of Yasemin Soysal on 'active citizenship' (Soysal, 2012) or of Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas on deservingness (Garcés-Mascareñas, 2015). As individuals must be productive, the professional career serves as a matrix in the biographisation activity (Delory-Momberger, 2009, p. 83). Indeed, during our sessions, interviewees primarily mobilised professional events as milestones in their storytelling. Moreover, life stories are more and more told in the public sphere: we have all published part or whole of our resumes and activities on social networks such as LinkedIn, Academia or Facebook; we have attended workshops and training courses in order to 'sell' our life story to potential employers, donors or academic institutions. And we can also recognise that we are not all equal in those biographical performances. Delory-Momberger sheds light on the new inequalities which develop around the individual and collective capacity to tell the story of one's own life (*Ibid.*).

Some interviewees talk, and some do not. Asking personal questions regarding immigration experiences is often more sensitive than asking about working procedures. Depending on the

[82] Translation of the author.

boundaries interviewees draw around their personal experiences, according to their availability, or even their interest in my project, interviews ranged from 45 minutes to three hours, and were not equally personal.

Nevertheless, I believe those discursive interventions 'make sense' of particular issues raised in the public domain. In this sense, an actor involved in a particular public issue, whether he be a city councillor, the director of a department drawing a working procedure, the municipal agent in charge of operating this procedure and providing his director with feedback and monitoring, all will make sense of what he/she sees through his/her own experience, as well as through the context in which he/she is located (or from other contexts in which similar issues were met).

3.2.3 Collective narratives

Some social groups have been much more successful in constructing and diffusing a story justifying their social existence, their values, their norms and their views of the world. Yet, "there is no collective, no human community without a narrative, there is no social space without a narrative, there is no "territory" without a narrative"[83] (Delory-Momberger, 2012, p. 172). Each group has funding narratives, myths, legends or national histories, Delory-Momberger argues. And individuals borrow from collective narratives' patterns. Of course, each individual combines different memberships and belongings, different 'social mediations' (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 37).

Commenting on the following extract, from German philosopher Frederich Nietzsche's *Of the Use and Abuse of History for Life* (1874), Ferrarotti says:

> This means that history is no longer conceived of restrictively as the noble sequence of great events, battles, treaties, dynastic marriages, and so forth, but rather as the cumulative result of the threads and networks of relations into which, day after day, human groups enter of necessity. (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 8)

In that sense, Ferrarotti recognises the power of 'little history':

> What is little, worn out and decrepit acquires its own dignity and intangibility when the soul of antiquarian man, which protects and venerates, transmigrates into these things and there prepares a family next. The history of his city becomes for him the history of himself. He understands the walls, the gateway with its towers, the municipal statutes, the popular festivities like an illustrated diary of his youth, finding in all this himself, his powers, his activity, pleasure, judgment, madness, and discourteous habits. He tells himself that here one could live because here one could live. Here one will be able to go on living because we are stubborn, and it is not

[83] Translation of the author.

> possible to fall to bits in the space of one night. Thus, with this 'we' he sees beyond the ephemeral, random individual life and feels himself the spirit of the house, lineage, and city. (Nietzsche in Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 8).

Origin myths and history are not limited to nation-states: [84] cities also have their origin myths. Based on the claims I have made in the theoretical chapter of this volume, a city is an intensely human place. It takes shape through human activities and practices, and needs the very intention of a group of individuals to exist as a place, and not a mere crossing area. Places are given a set of symbols, social representations and narratives that can be associated with physical locales, but not only. The "threads and networks of relations" mentioned by Ferrarotti are therefore deeply connected to the places where they materialise. And the uniqueness of the relations in a time-space context makes a 'sense of place' possible. Of course, those symbols, representations and meanings are not fixed in time. They are the results of every layer that has given the place a value, but also of the power relations, of the struggle of one collective narrative against others.

The power of certain actions and narratives to change the course of a city can be illustrated by the more recent activity of placemaking. In fact, under the requests for mandatory development and entrepreneurship made on cities to compete with one another, I have argued that cities engage in placemaking. In that context, the desire to change the image of the city can go hand in hand with the elaboration of new collective narratives. For instance, Kiryat Shmona was first a transit camp (*maabara* in Hebrew) for immigrants in the early 1950s. This has long been considered part of the forced establishment of immigrants at Israeli borders. However, in recent years, the city has engaged in a new project aiming at turning the city's small museum into a national museum of the *maabara*, and a branch of the national museum of Israel, in an attempt to transform a discourse of oppression into a discourse of pride (Interview 55, 2015).

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[84] Usually, scholars exploring founding and origin myths belong to a field focused on the formation of the nation-states. Indeed, following Benedict Anderson's definition of a nation as an imagined political community, and the parallel 'national imaginings' anchored in territory and time which allowed the identification and perpetuation of a 'nation' (Anderson, 1983), many other social scientists have studied collective narratives. Anthony Smith adds to his definition of a nation the importance of "common myths and historical memories" (A. D. Smith, 1996). Those myths are anchored in specific places and definite territories — which he calls ethnoscapes and historic homelands. They are backed up by 'miraculous and sacred sites (*Ibid*.). Patrick J. Geary similarly studies the origin myths perpetuated in the different nations of Europe, working toward the deconstruction of those myths (Geary, 2013). In Israel, the most prominent work on collective narratives and myths is the one of Aharon Kellerman. Kellerman has written on settlement myths in Israel. For him, the elaboration of myth runs along three stages: an ideological loading of the landscape; its validation in collective memory — through collective narratives like arts, media or popular culture; and then in 'civil religion', that is in ceremonies and memorial days (Kellerman, 1996). For him, settlement myths in Israel are related to sites on the one hand, and to environment, society and security concerns on the other hand. Kellerman predicted a demythologisation as early as the 1980s. Nevertheless, those accounts concern the origin myths of nations, of large groups.

Another example is provided by Acre. Acre has been a successful tourist destination thanks to the old Arab city. However, in an attempt to incorporate other parts of the city in the image, the municipality implemented a tourist project, editing new tourist maps, a book and other texts which promote touristic sites in Acre mainly linked to the different Jewish groups represented like the Tunisian synagogue, the Caucasus synagogue… etc, considering the old Arab city as one destination among others (Interview 3, 2014; Interview 32, 2015).

Those attempts to influence the narratives of the city strongly affect politics of identity and belonging. Indeed, they can inform the 'imaginaries of community and place' (Walker & Leitner, 2011). Kiryat Shmona's museum for instance aims at reintegrating the *Mizrahi* populations within the national narrative of state-building and pioneering. Acre's tourism plan aims at leveraging Jewish heritage for economic purposes, lowering the share of the Arab old city in the total tourism supply in the process. Evidently, this last remark was never formulated out loud in Acre, a highly politicised field of research.

3.2.4 Political discourses to account for absent policy papers

Officials are very often called upon by the media as well as by local organisations, businesses and residents. They are requested to give weekly speeches at commemorations, celebrations, and opening ceremonies. They also give interviews for the television, on regional and local matters. Therefore, they get many opportunities to polish their performative repertoires.

Similarly, the technical staff I interviewed — ministry agents, municipal agents, directors of local organisations and their staff — have multiple opportunities to smooth out their job descriptions. Through grant writing, editing of communication tools, conferences and meetings but also training sessions — organised by their organisation or by a supervising body —, they acquire a 'language' and a lexicon that empowers them to report on their activities to external interlocutors.

As I mentioned in the previous subsection, my main objective was to collect life stories. This to some extent allowed me to include a more emotional panel of descriptions in each interview. It provided a nice break, even for a few minutes, from the two main discourses I was up against: the political discourse and the institutional discourse. Nevertheless, this was not always the case. Indeed, for a politician or a department director in charge of immigration, telling his own immigration story does not fall under a repertoire of personal and family memories: it is first and foremost political. It is part of the legitimising attributes for them to get and do the job.

The municipality is a particular institution in the sense that it is not only technocratic. It does not only rely on bureaucratic work, and the expertise of its agents, but it is led by a mayor and a council who are elected — every five years in the case of Israel. It therefore takes part in 'politics', that is the management of collective life, the regulation of the *polis* and its defence (Tournier & Bonnafous, 1995). Maurice Tournier and Simone Bonnafous are part of the research laboratory '*Lexicométrie et textes politiques*' in Saint Cloud, France. They define politics as the art of governing a group of citizens, and therefore emphasise the power of politics to organise social life (*Ibid.*). For them, politics is a space of language, a space where we speak — in the sense of taking the floor (*prendre la parole*) and occupying communication channels; and in the sense of taking control over language (*prendre la langue*) to impose meanings, values, symbols and discursive rituals (*Ibid.*). This last part is essential as it relates to the gaining of power and hegemony. And indeed, Tournier and Bonnafous suggest that the researcher must analyse "the extent to which words spoken in the public space around power stakes reveal the symbolic appropriation or dispossession struggles taking place in the space of discussion" (*Ibid.*, p. 69). As Patrick Charaudeau argues, "words and ideas […] materialise and produce meaning through enunciation" (Charaudeau, 2011, p. 105). The historical context, but also the moment when the story is told, are both crucial to analyse those words.

To illustrate this idea, I do not lack examples. Indeed, the topics addressed during sessions are usually politically loaded: immigration, integration in the city, vision and policy choices for economic development… etc. One of the most sensitive fields was probably the city of Acre, as a quarter of the population is made of Palestinians holding Israeli citizenship. Therefore, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict shaping Israeli politics since the establishment of the state finds a particular resonance in this local context. I transcribe here an extract from my field diary, following the encounter with Stan, spokesperson of the municipality of Acre, Christian, former coordinator of French immigration and now advisor to the mayor for French Affairs, and myself:

> The conversation heated up at that point. I think I pointed out that being an Arab city could be a niche to attract left-wing immigrants who looked for the "true Israel". It led to a weird conversation. For S. D., it was very very important to explain that Acre is *not* an Arab city but a *mixed* city. 28% of Acre's residents are Arabs. The deputy mayor is Arab. The communities co-exist. There are tensions, but they live together. Christian wanted to add that another message was possible: showing that Acre is in danger because of the presence of Arabs, and that Jews need to settle there to save the city. Stan got even more upset. He said that there was no way that the municipality would sell Acre like that. That this kind of message was spread by people like Rabbi Eichileksher. That Acre would be branded differently and that I could speak with [the person who gave me his contact, a consultant on city branding and tourism development] about it as their new brand was "A city of Mediterranean cultures". Stan started to list initiatives illustrating this co-existence: the

> Arab-Jewish Youth parliament for instance. He concluded that bringing immigration was a way for them to bring a strong population to a city which ranked 4 in terms of socio-economic situation, but in no way did the municipality want to judaise Acre. Christian indeed explained that he asked the mayor if [telling potential candidates to immigration that coming to Acre would permit increasing the Jewish population of the city, and therefore counter the Palestinian population,] was an option, and the mayor refused to answer. I asked him if he thinks this is the kind of message you can hear in France, among religious or community leaders for instance. Christian nodded. (Interview 3, 2014)

This extract shows the confrontation between two protagonists defending two different 'views of the world'. Stan is the spokesperson and needs to relay the mayor and the council's meanings and values. He is concerned with defining Acre as a mixed and not a Palestinian city. However, he is also concerned with showing that peaceful coexistence is possible. He insists that immigration is for economic growth and does not participate in an attempt to increase the Jewish demography of the city. Christian is more concerned with French immigration and he relays discourses belonging to those who 'organise' immigration from France to Israel. They are less concerned with the legitimacy of mayors governing mixed cities and the next municipal elections to be held. Their concern is encouraging immigration to Israel, and in some cases, like Stan, directing it to cities they perceive as needing immigration.

In this session, Christian destabilised the municipal discourse of peaceful coexistence, upsetting the spokesperson, who had to justify himself. This session has in fact unveiled the fine line most of the interviewees walk, between three main contradictory beliefs: Acre can capitalise on its Palestinian old city for tourism; a possible coexistence of Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Israelis is possible; but the city must remain Israeli and in majority Jewish.

This issue cuts across Israeli politics since the establishment of the state, and across large fields of policymaking. However, other issues were more temporary, and still affected the narratives I collected. The events that punctuated the international, national and local lives of these cities were therefore commented. Discourses and topics addressed evolved with the micro-history of the cities, as described in the chronology I have inserted in the first section of this chapter.

3.2.5 Dealing with institutional discourses

Even though elected mayor and councillors direct the municipality, they share the power with municipal agents. Indeed, department directors and their employees are not dependent on election cycles. They keep their positions from one term to another. The content of their job descriptions therefore falls much more within bureaucratic work and decisions rely on their expertise rather than political stakes.

In this context, the municipality is an institution. Institution anthropologist Irène Bellier links institutions and discourses. She says: "The anthropologist is interested in the way that, from the practices and discourses of its representatives and agents, the institution builds its territory, performs activities, and depending on the ideas it generates, defines a political space" (Bellier, 1997, p. 129). Bellier argues that a culture of institutions exists because within an institution, there are rules, norms, structures and common values. To analyse the culture of this institution, she recommends focusing on observations of individual and collective practices, examining discourses and texts produced by the institution, and treating those data relative to the institution's environment, to the relations — whether dominating, subordinated or integrated — that link it to the rest of the world (*Ibid.*).

Anchored in a Weberian tradition of bureaucratic analysis, Alice Krieg Planque and Claire Oger argue that there are two essential aspects of institutional discourses, both aiming at establishing legitimacy. First, discourses in institutions are stabilised — and this stabilisation can occur at a lexical level, by imposing a 'language', a way to designate issues or their treatment. In that sense, the term 'absorption' to talk about integration of Jewish immigrants in Israel refers to the bureaucratic work done by governmental agents to address the settlement and accommodation of new immigrants in Israel. The second aspect is the eradication of conflict to reach an 'authorised discourse'. Reducing dissonance aims at the "neutralisation of the opposition between the expert stance and the political positioning, the conciliation of interests between public and private partners, the denial of opinion divergences, or even the legitimacy of scientific discourse" (Krieg-Planque & Oger, 2010, p. 93). Obviously, this process of 'depoliticisation' does not mean that a political agenda becomes objective in the hands of agents. It is loaded with new subjectivities as it is translated into a working procedure, an activity or another type of practices.

How can I then find an institutional discourse? Where does it stabilise? First of all, the interviews were the prime material I collected, which highlighted a certain regularity emerging around certain topics. When similar answers are given, using a specific lexicon, I believe that they are part of a stabilised discourse produced by the institution. The spokesperson is a central person in this external communication. It also mediates between political and institutional discourses. In both the cities that I categorised as more proactive with regards to immigration, the spokespersons were quite knowledgeable and knew many facts and figures on this subject.

Other spaces such as the website,[85] but more importantly the official Facebook page, are important communication tools, legitimising the municipality. Handled by the spokesperson, it is updated very regularly according to the demands of the different departments, but mostly the mayor's office. In Kiryat Gat in particular, a Russian-speaking page was set by the spokesperson, following a demand from the mayor, to relay municipal-funded activities to the Russian-speaking residents (Interview 57, 2015). In Kiryat Shmona, the councillor in charge of immigration relayed information in Russian using his personal Facebook page.

To summarise, I focused on two types of actors: institutions, and people hosted by those institutions. In that sense, there are two different kinds of analysis that will emerge. On the one hand, an analysis focusing on the culture and the discourses of the institution dealing with immigrant integration, whether it be the municipality, the MOIA, a youth centre and so on. It is possible to find an institutional discourse, as it will be the 'authorised discourse', stabilised and free of conflict, aiming at gaining legitimacy. This discourse might be recurrent among interviewees of a same institution, and it will be the one brought about by the institution spokesperson, or fixed in place in symbolic sub-institutions, like the website, the Facebook page, or the municipal museum. On the other hand, I believe that leaders and agents also operate outside the institutional framework and perform independently. Their 'agency' is crucial to shaping the social life of the city. Recognizing the agency of interviewees had a crucial methodological implication: I mainly use interviewing sessions and discarded quantitative tools. Sessions follow interview guidelines in which I remind myself to collect the following information: personal immigration story; professional experiences and current responsibilities and tasks; representation of the others, beliefs; career development and future stakes. The limited questions I ask the interviewees aim at unveiling their life stories. The result is therefore a narrative, which I analyse through the biographical method.

Conclusions

This chapter was the occasion to briefly define the principles of constructivist grounded theory. Grounded theory encourages the comparison of the data, but also between data collected in different places — the fields of enquiry being bounded in space (and not through ethno-national division, as is often the case in migration studies) —, and between the collected data and existing

[85] Following decentralisation and a growing territorial competition, municipalities have gone into marketing, and increased their use of promotional tools. She studies mid-sized cities and shows that municipal websites are 'political tools' ('*outils du politique*' in French) which stage a territorial practice (Mainet, 2011, p. 75). Those websites integrate a promotional dimension, but they also integrate stakes, weaknesses, preoccupations of the local actors and more (*Ibid*.). For small and mid-sized towns, those digital tools are recent. There are usually handled by a few people within the municipality, without much resource and therefore are more makeshift jobs (*Ibid*.).

empirical and theoretical scholarship. The study of specific cases, at a methodological local scale, enables the emergence of specific threads for research, deepening knowledge, challenging theory and producing new paths of thinking.

What do I look at in those places? First, the particular challenges inherent to their location out of core networks, but also the practices, everyday life, and finally the narratives that inform the collective representations of the place, its 'little history'. To that extent, I chose four different frontier towns which, although they looked similar when taking into account geographical, demographic, socioeconomic and political dimensions, represented rather distinct positions toward immigration and integration issues.

Evidently, those places need people to produce and reproduce them. People sit in places, I argued in the theoretical chapter. Among the residents, I identified social actors, whose interventions are meaningful. Their location in particular time-space contexts makes them significant agents of change (or of reproduction of the status quo). The municipality is the first door I knocked at, but as I assumed, numerous connections exist with other institutions in and outside the city. Those social actors I met participate in the production of the knowledge I accumulated during encounters, observations and more. Their participation can be seen from the script of the interview, where dialogue takes place. But moreover, this interview set the stage for a confrontation between two worlds: the municipality and the university, each side advocating, justifying, and proving something to the other.

The discursive performance I could testify to during these encounters is a substantial part of the political life of the institutions I visited. Understanding who the actors are, what their resources are, what stories they tell, means that I can ultimately unveil their role in the production and reproduction of scales and in the transformations of statehood.

The narratives I collected could fall into three categories: biographical account, where the participants tell about their personal and professional background, more particularly the experiences connected to immigration; political discourses, sometimes biographical, where the interviewees gave their opinion toward the organisation of the social life of the city; and institutional discourses which aimed at legitimising the institution as a relevant public actor for immigration and integration issues.

Grounding the research in places, listening to the actors, accounting for scalar processes: as the title suggests: the upcoming chapters will follow the same pattern. The upcoming chapter will focus more particularly on the links between immigration, economic development and

placemaking. It will even more strongly connect people and territory, which have been designed as concomitant since statehood. Then, I will move on to the people in these places: the officials, the leaders that take the floor and control the official communication about immigration; but all social actors in the broader sense who participate in the public actions geared at immigrants. Their discourses and practices are interventions: they frame immigration and integration as issues, and as objects of public action. Lastly, those interventions produce scales. The last chapter therefore looks into this scalar space: the local governance of immigration and integration.

Part II: The emergence of local immigration policies: reconciling scale and agency

Chapter 5 ◊ Immigration as an opportunity: rescaling of the local economic development strategy

In their introduction to *Locating Migration: Rescaling Cities and Migrants*, Glick Schiller and Caglar rightly point out that "When it comes to urban studies, the robust literature on the neoliberal remaking, reimagining, and competitive marketing of cities is strangely silent about migration" (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010). In their view, these two issues should be reframed together as "migrants respond to the differential opportunities provided by the positioning of cities. These opportunities include variations in regulatory regimes, local infrastructures and possibilities for entrepreneurial activities, employment, education, housing, and entrance into local political and cultural life" (*Ibid.*). However, might it also be possible that cities could look to immigration as a way of improving their situation? This hypothesis has been relayed by international organisations such as the Migration Policy Institute, which encourages local governments to appeal to immigrants, and take advantage of their ties with the Diaspora (Agunias & Newland, 2012; Papademetriou, 2014). Policymakers have also been fond of this approach, basing their assumption on Richard Florida's 'creative class' (Hoekstra, 2014). I will focus more particularly on immigration and development in receiving cities, beyond the shallow assumption that 'immigrants equal diversity equal economic development'.

This chapter will explore the motives of Israeli peripheral local government when they elaborate local immigration policies. As mentioned in chapter two, I will explore the following specific questions: to what extent is immigration considered a possible lever for urban economic development and social change? Is there a positive correlation between cities that are engaged in actions aimed at rescaling their development strategy, and cities that proactively address immigration issues? Through this analysis, I hope to reach better understanding of the ways in which local governments scale their development strategy. I will thus attempt to fill the void between a neoliberal governance leading cities to create a positioning and market it, and to often associate this new positioning with immigration, on the basis of the shallow assumption that, "immigration is good for cities, it is good for the growth of our city". While this void has been widely addressed by the scholarship in sending regions in the global South, there have been few studies on the links between immigration and development in the North.

To this end, I base my analysis on scholarship concerned with new development strategies exerted by cities to gain access to more and more mobile resources (K. R. Cox, 1993; DeFilippis, 1999; Young & Kaczmarek, 2000; Feser, 2014). Kristin Good has found a clear relation between

these new 'urban regimes' and immigration policies (Good, 2009). Nevertheless, her analysis does not explore the effect of the adoption of local policies on rescaling processes. I also appeal to contributions linked to the transformation of immigrants into 'neoliberal subjects' (Varsanyi, 2008), showing that 'active, participatory and productive citizens' (Soysal, 2012) are perceived as 'deserving' (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012) and therefore more desirable for cities.

The hypotheses are two-fold. Firstly, local governments engaging in 'remaking, reimagining and marketing' their cities will tend to consider immigration as a potential catalyst for development. They will therefore favour immigrants whom they perceive as having more to contribute. Secondly, their involvement in immigration will transform the hierarchy of governance: by designing immigration policies and reaching out to national organisations, and also to transnational organisations and Diasporic organisations, they rescale their development strategy, and reposition themselves on the national and Diasporic map. The motives which lead local government to consider immigration as a dimension of the city's positioning in national and transnational political and socioeconomic networks are dominated by issues of 'place': bringing the city 'closer' to the centre, redeploying everyday life and the practices associated with it, and altering meanings and identities within those places.

The results only partly confirm the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of my research project. On the one hand, there is some evidence that local governments which adopt the new 'rules of the game' formulate more proactive immigration policies. These policies differ from national immigration policy — the Law of Return —, as they are more often associated with an active citizenship approach. Immigrants perceived as possessing higher human and social capital — English or Russian speaking immigrants for instance — are favoured in the activities carried out by the local governments. However, their settlement is not followed by any concrete action to take advantage of their perceived assets. There is no planned infrastructure. Indeed, a naïve belief in 'in-place economy' prevails. Nevertheless, cities also accept immigrants who are considered to provide less human and social capital (African and Asian immigrants). Accepting these groups makes it possible for local governments to obtain substantial budgets from the ministries as well as from third sector organisations. Local governments respond differently to the diversity of immigration situations. The result is a rescaling of the development strategy of local government but in a complex and varied way. Again, rescaling is not straightforward and leads to 'mosaic' (Brenner 2004) patterns of power and governance.

The first sections present the results of the interviews. There is general consensus that immigration to the city represents a lever for development, traditionally linked to the pioneering and nation-building activities of the first immigrants to Palestine. More particularly, immigration

is often correlated with economic development, demographic strengthening, and political strength, but also to the fostering of a diverse population. However, this belief concerns Western and FSU immigrants in particular, who are stereotyped as highly skilled, cultured and hardworking. Two of the cities studied believe that the government will direct lower 'quality' immigrants to their cities, and therefore prefer to avoid encouraging immigrant settlement, an activity they perceive as relevant only for 'strong cities'. The last section will therefore provide an analysis of these themes alongside theories of 'active citizenship' or 'merit', and the existing literature on local/urban economic development.

1 Consensus on the positive contribution of immigration in cities

Israel encouraged settlement immigration even before the establishment of the state. The first groups of Jews who emigrated to Mandatory Palestine arrived in the second half of the 19th century. In order to establish a Jewish homeland in the area, immigrants were desired. This continues today, as immigration is one of the aspects of Jewish domination in this disputed area.

In this context, I challenge the perception of immigration for the cities located far away from the centre. Indeed, historically, the four cities hosted 'reluctant' immigrants,[86] the majority of whom in their majority did not choose to settle so far from employment centres. However, since first and second-generation immigrants populate these cities, I wonder if they have developed a collective imaginary of their home which is connected with their immigration experience, and therefore welcomes immigrants.

The analysis of the interviews conducted in the four cities show a large consensus towards the benefits of immigration in Israel. These benefits are often envisaged at city level. First, Jewish immigration is associated with a quasi-biological metaphor of renewal, a source of life and blood. For the cities analysed, immigration is perceived as enabling 'sick' urban life to regenerate through a 'trauma', a 'revolution' or a 'blood transfusion'. Second, Jewish immigration relates to various dimensions of development, from socioeconomic development, demographic changes, political strength, diversity enrichment to more straightforward financial benefit. This first section will explore these two sets of benefits.

1.1 *Aliyah* as a process of Jewish regeneration

Jewish immigration to Israel, and in particular to the four cities that are the focus of the analysis, is a phenomenon that triggers positive and emphatic descriptions. These descriptions are

[86] See footnote in chapter 3 on the term 'reluctant pioneers', coined by Alex Weingrod (1966).

usually wide-ranging and include many elements related to the changes brought about by immigration.

A first set of terms caught my attention, as they revealed the emotional power of Jewish immigration in Israel. Indeed, I isolated several quotes that link immigration to a 'revolution, a 'trauma'; but also following a more biological image, to 'new blood', a 'blood transfusion' or 'life and death'; or to put it more simply 'new jobs', 'innovation' and so on (Interview 1, 2014; Interview 8, 2014; Interview 16, 2014; Interview 20, 2015).

The description of this trauma and revolution is present in the following quotes. In Arad, where the population almost doubled in two decades, the memory of the massive arrival of FSU immigrants in the city is described as a trauma by the city spokesperson:

> The second trauma is immigration. At the end of the 1980s, there were 10,000 residents in Arad, representing the population of Israel. When the USSR opened the gate for emigration, 10,000 new immigrants arrived in Arad doubling its population between 1990 and 1992. They brought very positive things: they are intelligent, educated people. But they arrived, and all of them needed jobs. All of a sudden, your city changes. Everybody speaks Russian: at the supermarket, at the health plan clinics (*kupat cholim)*… Plus, a lot of older people and single mothers arrived, which translated into a lot of social work. They had no money, no jobs and had to integrate in school. They also brought a new culture. The central government gave money but… as a resident I can tell: immigrants got more money that what we earned then. They could pay for higher rent. Owners understood that. Rents went up, as well as real estate. The old residents then could look at immigrants in a bad way. On the other side, you have to admire their courage: engineers came and cleaned the streets, doctors became cashiers. This wave of migration was a big crisis, but I think Arad got stronger. The Russians came with a lot of motivation. They came to learn, to work, to improve. They opened an evening class for Russians for their kids to excel. They took every job they could. As our critical mass increased, so did jobs, money. We got extra budget for education for instance. (Interview 1, 2014)

Similarly, the mayor of Arad, Tali, who has personally experienced this immigration, speaks of 'new blood' and insists on the fresh start such a demographic change provides:

> Tali: Arad became a city thanks to the big *Aliyah* which came to it. To tell you… The former mayor, Betzalel Tabib, really wanted this *Aliyah*. I even know that he travelled several times to Russia to bring new immigrants, he travelled to Saint Petersburg to bring new immigrants. And really, the immigrants that came here were very educated. It's people with a very high culture. And, and, um. I think he did a lot for it to happen. […]. I think… maybe I am convinced, maybe I just say that, but I hear a lot of people who are not new immigrants that understand the extent of *Aliyah*'s contribution

to the State of Israel. In different sectors, and also that the number of citizens grew up. I don't even speak about sectors like medicine… like

Me: High tech.

Tali: High tech. True. And, those things… you know what, the next big thing I want to do in Arad is to bring 10,000 new immigrants. For the city. It strengthens the city. On the contrary. It does something new. New community. New blood. In fact it does. It can create new jobs. Everything is new. It gives a feeling of innovation. It's something that does good to a community in any case. So, I tell again, I really want new immigrants. I already decided with the MOIA and also with the Jewish Agency. We are thinking of how to restore the relation frame that there is in Arad for outreaching (*idud aliyah*). Um. (Interview 8, 2014)

In Kiryat Gat, the demographic jump was similar to Arad. The municipal agent in charge of integration issues mentions the sociocultural 'revolution' which took place, due to immigration, but also due to a municipal leadership that took advantage of the city's demography:

Moshe: True, true. I agree. There is a gap. For sure. But, let's say, that Kiryat Gat, in the last 10 years, went through a revolution, really.

Me: You feel that?

Moshe: Of course, I feel that. I go around in the city. I am going to clubs, to this. Look, it's important to highlight something that there is in Kiryat Gat. There are four choirs of immigrants. Really, immigrants. 100 % immigrants. There is the war veterans' choir, who sings. It competes and got prices. And, we have, physics' students who got first prize. We have boxers who compete in Europe. We have a European champion in the early childhood education, in Kiryat Gat. We have, we have why being proud let's say. (Interview 16, 2014)

With this new influx of Jewish 'blood', interviewees point out that their cities were 'saved'. They say: "we can save a city with *Aliyah*". Indeed, it brings a new population to those cities that experience out-migration, enabling new constructions for instance. But more importantly, at national level, "the more Jews in Israel, the stronger the country is" (Interview 14, 2014; Interview 30, 2015; Interview 34, 2015). And indeed, interviewees might look at immigrants as 'saviours', therefore borrowing from myths originating in the *Yishuv*. Interviewees sometimes draw their analysis on a nation-wide understanding of the role of immigrants in nation building, For instance, the mayor of Kiryat Gat says:

[You are in Israel] Four years… In… 40 years, I will ask you: How do you feel? An immigrant? Pioneer? That? Everything! The ones in the 1950s, they say they are pioneers. And the ones that got in the 1930s, also say that they are pioneers. And the ones that arrived in 1881, also say that they

> are pioneers. Always pioneers. This country, is always… in the building. That's all. For me… It's the Jewish home. You understand? Everybody comes. (Interview 19, 2014)

His spokesperson says:

> Malcha: Right that Israel is not a natural thing?
>
> Me: (laugh). True. There is a fantastic energy to advance things
>
> Malcha: Something that there is nowhere. This experience of a new country that was established from nothing. A people that experienced the biggest crisis of the modern history
>
> Me: Refugees
>
> Malcha: Suddenly, they established a country that today is one of the leaders in terms of technology. For me, it's something.
>
> Me: You feel proud?
>
> Malcha: So proud. I am a believer. I think there is a process that is not, not natural, something special. (Interview 14, 2014)

In Kiryat Shmona, one municipal agent Avichai, explains in greater detail, and at the level of the city, the demographic impact of immigration in the city from its establishment in 1949 onwards. According to him the city owes its existence and survival to immigration, compensating for the out-migration of the young workforce:

> Look, Kiryat Shmona is a city of immigrants. It was always a city of immigrants. It had, every time there was a wave of mass migration to Israel, it saved Kiryat Shmona. (We look at a PowerPoint presentation printed in a booklet, reproduced below) You can see that — Amir has it, and me too, I can send it to you — you can see in the 1950s. Who came to the city was the wave from Yemen, Morocco, Persia and Romania, there was period, they were sent there. It's not that they decided, they were sent here, it was always the issue to send people here. There are many ways to send. In the 1950s, they sent them by bus, they drove them here. The State told them: you stay here. If you don't stay here, you don't get an absorption basket, you don't get help. The ones who did not have the means, stayed. Which is the majority of *Aliyah* from the Arab countries. The ones who had means and relations and more, left. You can see it: Romanians, Poles, who lived here left. It left a population that was very very, hum, very very homogeneous in terms of its characteristics. That's it. In the 1950s came a wave of mass migration. Then there was a period that there was here, in the mid-1950s, there was out-migration, people that understood that it was not good, there is no income, there is nothing. They left to the centre. The city got smaller. And what saved Kiryat Shmona again was the *Aliyah* from Morocco, that started in 1956, a wave of *Aliyah* from Morocco. And again, they sent here a lot of people. Until today, the community that came from Morocco is

very big. They sent a huge amount of immigrants, and when the city stabilized, 15,000 people left. That's it. A big wave came until it stabilized. Until the 1980s, the 1970s, the 1980s, the city started to get older. People that were born here became adults and migrated out, again, the city entered a cycle of out-migration. What saved it again was the wave of *Aliyah* from Russia. Now, we have here, you can see (he flips in the booklet): those are the figures of migration. You can see that in the 1980s there was here out-migration, always around — 400. Even today, it came back to those numbers, — 400. You see that in the 1980s, young people left. In the 1990s, there was a huge jump. Then you see — for the ones who don't know what goes on — the jump changed. Instead of having + 300 people, 1100 leave. People that get here, after a certain period, not even, after a year, two years, it does not take much time, they go away. Huh. So it really shaped, it shaped, the waves of migration, what it does, it increases, suddenly, you see a bigger volume of population. You see 20,000 people. It's also a lot of young people that increase the level of productivity and the natural growth of the city, and then the city grows. But in the 2000s, it comes back to the same situation it was in the 1980s. Again, we talk about a situation, the number of young people decreases, the birth rate decreases, and a big exit, a big exit of people. (Interview 55, 2015)

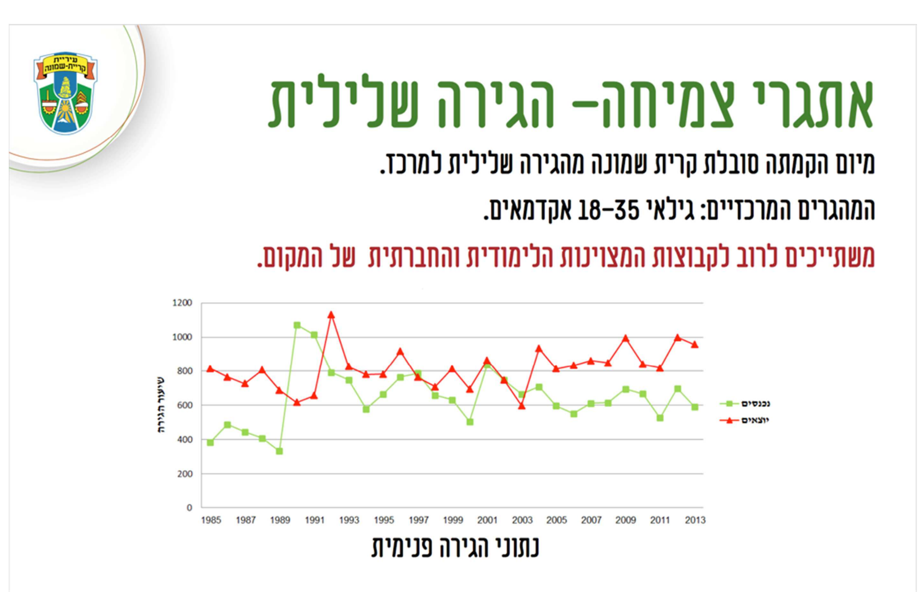

Figure 5.1. Slide on internal migration in Kiryat Shmona. Source: municipality of Kiryat Shmona (2015).

As I have briefly mentioned in the third chapter of this volume, the parallel with blood and life shows how much Jewish immigration is linked to renewal or regeneration, following a tradition established by early Zionists. The Zionist ideology aimed at finding a collective solution by gathering together the Jewish Diasporas in a Jewish national home. The regeneration of Jews therefore occurred through a national project, deeply connected to the territory, but also to labour and cultural renewal. In that sense, the participants in this research project reproduce ideological frameworks which existed even prior to Statehood. It is interesting to read that these

representatives of peripheral cities argue that immigrants are pioneers and agents of nation building. Indeed, the immigrants who settled in those areas are usually excluded from the pioneering elites (Jamous, 1982; Ram, 1995; Shafir & Peled, 2002). It is therefore part of their struggle to obtain this recognition. To illustrate this will for recognition, Kiryat Shmona leads a project of *maabarot* museum. Associated with Tel Hai academic college, a governmental office as well as the Museum of Israel, they are attempting to build a museum in Kiryat Shmona which will stage the role of these 'reluctant pioneers' who lived in transit camps before participating in the construction of cities like Kiryat Shmona (Interview 55, 2015).

Therefore, the concept of Jewish regeneration through the territory persists, but it is reframed through more recent developments and challenges. As these cities experience permanent socioeconomic crisis and depression, immigration therefore makes it possible to cope temporarily with the crisis, as a new population comes in. The long quote from Y. E. in Kiryat Shmona illustrates the chronological coming and going of immigrants, and its parallel with the predicament of the city. He points out a virtual demographic growth of the city, where immigration figures hide the more problematic phenomenon of out-migration.[87]

The terms 'new blood', 'trauma', 'revolution', usually refer to the mass migration from the former Soviet countries. They illustrate the belief that the FSU immigration in those four cities led to the destruction of the pre-immigration social structure of the city, and they laid out the ground for a possible fresh start. It is true that FSU immigration in the 1990s provided a demographic burst, and has dramatically increased the number of residents in small cities in the periphery. The following figures show that in the four cities I studied, the residential base grew drastically before and after the 1990s immigration. Nevertheless, in 2015, the Southern and the Northern districts still experience out-migration (CBS, 2016).

[87] In fact, a substantial out-migration occurs in those cities (Sitton, 1962; Beenstock, 1996; Portnov, 1998; Beenstock, 1999).

	1983	1995	2015
Acre	36,400	45,100	47,700
Arad	12,400	20,900	24,400
Kiryat Gat	25,500	45,200	51,500
Kiryat Shmona	15,200	19,600	23,100

Table 5.1. Evolution of the residents in Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona. Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel (2016)

The question that remains, and which I will address in the upcoming subsections, is whether this relative 'regeneration' has indeed brought a renewed economic, sociocultural and political dynamism.

1.2 Beyond metaphor: the expected effects of immigration on cities

Beyond the general idea that immigrants bring 'new blood' and 'save' cities that are affected by socioeconomic crises, their expected impacts on cities are often described in detail. These descriptions often include a range of areas, illustrated in this quote from the director of the economic corporation of Kiryat Shmona:

> Immigrants brought luck to the city. 10,000 immigrants from Russia arrived in the 1990s. And the quality of these immigrants was good. I don't know why they came. Today, they are here for already 30 years. They integrated fantastically. They took the city ahead for culture, education, housing — like gardens and cleanness. All the teachers for maths, music, chemistry, physics are immigrants. They did something great to Kiryat Shmona. (Interview 23, 2015)

Despite the fact that most accounts bring different elements together, as above, I will categorise, in the following subsection, the different areas in which immigrants' contributions are praised for socioeconomic, demographic, political, cultural and governance reasons.

1.2.1 Aliyah and socioeconomic development

Jewish immigration to the cities is often correlated with socioeconomic development, particularly in Acre, Arad and Kiryat Gat.

Acre adopted a strong discourse along this line, spreading the message that strong people will strengthen the city, particularly if their settlement is associated with mechanisms to lever their

potential. I emphasise the fact that this is widespread in Acre and part of the official discourse, because I heard this in every office I visited. Here, I insert some quotes from Elisa, deputy director (acting as director) of the municipal department of immigration and integration; Zion, deputy mayor and councillor in charge of immigration and integration issues in the municipality; and Shimon, mayor of Acre, whom I interviewed twice.

Indeed, Elisa describes how immigrants can lead to the creation of new activities, new jobs and improve the attractiveness of the city:

> Of course. People with education, with children. This strengthens the city. A… piano teacher arrives. If he is professional, he can teach. He gives to born Israelis (*zabarim*) something about music. Everybody is like this. Yesterday, for instance, I met at the country a swimming coach. He has a very high level. He opened a school for swimming. I am sure he contributes. A city that has a tennis club, a swimming club, football school so… Tomorrow, someone will come and believe it's good to live in this city. With these investments, it's good for me to be here. If not, he will go to another place. The potential of new immigrants is… usable. One for instance, one can be… an expert from France, expert in maths, I don't know, let's find him a job to stay here. Tomorrow, he can teach at the college. The college will not need to bring someone from outside. How much the municipality gives to strengthen the immigrants… It gets it back. (Interview 5, 2014)

Deputy mayor Zion believes that immigrants were more highly educated than local residents in the 1990s. Their arrival triggered a sense of competitiveness leading to more efforts from local residents to achieve better in education and at work — something that he experienced himself as he decided to get a degree as an adult. Moreover, immigrants introduced a new work ethic and a culture of hardworking that Zion thinks was not very developed in Acre:

> Zion: Listen. They gave. If you take Acre for instance. Once, someone that finished high school matriculation exams (*bagrut*) with two units, he was a star. It was a blood transfusion. We improved in every fields. Aesthetics, cleanness. Once, people would throw the trash in the street, they threw the bags from the window. See in the neighbourhoods the cleanness, the aesthetics, look at the education, look at the conservatorium. 50% of the professors are from the Former Soviet Union. They taught us what it is to come work, not to come to work. People use to come to work, just to be at work. They came work. They jumped on every job. They worked in everything to sustain. In the education, really, it was a revolution. What is five units? I'll tell you the truth. I felt so, I felt so… I did not have a degree. I felt so… I was uncomfortable. I went to learn three years to get a degree, at age… as an adult. I would go four times a week in Afula, to the college to learn there.
>
> Me: What did you learn?
>
> Zion: […] Yes. You understand. The discomfort. What is being a doctor, an engineer? It's natural.

> What is it? Here, someone that managed to finish… 11 years of professional study was a professional. Now, you need to study 12 years and to finish five units. They made a general change in all our mind-set. The state got a million immigrants. Try to imagine how much it costs to bring up an engineer, a doctor. Millions, that from an early age. We got raw material… the best there is. We got engineers and, and doctors, whatever you want.
>
> Me: This morning, I attended a conference in Ruppin, and someone from the MOIA said to educate a doctor in Israel costs 500,000 shekels, while a doctor that comes from the Diaspora and needs to pass exams and internships costs 100,000 shekels.
>
> Zion: 20%. Yes. You understand. They also increased competition. People that want to work need to compete with these people. People came to work. Until today the factories. We opened employment. Everything everything. Until today, people called and still have people from the Former Soviet Union. I went there. To the factories. There was the Plada industries. Immigrants who worked in iron. You need to know that. Once we travelled with Elisa. We went to a city where there are factories like that. We looked for the Jews there. We told them, come and you'll start working immediately. He is ready to absorb you, to enrol you in Hebrew classes (*ulpan*). You understand. People are ready to hire immigrants. They know they are serious. They come to work, not to the workplace. They come to work. If he needs to do extra hours, he will. He will not give up. Here those things were not obvious. (Interview 20, 2015)

Mayor Shimon reiterates this belief in the potential contribution of immigrants to the socioeconomic development of the city. In his opinion, human capital is more important than financial investment to strengthen the economy of the city. This is a reason to invest extra resources in reaching out to Jewish candidates to immigration around the world, and in organising municipal activities to facilitate their settlement in the city:

> First of all, really, immigrants are on my daily priorities. It means that I see in immigrants a resource that can lead the city to social development, to economic development. This is how I see the immigrants. Not as them that we have to take care of, but as them, who with the right push, can then help the city to develop, to advance, and to be… a very important part of the city. And that's why I travelled to Russia six times in 'remoooote' places, that nobody heard of in Russia. (Interview 32, 2015)

> The city will grow from places that are equality breakers (*shovrei shivion*). This is the match point. The moment you know when to throw the ball to win the game, those ones win the game. Those are the points that win the game. Because your impact will be on all the city. And and and. You have those economics people that tell you, you want a strong economy, bring money. I say, you want a strong economy, build good people in, in your city. They will bring you a strong economy. It's a question of approach, of worldview. (Interview 58, 2015)

The relations between economic growth and immigration are usually apprehended at the macro level: immigration is a catalyst and a consequence of the accelerated development of a global capitalist economy. However, here, it refers rather to what Brenner (2004) has termed urban locality competition. Investing in human capital is seen as a strategy to reposition the city, rescale its development, so that it becomes more attractive. The results of this perceived virtuous circle are obviously difficult to assess. In the context of the 1990s FSU immigration, Tzfadia (2006) has shown that cities that absorbed immigrants have suffered from an economic backlash. However, as I mention in the third chapter, those cities were already very dependent on national transfers, characterised by weak leadership. An overrepresentation of public housing drew an elderly population to the periphery who were generally less skilled than immigrants who settled in the centre (*Ibid.*). Skill-wise, FSU immigrants arrived in Israel with a significantly higher level of education that Israeli-born nationals, and were significantly more skilled than the inhabitants of peripheral small towns. If a large proportion of immigrants experienced downward mobility the first years after their arrival, they are believed to have entered all strata of the economy. However, up until today, they have still not closed the earnings gap (Lewin-Epstein *et al.*, 2003; Y. Cohen & Haberfeld, 2007). But, Lipshitz has shown that there is a gap between FSU immigrants who settled in the periphery, and those who settled in the centres: the former groups are less educated and experience higher rates of unemployment (Lipshitz, 1998). However, it is possible that proactive local immigration policies have had an impact on those trends. Indeed, in terms of age at least, the next subsection shows that elderly immigrants are no longer overrepresented.

Similarly, and in order to increase the city's competitiveness, interviewees mention social development. For instance, the deputy mayor of Kiryat Gat also offers some views on immigration and social development:

> We needed to do something for culture in the city. When I came to Kiryat Gat, there were here three activities: basketball, football and tennis. That's it. Now, there are 45-50 activities. Judo, gymnastics. First the students were 90% from FSU. Now 60% veterans, and 40% immigrants. (Interview 45, 2015)

The influx of a large immigrant population therefore helped to increase the offer for sociocultural activities outside school. The deputy mayor cherishes this topic, as he started his first year in Kiryat Gat as a boxing coach. Later on, he established the sport association Kokhav David, which is still active today. Other interviewees in Kiryat Gat describe the contribution of immigrants, but they emphasise less the need for the city to activate this potential through specific mechanisms.

Interestingly enough, what these cities have in common is a new orientation towards 'in-place economy': that is the superiority of residents, rather than industrial investment, as a catalyst for development. It does not mean that Acre, Kiryat Gat or Arad do not try to attract more investors. However, in their discourse, they identify residents as a strong catalyst for development. The director of the renowned Kiryat Gat industrial park, who has himself been involved in industrial development in Kiryat Gat since the 1990s, affirms:

> It's not a catastrophe if Kiryat Gat becomes a dormitory city. Ok? That they come, sleep here, and buy here. They will strengthen the city in terms of economy, social, culture. But they will not work in the city! What's the catastrophe? (Interview 31, 2015)

In this context, all municipal leaders find it of the utmost importance to be well connected to other cities offering jobs — Haifa for Acre, Beer Sheva for Arad, Tel Aviv and Beer Sheva for Kiryat Gat. Acre already benefits from a main road to Haifa. In Kiryat Gat, I was often told proudly that thanks to road 6, and to the train, Kiryat Gat can be reached in 35 minutes. And in Arad, the renovation of road 31 was perceived as a milestone in Arad's future development. Kiryat Shmona is still rather disconnected from the Israeli transport grid, and is located far from large employment centres. The municipality has raised its voice through social networks and the media, blaming the government for keeping the city isolated. Municipalities focus on creating a welcoming residential environment, believing that residents will commute to the closest employment areas to work. Acre's mayor argues:

> They want to travel to Tel Aviv, they can. It means that the story of staying here, and living here, and buying a flat here for a cheap price and doing things in the centre, once it was impossible, now it's possible. That's part of the story. More young people stay here, and more young people buy flats here. You see that depending on the amount of residents. The amount of residents… grows all the time. (Interview 32, 2015)

This trend was encouraged from 1992 by the Israeli government, which adopted, through NOP 31, a metropolitan approach to development. Rather than dealing with the economic depression encountered in peripheries, where factories were constantly closing down (see the chapter on the Israeli context), the NOP 31 and its metropolitan approach has effectively sanctioned mid-sized cities in the periphery as residential areas, and emphasised the need to improve communication with the closest metropolitan areas — Beer Sheva or Haifa. The approach is not restricted to Israeli regional development. It has also be coined by French geographers Christophe Terrier and Laurent Davezies under the expression 'économie présentielle' or 'économie résidentielle' which we could translate as 'in-place economy'. As pointed out by Hélène Mainet: "This positioning towards inhabitants and tourists largely translates the turn

experienced by economic development and the place given to in-place economy, in comparison with productive economy”[88] (Mainet, 2011). This approach implies focussing on the area's residents, who produce and consume, rather than on the industrial economy.

1.2.2 Demographics

In addition to socio-economic development, immigration is perceived as a way to counter out-migration and to increase the size of the active population against an ageing population — a discourse which also widespread in Europe. Several interviewees in Acre argue that immigration has allowed to keep schools open (Interview 20, 2015; Interview 32, 2015). In Kiryat Shmona, the deputy mayor claims that the fact that there is no agenda in favour of immigration has led to schools closing (Interview 6, 2014). The person in charge of the ‘group *Aliyah*’ programme in the MOIA confirms that municipalities encouraging immigration to their cities do so to counter out-migration, and ageing, and to keep schools and other public services open (Interview 9, 2014).

Such statements are actually quite accurate. Demographic growth is maintained through immigration. Map 3.2 in chapter 3 showed the extent of immigration in the total population. Arad benefits the most from immigration, as 7.1% of its population in 2015 corresponds to the 2059 immigrants who settled in the town from 2001 to 2015. The other cities rank quite high in absolute numbers: Acre received 2631 immigrants in 14 years, mostly from the FSU, for a population of 47,700 in 2016; Kiryat Gat received 2443 immigrants in 14 years, mostly from Ethiopia, and the FSU, for a population of 51,500 in 2016; Kiryat Shmona received 836 immigrants in 14 years, mostly from the FSU, for a population of 23,100 in 2016.

Moreover, immigration to the cities under scrutiny draws a rather young population, with the 24-45 age group representing the largest proportion. The elderly, contrary to research findings from the 1990s, and contrary to popular belief, are not overrepresented in the cities. The following table compares the proportion of elderly immigrants in Acre, Arad and Kiryat Gat,[89] as well as in Tel Aviv:

[88] Translation of the author.
[89] Unfortunately, since Kiryat Shmona did not receive more than 10 immigrants per year between 2007 and 2011, the table — which categorises newcomers by age — did not include new immigrants in Kiryat Shmona.

	Immigrants (65 +)	Total immigrants	Immigrants (65 +) proportionally to total immigrants (in %)
Acre	58	749	7.74
Arad	48	555	8.65
Kiryat Gat	43	410	10.49
Tel Aviv	389	3486	11.16

Table 5.2. Immigrants aged over 65, settling in Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Tel Aviv, between 2007 and 2011. Source: CBS (2012)

Acre is also the city where Jewish immigration is perceived as a way to counter the demographic growth of Palestinian residents. It therefore follows the ideology of 'judaisation' of space promoted since early statehood. This discourse is not clearly announced. More specifically, the mayor goes to great effort to neutralise it, as 'social harmony' is at stake. Acre already experienced painful intercommunity riots, which the mayor considers a milestone under his leadership, and the trigger for a large range of activities to promote coexistence and mutual respect. The mayor takes pride in the endorsement he gets at each election from the Palestinian population: he reports that more than 90% of the Palestinian Israelis of the city vote for him, saying that he does not like to say it too loud; while at the same time assuring that Jewish immigration is a priority (Interview 32, 2015; Interview 58, 2015). Those rather contradictory statements are a constant in Acre. In fact, if the city has to position itself in face of the daily symptoms of the long-lasting conflict, and find practical solutions for a peaceful coexistence, those 'practical steps' are not accompanied by the production of new ideological frameworks. On the contrary, officials maintain the national ideology of Jewish superiority and control over the population and the land.

As this paradox raises some debate, it leads to significant tension. During my first encounter with the spokesperson, at a meeting to which two other municipal agents dropped in, the topic was addressed and raised tensions. My field diary reports:

> Christian wanted to add that another message was possible: showing that Acre is in danger because of the presence of Arabs, and that Jews need to settle there to save the city. Stan got even more pissed off. He said that there was no way that the municipality would sell Acre like that. That this kind of message was spread by people like Rabbi Eichileksher… That Acre would be branded differently and that I could speak with Eran about it as their new brand was 'A city of Mediterranean cultures'. Stan started to list initiatives illustrating this co-existence: the Arab-Jewish Youth parliament for instance. He concluded that bringing immigrants was a way for them to bring a strong population to a city which ranked 4 in terms of socio-economic situation, but in no way did

> the municipality wanted to judaise Acre. Christian indeed explained that he asked the mayor if this was an option, and the mayor refused. I asked him if he thinks this is the kind of message you can hear in France, among religious or community leaders for instance. Christian said yes (Interview 3, 2014)

Less embarrassed by a politically-correct discourse, and the promotion of coexistence, the deputy mayor of the city states that encouraging immigration in Acre is a way to counter the settlement of rural Palestinian Israelis in Acre:

> Me: So, that's my question — in a rough style —, why some municipalities took more responsibilities for *Aliyah* and absorption when there is a ministry? I see that some cities do a lot, Acre among them
>
> Zion: It's life and death.
>
> Me: That's what you feel.
>
> Zion: All the (Palestinian) villages will come to us. It's forbidden. We have a mission. What did you think? There is a school called Weizmann here. If we don't fill first grade, tomorrow they close the school. It's life or death. Life or death. What did you think? They will take the school, they will. I tell you that. We, *Aliyah* integration, it's blood, blood transfusion. (Interview 20, 2015)

If local politicians and municipal agents are — more or less — careful about justifying their municipal agenda towards immigration through the demographic argument, it seems much less ambiguous when looking at MOIA's transfers. In fact, they favour mixed cities: Acre, Nazareth Illit, Ramle etc. are all beneficiaries of the 'group *Aliyah*' programme, and moreover, benefit from the largest number of recruits (Interview 9, 2014).

1.2.3 Cultural diversity: a marketing tool?

Arising from the paradox mentioned above is the discourse of cultural diversity present in Acre.

In fact, and to accommodate the different social groups present in Acre, the city has invested in a new strategic plan, its branding being "Acre, city of Mediterranean cultures". It answers the pressing need to improve intercommunity relations, while at the same time bringing economic development. Indeed, the plan includes a vision to improve Palestinian-Israeli relations, as well as relations between the different Jewish groups in the city, whether they be old-timers or newcomers. Although it is not stated clearly on the municipal website, where the new branding is presented to the city residents, the mayor of Acre affirms that reaching out to Jewish communities abroad is part of this masterplan (Interview 32, 2015).

The plan also includes tourism promotion. Interestingly enough, the new goals of this tourism promotion are to include, more widely, the buildings, traditions and folklore of the various Jewish diasporas that settled in the city of Acre, and to give them a larger share in the tourism offer, thus reducing the attraction of the old Palestinian city centre (already suffering from a quasi-absence of Palestinian history, where the crusaders, the Ottoman and the Jewish occupation are much more emphasised (Shoval, 2013)). In that sense, the city branding aims at capitalising on the cultural heritage of the various groups that were present, and are still present today in the city, including Palestinian Israelis, but also, increasingly, the various immigrant groups; it also includes activities coordinated by the welfare department to reduce intercommunity conflicts. However, this 'pragmatic' approach is still affected by the national ideology, hence the tensions and contradictions between these initiatives and the activities of reaching out to Jewish immigration candidates abroad to contain the demographic balance of the city.

In the three other cities that are predominantly Jewish, the term 'diversity' is used somewhat differently in interviews, although very present. In those cases, 'diversity' refers to the various countries of origin of the immigrants that settled in those towns from the 1950s on. In Kiryat Gat, the mayor, deputy mayor, and several interviewees all praise the cultural diversity of the city. They remind me of the presence of more than 40 different countries of origin — however 94% of them are Jews (CBS 2016). Groups originating from these different areas have businesses, associations, clubs and choirs. The spokesperson declares that it is important to respect the various traditions of these former Diasporic groups:

> Some say, why do we need to speak about communities today? So, maybe we come from the anthropological point of view, the anthropological scholarship which says, why? Let's preserve the culture. Keep the signs. It's beautiful, it's ugly, it's the Israeli diaspora. The mayor here is very close to the tradition, he is a religious man. So, why not respect that. (Interview 14, 2014)

The fact that the residents of Kiryat Gat have immigrated, or that their parents and grandparents immigrated, from 40 different countries to Israel is described as a source of sociocultural enrichment. Another interviewee who also grew up in Kiryat Gat describes his childhood in the town:

> Raz: The city was… I think that it was kind of smart, hum, kind of. Let's say that, Kiryat Gat, in my opinion, at that time, was a development town. And, what makes Kiryat Gat special, along the years, back then it was even more, is that, in Kiryat Gat, I think there are over 40 different kinds of people from 40 different places in the world. Ok? It could be English speakers who came from South Africa, like Izhak A., ok? And of course from Morocco, from Algiers, from France or from the US, or from

> Eastern Europe. And born Israelis (*zabarim*). My parents for example are *zabarim* that came, hum, from Hedera. Ok? They were born in Israel, in their case.
>
> Me: Both of them?
>
> Raz: Both of them. They came to develop the dream of Ben Gurion to develop the country. Ok? And I think this is what was mirrored. To do this integration (*integrazia*[90]) for everybody. I think it was a social experience. I think that as a kid, I think that my childhood was a childhood… interesting. And rich. (Interview 31, 2015)

Multiculturalism is adopted by the interviewees in their discursive strategies, although they are sometimes generalising, simplifying and being a bit clumsy. They do not always use the term 'multiculturalism'. While the term 'multiculturalism' is more widely used in Acre, in other cities, other terms might be used. In Kiryat Gat, the term 'diversity' is more frequent. In Arad, one interviewee used the term 'cosmopolitanism':[91]

> I want that people from everywhere will come here. The world is more and more cosmopolitan. I think that cosmopolitanism can counter the extremism. If you play together, you run together… you will not fight. (Interview 21, 2015)

Without analysing the lexicon adopted by the different municipalities in too much depth, it seems that immigration is perceived, not as a marketing tool like in Acre, but more simply as a channel for sociocultural enrichment and an access to various cultures worldwide.

The first thing to be noted is the exclusionary character of this conception of diversity, multiculturalism or cosmopolitanism: in fact, it concerns only Jews. Moreover, the cultural contribution is usually perceived differently between Jewish groups. Indeed, and I will go into this in more detail further on, there is a general difference between the 'traditional' culture of *Mizrahi* immigrants, and a superior view of culture associated with FSU immigrants. As I have mentioned in a previous chapter, immigrants from Asia and Africa are not considered as having 'culture' (*tarbut* in Hebrew), but heritage (*moreshet* in Hebrew) (Golden in Storper-Perez, 1998, pp. 222-223).

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[90] I highlighted the use of the term *integrazia* instead of *klita* here since the interviewee refers to bringing together immigrants, rather than absorbing them in Israeli society.

[91] Cosmopolitanism, a concept first developed by antique Greek Stoic philosophers, might refer to one aspect of stoic cosmopolitanism, that is the fact that men, as citizens of the world, can claim universalism, while retaining their specificities. However, it can also be understood through Ulrich Beck's definition of cosmopolitanism, which quite bluntly, is rather interchangeable with the multiculturalism which has resulted from globalisation.

Secondly, it seems important to replace this discussion in a generational context. In fact, the participants in our research already had the opportunity to distance themselves from the 'social experience' of the ingathering of the exiles, and the formation of new modern Jews, from an assimilationist perspective. Recognising the importance of multiculturalism — as a societal ideal — stems from the cultural and religious renewal experienced by Israel, firstly through the Sephardic Jewish cultural and political movement that started in the 1980s, exemplified by the success of the political party *Shas*; and secondly through the mass immigration in the 1990s.

Rethinking the development towns through multicultural, or diversity lenses, therefore strongly contrasts with the context at the establishment of those towns, and during the years in which most of the interviewees grew up. But place is a dynamic concept, and I have already argued that place is the meeting point of networks of social relations, at a certain moment, and is therefore built on numerous layers of social relations. The history of these social relations, their conflicts and their power relations, informs today's relations. The redefinition of the demographic mosaic of Israel through more recent social concepts is definitely linked to new developments in the integration policy of Israel.

However, it can also be analysed as a strategy. In a political context that forces local leaders to market their place, to engage in 'placemaking', and to reposition the city in its wider relations with other spaces, they can harness immigration and diversity in order to renegotiate its position within the national, and even transnational map, and therefore to become an attractive place for immigrants to settle. These place-making activities can include the construction of narratives of diversity, immigrant-friendly services, and their marketing. In that sense, diversity and multiculturalism become instrumental. The two following subsections will address this issue more specifically, through the political dimension of immigration, and its role in reaching out to public funding.

1.2.4 Politics

The fact that local politicians embrace cultural diversity can be analysed as a political strategy. If I look at the municipal councils, it seems that political representation of the different groups in the city helps to build political strength. Arad, the city with the largest share of new immigrants, has an immigrant mayor. In Acre, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona, at least one deputy mayor is an immigrant. In Kiryat Gat, the mayor takes pride in the representation of the Ethiopian and the Russian-speaking communities through his two deputy mayors. In a meeting at the municipality of Kiryat Shmona, the mayor describes his alliance with Abram, the local candidate of the

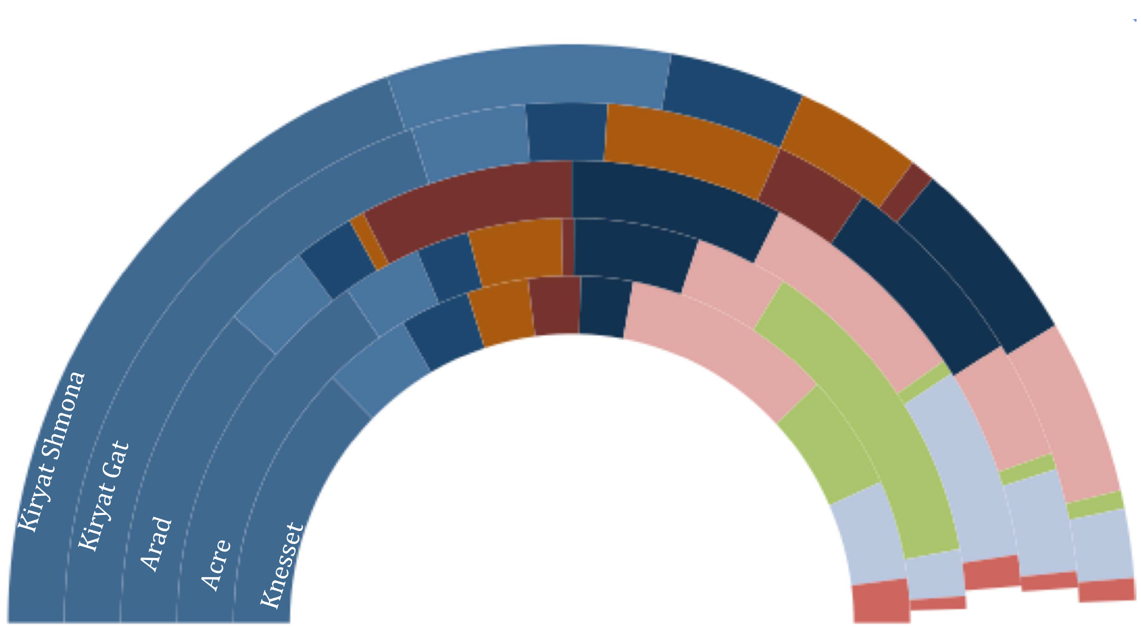
Russian party *Israel Beitenu*, to win the local elections. Indeed, the mayor states that he included Abram in his list because "he brings the voters" (Interview 54, 2015).

The periphery has been the target of intense political activity for the political parties representing immigrants. As mentioned above, since the 1980s, political actions have become localised (Gradus, 1983). A municipal director in Acre explains this control of the periphery in the following terms:

> Mordechai: This is an example, what do I want to tell, this is an example of the capacity — it could be that the same mayor in Arad, in Tel Aviv would not have been a councillor. The capacity to advance in the periphery, if you look at the capacity of the population, the education, and similar things, so there is. See, you met Zion who is a deputy mayor. It's his third term. And under him, immigrants. There are people, like in Karmiel, there is Rina G. who is very very strong. She was an immigrant. There is in Ma'alot, in Nahariya. There are immigrants that understood — as much as the guys of *Shas* understood — that they had power in the periphery. The immigrants here united and their party got forward, politically but also for jobs. And I am not sure that the same people in Tel Aviv or in Jerusalem or in Haifa, maybe yes, because there too, but it can be that the advancement of immigrants in periphery — this is the contrary of the assumption you made — can be more important.
>
> Me: So you have to choose between being the worst of the good, of the best of the worse.
>
> Mordechai: There is an expression of *Pirkei Avot*, you know it? 'To be the tail of the lions rather than the head of the foxes'. (Interview 44, 2015)

More importantly, the most emblematic parties for alternative identity politics, *Shas* — representing Sephardic Jews — and *Israel Beitenu* — representing Russian-speaking immigrants — are very much anchored in the periphery. A large proportion of their potential electorate resides in those cities. The following table shows the results of the March 2015 national elections for the four cities under scrutiny, in comparison with the national results. Kiryat Shmona is a striking example, where more than three quarters of the city population voted for right-wing parties such as Likud, *Kulanu*, *HaBait HaYehudi*, *Shas* and *Israel Beitenu*, whereas those parties represent only half of the current Knesset. Note that the Knesset as of 2016 differs slightly from the results of March 2015, following coalition agreements.

Figure 5.2. Results of the national elections, March 2015, for the State as well as for Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona. Sources: Haaretz news articles (2016). Realised by Amandine Desille.



- Likud: Major rightwing political party. Founded in 1973 after merger of Herut and other parties
- Kulanu: Centrist party founded by Moshe Kahlon in 2014
- Habait HaYehudi: National religious party formed, after merger, in 2008
- Shas: Sephardic religious party founded in 1984
- Yadut HaTora: Ultra-orthodox party founded in 1992
- Israel Beitenu: Nationalist immigrant party founded in 1999
- Zionist camp: Political alliance of labour (1968), hatnuah and green movement. Founded in 2014
- The Joint List: Political alliance of four Arab-dominated parties founded in 2015 (includes the Islamic Movement)
- Yesh Atid: Secular middle-class party founded by Yair Lapid in 2012
- Meretz: Left party emphasising a two-state solution. Founded in 1992

The results show the relative advantage of Likud, *Israel Beitenu* and *Shas* in the periphery, compared to the national average. I have already discussed the success of Likud in chapter three. The success of *Israel Beitenu* or *Shas* is not only linked to the demography of the cities. It also reflects the influence of local party representatives. I had the opportunity to do some filming on the day of the elections in Kiryat Shmona, where I followed Abram, deputy mayor and local representative of *Israel Beitenu*. He made it very clear that his position at the municipality was a factor of votes. These local representatives also advocate welfare programs and entitlements for the groups they represent, with many beneficiaries residing in the periphery.

A second aspect of the links between immigration and local politics is based on the positioning of the cities to gain access to resources. Being a welcoming municipality for immigrants brings a good reputation. Indeed, in Acre, the mayor and his staff are aware that providing good public services is at stake to attract additional resources. More explicitly, in Arad, the director of the municipal department for culture, immigration and integration, describes the efforts by the municipality at the time of the arrival of Soviet Jews in Arad, in the 1990s. She explains that the fact that the city was actively involved in their settlement helped them to be recognised as a model, the Minister at the head of MOIA often visiting them:

> Think, our brothers come. They can come. And really, by chance, arrived in Arad, people… with a very high level. Everybody with masters degrees, PhDs. Really. Everyone. I speak about the first masses that come. They were really quality people. From big cities. They did not come from towns or villages, but from big cities, important. Everybody came with a lot of will to come to Israel. Listen it was an extraordinary euphoria, one that was also viral. All the city was mobilized for this thing. There was not a person who did not open his house, their heart, their wallet. Beginning in the 1990s. It was, it was. Wow. There was a project to adopt families, which was coordinated by Nili Oz, spouse of Amos Oz, the famous writer. There were 300 families, veterans, who hosted immigrant families on a regular basis. 300. Understand. In the 1990s, we were 9500 residents. 300 families who adopted families. They would invite them for Shabbat, they would write to them, they would help them find a job, they would learn the language together with them. It's a huge project. We were a model in Israel for the integration of *Aliyah*. They came and learnt. There was not a Minister of Integration who did not visit, who did not share compliments. This thing was so so… It was high level but also euphoric. (Interview 7, 2014)

Similarly, MOIA's agent Rebecca affirms that depressed municipalities investing in immigrant integration earn a good reputation:

> Me: What makes the difference between Ramle, which is ready to encourage poorer *Aliyah* populations and other municipalities?

> Rebecca: What I personally understand is that, at educational level, classes were closing. They needed to fill classes again with newcomers, new blood. Sincerely, selling Ramle to French or to Americans is not easy. They found an easiest way. For me, any immigrant from any country is an asset. At some point, the immigrant brings more than what he receives. Even in terms of their municipal reputation, Ramle earned a lot. They are recognized for what they do. The reputation of the municipality, its social level, the social policies… You can see if the city understood that the immigrant was an asset. Some things have their own logics in *Aliyah*. Some cities come and say, we want French or Americans. (Interview 9, 2014)

This last remark leads us to the following section: investing in immigration can lever resources available at national level, for which distribution is conditioned on the capacity of local leaders to bring forward concrete proposals to spend those resources.

1.2.5 Access to public funding

The capacity to channel resources and to implement successful programs is certainly crucial to attract public funding, since transfers from the central administration have become more difficult to obtain. A large proportion of immigrants in a city provides a reason to draw public resources from MOIA, but also from the various ministries which dedicate part of their resources to immigrants — education, welfare, employment, construction, and the development of Galilee and Negev for instance. It must be borne in mind that the four cities are heavily dependent on national funding. Kiryat Shmona had the highest share of transfer, with 51.47% of its total budget being transferred from the central administration in 2011. Arad's budget was composed of 42.21% of transfers, while Kiryat Gat and Acre, just under 34% (their larger population, and larger industrial parks meant that they also benefited from a municipal budget which was twice the size of Arad and Kiryat Shmona).

For Gali, a senior at the Union of Local Authorities in Israel, this funding is the reason why some municipalities put immigration on their agenda, rather than the contrary:

> The municipality, in my opinion, looks at who can bring funding, and then they decide who they need. It's not that they build a working programme based on the needs and then they go to the MOIA to ask for cooperation to finance this need. It's the contrary. The Ministry brings, and I say: Ok, I have a budget of 50,000 NIS, let's see who needs it the most and for what. And this is for a municipality that operates well. (Interview 15, 2014)

And indeed, I came to realise that most municipalities involved in immigration outreaching were part of the programme 'group *Aliyah*'. In Acre, salaries of the six employees of the department are paid by the MOIA, with a small contribution from the municipality. In Arad and Kiryat Gat,

salaries are paid by the municipality, but the activities are highly subsidised by the Ministry. Arad got in the 'group *Aliyah*' programme when I started fieldwork, and withdrew when I finished. However, the municipal workers have retained their positions and are funded by the municipality. When I asked a former beneficiary, Christian, what was the point of the municipality getting into the 'group *Aliyah*' programme for French immigrants, he argued that it was because his full salary was paid by MOIA (Interview 30, 2015). When MOIA decided to withdraw, as not enough French families settled in Acre, Christian lost his job.

The settlement of immigrants who are considered 'special populations', such as Ethiopian immigrants or Indian immigrants from the Bnei Menashe community, also obtain additional budgets from the various ministries, as well as from foundations and immigration organisations (Interview 11, 2014; Interview 34, 2015). Indeed, welfare, education, employment, or municipal immigration and integration departments can draw resources from the Ministries on the basis that they serve these populations. In Kiryat Gat, several municipal agents are hired to serve the Ethiopian population residing in the city. For instance, during my fieldwork, a unit for the integration of Ethiopians — *Moked Klita* — was created under the department of welfare. A director was appointed as well as workers. A building located in a neighbourhood with a higher concentration of Ethiopian immigrants was seized for this office (Interview 38, 2015; Interview 45, 2015; Interview 46, 2015). Similarly, the presence of an important community from the Caucasus area in Acre helped the municipality to obtain a large budget — 200,000 NIS yearly — and fund a position at the municipality for an 'Integration of Caucasus Jews' coordinator' (Interview 20, 2015). The presence of a Palestinian population in Acre also helps to draw extra funding. Indeed, an interviewee states:

> You see in the job ads: wanted, social worker, individual counselling or community work. Always. In Lod and Ramle and Acre. They give them massive social help. (Interview 57, 2015)

Apart from direct transfers from the different ministries, political parties provide channels to accessing programs. *Israel Beitenu* representatives in municipalities are aware of the fact that they can reach out to the ministries the party controls, MOIA being one of them. For instance, when we debated the use of municipal resources by the Palestinian Israeli deputy mayor of Acre municipality, deputy mayor and *Israel Beitenu* representative, Zion says:

> Zion: What I say is that I am *Israel Beitenu*. If I need something for tourism, I go to the Minister of Tourism. (The second deputy mayor) does not have that!
>
> Me: That's what I meant to say. *Israel Beitenu* really helps
>
> Zion: Labour also helped. Labour helped. (Interview 20, 2015)

To sum up, immigrants, in general, are included in the collective imaginary of these places. Interviewees accept that immigrants will disrupt the course of their life, and for the most part, believe it to be for better. However, comparable to the Law of Return, this collective imaginary seems inclusive for Jewish immigrants, but excludes all other social groups.

Jewish immigration is associated with five main dimensions of local development. The first, and most obvious, is the socioeconomic development aspect. However, this development is foreseen through in-place economy rather than a productive economy. Immigrants are not generally viewed as entrepreneurs or job creators. By their presence in the city, they increase the residential base, which is believed to translate into consumption, but also… municipal taxes! The demographic growth experienced by host cities also means that public services can be maintained or increased. And, following the national project of occupation of the land, it secures a Jewish majority in territories where Palestinian Israelis reside. In addition to assuring a Jewish majority, it can strengthen parties that mainly serve the population of the periphery, and immigrant representatives. The dimension of sociocultural diversity, an argument that has gained growing popularity among policymakers in gateway cities in Europe and in North America, also has its advocates in these mid-sized cities. However, this diversity is limited to the various Jewish immigrant groups that make up the city. Palestinian Israelis, or even non-Jewish immigrants, are not part of the discourses. Lastly, immigrants bring an indirect benefit: they can justify new transfers from the central administration and from the third sector.

Based on these beliefs, municipalities sometimes adopt a proactive approach to immigration, encouraging immigration to their cities through marketing or outreaching on the one hand; and setting up immigrant-friendly public services' delivery on the other hand. It means that they dedicate resources, to travel out, to maintain municipal staff working directly with new immigrants, and to carry out programs. The following section will look in greater depth at these activities, and more importantly, whom they target.

2 Outreaching to 'active, participatory and productive individuals'

The impact of Jewish immigration on town' development — socioeconomic, demographic, cultural, political and financial — are more strongly associated with particular groups of immigrants. In order to clarify this phenomenon, I have selected a quote, which brings together several elements of analysis:

> People who say that, say that because they don't know. I'll tell you what. Let's think about what there was here before a million immigrants arrived. There is not a sector in the country, which did not generate profits, by 1000%, since *Aliyah* absorption. I'm talking about sciences, academia,

> music, literature, cinema, technology. There is no sector that did not take a big step. You know what. Look at Arad. I look at the settlement we were raised in. We were a very, very, very quality village. The elite of the Negev. Ok? Population that lived here, before the immigrants, was a very educated population, everybody was employed. Let's start with the fact that the settlement did not receive, there was a receiving committee, they did not receive a family without work. In the DNA of people, what stays is that residents work, they contribute. And then, boom, *Aliyah* arrived. Engineers arrived, music teachers arrived, maths teachers arrived, geologists arrived. Who did not come. People. Everybody found a job and worked. You know why? I speak about a high proportion. Why? This is their mentality. They don't know how else. All right a family arrived with a child, a dog and a Grandma. The grandma gets welfare. It's not that she came to the welfare authority but she got, she got from the State. It's a grandma. If she comes with grandpa, so a couple gets allowance. But the parents, the parents worked. I don't say that there were not some single mothers. I don't say that. We see some in the welfare. Today some don't work. But that's not the majority. We can't look at it this way. We need to look at the working, contributing mass. They give so much power to the state. Let's not look at the things… ok there is. I will tell you something, when we go for outreaching, I interview families. We can sit for 15 minutes, 10 minutes, sometimes it can be as long as 30 minutes. To tell you that I can say if these people will come and will work, and be efficient, and contribute. I don't know. Maybe he will not find himself. Maybe only she will work. But the children will serve in the army, and work. On this basis can we refuse a family? What's that. Think of it. I can tell you that the ones that speak this way… because some talk like that. I hear them. It's been years that I handle this conflict. Don't look at things in a narrow way. Yes, some don't find a job. (Interview 7, 2014)

Miriam is the director of the municipal department for culture, immigration and integration. She grew up in Arad in the 1970s. She has worked for 25 years in the municipality, dealing with immigration issues. She describes Arad as an elite town, where a city committee existed in the first years of its establishment to select residents on the basis of their occupational potential in the city. Even though the committee is not anymore active, in the 1990s, Arad's mayor proactively outreached to Soviet immigrants, travelling to the former Soviet republics. Miriam strongly believes that these immigrants, in their majority, are contributing citizens who work and participate in the economic growth of Israel. Their children serve in the armed forces, and will also be employed in the Israeli labour market.

Her discourse can therefore be divided into two lines of analysis: firstly, the engagement of municipalities in designing outreaching policies to specific immigrants, conceived as having a higher probability to contribute to local economic development as well as to nation-wide growth; second, the stereotyping of western migrants — as opposed to migrants originating from developing countries — whose characteristics make them more desirable in the eyes of the hosting society.

2.1 Adopting a policy to outreach to specific immigrants

At the moment of fieldwork, Acre and Arad (to a smaller extent) were actively engaged in immigrant outreaching — an activity MOIA and municipal agents in municipal departments of immigration and integration call *Aliyah* encouragement (*Idud Aliyah*). Kiryat Gat was not directly involved but it worked to retain Ethiopian immigrants who were first hosted in the Shoshana absorption centre, and it developed some pilot tools to encourage immigrants to buy housing units in the new Karmei Gat neighbourhood.

Aliyah outreaching is translated into several activities: an on-going relation with the representatives of the Jewish Agency and Nefesh beNefesh abroad; regular contacts with candidates to immigration interested in settling in the city; and trips abroad, usually led by the mayor or the deputy mayor, to market the city and convince Jews abroad to immigrate to Israel and more particularly to the city they represent. Contacts are usually established with JAFI (or Nefesh beNefesh) representatives in Western countries and in the Former Soviet countries. Trips are also organised towards those destinations — Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, Canada, United States, France, Mexico… etc. As the cities I explored have small municipal budgets, those trips are limited to one or two visits annually. Why would municipalities organise such activities? Elisa, director of the municipal department of immigration and integration in Acre answers:

> The Jewish Agency cannot advertise for each city. The Jewish Agency wants people to come, that's all. They don't say go to Acre, go to Holon. They don't choose where to go. It's us that need to advertise. Why would the Jewish Agency need to sell Acre? We need to do it. It's our objective, our interest. (Interview 5, 2014)

Cities that carry out activities to outreach to immigrants take control over the populations they appeal to. In Acre in particular, they say they target young families with children (Interview 5, 2014). They affirm they want to bring a strong population, who can contribute.

Who is this strong population? When I asked interviewees to better define what they meant by strong, I was told that meant people who work and can buy a house (Interview 2, 2014), people who work, serve in the armed forces and pay taxes (Interview 7, 2014), even if they do not work in the city where they settle, or even if they do not create new jobs.

As interviewees did not answer the question directly, I listed the terms that were associated with immigration on the one hand; and development, contribution or growth on the other hand. The following subsection focuses on the profile of the perceived ideal, desirable immigrants towards whom immigration outreaching policy is geared.

2.2 A requirement that fits FSU and Western immigrants' reputation

Throughout the analysis, I have shown that the active involvement of certain municipalities in outreaching to Jewish candidates to immigration is believed to allow those cities to gain control over the profile of those who settle in the city. In particular, and in order to contribute to the various aspects I have cited above — economic development, demographics, cultural diversity — immigrants targeted by those policies are expected to have a high level of education, to be of working age and to bring 'culture' (which implies the double meaning of Western liberal attitudes and knowledge of the arts — music, literature, theatre and more).

Although there are huge differences among FSU immigrants, in terms of geographic origin — from Ukraine to Uzbekistan —, in education, in previous occupation etc. the 'Russians' fall into a fairly stereotyped profile: educated, consumers of cultural activities, hardworking, 'people of the system' with high representation in the politics of Israel etc.

In short, the 'Russians' are idealised as 'active, participatory and productive individuals' (Soysal, 2012). In a world that promotes lifelong education, employment at any cost, and self-involvement in civil society (*Ibid.*), such individuals could ultimately replace the State where it has withdrawn.

2.2.1 Educational excellence

FSU immigration is highly correlated with educational credentials. Interviewees mention a wide array of topics in which FSU immigrants are believed to excel: sciences, academia, technology, also including maths, chemistry and physics. They are perceived as having higher numbers of trained individuals in the fields of medicine, computing and engineering (Interview 1, 2014; Interview 5, 2014; Interview 7, 2014; Interview 8, 2014; Interview 12, 2014; Interview 16, 2014; Interview 20, 2015; Interview 23, 2015; Interview 40, 2015; Interview 58, 2015).

It is in fact true that FSU immigrants are relatively better educated. The Central Bureau of Statistics reports that 50% of FSU immigrants who arrived after 1990 hold academic degrees (CBS, 2013). Nevertheless, many degrees are not automatically recognised and their holders have to sit equivalent exams upon arrival in Israel, leading many of them to give up on their previous career. Similarly, some professions are absent from the Israeli labour market, such as several types of engineering, which were virtually non-existent in Israel. Altogether, it is estimated that only 34 % of newcomers work in the same profession as they occupied in their home countries (CBS, 2013).

Even though FSU immigrants' education do not always allow for labour market integration, their high level of education has made it possible to introduce changes at various levels: Firstly, it means that there is increased competition within schools, helping to improve results in schools which register immigrants in the long run; secondly, it is associated with the availability of a pool of trained workers who need minor retraining to fit the labour market; and lastly, since these immigrants tend to place a premium on education, they set up alternative mechanisms to cope with what they perceive as a lower quality educational system in Israel. In Arad, for example, immigrants have set up an evening school for FSU immigrant children, hiring former Russian-speaking teachers, in order to provide extra classes.

2.2.2 Culture

The second dimension associated with FSU immigrants, and Western immigrants in general, is culture, including music — concerts, opera —, literature, cinema, or even sports (Interview 1, 2014; Interview 3, 2014; Interview 5, 2014; Interview 7, 2014; Interview 8, 2014; Interview 12, 2014; Interview 16, 2014; Interview 20, 2015; Interview 23, 2015; Interview 40, 2015; Interview 45, 2015; Interview 58, 2015).

In the 1990s, FSU immigrants, particularly the *intelligentsia* (Storper-Perez, 1998), supported by State institutions, therefore invested considerable efforts in fostering a vibrant cultural environment, which was usually segregated and Russian speaking. Daniele Storper-Perez has documented these initiatives in Jerusalem — and while large cities were certainly hosting more of these initiatives that the small towns of the periphery — I have met members of the *intelligentsia* who have invested time and effort in activating their contacts with Russian-speaking artists and recreating cultural life in Israel. In Arad, Natalia organised a weekly salon in the 1990s dedicated to poetry recitals, concerts and other cultural events.

Nowadays, providing cultural activities in their native tongue to Russian speaking immigrants is one of the main tasks municipal departments for immigration and integration take upon themselves, and they can easily obtain MOIA funds to do so. In Kiryat Gat and Arad in particular, organising cultural activities targeting FSU immigrants is at the core of the departments' activities. Arad's municipal departments for culture, and for immigration and integration have merged. Municipalities are assisted in this endeavour by the district office of the MOIA, the community centres of the *matnass* network, the youth club, and other community centres, cultural infrastructures and associations.

As I demonstrated earlier, leaders express clear links between this crave for culture and the sociocultural development of their cities. A quote by the director of AMI, the association for French immigration in Israel, explains the connection:

> If we would say that each immigrant could live for half the price in Kiryat Gat, subsidising rents as much as 1500 shekels a month, for a year? It's not a lot. But what an impact on the population! People leave Paris to come and live with us! When they arrive, they open a French bakery. In Ashkelon, when they opened the first French bakery… wow. Frenchmen have knowhow.[92] (Interview 34, 2015)

Interviewees mention another area in which FSU immigrants have made a significant contribution: an urban culture of aesthetics and cleanliness (Interview 1, 2014; Interview 6, 2014; Interview 20, 2015; Interview 23, 2015; Interview 27, 2015). In two drivalong interviews I conducted in Arad and Kiryat Gat, both my interlocutors insisted on showing me the improvements that immigrants had made to houses built in the 1990s. Among a series of similar houses, each one had added extensions and changed colours and architectural styles, leading to a quarter of the houses becoming personalised (Interview 1, 2014; Interview 27, 2015).

As described above, Russian-speaking urbanites, and French immigrants, are considered to have made the most contribution to culture. This reveals the persistence of a discriminatory vision that believes in the superiority of Western immigrants over Easterners. This is accentuated by the monopolistic position of FSU immigrants in the MOIA and in local institutions dealing with immigration integration.

2.2.3 Work ethics

Closely concomitant to the injunction on individuals to be productive, the ability to participate in the workforce is highly considered by interviewees. FSU immigrants are considered to possess such attributes: hard workers, with a work ethics, who do not mind the downward mobility often experienced by immigrants on arrival (Interview 1, 2014; Interview 7, 2014; Interview 14, 2014; Interview 15, 2014; Interview 23, 2015; Interview 40, 2015, 2015). Most descriptions do not concern entrepreneurship. FSU immigrants are perceived as individuals who primarily look for jobs as employees or in the public sector (Interview 12, 2014).

It is true that FSU immigrants have lower rates of self-employment than the Israeli population. Although several national mechanisms which were established in the 1990s to encourage

[92] Translation of the author.

entrepreneurship were designed for FSU immigrants, they are primarily exploited by Israelis (Razin, 1990). FSU immigrants' self-employment is half the average of Israeli self-employment.

What do the multiple statements linked to the labour market integration of FSU immigrants, perceived or real, induce? A first issue which I will explore in more depth in chapters 6 and 7, is the centrality of economic participation in present day Israel. In a previous chapter I have already described how values linked to individualism and financial autonomy are predominant in Israel today, hence the success of the label 'start-up nation' (Senor & Singer, 2011). Senor and Singer devoted a large section of their book (on the contribution of FSU immigrants) to the development of the high tech sector in Israel. This feeds quite directly into new frames of 'deservingness'. Immigrants who are perceived as autonomous and productive are praised in liberal discourse.

Nevertheless, the capacity of FSU immigrants to enter the labour market — compared to previous waves of immigration — seems to be concomitant to the accession of Israel in the circle of industrialised countries. The Israeli economy of the 1990s was better able to support the integration of a large number of immigrants than the fragile economy of the 1950s. Secondly, FSU immigrants benefited from the direct absorption policy, where they could, at least in theory, choose where to live and move closer to economic centres. Thirdly, the family structure is also a factor, as FSU immigrants belonged to smaller, usually multigenerational, families in which the elderly could take care of the children, providing more possibilities for parents to integrate the labour market (Lipshitz, 1998; Lewin-Epstein *et al.*, 2003; Tzfadia, 2006).

2.3 About other immigrants

Immigrants from different countries are not perceived as making equal contributions. In particular, immigrants from developing countries, or even Soviet Jews originating from Central Asia — Azerbaijan or Georgia for instance — are considered as a welfare population who costs more to public agencies than they contribute.

For instance, an Arad interviewee explains:

> Although in Arad, the *Aliyah* was rather 'easy'. Immigrants from Russian came. Not from Kazakhstan for instance, who are considered 'difficult migrants'. Good families. But with a different mentality. (Interview 21, 2015)

She continues:

> Immigrants are usually perceived as weakening the city. Although Arad did not host many Ethiopians. (*Ibid.*)

In Kiryat Shmona, many consider that immigrants who settled and stayed in the city are primarily there out of choice, or 'trapped'. In fact:

> The only thing you can do is to bring the same trapped populations from developing countries, from India, and I don't know where we have some left. Places where the culture is different, and you have to invest in them. And you need a period to absorb them, deal with economic problems. (Interview 55, 2015)

What is interesting though, is that in Acre there are measured statements when it comes to immigrants from developing countries. The mayor is proud of the achievements of the population of Mountain Jews — who in other cities usually fall into the category of undesirable immigrants. He assures that the mechanisms set up to facilitate their participation in the various city institutions have worked: pupils excel in schools, adults participate in the workforce etc. (Interview 32, 2015).

Kiryat Gat also works hard to eliminate prejudice towards immigrants from developing countries. A population of several thousand Ethiopian immigrants, and their offspring, reside in the city, as well as immigrants from central Asia, India and elsewhere. Even though several interviewees have demonstrated prejudiced discourse, the mayor, the deputy mayors and the spokesperson have attempted to offset such discriminatory discourse during our meetings. For instance, the spokesperson affirms Ethiopians make a considerable contribution significantly to the community (Interview 57, 2015). Kiryat Gat mayor Aviram explains that those who are usually blamed for their lack of participation are not necessarily the ones who should take the blame:

> Yes. And by the way, it's not the Ethiopians and the narco. I have here 3000 families from the FSU, who are retirees. They don't pay at all. They don't pay at all. It means, sometimes there are stereotypes: it's him, or him. No no my brother, it's you! I don't know if you know, but it's you. I don't know if you know, but it's your father. They shout: we give! The Haredim don't serve in the army! This one does not do that! This one… Wait wait. Do you know the proportion of people serving in the army? What are you talking about? Everybody pays municipal taxes among the Haredim. I wish everybody would pay municipal taxes like the Haredim. Why? Those ones don't pay at all. The Russians. So (Interview 19, 2014)

Here, I want to show that, even though there is a large consensus over the Law of Return, this immigration policy has been eroded at city level. The local reinterpretation of the Law of Return

follows a Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) logic. It is limited to certain individuals and groups who are expected to easily participate in the main institutions of the country — schools, the armed forces, the labour market, culture and politics. This involves a resemblance with the dominant Israeli groups, which FSU immigrants in particular are perceived to present. This logic consequently partly excludes other immigrants, who fit into present day institutions less well.

However, it only partly excludes them. At least, immigrants who are not perceived as productive individuals, but as vulnerable groups, benefit from the moral obligation of Israel to support Jewish immigrants. In return, municipalities are granted extra resources, therefore accessing new funding channels. Additionally, these cities contain a heritage of marginalisation, exploited by political parties such as the Sephardic *Shas* party or the *Israel Beitenu* immigrant party. In this context, they gain some pride from tolerating, or even celebrating, otherness.

This heritage also has an impact on the perception of the potential contribution of immigration. This next section will focus on the interviewees who do not believe it is the city's role to elaborate an immigration policy.

3 Breaks and resistances

The various interview extracts I have transcribed in the two previous sections stage four cities located across different places in a spectrum: from Acre, which has a very proactive immigration policy; to Arad which recently reintegrated an immigration outreaching programme; Kiryat Gat which puts some effort in retaining the current immigrant population, without specific efforts to reach out to newcomers; and Kiryat Shmona, which has adopted a no policy approach. These attitudes need to compared with the city's reactions to decentralisation, and its capacity to cope with its new responsibilities.

Kiryat Shmona's attitude is not isolated. Indeed, in the 1990s, scholars started to measure the relative 'autonomy' of cities. They have documented the reactions of city leaders requested to host newcomers, and show that, through a mix of bargaining and appeals to the public opinion, many mayors have refused to receive newcomers (see for instance Auerbach (2001, 2011)). They did not refuse Jewish immigration to Israel, but rather followed a NIMBY logic. However, at the time, this reaction demonstrated their capacity to bargain with the government. Nowadays, although some municipalities have very clearly engaged in encouraging immigration, some cities still refuse. The latter are the ones perceived to have a lower capacity for decentralisation.

Different factors explain this refusal: first of all, immigration is still perceived by some as generating more expenses than resources. Since the State assists in settlement, cities must have

housing available as well as various services, from language learning to schooling assistance at etc. Secondly, cities located in the periphery believe that immigrants who settle in their areas are usually more prone to unemployment, or are older, than those who choose to settle in the centre. Most importantly, these cities refuse to take responsibility for a public issue they believe is still the responsibility of the State.

3.1 Costs of immigration

The opponents of the settlement of new immigrants in their city raise the issue of public expenses, more notably the welfare dependency of new immigrants. This political discourse can only be too familiar, independently of the geographical context. Immigrants are usually portrayed as taking advantage of public expenses. If I have exposed the multiple accounts of interviewees who strongly support immigration as catalyst for development, there are still people who believe that their contribution does not pay back the expenses they generated both during their settlement and afterwards.

In the case of the cities I have studied, this feeling is usually connected with a bitter history of immigrant settlement in the periphery (see chapter 3). As one interviewee in Kiryat Shmona expresses, it is "the same trapped populations" who are "brought" to the city:

> And it's rare to see development towns that deal in immigrant integration policymaking. Also, in immigrant integration there are many risks. You can get populations who are welfare populations, and then you increase the economic weight for the local authority. The welfare, so you understand, although it's from the State, it's matching. Everything you, every new service, you pay at least a quarter of the cost, a quarter. And the budgets don't get bigger. Huh, that's why, it's a bit of a problem, I tell you again, there is no massive migration from France and from US. I speak of developed countries. And policies to attract them are almost failing. The only thing you can do is to bring the same trapped populations from developing countries, from India, and I don't know where we have some left. Places where the culture is different, and you have to invest in them. And you need a period to absorb them, deal with economic problems. (Interview 55, 2015)

Sometimes, these immigrants, although they have cost money, particularly in the first years following their settlement, when they benefit from the absorption basket but also from various other entitlements, decide to remigrate from Israel, back to their country of origin or to a third country:

> See, Latin Americans for instance, a lot of them came because of a disastrous economic situation. They… The last mayor brought 40 families to Kiryat Gat, from Argentina. You know how many stayed? Maybe four, five. Part of them went back to Argentina, part of them went to Kibbutzim.

> Some people got an absorption basket, opened a business, closed it and left debts behind. (Interview 16, 2014)

Out-migration of immigrants is not an isolated phenomenon, nor is the out-migration of residents. However, several interviewees associate immigration with the departure of the upper socioeconomic layers of the population to more dynamic areas. Indeed, the same interviewee in Kiryat Shmona speaks of the balancing movements of immigration and departure of what he calls 'quality individuals' or 'socioeconomic locomotives':

> Apart from people that, the way of their lives took them to a place where they don't have a choice, they stay here. It's people that don't have an education, or did not go to obtain a degree. Workers in factories and people like that, that. The ones who leave and don't come back, and we have a problem in planning, are the quality guys, let's say, the same economic, social locomotives. That we need to come back, to take the reins and drive the city forward. It has always been like this in Kiryat Shmona, it always suffered from this, it always expelled quality human resources out, to the centre. What balanced those out-migrations are the waves of massive *Aliyah*. But unfortunately, there will not be massive migrations in the upcoming years. (Interview 55, 2015)

In another city, one interviewee, who asked to remain anonymous, also links immigration with the decrease of the attractiveness of the city, and the subsequent out-migration of 'strong populations':

> Over the years, strong populations left. I don't want to be named now, because if I say something like… Immigrants' came and pulled the population down, and the strong ones left, those are things that I don't want to sign with my name.

In a city like Kiryat Shmona, immigration is mostly experienced as imposed from above, a result of a national public housing policy (Interview 44, 2015). The availability of housing prevails in the decision to 'send' immigrants, without any overall strategy to provide public services and employment in the long run. This is again related to immigrant settlement policies in the 1950s and 1960s, and again in the 1990s. In each case, municipalities were largely dependent on central transfers and had little room to negotiate with the government and decide on a number of immigrants that they could reasonably host in their cities. Strong municipalities refused the quotas and housing construction, while deprived municipalities found themselves with high numbers of immigrants, despite the lack of economic perspectives for residents and immigrants (Auerbach, 2001, 2011). Today, Kiryat Shmona experiences this situation even more strongly since public funding is shrinking:

> Abram: The Government does not give, does not give. As if we were in a good situation. But there

are elements here in Kiryat Shmona. If you look at the situation of social affairs, we have 2,700 or 2,500 families out of 7,000 families. Can we say that our situation is good? Our children go away, when they finish studying, they go away. So. People get old. I told to someone from the parliament who came to Kiryat Shmona: Thank you very much, thank you Government of Israel for having transformed Kiryat Shmona into a large retirement home. Ok. We need caregivers and social workers. That's not new. There is no new industry that could bring a stronger population, to balance things. Even for municipal taxes. 96% pay municipal taxes. But each year, we give 7 million NIS tax reduction.

Me: You mean that you manage to raise taxes, but then many benefit from tax reductions.

Abram: Reductions for the elderly for instance. Or people who live off social welfare. Most of the reductions are decided by law. But we give more reductions. There is a committee for tax reductions. The committee gives more because people find themselves in socio-economic conditions that are very difficult, so they ask for more. So these 7 million instead of taking them and redistributing them for the good of our residents, we give it away.

Me: So how did you get to rank 5 in this situation?

Abram: We don't understand either. We are trying, checking what we can do to get back to 4 at least, because 4 would mean extra millions in funding. From 2004, the trend started and ten years later, nothing got out. Our tail is not out of it so I don't even speak of our entire body. So let's talk about integration in Kiryat Shmona There was massive absorption. There was a great absorption in 1989/90. They sent people because there were apartments. People arrived here, got flats. The government was happy. They did not think of what would happen in one year, two years, three, what about the children. The State also provided funding through the MOIA, through all kinds of loans, the State gave something to live on and find a job, all kinds of Hebrew classes. Today there are no Hebrew class in Kiryat Shmona despite the fact that there are immigrants. (Interview 6, 2014)

This municipal attitude is quite criticised, which shows that municipalities who refuse the new rules of the decentralisation game are blamed and held responsible:

> Kiryat Shmona never misses the opportunity to miss an opportunity. It comes from a basic culture of poverty and inferiority. Kiryat Shmona always wanted someone else to do the job for them. There is no 'Kiryat Shmona for Kiryat Shmona'. (Interview 2015)

Kiryat Shmona is the least involved in immigration policymaking. It does not have a municipal unit, or department for immigration and integration. It does not organise outreaching activities. The activities targeted at the resident immigrant population are limited, and generally concern culture. The above mentioned extracts show that this policy comes from a general belief that

immigrants settling in Kiryat Shmona are a welfare population, notably elderly people, transforming the city into a 'retirement home'. Secondly, the responsibility to care for this welfare population falls too heavily on the shoulders of the local authority, which realises it cannot provide the necessary funds. Lately, the NGO Shavei Israel and the MOIA have decided that a group of Bnei Menashe immigrants from India are to settle in the city. The municipality has refused to become involved in the programme.

3.2 Refusal to be take responsibility in place of central administration

Acre's municipality affirms that it is their job to outreach to potential candidates to immigration. For the city, the Jewish Agency is an intermediary for future immigrants to Israel, but it is by no mean obliged to recommend settlement areas to the newcomers.

In Arad, reaching out to certain groups of Jews in the Diaspora was a strong policy in the 1990s. Arad has withdrawn from outreaching programs since 2003. The city reintegrated these programmes for just one year, in 2015, but withdrew again in 2016.

Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona take the view that encouraging Jewish immigration is the responsibility of the State, and not theirs. Kiryat Shmona, whose attitude firmly opposes decentralisation, once again calls upon the State to fulfil its responsibility:

> The ones who decide that they bring *Aliyah*, and they don't impose on the local authority to finance, there will be *Aliyah*. That's our obstacle. When you have to give a matching of 10%, 15, 20%. Now comes the community of Bnei Menashe. They are arriving now. From the beginning, we said that we can't deal with anything. (Interview 54, 2015)

Kiryat Gat does engage in activities for immigrants already living in the city but does not encourage immigration. The deputy mayor argues:

> We want. We want to separate. We will help him to go to work. We will help him to get to his school. We will help. That's our policy. Within the framework of education. But not. We don't want to be a branch of the MOIA. This, no. (Interview 57, 2015)

Resistance to decentralisation processes is particularly strong in those towns that have difficulties raising a municipal budget through local taxes. Even if they could reach central budgets, the weight of necessary funds is too large. In this context, they claim that the government is to blame for the establishment of cities in areas that are not connected with economic networks. This historical responsibility of the State in their marginalisation is, however, hardly linked to Marxist or post-colonialist political claims. It focuses essentially on

perceptions related to equitable resource distribution.

3.3 Need for cooperation

Expecting the State to take responsibility for immigration settlement, and the delivery of the required public services which necessarily follow on from such settlement, is not extraordinary for these peripheral cities that still obtain extra budgets and equalising grants to balance their meagre finances. Nevertheless, most transfers now come at a price: matching funds. In Kiryat Shmona in particular, interviewees blame the matching fund mechanism for privileging municipalities that have the means to match, while Kiryat Shmona stays out of development circles:

> If the MOIA gives 110,000 NIS per year, they will ask Kiryat Shmona to put up more, 11000 shekels. That's matching. For Kiryat Shmona, I hope that all the ministries will do the same. In Kiryat Shmona. For instance, in social affairs, if we want a, a project there, we can't. We need to put up a matching 25%. For big cities, which have the money, it's not a problem to do the matching, so they take the projects and develop them. It's not a problem for them to put up 25% and give it to social affairs, to improve the situation of children. And we stay in the same situation. (Interview 5, 2014)

Even if the matching is made possible, as in Kiryat Gat, it does not immediately translate into adopting immigration policies. The director of Kiryat Gat local MOIA office regrets that the city does not reach out to immigrants. However, she also explains that it would require cooperation between different bodies, to cater to all the immigrants' needs:

> Me: Also, in Kiryat Gat, they don't encourage *Aliyah*.
>
> Edna: Indeed, in Ashkelon, Ashdod, they do '*Aliyah* encouragement'. The municipality must participate and put up a budget. As a resident of Kiryat Gat, I feel very sad. We need this population. I see people in Hebrew classes: they are an investment. The municipality needs that. Y. A. does absorption in the community. To encourage *Aliyah* is not simply to bring the Grandma and the cousin of an existing resident. It requires cooperation. If a municipality encourages *Aliyah*, it commits to the newcomers. In exchange, the newcomers must stay for a year in the settlement, and they obtain extra money. On top of the standards, I will give you 3,000 shekels extra. And if you stay 9 months, I will give you another 3,000. You don't sign up for a year at least, but you know that every quarter there will be money. Anyway, in Kiryat Gat, there is no group *Aliyah* except from Ethiopia. Two years ago, there was a big *Aliyah* from Ethiopia. 200 immigrants came to Kiryat Gat, and 150 were Ethiopians. They have Hebrew classes in their absorption centre. The fifty immigrants left were of different ages. I could not open a class… I need 25 people at least to open a class. At the time, they had to go study outside the city. If you encourage *Aliyah*, the city must open a Hebrew class in Kiryat Gat. It must provide employment, housing… and the MOIA will give money.

(Interview 18, 2014)

Description of successful immigration policies involves cooperation with the ministries, the municipality, other public and third sector agencies on local levels, and very often, the residents themselves who offer assistance, open their homes, and help their new neighbours in their daily lives.

To conclude, taking responsibility for immigration issues is one of the many new responsibilities that have fallen on local government over the last decades. As economic development increasingly becomes a prerogative of the city, those who do not have the resources and the tools to follow this injunction find themselves cyclically jeopardised. For those cities, every cost seems unbearable. Interviewees often qualify their management as 'survival' management. In this context, immigration is not on their agenda. In their short-term vision, they cannot foresee the possible gains of immigration, and they focus on the impossibility to match funds available at the central level. Immigration is a responsibility of the State, not an engine of development.

4 Towards a rescaling of immigration policymaking?

Improving the city's attractiveness for immigrants is not the privilege of world-cities. These cases show that mid-sized peripheral cities can also engage in immigration outreaching.

The discourse of these mid-sized cities, located far from the economic and political centres of the country — the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv axis — is anchored in a new approach towards urban governance. These cities wish to take control over their residents, whom they want to choose, and over their socioeconomic development. Immigration is one aspect of this shift. Although it is the prerogative of the State, some cities voluntarily take over and affirm that it is their role to 'market' their territory as a potential area of settlement. Realistic when it comes to the low industrial and business potential of their city, they would rather emphasise their connectivity with larger employment areas — Tel Aviv, Haifa or Beer Sheva. Newcomers can quickly access those areas, while benefiting from a rural/urban lifestyle in a quiet town of the periphery.[93]

To justify their proactive policy towards new immigrants, leaders borrow from Zionist ideology of Jewish occupation of the land, and its regenerative effect on the territory. They also borrow from more global and liberal discourses of diversity and socioeconomic development. This diversity is limited to Jewish immigration (or at least to beneficiaries of the Law of Return, if not Jewish within the definition of the Orthodox religious authorities). Furthermore, it is often

[93] The urban/rural lifestyle of mid-sized towns is a common topos in the positioning, marketing and branding of these cities. In France, see for instance (Mainet, 2011).

limited to those immigrants who resemble the majority — white, Western Jewish immigrants. Nevertheless, partly because of their immigration history, some also reaffirm their will to cater for immigrants from developing countries. The main benefit perceived is the resources local authorities can obtain when they accept to take part in the settlement and integration of these groups — Ethiopian immigrants, Caucasus immigrants or Indian immigrants in the case of Acre and Kiryat Gat.

Unsurprisingly, local politicians whose approach opposes decentralization reforms do not encourage immigration. Kiryat Shmona, in particular, endlessly calls upon the State to take responsibility for a periphery it created, a frontier town, a shield that has suffered the consequences of the tensions and wars between Israel and Lebanon since the 1970s. Permanently confronted with its past, Kiryat Shmona looks at the consequences of immigration on its population, who they perceive as being low skilled, welfare dependent and aging. Lastly, Kiryat Shmona does not benefit from a close employment area. Its geographic isolation reinforces the feeling of deprivation.

We shall now focus on the three cities which convey an immigrant-friendly discourse: Acre, which proactively reaches out to potential immigrants; Arad, which has some mechanisms in place to outreach; and Kiryat Gat, which, if it does not have human resources targeted at outreaching, does recognise the potential contribution of immigrants and tries to retain currently residing immigrants, including Ethiopian immigrants benefiting from the absorption centre programme.

Statements collected among policy makers and executive staffs in these cities show an increasing role of the city in immigration affairs. I will argue that the rescaling of the only policy regulating immigration to Israel — the Law of Return — includes a redefinition of the Law itself. Indeed, decision makers at city level redraw the boundaries of the law to favour beneficiaries they consider as contributors. Although they agree with the ethno-nationalist immigration policy, they adopt a NIMBY approach, avoiding taking responsibility for immigrants they believe will immediately fall into welfare, and preferring immigrants they believe will quickly become net contributors.

However, the contribution of the newcomers is measured in terms of their residential contribution. As residents, they are expected to buy a property, pay local taxes, consume at local stores, and use public services (the latter helping to maintain services and secure central funding).

This last point in particular is worth highlighting: since the State of Israel supports Jewish immigration, and many ministries adopt an annual budget which includes funds for immigrant integration — in education, welfare, employment and so on —, hosting a large proportion of immigrants results in transfers of funding to the city. Additionally, these funds are even more important if the new residents originate from developing countries or countries where the Jewish community is in danger. In such cases, extra funding is released for these 'special populations' as defined by the ministries.

4.1 An attempt to outreach to active, productive, participative individuals

Immigration policies usually favour two types of immigrants: either labour immigrants who can join the large mass of malleable unskilled workers of the globalised economy, or high-skilled immigrants, usually portrayed as doctors, engineers or start-up funders. Even though family reunification is a much more common reason to enter another country legally, policies put more emphasis on the professional background of the potential immigrants, and the possible niches they can occupy to boost the economy.

Israeli immigration policy, however, is usually viewed from an ethno-nationalist angle. The policy is at one and the same time inclusive and exclusive: it is very inclusive in that it applies to all Jews of the Diaspora, but it is also very exclusive as its beneficiaries are Jews, and Jews only. Nevertheless, fieldwork in the four cities I chose to explore as well as secondary material on other cities show that this law is not as inclusive as it seems. Indeed, the interviewees express the desire to select and control entries, limiting them to those they call 'contributing individuals' or 'a strong population'. The immigrants' professional background and age is a factor included in policy formation, even though theorists have often neglected. [94]

In this sense, policy formation can be related to frames of "active, participatory and productive individuals" (Soysal, 2012) or of 'deservingness' (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012; Garcés-Mascareñas, 2015). Indeed, Soysal shows that the new European social project focuses on individual responsibility to achieve a higher position in the labour market and active citizenship (Soysal, 2012). For Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas, deserving foreigners are assessed along

[94] As I mentioned in chapter three the first waves of Jewish immigration to Ottoman Palestinewhich were managed by Zionist organisations in charge of encouraging and assisting their settlement, prevented 'penniless' Jews from immigrating to Israel (Shilo, 1994). Candidates for immigration had to be independent, to rely on their own resources and to contribute to the economic development of the *Yishuv*. After the establishment of the State, because resources were insufficient, the Jewish Agency decided to focus its efforts on countries where there was an immediate threat to the Jewish communities. In other cases, priority was given to young workers under age of 35 — who were to represent 80% of immigrants.

three dimensions: their place of residence, which provides access to rights; their performance, that is to say their economic reliability and their cultural integration; and their vulnerability, that has to be proved and accompanied by a lack of agency, as being an asylum-seeker must mean having no migratory project (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012).

Findings fit these frames, in the sense that interviewees expect the newcomers to work, to take part in the sociocultural activities of the city, in political life, as well as in the main institutions of the country, like the armed forces.

Even immigrants from developing countries can be identified as 'deserving'. Indeed, although they are believed to adapt less easily to the demands of the Israeli labour market (in terms of human capital for instance) or to the standards and language of the institutions, they are legitimate immigrants because of their very vulnerability. The State has a responsibility towards them. Their vulnerability is linked with their origins, or their parents' origins. As a group, they deserve life-long assistance, and therefore life-long identification as 'new immigrants'. In the following chapters I will analyse in greater depth the type of integration activities designed for these immigrants.

4.2 Belief in in-place economy

What do local governments' officials expect from these contributing individuals? By carrying out outreaching activities that favour the settlement of Western or FSU immigrants, who are expected to be educated and to have high work ethics, is local government hoping for a future layer of businessmen and entrepreneurs? Or are they hoping for a cheap and malleable workforce?

Indeed, in the theoretical framework of this study, I have drawn from the work of Glick-Schiller and Çağlar. They believe that cities respond to the relations between immigration and economic growth. On the one hand, cities develop opportunities to attract immigrants, "These opportunities include variations in regulatory regimes, local infrastructures and possibilities for entrepreneurial activities, employment, education, housing, and entrance into local political and cultural life" (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 3). On the other hand, they are expected to become "active agents in the neoliberal transformations of the cities: (1) as part of the labour force upon which cities build their competitiveness; […]; (3) as agents of neoliberal urban restructuring who contribute to or contest the changing status and positioning of neighbourhoods and cities; (4) by facilitating privatisation and neoliberal subjectivities […]" (*Ibid.,* p. 12).

Other more recent works have shown that some cities have started to use diversity — a vague term referring to the presence of non-White and foreign-born immigrants in the city as a brand (Hoekstra, 2014, 2015; Sanders, 2015; Goode in Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, pp. 143–165). Kristin Good's work on Toronto and Vancouver metropolitan areas in Canada shows a relatively frequent use of the relations between immigration and economic growth: more specifically, Vancouver's greater responsiveness to immigrants is clearly identified with a 'proactive economic-development regime' (Good, 2009, p. 144). However, since 2015, the CityDiv project at the Max Planck Institute in Germany has collected data in large French and German cities to analyse their understanding of diversity and its impact on economic development, and preliminary results show that while the benefits are recognised, measures are still very limited (Tandé, 2015).

In the context of the Israeli periphery, I have shown that one argument is particularly true. As argued by Glick-Schiller and Çağlar, immigrants are perceived by the participants in this research "as agents of neoliberal urban restructuring who contribute to or contest the changing status and positioning of neighbourhoods and cities". Indeed, following a logic of 'in-place economy', the settlement of immigrants means that they are new residents in the territory, who produce and consume, who buy properties and sustain a need for commerce, businesses, public services or cultural activities (Mainet, 2011). Helga Leitner has studied immigration in small cities in America. She argues similarly that "migrants may prove to be active agents of the reconstitution of urban life" (Leitner, 2012, p. 211). Decayed city centres find a new function through the settlement of immigrants. New shops open. Public services witness a pick-up of demand and can therefore argue for their continuance.

Nevertheless, a large incoming of immigrants in depressed towns can also contribute to the city's decline (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, pp. 191–192). In Israel, Erez Tzfadia has shown that the mass migration of the 1990s involved very high social costs for towns whose economies could not accommodate both old timers and newcomers (Tzfadia, 2006). Although there is no longer any mass migration to Israel, the memory of the 1990s migration may impact cities like Kiryat Shmona and explain their reluctance to receive more immigrants.

4.3 Immigration brings public funding

While exploring the reasons why local governments design local immigration policies, one finding is definitely paradoxical: the rescaling of immigration policies is a strategy to access resources from central administration!

Indeed, local governments formulate a simple demographic equation: the more immigrants there are in their cities, the greater access they can obtain to certain budgets targeted at immigrants, or more precisely, to services designed for immigrants. If there is already an immigrant group in the city there may be a 'critical mass' which helps provide a change in status. For instance, in the 1990s, cities that hosted a large number of immigrants managed to change their status from local councils to city councils, which was believed to grant them further independence and benefits. At present, ministries transfer budgets for education or welfare depending on the size of the immigrant population.

'Special populations' benefit from extra budgets for education, welfare, employment, culture, Jewish education (non-formal education) and Jewish tradition, and community development. In 2015, these special populations were deemed to be Ethiopian immigrants, Bnei Menashe immigrants from India, immigrants from the central Asian Republics (Georgia, Azerbaijan and Bukhara), and Ukrainian and Yemenite immigrants (due to current unrest).[95]

The MOIA has various cooperation programs with local government. They provide that most expenses will be borne by the Ministry itself. These programs are the 'integration in the community' programme, which mainly transfers funds for sociocultural activities, and the 'group *Aliyah*' programme, which pays for the salaries of local municipal coordinators called *proyektorim*. They help the municipality to hire municipal agents with minimal risks. These agents work for the municipality, following the municipal agenda, and encourage immigration, as well as organising integration activities.

Good shows that municipalities find it easier to raise funds from foundations for clear immigration/economic growth initiatives (Good, 2009, p. 144). This does not exactly correspond to the correlation I found in Israel. Economic growth initiatives are very marginal, and most efforts are directed towards cultural and social activities.

Conclusions: rescaling towards the local level?

In the introduction, I mentioned the following hypothesis: local governments' involvement in immigration will transform the hierarchy of governance. By designing immigration policies and reaching out to national organisations, and also transnational organisations and Diasporic organisations, they rescale their development strategy, and reposition themselves on the national and the Diasporic map.

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[95]See http://www.moia.gov.il/Hebrew/Subjects/ImmigrantAbsorption/Documents/NohalRashuyot_2015.pdf p. 13.

In fact, the creation of municipal units or departments that encourage new immigration has become more widespread over the last decade. If Arad seems to have addressed this issue for some time, Acre has reinforced this sector of activity since its mayor was elected. These units and departments have established direct contact with transnational organisations in charge of Jewish immigration, such as the Jewish Agency, Nefesh beNefesh or Shave Israel. By engaging in daily interactions with them, they hope to increase the flow of newcomers to their city.

One of the principal motives for these municipalities to increase their effort towards this end is a localisation of socioeconomic development strategies. Since the mid-1980s, the State has withdrawn from peripheral towns. Industries are less and less subsidised and are leaving these areas. Municipal budgets are increasingly based on local incomes, which are also diminishing with the retraction of industries and businesses. Some municipalities have therefore proactively looked for new development perspectives — usually in parallel with claims directed at the central administration to support them. A focus on immigration policies — among others — show a turn in this local development approach which favours less a productive economy, and is more and more based on an 'in-place economy'. As attracting important industrial project is challenging (or in the case of Kiryat Gat, the industrial area does not absorb enough local manpower), residents are the new engines of development.

Investing in (international or internal) immigration provides another advantage: public subsidies are available and can be levered to hire municipal agents, to organise numerous sociocultural activities and to deliver public services. What I have assumed to be primarily a new local policy relies greatly on transfers from central administration. The following chapters will therefore have to determine if these transfers of funding come with transfers of ideas. I have shown that local immigration policies seem to differ to a certain degree from the national immigration policy, the law of return, by limiting its beneficiaries to productive individuals. This first set of findings will be explored in more depth.

This chapter is aimed at addressing the rescaling of the development strategy of the local government which occurs in a complex and varied way. As I demonstrated in the chapter two, rescaling is not straightforward and leads to 'mosaic' (Brenner, 2004) patterns of power and governance. Here, the fact that the local governments of these four cities adopt different positions towards the potential of immigration in city development, is mostly grounded in place. The next chapter will therefore explore the role of the agents, the people that sit in those places, in associating immigration and development, and therefore pushing forward a proactive policy for immigration and integration.

Chapter 6 ◊ Meaningful interventions: local immigrant politicians produce scales

> To be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons (including lying about them). (Giddens, 1986, p. 3)

This quote extracted from Anthony Giddens's *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Giddens, 1986) highlights the relations between people's social engagement with their world, their capacity to critically evaluate their actions, and their ability to express — through language — an opinion on these actions. Since the 1970s and the humanistic renewal in geography, relations between agency, reflexivity and language are central to many studies, and an even larger number of studies have analysed politics and discursive performances in politics. In fact, in addition to special issues regularly published in various places, several scientific journals are specifically dedicated to this topic — international reviews like *Language in Society*, *Research on Language and Social Interaction* and *Linguistic Anthropology*; or Francophone reviews such as *Le sujet dans la cité*, *Mots : les languages du politique* and *Langage et Sociétés*.

In this rich theoretical, methodological and empirical context, and although narratives of immigrants have become a more frequent object of investigation, I have never come across any articles exploring the relations between immigrant politicians — whom, as politicians, produce and control the political discourse on immigration — and the way their narratives frame politics and policies, and more particularly those related to immigration issues.

Among the numerous analyses published over the three last decades on immigration policies, several works acknowledge that a person in government can lead a new immigration policy. For instance, Frankfurt's immigrant policy in the 1990s was led by former councillor Daniel Cohn Bendit (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997). In her work in Canada, Good recognises the importance of political agency and micropolitics in the formulation of immigration policies (Good, 2009, p. 22). Her research was based on interviews with local politicians, to understand their power and influence on the adoption of municipal multicultural policies. Another example is the pro-immigrant policy adopted by the American city of Philadelphia, and usually associated with the city's Afro-American mayor (Sanders, 2015). In Israel, Auerbach (2001; 2011), Razin (2001) and Tzfadia (2005) demonstrate the increasing influence of mayoral activities in Israel. However, Auerbach in particular has shown that when it comes to immigration, mayoral activities focus more on adopting a no-policy attitude (Auerbach, 2001, 2011).

In fact, the politicians who control the framing of immigration policies have rarely experienced immigration themselves. As Penninx (2004) indicates, immigration and integration policies are usually formed through a negotiation between members of the ‘majority’, whereas immigrants targeted by those policies are hardly invited to the deliberations with politicians.

This is the reason why Israel can provide concrete cases to measure the differentiated results of a negotiation between nationals and newcomers. In fact, Jewish immigrants benefitting from the Law of Return have immediate access to Israel citizenship, and can therefore vote and be elected even though they have just settled in the country. This access to citizenship, combined with the centrality of immigration in the Israeli national project and the weight of the immigrant population, are factors that have stimulated the emergence of an immigrant electorate and of immigrant representatives in national and local elections for political parties whose proposals are often linked with difficulties encountered by immigrants. The crystallisation of the religious Sephardic movement into the *Shas* party in the 1980s, or the establishment of nationalist Russian-speaking immigrant parties such as *Israel BeAliyah* and *Israel Beitenu* after the 1990s immigration from the former USSR, that I have mentioned in the previous chapters, illustrate the strength of immigrant politics in redefining a Jewish identity in Israel, outside the dominant Ashkenazi Jewish identity (see for instance, Shafir & Peled (2002), Berthomière (2004)).

Scholars and journalists have studied the life stories of these political parties' leaders — Aryeh Deri for *Shas*, or Avigdor Lieberman for *Israel Beitenu* —, but what about the life stories of their local representatives? Indeed, these parties are very active in city councils, especially in areas with large immigrant populations. This is precisely what the present chapter will explore: through the analysis of the relations between the personal and professional experiences of local immigrant officials and the way they tell those stories, I argue that the language of immigrants — through the ‘politisation’ of their life stories —, reveals to a certain extent the local institutional framing of immigration and integration in Israel. Immigrant politicians I have met in Israel engage actively in ‘biographisation’ (Delory-Momberger, 2009), reconstituting their immigration story and staging it on multiple occasions — for the media and for researchers, and for their voters. The narratives and discourses of these politicians are meaningful events through which these officials engage with their social world, impacting the stakes of the groups they represent.

This chapter will focus more particularly on three local officials, who immigrated to Israel in the 1980s and 1990s. I will first describe the themes that emerge from their stories and the way they tell their stories. To this end, I have analysed the transcripts of our meetings, following a thematic analysis method. I then compared the three analyses to identify any recurrent themes.

As they are closely related, I have chosen to present the three major themes that are found in the three transcripts: the process of integration, their role of representation, and their function of mediation. Secondly, I will focus more particularly on the extent to which their 'biographical performance' constitutes a meaningful intervention, impacting immigration and integration policies, and the scales at which they are defined. This part will more specifically highlight discursive strategy, rather than only the themes that emerge from analysis. Lastly, I will analyse in more depth the impact of these interventions.

1 Meeting with immigrant local officials

I chose to present three local officials who experienced immigration from their country of origin to Israel. The three officials were strongly involved with immigration and integration policies formed in the cities. Numerous interviewees mentioned them during our encounters and encouraged me to meet them. Secondly, when we met, their immigration story was central to our discussion. Lastly, I had the opportunity to meet them several times, and to establish a relation beyond the official character of our first encounter.

Tali is the mayor of Arad. She was born in Beltz in Moldova. She has a degree in psychology. She immigrated in 1991 with her husband and her two children. This immigration was the result of a long-lasting migratory project, the family's first attempt to immigrate to Israel being in 1978. Tali grew up with the future of Israel in her mind. She already spoke Hebrew when she arrived in Arad. Tali does not elaborate on her professional experience in Moldova: she says that her story starts when she arrived in Israel, what happened before does not matter (Interview 8, 2014). She first worked as a chambermaid at a hotel, in the Dead Sea hotel compound. Then she worked in another small service firm, before being hired by a bank in Arad, where she worked for 16 years. In 2003, she became a member of Arad city council, under the ultranationalist and Russian-speaking party *Israel Beitenu.* She replaced the evicted mayor in 2010, becoming the first 1990s immigrant mayor. In 2015, while I was doing my fieldwork, she was elected and became a Member of Parliament, 6th on the *Kulanu* list, a centre-right party led by Moshe Kachlon. She therefore had to leave the municipality. In June 2015, local elections took place, leaving her natural replacement far behind the *Yesh Atid* candidate.

Abram comes from Ekaterinburg in central Russia. This is where he married and worked as a doctor. He also tells me that his first (failed) attempt to immigrate was in the 1980s. Eventually, as he felt he could not be promoted at the hospital he was working in due to his Jewish identity, he followed his sister who had already settled in Israel and arrived with his wife and son in 1993, in Kibbutz Mayan Baruch in Galilee, a few kilometres from Kiryat Shmona. Later to

become mayor of Arad, Abram's first job was as a cleaning agent, which allowed him to support his family while he studied to obtain Israeli medical qualifications. He passed the exams and opened his own small clinic. Finally, he became a doctor at Kiryat Shmona's emergency room in 1997, a position which helped him to get to know many of the city's residents. In 1996, he was contacted by a local representative of the local branch of *Israel BeAliyah, refuznik* Nathan Sharansky's party. When *Israel BeAliyah* disbanded, he joined *Israel Beitenu.* As a member of this party, he was elected to the municipal council in 2003, 2008 and 2013. He is the deputy mayor in Kiryat Shmona.

Ayelet was born in Ethiopia. With her family, she crossed Sudan before arriving in Israel. She was four and a half when her family settled in Ashkelon in Israel. She remembers a visit of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who came to visit the immigrants' neighbourhood of her childhood. She was designated to bring her a present. Some years later, her parents purchased a property in Kiryat Gat. Ayelet has a bachelor's degree in administration and public policies from Sapir Academic Centre. She works as a community worker. Finally, she joined the current mayor's local list. They won the local elections in 2008, and again in 2013. She is a deputy mayor. Ayelet is a religious and observant woman.

While each story is personal and unique, three themes emerge from the analysis of my meetings with these three officials: a liberal understanding of integration, and of their integration in particular, which is dependent on the immigrant's capacity; a function of representative, more linked to public service rather than politics; and a position of mediation, between the different groups in the city, but also between the various levels of governance.

1.1 The process of integration

The first theme emerging from the textual analysis of these encounters is the process of their 'integration'. I insist on the term 'process' as integration is conceived as the realisation of these individuals' ambitions over time. I will show that immigration first means a fresh start, usually associated with professional downgrading. This downward mobility is seen as temporary. Steadfast individual efforts allowed the three participants to achieve their integration into the State's main institutions — in this case education, the labour market and the political and religious institutions.

The arrival in Israel was a new beginning, in particular for Tali and Abram who arrived when they were adults. The mayor of Arad tells me:

> [...] I mean, we arrived and we knew that we were starting from scratch. That's why, today, when someone requires my resume, I start with a sentence "I came to Israel in 1991". I mean, everything that was before, took place, but it does not influence what I do today. (Interview 8, 2014)

The fact that prior experiences no longer count to enter the labour market results in immediate downward mobility. The three interviewees describe their first job as cleaning agents (although for Ayelet, it was more a student job for an Israeli youth, rather than a result of her immigration). Abram talks about his experience with humour:

> Me: So you feel that you did not obtain a better position because you were a Jew. Weren't you worried that here, they would not let you be a manager because you are an immigrant?
>
> Abram: I was not afraid. We arrived here. You know where I worked. I worked in Mayan Baruch, in the shopping centre. I cleaned. Even during *ulpan* (Hebrew course), I was a cleaner. After some time, thanks to my connections, I got my wife to work there too. (Laugh). The two of us worked there. In Mayan Baruch shopping centre. My wife worked in Burger Ranch. Every time she got a free meal, she would bring me a burger. I was so happy. (Interview 6, 2014)

Tali understands that, after immigration, she would need to make some sacrifices and accept whatever job she could find. She tries to show that she felt no frustration or resentment for her professional downgrading:

> I remember the day that I was offered a job as a chambermaid in a hotel in the Dead Sea. I was the happiest person in the world. I took the job. Although, as you understood, although I have a degree in psychology and although I could do a lot of different things. (Interview 8, 2014)

Later on during our encounter, she reflects on this experience:

> Look, maybe I am not a good example, I don't know. When we wanted to come, everybody told us that *Aliyah* is very hard. "Be ready, it's hard, you will have a lot of difficulties and problems". When we celebrated a year in Israel, my husband and I sat and we asked ourselves: 'When will it be difficult?' Everything depends on how you see things, as a person, The moment when you don't think of 'How hard it is! How miserable I am!'. Think of that. 'Now, I go clean rooms, I clean toilet seats! Me! With my master's degree! In psychology'. You understand. I wasn't thinking that. But I believe that some did, some thought like that. And I believe that the ones who thought like that did not succeed. I think that you have to accept what... what life offers you and go for it. That's what we did. We went with the flow. It's our country, we need to find ourselves here. (*Ibid.*)

After this period of acceptation, the process of integration starts, and upward mobility occurs at a slow but sure pace. This self-realisation is due to a small-step strategy, as employed by Abram

thanks to his perseverance, Abram's medical degree was recognised in Israel and he could practice again, first as a self-employed doctor, and then as an employee at the ER. Abram and I spent some time discussing during several encounters. He always provided detailed accounts of events, illustrating them with figures and statistics. Even when it came to his life story, he gave detailed accounts of his arrival, of his daily schedule when he studied medical jargon Hebrew in Haifa. To become the well-known local emergency doctor he is, he describes in detail the various jobs he accepted before being hired in the emergency unit four years after his arrival.

He also explained his step-by-step introduction into local politics: the intermediary who introduced him to the party and his first conference with the other members. During another meeting, I came to understand the alliance strategies which allowed the mayor to retain his position in the municipality. Indeed, while the Russian-speaking residents of the city usually support a candidate who represents them — like Abram, but others have also occupied his position before him —, they do not form a majority. However, they are sufficiently numerous to make a difference between two close candidates:

> Nissim: We lost those elections. And, then, I tried another time. And the second time, we won. And, and I became mayor
>
> Abram: in 2008.
>
> Nissim: And now, again, for this term
>
> Abram: Again with my help
>
> Nissim: With your help. Also at that time with your help, and
>
> Me: What does that mean with his help? He brought the votes
>
> Nissim: He brought the voters, yes. That's it.
>
> Me (to Abram): You have power, for negotiation. (Interview 22, 2015)

I also had the opportunity to see him at work during the elections. Indeed, on 23 March 2015, there were national elections for the Israeli parliament. As a local representative of *Israel Beitenu*, Abram led the local campaign for the party. I followed him with a wireless microphone and a camera from 8 am to 10 pm that day, and witnessed the preparation of what Abram later describes as a 'military operation'.

All the usual supporters of the party were listed, and a car pooling system was set up to ensure that people with limited mobility could reach their polling station on the day of the elections.

Staffs were recruited for election day to monitor their arrival at the polling station, and to ensure that all of them came to vote. If not, another recruit located in a small office used as local headquarters phoned the missing voters to entice them to go to their polling station. We spent the entire day driving from poll to poll to make sure everything went smoothly.

Tali thinks that integration depends on the individual's mind-set. Someone who is optimistic, flexible and self-reliable can integrate. Tali tells a story of success: following her immigration, she quickly found a job — despite the "very, very big immigration" and the fact that it was "very, very hard to find a job". For her first job in Israel, as well as her job at the bank, she explains her ascension through very simple reasons: the fact that she spoke Hebrew, or that she simply dared to ask. On several times, she used the term personality, character or temper:

> But, it seems that success depends on ones' character. I am a really optimistic person. And, at the moment when you see the light at the end of the tunnel, and not the dark, you go towards that, you always know the direction. (Interview 8, 2014)

Or:

> I never felt, again I need to say that, I never felt that because I am a new immigrant, um, I get different treatment. Not me. Maybe it's because I never let people make me feel that way. I am the kind of person... if something bothers me I put it on the table. I don't go and cry on the side. And, it seems that people see that. They also protect the weak. The strong ones are always... strong. I am happy today to say all I just said and to feel that I went through everything... yes. I was really strong. Again, not everything was smooth, not everything was easy. Everything was. But I don't try. If now I stop to remember "oh how difficult it was, how miserable I was, what did I do". No, I won't go there. It happened, I did it. It's one of the things that a person must accept, immigration or no immigration. It's character. Because a new immigrant, I repeat myself and will say it again, if you come to a new state, try and be part of it. Don't try to get the state be like you, you try to be like the state. You will feel much better much faster. (*Ibid*.)

And when talking about the results of the municipal elections:

> Well, of course, we were all in heaven. In heaven from being so happy. I could not think it could be different. (Laugh) Again, because I'm that kind of person. Of course, retrospectively, if I think about it I could have not been elected. (*Ibid*.)

Similarly, Ayelet insists on the balance between her religious observance, and the "inner fire" that pushes her forward. Ayelet is a believer and observes the rules of Judaism. She says that she grew up in a religious family. She uses the term *Haredi*, therefore indicating she practices ultra-orthodoxy. She also started her story by saying she is divorced and is raising her child, thus

affirming she is a ‘modern’ woman. At several moments during our meeting, she talks about her own religious practice and how she translates religious values into her work ethics. She mentions her refusal to lie, her respect and integrity. Later in the interview, she mentions the biblical prophet Moses — “a humble man who took on responsibilities” —, and her desire to work towards this ideal. She also regularly mentions the guidance she receives from God when she encounters specific challenges at work. When we finish the interview, I ask her about her plans for the future. She starts by answering that she prays every day. Here are three extracts of the transcription of our encounter:

> I asked how her relatives and friends reacted to her election. Ayelet answered that it was not a surprise! “I am very religious. I come from an orthodox (*Haredit*) family. I am very religious but I have fire inside. I am a warrior. I use Jewish religious concepts like refusing to lie, respect... it helps me a lot. I hate journalism or politics. I just do it out of obligation. That’s why I don’t like interviews (Ayelet did not let me record our conversation. I had to take notes). I don’t want publicity”. I told her that I think those are qualities: being honest, transparent, accountable, isn't that what led to her second re-election? “I think people are smart enough, much more than the media would have us believe. The way I work, I feel I am a woman of integrity, at peace with myself”. You can go to sleep at night, I laughed. “I am not completely relaxed: some people are still hungry”. (Interview 2, 2014)

> Ayelet mentioned ‘Father Moses’, and explained that he was a humble man who took responsibilities. “I don’t compare myself to Moses, God forbid, but I shoulder responsibilities. When there are people, there is no need for me. I go where there is no-one, or at least no-one who can take on the responsibility”. (*Ibid.*)

> “I pray every day for the Messiah to come, and for peace in the world. I am religious. Today is *Rosh haHodesh* (the first day of the month, following the Jewish calendar), it has this particular energy”. (*Ibid.*)

She contrasts her religious observance with the fact that she has ‘fire inside’ and she is a ‘warrior’. She explains that she started to work early, at 14, to get some pocket money. Then she dreamt of being a model, a lawyer, a judge, a teacher and a prime minister like Margaret Thatcher.

When I say that a Black woman in a senior position in Israel is uncommon, she assures me she cannot think this each time she deals with her White Ashkenazi counterparts at the municipality. She assures me she does not reject her Blackness or her gender. These are important matters to her, and she dedicates part of her efforts to advance the condition of women and of Ethiopian immigrants in the city.

> […] I don't instrumentalise the fact that I am black or a woman. I try to influence things. (*Ibid.*)

Nevertheless, she does not see race or gender as structural issues. She aspires to normalisation. In that sense, she concurs with the liberal integration approach promoted by Tali, where individual efforts are more important for successful integration than removing structural obstacles.

To be truthful, the role of institutions is not entirely dismissed in these discourses. Tali does deny the support she received during the first years following her arrival:

> Me: I have a lot more questions, but I will fast forward as we have little time left. As a local resident, what do you expect from your municipality? What do you expect the municipality to do to help immigrants?
>
> Tali: I will tell you what, I will tell you what. This question is not for me, and I will tell you why. In life I never ask for anything. I did not come with the idea that someone needs to help me, someone needs to give to me, someone needs to take care of me. I was not in that place. Therefore, I never turned to the municipality or to anybody to ask for something. Until today, when I see people, I tell them, folks, if you want something in life, do it yourself. Don't expect help or support from anyone else. I need to tell you that as a new immigrant, I can't remember turning to the municipality. The first time I came into this office, I was already a candidate for deputy mayor. I don't know. Someone who works, who succeeded, his children are part of the education system: what do they need from the municipality! My house is in the neighbourhood, it was always nice there, there were no, no reasons to go and request something from the municipality. I never got a shekel from the State, I never got a discount from the municipality. Someone needs to... (Interview 8, 2014)

Obviously, Tali and her family did obtain access to subsidies to learn Hebrew, to buy property or to enrol their children in school, as those schemes are available to any immigrant, regardless of his or her situation. The 'self-made man' discourse is very strong among the interviewees. It defines integration outside the State agencies, even though these interviewees represent those agencies, and more particularly advocate towards a more proactive role of agencies towards immigration integration. Indeed, the municipality of Arad funds activities to outreach to immigrants as well as to accompany the newcomers in their first steps in Arad. Tali denies this help, but she also recognises that the immigration absorption system in Israel has permitted her to access politics.

The narratives of the three representatives are therefore constantly navigating between these fine lines: on the one hand, they adopt a liberal discourse of self-realisation, their success being concomitant to their personality and efforts; on the other hand, their integration story is also

their life story, and legitimates their presence in government, and their role of community representatives, advancing the interests of their community. This is the second theme — representation — which I will now explore.

1.2 Representation

The second emerging theme is the representation function played by the three officials. This role of representation is described as accidental: they affirm they were asked to join the city council, rather than having stepped forward to join local politics. Second, they closely link Israeli immigration policy with their election — a policy which helps newcomers to be elected, but also a political representation of immigrants through immigrant political parties. Lastly, rather than politics, they describe their function as public service. Among the tasks they carry out, part of them concern the whole city, while other tasks are more closely related to the immigrant residents of the city.

In fact, both Abram and Tali explain that members of Israel Beitenu contacted them — or before that of *Israel beAliyah* — who were looking for local representatives. It could be that the rather public function of both Abram and Tali had a role to play: one worked in the ER while the other worked at a local bank. They had already met many residents and their names were known.

> Abram: In 1996, Nathan Sharansky, today head of the Jewish agency, Sharansky established his party. Professor Nuddleman, one of the MPs of *Israel beAliyah* came to me, and asked me to come to politics. That's how I got in. I was at the first party conference in Jerusalem. Afterwards, I became head of the party here. In 1999, when the party dissolved, when Sharansky joined Likud, the party dissolved so I joined *Israel Beitenu* [...]. (Interview 6, 2014)

> Tali: It's the opposite. I entered politics in 2003. I was not a member of *Israel Beitenu*, I was not in any party (laugh). I was... with everyone. And then, they found me. They integrated me— I performed somewhere I can't remember, so they invited me to a meeting and asked me to join them. Then they told me what the party was. And, and I need to tell you, that now, retrospectively, if Likud had invited me, I think I would have gone with Likud. I mean. To tell you that I really understood what it meant... I don't think so. I did not understand much about politics then. But, it was *Israel Beitenu*, so I joined *Israeli Beitenu*. We have been together for many years and they help and guide. It's important. When there is political back-up from the government it's... very important. (Interview 8, 2014)

Ayelet was asked to join a local list twice, first by the previous mayor in function, which she refused, and second by the current mayor Aviram, whose offer she accepted. They won the local elections, endorsing her as the deputy mayor.

First of all, there is an intention from *Israel Beitenu* or from a local list such as the one led by Aviram to recruit immigrant representatives. Secondly, their accession to local politics was made possible through Israeli immigration policy. Although Tali's discourse is very much that of the self-made woman, she does believe her election was made possible thanks to the immigrant incorporation policy of Israel. She considers Israel offers a "platform" for immigrants who want to succeed: "I think that a State that gives an opportunity in such a short time, start with nothing and reach such a senior position. I think it's very special. I am not sure there are many countries in the world which give a platform like this" (*Ibid*.). Later she says: "Think of it, an immigrant... I can't explain it, but this is not natural. It's not natural that a new immigrant who came to Israel 20 years ago should become a mayor" (*Ibid*.).

Nevertheless, this 'platform' is first available for Jewish immigrants. In the national view, the strangeness of new immigrants is only temporary, as they are part of one people, the Jewish people. Secondly, it is open to those who contribute, those who believe they can give something to the country. I have already quoted Tali saying: "Because a new immigrant, I will repeat myself and say it again, if you come to a new country, try and be part of it. Don't try to get the state to be like you, try to be like the state" (*Ibid*.). At the end of the interview, Tali talks about the fact she cannot help all residents and fulfil all their requests.

> Tali: Many times, inside of me, I want to tell people "if what you have here is not good, leave, because you must appreciate what there is here". Understand,
>
> Me: But you cannot tell them that.
>
> Tali: Of course I can't. Inside of me, inside of me I think "You can't always ask what the government does for you. Let's see what you did for this country!". (*Ibid*.)

If Tali considers herself a politician, Abram and Ayelet insist that they are elected civil servants, rather than politicians. A semantic difference that, it seems, allows them to market themselves as close contacts for the residents they represent.

Ayelet does not see herself as a politician but someone who helps, facilitates and mediates; she needs to represent the interests of the city, but also of the Ethiopian community. Ayelet has a BA in administration and public policy.

> I remember that Margaret Thatcher came to Ashkelon with the Israeli Prime Minister of the time. I got selected to hand something to her during the ceremony. She was an impressive woman. After that, I wanted to be her. I was doing a lot, but when I had to choose to study, it was natural for me to study public services. (Interview 2, 2014)

She worked for some years as a community worker before being elected. She was asked by A. D. to chair a steering committee and that is how they became acquainted and ran as members of the same independent list. She sees herself as a civil servant, chosen by the public, and she does not refer to a political party.

> I am not a politician. I am a civil servant, chosen by the public. I had to go through elections, yes. […](*Ibid.*)

Ayelet's office is always open to enquiries. When describing her day, she says that contractors and residents come to her to solve issues they have with the various institutions. She is also a representative of her community and chairs a committee on issues related to the Ethiopian communities. I learnt a bit later that a forum is organised with all (not only municipal) city actors involved with Ethiopian residents, which she chairs. She is also the chair of the municipal committee for the status of women. And she states that she tries to help women and Ethiopian immigrants reach key positions.

Ayelet is the less talkative when it comes to her immigration story. She is also the only one who grew up in Israel. However, her relative silence about her Blackness says something about the kind of message she wants to spread. Like other Ethiopian representatives I have met in Kiryat Gat, this discourse focusing on normativity is rather common. Ayelet affirms that she did not succeed because, or despite the fact, she is a Black woman in Israel. She succeeded because of who she is: thanks to her work ethics and her "inner fire".

Abram in turn, wants to 'heal' the city. I remember sharing my findings and impressions after fieldwork in Kiryat Shmona with a colleague of mine. I told her about Abram and his work at the municipality. She told me: "it seems that he is approaching local politics as if he were still in his practice, making a diagnosis and preparing a prescription to heal his 'sick' town". Even if the metaphor seems a bit simplistic, Abram does have an almost clinical way of looking at the different issues he is in charge of.

First of all, he does see his work with immigrants as providing tailor-made solutions for each individual. Mostly, he believes he has a role of mediation to improve relations between neighbours and between communities — even if it is a simple neighbouring conflict. Secondly, he is in charge of monitoring the budget spent by the regional branch of the MOIA, notably the cultural activities they fund.

During our first meeting, he says:

Abram: No I don't really feel like a politician. My job is to help people, find a solution to their problem. On the one hand. And on the other hand, use my capacity to advance the city. I don't feel like a politician.

[...]

Me: What did your family say when you started to become involved in politics, first in *Israel beAliyah,* then in *Israel Beitenu*?

Abram: My wife is not happy. No. Why? She does not see me. Time-wise, it's a job that demands time. She also works shifts. We can meet after 9 p.m. She is not satisfied but she supports me. She does not have a choice.

Me: What about other relatives and friends?

Abram: First of all, it does not annoy anyone. They know that *Aliyah*, immigrants, need a representative. After 25 years, as today we are in 2014, they need representatives in Municipalities, in the Knesset, especially for a big *Aliyah*, since 1,200,000 arrived here from the 1970s, from 1989.

Me: Last week, I talked with a friend from Kiryat Shmona. We talked about my PhD and the fact I will work on Kiryat Shmona. He asked me if I had met Abram. I told him "no. What about him?" He said he knew you. He said that's good they have a representative. The Moroccans have the mayor, and we have Abram. That's what he said.

Abram: Nice.

Me: You feel like this?

Abram: I can't say that I represent the immigrants in Kiryat Shmona. I represent the whole city. But it's true that immigrants have their own problems, with social security... But also relations between them. The culture they ask for.

[...]

Abram: When I started in politics

Me: Now you are a politician!

Abram: I am not a politician. The motive was to help people, immigrants. They were confused; they had no experience, nothing. The idea was to help, orient, talk, explain. Where. How should we start life. And the retired people. In every *kupat holim* (health care services), there is not always a person speaking Russian. A person get there, he is blind. Only with your hands you can explain. Although Israelis try, they want to understand what people want. That's it really. Relations. There is warmth. My friends who live today in Canada or other places tell me that they miss the

attention they use to get [in Israel]. (Interview 6, 2014)

A year later, while we watch the documentary I shot with the mayor, Abram says:

> In the movie, and when you went around with me, you saw that we integrated in the city, the Russian speakers, and the new immigrants. The new immigrants, the new Israelis, we integrated and we have good relations with everyone. Everyone talks to everyone. If there is a fight between neighbours I try to calm things down, it's also in a good way. (Interview 54, 2015)

The extracts show that the main activities Abram engages with are accompanying the new immigrants in accessing their rights, sometimes translating and explaining in their language; facilitating the organisation of cultural activities for immigrants, including the commemoration of the Second World War peace agreement on May 9; and intercommunity and inter-neighbour relations' mediation.

Nevertheless, Abram finds that this system has its limits. He often contrasts the individualistic character of his solutions for immigrants' issues to what he perceives as the 'tribal' system of his fellow residents who immigrated in the 1950s and 1960s. He refers to them as 'families' (or the Hebrew term for extended families '*hamulot*'), highlighting their solidarity but also the control they manage to obtain over municipal resources.

> Abram: The water company: it's in cooperation with some municipalities. Today, there is a Russian speaker, from 2014, at the reception. We have, in the department, an engineer speaking Russian. Some in the municipalities speak Russian. I tried to make sure they would not get fired.
>
> Me: You laugh. It's a war.
>
> Abram: It's not a war. I try to explain. Who stayed really made it. […] there is a glass ceiling, people can't pass it. We try to break it. In Kiryat Shmona it's really hard. It's a small city. There are families, there are hamulot. Hamulot very close and they don't let us in. So we could say it's a war. But we try or not. We win or we lose. (Interview 6, 2014)

While watching the documentary together in August 2015, I take notes of his comments. My field diary mentions:

> He believes that Russians suffer from discrimination here. He said that Moroccans always help each other get jobs... A kind of solidarity lacking among Russians. Abram pushes them to send their application when there is a tender, but no one tries. They give up saying that it is not an open tender, that it is ”tailored”. In a place where some families control it all. (Interview 49, 2015)

The various extracts reveal conflicting interests. The representative function of the three officials is sometimes linked to their immigration background, their political affiliation and the fact that their electorate are immigrants. But they are also local officials, and therefore must represent the interests of all the residents of the city. Their work therefore oscillates between the departments they supervise — engineering or finance for Ayelet, or welfare for Abram — and tasks related to orientation, conflict-solving and lobbying for immigrant groups' interests. Lastly, there are also conflicts between the interests of the political party they are members of, and the city interests. This remark leads me to the next theme: mediation or brokerage.

1.3 Mediation

These representatives function as mediators. Located at the intersections of multiple social spaces, they can assume various identities, channel information from one group to another, advocate for the interests of one group to another, or on the contrary, take on the role of gatekeepers, making themselves essential for communication between groups.

Tali was born and grew up in Moldova. She gave birth to both her children there. Her family, professional and political careers in Israel are therefore part of her adulthood. And they are still very much connected to her previous experiences in the FSU. Indeed, she was elected as a member of the Russian immigrant party *Israel Beitenu*. She benefited from a large group of Russian-speaking voters — 40% of the residents being FSU immigrants. And her narrative reflects the various identities she mobilises at different time.

First of all, she often speaks of herself and her unique experience. She affirms that "maybe [she is] not an example", that she is different. Second, she affirms her Jewish roots very early in the interview. Indeed, her project to come to Israel was elaborated long before the actual immigration, and was linked to the family's connection with Israel. She also often refers to herself as a new immigrant, and includes herself in a larger group of new immigrants, whom she represents. This larger group congratulated her when she was elected and saw in her the success of a much larger community. Before her election, she also remembers:

> A large number of Arad's residents remember me as the first person that welcomed them in the State of Israel. When they arrived as new immigrants, they came to me to open a bank account. Without understanding how it goes in this country, without understanding where to start from. And I, as I experienced it, I used this meeting to talk about other things. I did not talk only about the bank. I talked about a lot of other things: To which medical house to go, where to rent a flat. The moment when you... I think that was the good thing. We were all together. We supported each other. We... were not afraid of sharing experiences... even when the experiences where not nice,

yes. (Interview 8, 2014)

When she got elected, all doubts about her Israeli identity were swept away. She became part of "They, the Israelis", up to questioning who were these "they" her fellow residents talked about.

> Me: When you became a mayor, what did your husband and your children think?
>
> Tali: Well, of course, we were all in heaven. In heaven from being happy. I could not think it could be different. (Laugh) Again, because I'm this kind of person. Of course, retrospectively, if I think of it I could have not been elected. But. You know what. I remember a sentence that new immigrants told me, when I talked to them. They told me: "They will not let you be a mayor". I asked them "Who, they?". So they told me "Israelis". And then, I told them, folks, it is not Russia where someone decided who would be elected. Here, you chose, here, you vote, not anyone else. And, and, it really took time, especially for the elderly who came from another country, other policies, another reality. When we, when I was elected, I felt that they were all proud. I talk about the immigrants. I remember that I got millions of phone calls, from other cities, to show me their pride. "We are so proud that you succeeded!" Because, I am the first of the 1990s *Aliyah*, yes. There were one or two from the 1970s' *Aliyah*. But not, from the 1990s *Aliyah*. I really felt, in all places where I spoke, in places where they invited me, I really felt that... it was something special. (*Ibid.*)

However, sometimes, she still fails to be Israeli, her accent or her grammar mistakes betraying her.

> And really, the speech, that they would not think that I am a new immigrant, that I do mistakes. Although I know that I do mistakes. We are all humans. So people live here 40 years and still speak with an accent. I am not ashamed of my accent. Yes. What to do. I am a new immigrant, and I proud of it, and I am proud of what I went through, that's why, people need to accept me the way I am. That's me. With the good things and the bad. (*Ibid.*)

Ayelet got involved in local politics when she was 26, and the soon to become mayor asked her to chair a local steering committee to determine the municipal actions for the Ethiopian community in Kiryat Gat. Ayelet remembers feeling impressed by the stakeholders invited to sit at the committee, as she was young and "a bit afraid". However, she also remembers that at the moment when every stakeholder called her to try and influence her assessment report, she understood she had a role to play and she could contribute.

Israel does not have the reputation of fostering equal representation and expression among its different groups. In particular, in May 2015, Israel experienced intense protests and debate around the recognition of Ethiopians as full citizens, three decades after their settlement in

Israel.[96] In this context, I ask Ayelet if she experienced difficulties, as a Black woman, carrying out her functions:

> I cannot stop on that. Being black, being a woman... As a deputy mayor, I manage the CFO, the person in charge of culture, of engineering... They are all men, white, Ashkenazim. I can't be impressed. When I was elected, I was 32. I had to sit with the CFO who is here for 30 years. But I am a human being, and I am the manager. I say, he does. Of course, there is discrimination, racism. There is. I am also here because I represent my community. When I arrived, I put women in key positions. I gave power to Ethiopians, to women. I established a committee. My title... whatever. [...]. (*Ibid.*)

Ayelet has become a model in Kiryat Gat. The director of the absorption centre for Ethiopian immigrants tells me that Ayelet is not only the deputy director because she has voters. He says that only 1,500 Ethiopian Israelis in Kiryat Gat are of voting age, and that's not enough to make a difference. "She is in her position because she is good" (Interview 28, 2015). The director of the *Moked Klita* — a unit of the municipal welfare department in charge of integration for Ethiopian immigrants — refers to Ayelet as a "model" in the Ethiopian community (Interview 46, 2015). Similarly, the director of community work in the municipality recalls that Ayelet changed her career, and the way she approached community work. Ayelet also revived community work service, after it had been marginalised for years. She often uses mapping and reports done by community workers to advocate at ministry level (Interview 38, 2015).

The interviews show that interviewees constantly circulate between 'I', 'we' and 'they'. We are sometimes newcomers to Israel, only FSU immigrants, only the city's immigrants or simply the family members. 'They' are often the Israelis, but also sometimes the immigrants — when the official feels she/he is already part of the Israelis, and not a newcomer anymore. This negotiation between several groups of belonging is permanent for those officials who represent the interests of the city's residents on the one hand; and the interests of the group that elected them, on the other hand.

To sum up, the themes emerging from the analysis, linked to the officials' own experiences but also to their understanding of immigration integration issues in Israel and in their city, were three-fold. First, a large part of the stories they tell are linked to the process of integration, and more specifically to their integration in Israel. They describe a process that takes time, where hard work, patience and optimism are central to their personal and professional resilience. Compared to other interviews in the four cities (where the institutions are described as

[96] For articles in Hebrew, see for instance (Allouche-Lebron & Yivraken, 2015; Hasson, 2015b; Kashti, 2015b, 2015c; Lior, 2015a; Lior & Kovovitz, 2015; Spigel & Kovovitz, 2015; Tzfarir & Kovovitz, 2015).

fundamental to successful integration), here there is a great emphasis on the self-made man discourse. Nevertheless, the interviewees do acknowledge that their immigration to Israel, and their belonging to the Jewish people, facilitates the integration process, offers more political opportunities — as newcomers can vote, be elected, and have political parties representing their interests.

Representation is a second emerging theme, as they all understand their accession to local politics as being due to their status of community representatives. They were approached by immigrant parties, or by individuals who clearly stated their need to foster a municipal list that demographically represented the city. During their mandate, they participate in a differentiated delivery of public services, where the immigrant groups can reach out to the municipality in their mother tongue. These three local politicians therefore answer individual demands, but also deal with group advocacy or intercommunity conflicts. From their elections onwards, they are torn between two sets of interests: those of the immigrants who voted for them, and those of the city's residents who they represent.

These multiple belongings, inherent to their identity, and as conflicting as they might be, also help them to act as mediators. In fact, drawing on Laub Coser, Emirbayer and Mische suggest: "Actors who are positioned at the intersection of multiple temporal-relational contexts can develop greater capacities for creative and critical intervention" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 1007). The three officials are located between multiple groups of belonging, but also different scales — the party they are members of, the administration, the groups they represent themselves.

Before I turn to the influence of these narratives on the political frames of immigration integration, I want to add another layer of analysis: the discursive strategies present in these encounters.

2 Biographisation, biographic performance and meaningful interventions

Beyond the themes that converge in these three life stories — integration, representation and mediation —, the stories also borrow from a mode of narration adapted to public discourse.

2.1 Biographical performance

For the three immigrant officials, telling the story of their immigration experience and the years that followed their arrival in Israel, until they accessed politics, is an almost routinely activity.

First of all, they live in a society in which people constantly tell their stories — through social networks, job interviewees, participation in social activities etc. But through their public position, this injunction to tell their life story is even stronger and more frequent. An example that particularly struck me is the extent to which Arad's mayor stages her life story. Tali has adopted a narrative style to describe her migratory experience and political ascension with a rhythm and images which are repeated to all the curious journalists and researchers — including myself. I have transcribed below two extracts from local Jewish media newspapers' articles in the US, and an extract from our meeting at the city hall in August 2014.

Here in the *New Jersey Jewish News*, in an article posted in November 2011:

> Even without the gender aspect, her story is a triumphant one. Born and brought up in Moldova in the former Soviet Union, she arrived in Israel 20 years ago at the age of 28 with her husband, two children aged seven and two, "and $10 in my pocket." With just minimal Hebrew and unable to use her degree in psychology, she got a job as a chambermaid in a Dead Sea hotel. Within three days, she had been put in charge of the cleaning staff. She related how, when she told her family back in Moldova about this, they asked how long it would take her to become president. "We came expecting to face a lot of struggle," she said, "but everything went so well. After two years, I asked, 'Where's the hardship?'". Her husband, now a supervisor in a factory, has been very supportive. She said, "Without his help, I couldn't have done what I have." [Tali] said she had no special interest in politics, but got involved back in 2003 to help get Brill elected. "I was just interested in learning more about how things work," she said. Thrust into office mid-term after he was forced out, she is now looking forward to running for a full five-year term when this one ends in three years. Given that the town has a complex population mix, with 40 percent immigrants, and a history of economic struggle, it isn't a job many would envy, but [Tali] said she is passionate about the town and the position. Children are her priority. It's a source of pride to her that, while her son has moved elsewhere, her daughter, now 22, has chosen to stay in Arad; she would like to make other young people want to stay, and to attract more. (Durbach, 2011)

Then in the Jewish Telegraph in 2012:

> When she arrived as a Russian immigrant in 1991 ("with a husband, two boys and $10"), the population was half of what it is today, and decreasing. [Tali] had a masters degree in psychology but her first job was as a chambermaid in a Dead Sea hotel before becoming housekeeper within three days. "I told my family in Russia I would be prime minister," she said. "I knew even then what people needed to come here. I put other people in my place. I understood that they needed education for their children, security, culture and work. "These are the things I work on now — and people stay." Forty per cent of the population are immigrants from Russia, 15% are ultra-

> Orthodox and others who arrived from kibbutzim and moshavim to help build the city. (Harris, 2012)

And lastly, five minutes after the beginning of our meeting, she explains:

> When we arrived in 1991. I want to tell you that we arrived with two suitcases, two children (*the secretary comes in*). Um. So, my two children, two suitcases, and 10 dollars in pocket. That's all. I mean, we arrived and we knew that we were starting from scratch. That's why, today, when someone requires my resume, I start with a sentence "I came to Israel in 1991". I mean, everything that was before, existed, but it does not influence what I do today. Everything changed. Everything. Um. So when we arrived here… it was the beginning of the 1990s. There was a very, very big immigration. It was very, very hard to find a job. I remember the day that I was offered a job as a chambermaid in a hotel in the Dead Sea. I was the happiest in the world. I took this job. Although, as you understood, although I have a degree in psychology and although I could do a lot of different things. But… I did not think of it. First of all, I need to provide for my family, provide for my children. That's why, I started to work there. What I did not tell you, and it is very important, is that I studied Hebrew before I came. And I spoke the language… Let's say that I did not speak a high level of Hebrew, but I could talk. I understood everything people said. When I started to work in a hotel, I found two groups of people. One group of new immigrants, chambermaids. None of them spoke Hebrew. And the group of hotel managers who spoke only Hebrew. So, when I arrived, I could communicate — as I spoke the language — between the two groups. That's why, after three days, I got advancement promotion and I became a team manager. My parents were still in Moldova. I wrote them a letter, I wrote, "Abale, until you arrive, at this rate, I will become prime Minister". (Interview 8, 2014)

In 2011, 2012 and 2014, Tali mobilises the same narrative arch and the same elements: her immigration triggered a fresh start in Israel, without financial resources and without many professional prospects; but she had the human capital to quickly find a job and be promoted, which she sees as a first stone on her path to government. The narrative of her life story, also found among other officials I have met, participates in what Delory-Momberger has called 'biographisation'. As I mentioned in a prior chapter, she argues: "We never stop *biographying*, that is to fit our experience in orientated time schemes which organise mentally our moves, our behaviour, our actions, following a narrative logic. This biographisation activity could be defined as a dimension of human thinking and acting which, in the form of *practical hermeneutics*, enables individuals, in the conditions of their socio-historical settings, to integrate, to structure, to interpret situations and events they experience"[97] (Delory-Momberger, 2009, p. 30). The

[97] Translation of the author.

following subsection will therefore focus more particularly on the structuration of the events experienced by the participants in this research work.

Secondly, Tali's discursive performance has to be included in the collective story of the immigrant group she came with. Indeed, while the interviewees want to put on display their individual story, and a story of success and self-realisation, they also expect me to be familiar with the collective narratives of their group, with the bureaucratic process of absorption which they went through with specific contextual aspects of immigration in Israel. For instance, saying that the 1990s witnessed a "very, very big immigration", or saying "I came in 1983 through Sudan" are statements that underline very specific conditions of immigration, that a policymaker would expect a scholar to know.

Lastly, the last subsection of this reflexion on the biographic performance has to do with the fact that I — as a researcher, who came to their offices to collect stories — suggest or even impose an oral storytelling activity for the interviewees. Facing me, they follow an injunction to tell their story, and as I am a student in social sciences, they also activate a specific set of stories which they believe will interest me. Here, the narration is the result of an interaction with the researcher (Charmaz, 2001, p. 366; Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 53).

2.2 Telling a story: from fragmentation to continuity

As described in the previous extracts, Tali starts her story with her immigration. Each time, she tells her interlocutor about the material dispossession she and her family experienced. Despite her degree, she proudly says that she quickly found a job as a chambermaid. Her rapid promotion at the hotel triggers an announcement to her family back in Moldova: she will soon be a minister. This sentence in particular recreates continuity in her narrative. As Delory-Momberger has argued, immigrants in particular reconstitute their stories because they experience fragmentation and transition. Through a process of reflexivity and subjectification, they make sense of their own story and recover continuity (Delory-Momberger, 2009, pp. 61-62).

Tali, Abram and Ayelet immigrated in the 1980s and early 1990s, so they tell a story that occurred three decades ago. In the case of Ayelet, immigration dates from her childhood, and a lot of the memories linked to it are probably reconstituted from her family's storytelling. The events they remember and choose to describe during our encounters are therefore part of a decision-making process, the date of immigration, the process of obtaining a first job — sometimes through specific training —, and their access to local politics. None of them describe

the first days of their immigration — although this is common in interviews with immigrants from the 1950s and 1960s. They choose to give detailed accounts of certain events — usually the ones linked to their first job, or to certain milestones in their career. Sometimes, those detailed accounts are given because I specifically asked them to describe a 'turning point' in their life. All three choose to adopt a certain rhythm to their storytelling, omitting some events, while describing others extensively.

2.3 Collective and individual narratives

Tali's story takes place within collective narrative patterns. In fact, "the individual storytelling is a place of tension, negotiation and transaction between a set of collective stories, those of groups and social inscription or collective belonging, and a singular individual trajectory, a unique feeling of oneself and one's existence"[98] (Delory-Momberger, 2012). In the extracts I quoted, Tali also tells the story of the "very, very large immigration", of the Soviet Jews who were able to leave the former Soviet Union from the end of the 1980s onwards. This simple sentence means that I have to understand the context of her immigration, with 850,000 new immigrants arriving in Israel in one decade. These newcomers were gathered in certain sectors of the economy and created Russian-speaking networks. Many of them experienced downward professional mobility.

Similarly, Ayelet briefly describes her experience of immigration to Israel. She probably has little direct memory, since she was very young, but has managed to reconstitute the story through stories heard at home or outside.

> I asked her where she comes from: "Ethiopia". You were born there, I asked. "Yes. I arrived when I was four and a half, in 1983. My family came through Sudan. We lost my sister on the way. We settled in Ashkelon for 12 years. We got public housing. Then, my parents bought a house in Kiryat Gat. I did my national service, then started a BA in public services in Sapir [college]. I had a child, she is 14 now, and got a divorce". (Interview 2, 2014)

When she describes her arrival from Ethiopia through Sudan, she refers to the first wave of immigration of Jews from Ethiopia, the most famous event being Operation Solomon, in which thousands of Ethiopian Jews were flown to Israel in 1984. Immigrants from this period usually distinguish themselves from the later 1991 immigration, and also from more recent immigration. Immigrants were hosted in absorption centres and then given public housing in specific areas of Israel. Therefore, there is a lot of information contained in one simple sentence.

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[98] Translation of the author.

An explanation for these particular features is that individuals usually fit their stories into larger collective narratives, and in our case, into immigration narratives. For instance, when Ayelet says she immigrated with her family in 1983 through Sudan, or when Tali and B. B. say they immigrated in 1991 and 1993, respectively, it means certain things for them. First, they expect me to understand the conditions of their arrival based on the collective story I am expected to know: the high number of arrivals during the same period, the difficulty finding accommodation and an occupation, the perception of their immigration by the rest of the Israeli population and so on. Secondly, they reveal elements of their Jewishness, since those collective narratives are linked to *Aliyah*, and not, for instance, to individual economic-driven migration. They also highlight the elements that are stereotypical for their group. In the case of Tali and B. B., they showcase stories of downward mobility, hard work and determination to climb back up the social ladder.

2.4 Biographisation is a socially meaningful event

So far I have focused on the impact of their storytelling and discursive strategies during our encounters. However, their discourse has an impact beyond our encounter. Indeed, individuals do not structure the elements of their social world merely for themselves, and for the researcher holding a recording microphone in front of them. Instead they engage in their social world, they "try to live society instead of being passively lived by it" (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 3). As I have explained above, they "make history". As Giddens has argued, the reflexivity processes of agents, generally translated through language, are the reasons why men "make history" (Giddens, 1986, p. 202), or why we can see "history in the making" (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. xxix). And in particular, these officials, located at the heart of decision-making in the cities they inhabit, can make the history of those cities.

The mayor of Arad, or the deputy mayors of Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona, even though they claim they are serving the public, rather than engaging in politics, are in fact, involved in politics — in the sense that politics is the art of governing a group of citizens, managing collective life, regulating and defending the *polis* (Tournier & Bonnafous, 1995). From this definition, Maurice Tournier and Simone Bonnafous highlight the importance of language in the political space. For them politics is a space of language, a space where we speak — in the sense of taking the floor (*prendre la parole*) and occupying communication channels; and in the sense of taking control over speech (*prendre la langue*) to impose meanings, values, symbols and discursive rituals (*Ibid.*). The last element is essential as it relates to gaining power and hegemony. And indeed, Tournier and Bonnafous suggest that the researcher must analyse "the extent to which words spoken in the public space around power stakes divulge the symbolic appropriation or

dispossession struggles taking place in the space of discussion" (*Ibid.*, p. 69). In the case of immigration and integration policies, those actors who participate in decision-making define a local issue that will become the object of public action. The language they use is therefore essential to the understanding of the motives behind this normative process of policymaking.

The main hypothesis is that they intervene through language, they take the floor and they take control over speech, and impose their own story of immigration in the public space. Being immigrants and politicians, they are the authority at the council. Their stories are the ones that occupy the political debate, and not the stories of 'voiceless' residents, who do not know, or cannot themselves express their experiences and biography in those spaces.

Moreover, the stories of these politicians is their curriculum vitae: they claim to be the legitimate representatives of other individuals who experienced immigration, as they themselves experienced it, and moreover, because they overcame obstacles thanks to their tenacity and their personal abilities. Nevertheless, their privileged position brings them further — even before their election — from the majority of immigrants who populate those cities.

This language intervention results in three transformations: they redefine the scale of integration, with the individual himself becoming solely responsible for the success or the failure of his integration in Israeli institutions; they redefine the scale of representation, travelling between the different social groups that they believe they legitimately represent; and they justify their mediation function between these groups, but also between the various scales of governance.

3 Results of these interventions

The narrative analysis of the transcripts of the various meetings with these three local politicians reveals the emergence of three major themes: integration, representation and mediation. Here, I will return to these themes, to provide a better understanding of the effects of these discursive interventions in the public sphere. In fact, what occurs is a dual movement of reproduction, and production, of the role of immigrants in the city and the nation at large.

When it comes to integration, local immigrant politicians reproduce national frames of integration, where their Jewishness is emphasised, as well as their contribution to the nation — mimicking the pioneer movement and sacrificing self-interest for the greater good. Nevertheless, they also introduce variations to the national ideology. A more accommodating aspect is the fact that they encourage the preservation of immigrants' sociocultural practices. However, they also

adopt a stronger self-made man discourse, where the responsibility of integration trickles down to the immigrants themselves.

The second theme, representation, also reveals the tensions in the discourses: on the one hand, immigration is a 'visiting card' for those immigrants who emphasise their own immigration experience as a guarantee that they represent other immigrants; on the other hand, they value their belonging to the Israeli nation, and their ability to represent the interests of immigrants in an eminently Israeli political sphere.

Lastly, in this in-between situation, they negotiate a role of mediators and brokers, whereby they make themselves essential in establishing relations between old-timer residents, immigrants, local and national institutions.

Their interventions participate in the definition of the hierarchy of power and responsibility on an axis going from the individual to transnational organisations —in a way which is nonetheless unbounded.

3.1 Integration

The life story of each of the three officials provides a portrait of a legitimate immigrant. First, he acquires legitimacy since he belongs to a larger national political project — the permanent and often threatened construction of a Jewish home in Israel. Although both FSU immigrants and Ethiopian immigrants often see their Jewishness as being 'doubted' or questioned, they participate in reinforcing their differences by emphasising their belonging to the Jewish people. Tali talks about her Jewish education, her family's attachment to Israel before immigration, her belonging to the people of Israel. Abram explains his immigration because of anti-Semitism in Russia. Ayelet defines herself as a religious woman and refers to God's guidance in her personal and professional life.

But beyond the Jewish identity which make them immediate members of the nation, the immigrants who become a legitimate object of local public action have to make the effort to participate. They renounce their former status to integrate the labour market at all costs, and, thanks to personal efforts, acquire professional training, and innate optimism are able to climb back up the social ladder. The three politicians promote self-responsibility, hard work and personal efforts to perform in Israeli society. All three of them mention that their first jobs in Israel were cleaning, and they take pride in their ability to start back from scratch, to bear the feeling of downward mobility to make their way back to success. Tali considers that an immigrant must be open, flexible and optimistic to accept the difficulties and integrate. He must

contribute to the country before asking the country that welcomed him to support him. Abram shows that constant efforts pay off, in what I have called a step-by-step strategy. Ayelet defines herself as a warrior, with fire inside. She refuses to put forward her blackness or the fact that she is a woman, and instead requests normativity. Here, the three characters all borrow from the Zionist ideology of pioneering and sacrifice of self-interest for the 'greater good': the building of the nation (Ram, 1995)

Similarly, by making the effort to understand the functioning and norms of local and national public institutions, they may pretend to represent their peers in their political functions. The self-made immigrant is therefore a significant character. When I ask Tali why she always tells the story of her arrival in Israel in a similar manner, she argues that she wants to give hope to newcomers that everything is possible. While she acknowledges on several occasions that the State's absorption system is a 'platform', where immigrants obtain the necessary recognition for their personal and professional development, the ultimate responsibility for their success is in the hands of the newcomers themselves. However, the three of them also believe in preserving their mother tongue, the cultural belonging to their group of origin, which provides their legitimacy as local representatives.

Their biographical performance therefore has an impact on the scales of integration, that is, the understanding of 'who is responsible for what'. Through a selective series of experiences relayed at individual, local, national and transnational level, interviewees can impact the scale on which different dimensions of integration are viewed.

The political dimension of integration, or one could say, the way citizenship is practiced, is viewed on a national and local scale. On the one hand, Tali and Abram are members of the nationalist party *Israel Beitenu*. They underline the importance of representation for FSU immigrants to be able to defend their rights. They perceive themselves as local representatives of this larger group. Ayelet takes a different view, since she belongs to a local municipal list, and wants to make changes from within. But her discourse may also be deliberate, in order to deconstruct the immigrant figure towards normativity.

In terms of the socio-cultural dimension, their positions differs somewhat. Tali makes a distinction between herself and her husband, between those who are now Israelis and those who have a 'FSU mentality'. However, her municipality does provide extensive cultural services in Russian for Russian-speaking residents. Abram believes that Russian-speaking immigrants should have access to services in Russian. His friends, supporters and voters are Russian-speakers and he makes a clearer distinction between 'them' and 'us'. Ayelet tries to counter the

discrimination that Ethiopian immigrants experience by increasing their representation and participation in institutions. None of them argue for an assimilationist approach which would respect socio-cultural diversity. However, they do not advocate multiculturalism per se. It seems that they are more concerned with bringing their community to normativity. They do not request segregated committees or specific treatment and programmes to deal with the social challenges met by their peers. However, they wish to make changes within the system, as they are part of "we, the Israelis". Perhaps, the local scale allows for provision of community-friendly socio-cultural services, and it is understood that social networks at local level will be mostly intra-community. But on the national scale, their recognition as full Israelis is required.

Economic integration is the most 'individual' scale of integration. Promoting the model of the self-made man, immigrants must rely on their own efforts and abilities to achieve economic integration and perform like Israelis. The role of the State is minor. Tali assures us that she never entered the municipality building before she was deputy mayor. Abram, although he expresses some resentment when it comes to the topic of the recognition of medical studies carried out abroad, he identifies himself as someone who passed exams and practiced. Even when talking about his son, who was unemployed for a long period and obliged to relocate after finding a job, he does not provide State-led solutions to facilitate economic development in the Galilee region. Lastly, Ayelet believes that the city of Kiryat Gat should not request help from the State but should foster a climate favouring economic development, by adding lands for development.

To sum up, the biographical performance of these three immigrants impacts the framing of immigration and integration as an object of public action by the local administration. If they are not the only ones to provide a frame, it is one of the possible frames on which local policies are designed. In their narratives, a discourse of self-responsibility is prominent, where the immigrant must rely on his own capacity to integrate and contribute to the country. Political representation is necessary for their communities, but it is also linked to a desire to become part of a larger Israeli nation. Lastly, socio-cultural integration is rather left up to personal interpretation, where the community scale is seen as the scale where social networks and activities are set up.

3.2 Representation

The understanding of immigrant politicians' representative roles also appears in the themes, which emerge. The first clear element is the fact that their personal immigration storytelling is a public performance, aimed at legitimising their presence in local politics. However, their roles as community representatives are not shared with others — there is no other existing platform for

immigrant representation at the municipality level. Lastly, if they enter local politics based on their immigration experience, and through the votes of their peer residents, they also hold responsibilities which affect the whole city. They constantly navigate between being community representatives and city officials.

For many interviewees I met during fieldwork, holding responsibilities linked to immigration and integration was seen as a result of their natural authority on the topic: Their immigration experience is part of their job description and legitimates their function. They tell their own story, and the story of their immigrant peers, in order to demonstrate that they belong to those large-scale waves of immigration to Israel. Their immigration experience is part of the ingathering of exiles and the building of Israel. But at the individual level, it is one stage of their personal life and their career, through which they have gained a new experience. Tali recalls that while she worked at the bank, she took advantage of her encounters with new residents, who came to open a bank account, to help them out with other aspects of their settlement in the city — she says:

> And I, as I experienced it, I used this meeting to talk about other things. I did not talk only about the bank. I talked about a lot of other things: To which medical house to go, where to rent a flat. (Interview 8, 2014)

By telling their own immigration story, they show that they have gone through a similar transition, so they know what they are talking about. They speak of the uprooting and the need to start from scratch, studying and accepting work in a job that does not correspond to their previously acquired skills. They also speak of recreating a feeling of home. And they speak of their engagement with the community, with the city and with their new country in general. Apart from Ayelet who studied public administration, Tali and B. B. — and numerous municipal agents in charge of immigration-linked programmes — have no education and training related to public administration and management. Their immigration experience is their visiting card.

Their engagement with the community is made more obvious when they refuse to be called politicians. All of them claim they entered local politics to help and to serve. Moreover, they were 'chosen', by the *Israel Beitenu* party, by the former *Israel beAliyah* party, or by the former mayor, who asked them to become formal representatives. They explain their access to local politics almost by accident, but also because of their personality: Tali regularly uses sentences to show that she has a strong character, including optimism, hard work and flexibility; Abram's descriptive accounts of his upward mobility underlines hard work and perseverance; and Ayelet explains her ascension by her 'inner fire', her being a 'warrior'.

The fact that they have engaged and become representatives of their groups in local politics does not necessarily mean that they are not in competition to retain their titles as representatives. This does not feature in the biographies I collected, but it should be mentioned here: they were elected and entered the municipal council, and they seem to find it a sufficient channel of expression for their immigrant peers. At no point during fieldwork was the participation of a larger group of immigrants (through a committee, forum or other means of participative democracy) considered. Indeed, when we followed him during the documentary filming Abram demonstrated that he deployed considerable efforts to filter and reinterpret demands from immigrant residents, reinforcing his role as 'gatekeeper'.

Immigrant representatives face a dilemma: elected mostly by other immigrants in the city, they are regularly solicited by the municipality, and by their voters, to deal with specific immigration-linked issues; nevertheless, they also hold other responsibilities for public issues which concern all the residents of the city. Tali is the mayor of Arad, and as such, she deals with any local issues. However, she is a member of the traditionally immigrant *Israel Beitenu* party, she speaks Russian and her success is largely due to the large Russian community of Arad — 40% of the population. Abram is in charge of welfare for the municipality. However, he knows he gained his seat because the current mayor understood Abram could be a strategic ally.

Because Abram is an immigrant, and although another councillor is in charge of immigration and integration, he organises immigrant-targeted activities for the municipality. Immigrants regularly come to his office to ask for help, translation and other shortcuts into the local administration. Similarly, Ayelet is not the councillor in charge of immigration and integration. Alexander, an immigrant from Russia's Caucasus area, fills this position. Nevertheless, as she was born in Ethiopia, Ethiopian immigrants and municipal agents dealing with immigrants usually turn to her rather than to Alexander. On top of these more or less informal activities, she is in charge of the municipal departments of finances, engineering and planning.

The three officials represent the interests of various groups: their supporters, the residents of the city, the immigrants residing in the city, or even immigrants in Israel as a whole. They have multiple affiliations: as members of a national political party, Tali and Abram can intervene at the national and local level. They are not only mayors or councillors, but also municipal agents. Indeed, Ayelet or Abram both receive a salary from the municipality and are expected to serve residents directly. They receive residents in their office and deal with issues as diverse as entitlements, allowances, job hunting, business creation etc. They are located between groups and interests, and the mobilisation of various identities and discourses during our encounters translates the tensions and negotiations of these opposing interests. The scale of representation

therefore varies between the communities they belong to — a belonging largely defined by a common language — at the city level and at national level, to the residents of the city at large.

3.3 Mediation

The final hierarchy of power that is affected and influenced through the agency of these immigrants' concerns their intervention per se. I have just mentioned two important elements of power: the ability of these immigrant politicians to steer between the groups they represent and all the residents of the city on the one hand; and the absence of other means of representation for immigrants residing in the city, on the other hand. And indeed, they act as mediators, facilitators, brokers or 'ferrymen' (Pollard & Prat, 2012) between the different groups, but also between various levels of governance.

During a conversation with Deborah Golden, the Israeli anthropologist described to me her perception of the role of mediators[99] played by the immigrants arriving in the early phases of massive waves of immigration. Those who arrived early arrivals had time to become acquainted with their settlement society, time to learn Hebrew, to understand the norms and codes, and to develop a social network. When later arrivals immigrated from their countries of origin, they played the role of an interface between two worlds. In the 1990s, Russian-speakers who had immigrated in the 1970s or early arrivals in the 1990s became such interfaces. A similar phenomenon may be observed among Ethiopian immigrants of 1984 who were able to play the role of mediator for those who arrived in 1991.

In our case, Tali, Abram and Ayelet play this role for present day immigration, and with current immigrant residents who — although they immigrated years ago — do not have sufficient command of Hebrew, or who are unable to deal with Israeli administration alone. In Tali's discourse, this notion of mediation between groups is expressed quite bluntly. Tali steers between her own self, her belonging to a larger Jewish community, to FSU immigrants in Israel, but also to the FSU immigrants in her city. She is also the mayor of the city, therefore bridging the gap between city residents and national institutions.

In the activities in which Abram is involved, I have shown that he acts as a mediator between immigrants and local institutions, explaining and translating, as well as creating shortcuts. He also mediates between the needs of immigrant groups and the municipality, prioritising certain activities over others, in a context of financial constraints. Lastly, he deals with intercommunity

[99] The role of mediator I mention here is different from the professional mediators (in Hebrew *megasher*) usually hired by the welfare department to handle conflicts between residents.

mediation and inter-neighbour relations. I saw him 'in action' while filming during the 9 May commemoration in 2015. This mediation activity is certainly not limited to translation. Abram filters, chooses what to translate and what not to translate, adds contexts and explains. This control over what is said and done helps him to increase his power inside and outside the community. More than a mediator, he is a gatekeeper. Similarly, I participated in meetings with the mayor, and sometimes with heads of non-profit organisations. Abram moderated our interventions, translated and explained subtleties of language and/or of institutional culture to all parties during those meetings. Again, he did not translate everything and he filtered information depending on what he perceived as being important or necessary.

Ayelet also engages in mediation. I have shown that she dedicates part of her power to advance the condition of women and of Ethiopian immigrants in the city. She chairs a committee and a forum dedicated to issues related to the Ethiopian communities. This activity of mediation aims at bringing people within the system.

Even more than cultural mediators, the three immigrant politicians play a wider role as brokers between different levels of governance — the municipality, the ministries, the political parties, or other organisations in the city that participate in immigration activities. This could be attached to the concept of 'ferrymen' (in French: *passeurs*) developed by Julie Pollard and Pauline Prat when they address the methodology to compare subnational policies. In their opinion, certain politicians use their positioning at different levels of governance to enhance communication and coordination between those levels (Pollard & Prat, 2012). Instead of 'ferrymen', I prefer the term 'brokers', and I argue that these brokers produce new scales of power.

Indeed, Tali, Abram and Ayelet not only mediate between old timers and newcomers, between veteran Israelis and immigrants. They also mediate between the various institutions located at different levels. In a context of urban governance, local politics also includes actors located at different scales. They deal with issues between individuals. In small cities, residents do not hesitate to knock on their doors and express individual requests to the mayor or to the deputy mayor whom they consider indebted to their electorate. At a more intermediate level, immigrant politicians mediate between communities, and between communities and the municipality. But they also deal, on a daily basis, with institutions such as the MOIA or the Jewish Agency on the national and even Diasporic levels.

These activities of mediation and brokerage are involved in the rescaling of power. The multiple belongings of immigrant politicians allow them to access different groups and different levels of

governance — they are elected officials, they are also members of national political parties, they are immigrants and perceived as formal representatives, each of these 'hats' opening a different door. By bypassing, bridging and sometimes acting as gatekeepers, they produce and reproduce new hierarchies of power and authority. I will expand this argument in the following chapters, notably when I will address the morphology of the governance of immigration and integration. What is clear at this stage of our analysis is that the officials I have met assist in the creation of new channels between the municipality and the MOIA, through their belonging to *Israel Beitenu*.

Conclusions

This chapter aims to present the stories of Jewish immigration to Israel, as told by local officials who themselves experienced immigration. The main argument is that the stories built and performed by these officials in the public space, via other institutional actors, journalists or researchers for instance, participate in the definition of the frames of immigration and integration policies, at least in those cities where I conducted my research.

They convey a discourse of integration centred on the immigrants' individual capacity to overcome the difficulties inherent to immigration. The stories therefore express continuity after immigration to Israel, implying a fresh start, and the small successes that act as the milestones of the personal and professional development of these immigrants, until they reach the ultimate success of their integration: being elected to a political position in Israel, despite the fact they had been foreigners some years earlier.

I have shown that the personal immigration stories told to researchers, journalists, peer councillors and residents, act as a legitimising act: their immigration experience is their curriculum vitae which enabled them to develop the necessary skills for their job. However, these officials also struggle to balance between their role as community representatives, and their role as councillors. They have to constantly steer between the interests of their voters and those of the city residents they represent.

While we can attribute their professional success to the fact they were 'sought out' by national or local political parties, their position as resource-persons in the local social space and their status as community representatives even before their election. Tali worked at the bank for sixteen years and therefore knew many Arad residents; Abram was the ER doctor and treated thousands; and Ayelet was a community worker, also in contact with many residents, At least, it is their situation of 'in-between' (Delory-Momberger, 2009, p. 70), at the intersection between several social spaces, which allows them to be seen as resource-persons and representatives.

Their social resources are also mobilised to operate as brokers and to mediate between groups and between levels of governance. In that sense, they participate in the transformation and the production of new scales of power. Their meaningful interventions have an impact beyond immigration and integration issues.

In the introduction, I mentioned the possibility to view immigrant participation in politics as a way to co-construct values and norms — such as integration — and therefore escape from the imbalance induced when immigration and integration issues are defined by the majority (who are usually not immigrants). However, these examples demonstrate that immigrants themselves can be intransigent. They support their peers and believe in maintaining their own sociocultural world. But, their discourses also emphasise the *self-made man* image and the capacity of immigrants to take advantage of the infrastructures that the State and cities build for new immigrants.

The participation — as conceived by the American philosopher Nancy Fraser as a co-construction of the world, cultural values, norms and more of the political community (Ferrarese, 2015, p. 7) — of immigrant officials is not power-free, and symbolic struggles do take place. Immigrant officials do participate in the production of a local scale of integration and representation, that better accommodate sociocultural diversity, but at the same time, they participate in the limitation of the national immigration policy to an even more restricted number of immigrants who they perceive as legitimate and more deserving than others.

Part III: Immigrant integration policies: from symbolic policies to implementation of policies

Chapter 7 ◊ A grounded-theory of integration: is there a local interpretation of immigrant integration?

Academic literature has widely contributed to critical thinking on integration, as embedded in national politics of belonging, therefore going beyond a simplistic definition of immigrant integration relatively to a benchmark (usually the performance of an average national). Most of these new accounts come from political science and sociology, both deeply concerned with the social construction of the concept of integration. What then can research in social geography bring to this debate?

In this particular project, I aimed at analysing the rescaling of State responsibility towards immigrant integration issues. This required focusing essentially on the governance of integration, that is to say how immigrant integration is defined as an object of public action by State actors, as well as other actors involved, located at various scales. From a constructivist perspective, I emphasise the voices of these actors, grounded in the places I carried out my research. By anchoring the enquiry in places, and acknowledging the agency of the participants to my research, I hope to provide a grounded-theory of immigrant integration. I therefore offer a critical perspective of the process of immigrant 'absorption', the term usually adopted when addressing the policies directed at new immigrants to Israel after their settlement. The concept of 'absorption', as described in chapter 3, was a fundamental aspect of nation-building after the establishment of the state: "To each aliya is assigned a specific functional contribution in the nation building process and a consequent location on the centre periphery continuum" (Ram, 1995, p. 31). Public agencies have targeted resources at newcomers' acculturation in modern Jewish society (Ram, 1995; Shafir & Peled, 2002), the core of which was European Jewry, whereas the periphery had a 'marginal' role in nation-building: they were meant to be assimilated within the core culture in order to create a 'unified and homogeneous nation' (Frankenstein, cited by Ram, 1995, p. 38).

While my analysis focuses on the role of institutions — as 'absorption' implies —, I want to address more specifically the variations of this 'national project', since Israeli society is being transformed and faces new challenges, and more particularly, the various interpretations that occur at the city level. In previous chapters, I have mentioned several elements that characterise the cities I became acquainted with during this doctoral project. For this chapter in particular, I want to insist on the elements that were crucial to formulating my hypotheses and research questions. These elements inform the tensions that appear at city level between:

- cities that have benefited from more autonomy since the 1980s;
- a State that intervenes in peripheral cities with less capacity for autonomy;
- immigrant residents who have had an important influence on transforming the original Zionist national project into a neo-Zionist ideology which is conservative, religious, nationalistic and which has a hawkish attitude towards the conflict (Ram, 2000).

The first set of elements concerns the historical development of these cities, even though their history is rather short. In fact, these cities are immigrant cities, established (or expanded in the case of Acre) at the frontiers of the country. From the 1970s on, they represent the second Israel — or *Israel hashnia* — against the Ashkenazi establishment. Political movements that emerged from that moment on have largely contributed to create an alternative identity that takes into account the large groups of immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East — even though these alternatives do not address issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict any differently, and involve contrasting strategies of reaching out to the establishment, while at the same time contesting it. Nowadays, what is the heritage of this alternative identity discourse on current immigration? Similarly, the large wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union has reinforced a more pluralist attitude in which immigrants' cultural practices are more widely accepted. Since many agents I met during fieldwork belong to this large group, do they also participate in producing a more pluralist understanding of integration?

A second set of elements regards the specific challenges met by these frontier towns, viewed through more politico-administrative and economic lenses. In a context of *de facto* decentralisation, cities excluded from economic and political core networks already experience tremendous difficulties to raise the necessary resources to run the local public administration, and can barely afford the long-term investments needed to foster the local environment for social and economic development. Nevertheless, their newly acquired independence can also mean that they develop innovative actions for their cities. In any case, their marginalisation should not sanction them as powerless, and scholars have a responsibility to unveil the active role of the actors of these cities in producing new governance patterns, notably when it comes to addressing immigration settlement in their communities. One cannot be too naïve, and it may be that the discourses framing policies are more influenced by local conservatism than liberal progressivism. In fact, in an earlier chapter, I have shown that right-wing conservative parties are disproportionally represented in those areas.

A last element that may run counter to this statement is the large presence of immigrants in local politics, as well as in the municipal departments and other local organisations that deal with immigrant integration in the four cities. In fact, these towns provide an opportunity to look at

narratives and discourses produced by immigrants who are not only beneficiaries of institutional policies, programmes and activities, but also decision-makers.

This chapter aims to explore the meanings of integration put forward by local officials, by the municipal department for immigration and integration in particular, and by other municipal departments and other stakeholders involved in this policy domain. Confronting the various definitions found with definitions of immigrant integration found in the literature (see also annex 3 on integration) may shed some light on the production of meaning and consequently on possible interventions at city level, and the impact of these transformations of immigrant integration at large. What exactly is the immigrant-integration-narrative framing which is at work and how do these narratives impact the formulation of immigration integration as an issue of public action? How are the logics of the State, the city and immigrants neutralised at local level, and translated into coherent policies?

The analysis I provide here is based on the interviews I conducted in the four cities and in national governmental institutions. In each interview, I have extracted all the sentences that deal with the relations between new immigrants and the host society — in the widest sense possible. Many terms synonymous with integration were found, but rather than looking into the lexicon, I have looked for 'stories', for narratives of success and failure characterising this relationship between the immigrants and the host society.

Unsurprisingly, these stories are very much connected with the professional tasks of the interviewees. In the first section of this chapter, I will focus on the agents working at the municipal department for immigration and integration. Their understanding of integration is very much linked to their job description, and involves the significant responsibility of State institutions in immigrant integration. I will then move on to the other municipal councillors and agents I met, and compare their approaches to integration with those found among workers for the department for immigration and integration. The third section will attempt to provide a grounded definition of integration. Lastly, from these local interpretations of immigrant integration, I will show that new scales of integration processes and responsibilities are produced, between the self, the local and the national.

1 The municipal department of immigration and integration

This first section sheds light on a rather recent institutional development in city government: the setting up of independent departments for immigration and integration within municipalities. Research funded by the Union for Local Authorities in Israel has identified these departments,

and shown that many municipalities have an institutional setting of some sort that deals directly with new immigrants (Yehuda Abramson, 2013). Municipal departments are the most autonomous form, together with non-governmental entities — Haifa municipality, for instance, has created a separate organisation for immigrant integration issues (Mesch, 2002; Yehuda Abramson, 2013). But it is also common to find units under the municipal welfare department, the municipal department of culture, or, in one case under the municipal department of education.

Among the four cities under scrutiny, different institutional arrangements may be found: Acre has a municipal department for immigration and integration, Arad has a municipal department for culture, immigration and integration, while in Kiryat Gat, the unit for immigration and integration is under the control of the municipal welfare department. Lastly, Kiryat Shmona does not have an independent unit. In this town, two municipal councillors are in charge at the municipality, while most activities are organised through the district and the local offices of the MOIA.

Through the analysis of interviews with the municipal agents in these departments and units, and the local politicians that supervise their work, I have identified three different views of immigrant integration, which are not exclusive but rather complimentary: the first is the view of integration as the bureaucratic process of 'absorption' (*klita* in Hebrew); the second view involves personal guidance towards the progressive settlement of immigrants, and their inclusion in the various institutions of the city — including school and employment; the third view involves providing socio-cultural activities to immigrants, part of them targeted at becoming acquainted with the host society, but a larger part leading to a segregated socio-cultural landscape. The efforts deployed by officials to help immigrants settle, find an occupation, and obtain their entitlements, are justified by the need to foster a feeling of pride and self-confidence among newcomers who have just experienced a traumatic rupture through immigration.

1.1 Absorption as a bureaucratic process

Absorption (*klita* in Hebrew) is the most common term used to refer to the activities taking place after immigrants' settlement in Israel. This is the official term, which appears in the name of the Ministry which deals with to Jewish immigration matters, as well as the names of the municipal departments I contacted.

As mentioned in chapter 3, social theorist Eisenstadt, who studied the absorption policy of Israel in the 1950s, envisaged three aspects of successful absorption of 'traditional' immigrants to 'modern Jews':

> Acculturation — learning of the various norms, roles, and customs of the absorbing society; personal adjustment — strengthening the mental makeup of the immigrants, building confidence and satisfaction in them; and institutional dispersion — the proportional dispersion of immigrants in the various institutional spheres, residential locations, and so forth (S. N. Eisenstadt, 1954a:10 15). 'Absorption' was designated in terms of the "diffusion" of values, norms, and roles, from the modern absorbing society to the traditional immigrants, until they were entirely immersed. (*Ibid*., p. 38)

In this context, "State agencies were thus advised to view 'absorption' as a process analogous to 'adult socialization' […]" (*Ibid.,* p. 40), and to create personal contacts with immigrants, in order to create identification and participation (*Ibid*.).

Today, absorption mainly refers to the bureaucratic process of immigrant settlement — from the entitlements from which new immigrants benefit, access to housing and schooling (for children and teenagers), Hebrew classes, professional training and retraining, access to employment, national insurance, and retirement allowances for the elderly.

When they arrive at the airport, new immigrants are given an immigrant card and their new identity card, as well as a voucher for the taxi bringing them to the address of their choice. Immigrants coming to settle in Acre are offered two nights at a hotel in the city. In Arad, absorption flats are available at the youth centre to accommodate them during the first few days. Following their arrival in the city, the coordinators meet with them and take them to open a bank account, to obtain their 'absorption basket' and to register at the Interior Ministry. The extract below is one of the many descriptions of the work done by the coordinators during the first days following arrival:

> Elisa: At the airport, we welcome the immigrants. They are given an immigrant card and an ID. I am in contact with them before they come. I am in contact with them 6 months, a year before. I answer their questions. I understand it is very important that they get answers to all their questions. When they arrive at the airport, they know they will come to Acre. The municipality books two nights at a hotel, and the municipality pays for it. So straight after the airport, they come here. This is also absorption. That somebody has thought of them. They don't have to look for a place to sleep for the first night. The municipality… thought of that. At the airport, they know that in Acre there is a hotel. They bring them to the hotel. The Jewish agency knows at the airport. I meet with them in the morning. Sometimes they call me in the middle of the night. It gives them confidence. That's OK if I

have to wake up. People are in a worse situation than I am. It's harder for them. I see them first. They feel they know me. Because you talked over the phone, exchanged mails. It's easier for them, they are more confident, they know me. And then it's the start. First, a flat, all the documents, a bank, health, ministry of interior, ministry of integration

Me: So what do they have to do with the ministry of integration?

Elisa: They need to register with the ministry of integration. They need to bring the details of their bank account to get the money they deserve, the absorption basket. A person who comes does not know where to go, but we know it's important that they register as soon as possible at the Ministry of Integration, that way they will get the money as early as possible. Put the children in school, kindergarten, everything" (Interview 5, 2014).

Subsidised Hebrew classes are made available for beginners, usually in the city, or in the case of Kiryat Shmona, where very few immigrants arrive every year, in a neighbouring city or village. Professional training, or Hebrew entrepreneurship support and counselling are also made available. Employers can obtain employment vouchers so that part of the immigrant's salary is paid by the State, if the employer promises to hire him/her for a two-year contract. Under certain conditions, immigrants also have access to public housing, which they need to apply for through the MOIA

The MOIA and its local offices' agents — the *yoatsim* — are traditionally in charge of the absorption of new immigrants. However, the development of new municipal departments, or the expansion of municipal departments, usually corresponds to the implementation of the MOIA programme of 'group *Aliyah*'[100]. The 'group *Aliyah*' programme is a partnership between the MOIA, JAFI and the municipality. The main objective is to assure continuity from the moment an individual contacts the JAFI office in his country of origin, to his immigration and settlement. In fact, the administrative fragmentation between the JAFI, the MOIA and the municipality of the city where the newcomer settles, has led the MOIA to establish a new position, a *proyektor*, who is in touch with the candidate for immigration, and accompanies him until the agents decide he has achieved absorption. A relationship is built up and the coordinators feel that, when newcomers arrive in the city, they are already 'family' (Interview 7, 2014; Interview 48, 2015). The MOIA transfers funds to the selected municipalities to pay for the salaries of the *proyektorim*, while the municipality must provide funding to travel abroad and outreach to potential candidates for immigration.

[100]http://www.moia.gov.il/English/ImmingrantToIsrael/FirstStepsList/Pages/Group-Aliyah-and-Absorption.aspx

Looking at the *proyektor*'s function in a wider perspective, several remarks are to be made. First, it corresponds to shifts in immigration patterns in Israel where, on the one hand, there is no longer any expectation that there will be massive immigration from one country of origin, and immigrants arrive in small families, rather than together with large groups;[101] and on the other hand, the government has adopted a direct absorption policy where individuals obtain direct entitlements (see chapter 3). The *proyektor* of group *Aliyah*, or the municipal agent in the unit for immigration and integration, are therefore in charge of creating a relationship between immigrants and the local community, that has been disrupted and is no longer planned at State level. In that sense, it offers some continuity to the 'personal contacts' between State agents and newcomers which were encouraged the first years after the establishment of the state.

Second, it obliges the municipalities to determine their agenda towards immigration and to proactively submit a proposal to the public bid of the MOIA. The proposal must include the potential for future immigration, housing options available, the types of subventions and privileges new immigrants can benefit from at the municipal level, out of the entitlements provided by the MOIA… etc. In this context, the MOIA budget is transferred to municipalities who can prove they have the will and capacity to engage in immigration outreaching and absorption. It also obliges the municipalities to save a matching budget and take ownership and responsibility for this policy.

At the time of fieldwork, both Acre and Arad were beneficiaries of the 'group *Aliyah'* programme*.* Acre benefited from the largest staff — the MOIA provides that a maximum of 3.5 officers can be paid by the programme. Arad in turn, had just joined when I met the director, and the mayor planned her first trip to Moldova to outreach to candidates for immigration. However, their participation stopped in 2015. They did maintain a Russian-speaking staff dedicated to immigration and integration before and after fieldwork. In Kiryat Gat where there is no such programme, the local Kiryat Gat MOIA branch plays this role of welcoming and guiding newcomers through the first administrative steps. However, the local *yoetset* explains that she does not 'babysit' newcomers as much. She works office hours, and does not accompany them personally to the bank or to look for a flat (Interview 18, 2014). Similarly, in Kiryat Shmona, the MOIA organises a fair where newcomers have the opportunity to become acquainted with all the services they will be able to access as new immigrants (Interview 50, 2015). Both of the Russian-speaking municipal councillors of Kiryat Shmona may intervene in the first days, but there is not

[101] There are exceptions. Immigrants from India or Ethiopia, who come in larger groups, are directed to absorption centres and do not therefore come into contact with *proyektorim*. Another exception is the immigration organised from France and the United States with several families towards same settlement, but here again, the coordinator for these groups is usually a private agent, and acts as an intermediary between the group, and the settlement's administration as well as other institutions.

a municipal agent whose job it is to welcome newcomers.

1.2 Personal or community accompaniment

One crucial difference between *yoatsim* employed by the MOIA and working in MOIA local offices, and the *proyektorim* in the municipal department for immigration and integration, lies in the personal accompaniment tasks of the latter.

In fact, *proyektorim* deal with a range of activities that go well beyond bureaucratic absorption and activation of rights and entitlements. They accompany newcomers to find a flat to rent, to select a school and register their children, to subscribe to a phone company, and they even participate in helping newcomers move into their flat, find second hand furniture, electric appliances or linen. Municipal agents also reported going to the pharmacy to get newcomers' usual medication or to buy baby provisions. They translate at the bank, and in local shops. They can even assist in case of burials or looking for foster families for orphans etc. (Interview 5, 2014; Interview 7, 2014; Interview 26, 2015). Coordinators are responsible for presenting the various options available, and they act as translators and intermediaries after newcomers take their decision.

This personal accompaniment is possible because *proyektorim* usually speak the language of the majority of newcomers. In fact, their recruitment is based on the immigrant population. In the case of the cities I explored, a large majority of immigrants were Russian-speaking — apart from an Ethiopian group in Kiryat Gat, which I will focus on in the next paragraph.

Accompaniment of immigrants from developing countries — such as the Indian Bnei Menashe immigrants who settled in Acre, or the Ethiopian immigrants in Kiryat Gat — is organised in a distinctive manner. In fact, instead of a personal or family accompaniment, face to face, in the *proyektor*'s office, efforts and resources are deployed at the group level. For instance, when the Shavei Israel[102] organisation and Acre municipality agreed on the settlement of several families from the Bnei Menashe community, the municipal departments met for a planning meeting. Firstly, the newcomers went through six months of conversion to Orthodox Judaism — a request from the religious authority, who do not recognise Bnei Menashe practice of Judaism —, this conversion conditioning their obtaining Israeli citizenship. Secondly, the municipal team mapped the skills of the future residents in order to plan relevant professional training. Some of

[102] Shavei Israel is a Jewish organisation based in Israel, whose objective is to support 'forgotten' Jewish communities (Bnei Menashe in India, Kaifeng Jews in China, Marranos in Spain and Latin America etc.) in their efforts to reconnect with the Jewish people and Israel, through immigration to Israel.

the newcomers were thus trained — as planned before their arrival — to become semi-skilled workers in an industry which was recruiting in the area (Interview 29, 2015).

We can therefore already distinguish the types of missions the municipal department for immigration and integration takes upon itself when it comes to FSU immigrants, or English-speaking immigrants (in Acre), and the type of missions defined for Ethiopian or Indian immigrants. In the first case, the *proyektor* acts as a consultant and leads the immigrants, whose ultimate decisions regarding housing, employment, education etc. remain in their own hands. Whereas immigrants who are under the 'special populations' category at the MOIA are dealt with at group level, following a much more assimilationist and paternalist agenda.

1.3 A segregated sociocultural landscape

More surprising are the many statements I came across to the effect that the department for immigration and integration's main mission is to organise segregated cultural activities in Russian, English, or Amharic.

In fact, a substantial part of the resources — human and financial — for immigration and integration actually flows into segregated sociocultural activities. The local branch of the MOIA, the municipal immigration and integration department, the youth centres, cultural centres, community clubs and the *matnass* network, all offer a range of concerts, plays, lectures and workshops in Russian or in Amharic. They all claim to advertise in Hebrew in the local newspapers and encourage the participation of all. However, I have attended several activities in Acre, Arad and Kiryat Gat, which were all organised in Russian, making it impossible for non-Russian speakers to understand.

The channelling of public resources and more particularly of resources intended for immigrant integration, in the production of a segregated sociocultural space in cities, is to be understood in the rather recent context of multiculturalism inherited from the Russian immigration of the 1990s. The case of Kiryat Gat is enlightening. Indeed, various groups of Russian-speaking immigrants organise and participate in the conception of the socio-cultural programme initiated by the municipality,[103] and funded by the MOIA:

[103] This type of participative programme design is particularly interesting for a department that usually hires municipal agents without a professional background in psychology, social work or education. Municipal agents in the municipal department or unit for immigration and integration are hired on the basis of their knowledge of the language or their previous immigration experience. They do not have compulsory training unlike welfare workers who are expected to attend regular trainings — on which

Ruti: There are people. They decide. There is a committee. One person manages the finances, another organizes this. They are Russians, organized.

Moshe: Intelligent. It's not just people.

Ruti: Intelligent people that know how to work. In the past they were managers in big factories. For instance, V. who was here, he was the main architect of the city of Donetsk. Donetsk is like Israel. You understand? And he was the city architect. So they have knowledge and capacity and determination, which are the best best best. What Moshe did, was to fight over the programmes. They brought programmes and we always tried to make it better. Moshe was writing in a way that you would think that they wrote it so well. You understand. At the end, it was ours. For instance, there was a project on women's empowerment. Empowerment, as if they were empowered. There was a period when it was just about empowerment, empowerment, empowerment.

Moshe: Also in welfare, there was a period, the first years I worked there, where it was all about women's empowerment, women's workshops, parents' workshops.

Ruti: But empowerment, it was just…

Moshe: Once I sat in a meeting and they asked me: Tell me, in Kiryat Gat, they are all powerful? With all the empowerment all the time!

Ruti: But, when I talked to the girls, this was not what they needed: there are problems in families, there were problems there. There is not a lot of work in Kiryat Gat. And sometimes, there were a lot of cases where the woman works and her husband does not… work. You know what it is? Conflict and the children leave the house and all those things. A woman, all of a sudden, a woman, as if it was not enough that she was working the whole day, and sitting at school, and at home, she has to care about her husband, who, poor him, could not find a job, that's not that he does not want one: he is not a doctor, not a teacher, they closed the factory and fired him. So now he sits. He sits and he does not help. He is depressed. With everything she must deal with, she also must deal with him. There is no help. She will not go to a social worker. Even if she goes, what will she tell her? I talked to Moshe and I told him: do it the way you want. Write what you want, all the words you want. What do we really do? A group of women, with psychologists that we worked with, who will bring material and all, to show the woman that she is not responsible for what happens, because this is often what she feels, that he is not responsible either in what happened, and how do we get out of that? If women sit together and my story and her story are similar, I see that I am not the worst in the world and you tell me that also at yours, those things happen, and a third person sits and says: girls, let's think of what we can do. And everyone does their homework and a week after, one says I did that, I said that, I smiled this way, and two, three weeks later, we hear that the husband found a job, it's a huge success. Moshe was the one who closed the deal. He had to stand in front of the MOIA. They want

their promotion is conditioned —, notably, in the case of the workers I have met that have daily activities with immigrants, training in intercultural skills etc..

> empowerment. That's what they want. But, suddenly they want Judaism. OK. We do Judaism. But the way we want. (Interview 16, 2014)

This sociocultural segregation is generally positively perceived by Israeli born people who consider the Russian-speaking 'commune' (Interview 36, 2015) a very efficient support group. FSU immigrants working in the institutions themselves consider it perfectly legitimate their belonging to both worlds: their belonging to Israel where they work, where they belong as Jews, and as supporters of the political project of perpetuating a Jewish home; and their belonging to a large group of Russian-speaking immigrants, generally portrayed as highly skilled, educated and fond of culture — art, performing arts and literature. This generalisation is sustained by the interviewees themselves, who, at least in my presence, failed to mention the great fragmentation of this immigration, in terms of immigration periods and regions of origin, but also in terms of levels of religiosity, class and level of education (Goldberg & Bram, 2007). Intra-community racism is never debated in the meetings.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand that FSU immigrants, but also English, French and Spanish speaking immigrants, have the privilege to retain their language and to have access to segregated sociocultural activities. In that sense, those who reproduce their practices can be defined as dominant groups who resemble the white European Jewish elite of Israel. Multiculturalism, as promoted by the local politicians I have met, and by municipal agents, is idealised, and is rather exclusive. It draws a clear distinction between the Palestinian population of the region, and with other immigrant groups in Israel.

Indeed, pressure to convert, to learn Hebrew, to give up on previous standards and norms, is much greater for other immigrant groups. These groups are usually targeted by the MOIA, and by other institutions dealing with immigration and integration under the category 'special populations'. Special populations include Ethiopian immigrants, Indian immigrants, but also Georgian, Bukhara and Caucasus immigrants from central Asia. The extra resources allocated to these groups at national and local levels are justified in the name of affirmative action. However, the special treatments they enjoy are also perceived as a strategy to perpetually exclude the immigrants from the rest of society. Israelis born from Ethiopian immigrant parents are therefore still labelled as immigrants. This extract is enlightening:

> Michael remembers that while working in Neve Yakov, he saw how different the FSU immigrants from the 1970s and 1990s were: "they don't get together". He mentions the Bukhara Jews and the fact that Caucasus Jews were also named "Bukhara" until we found out they were distinct groups. He talks to me about his colleague Abram who could not say if he was a Bukhara or a Caucasus Jew… Michael tells the story of Slas, in Sderot, whose wife is an engineer. After failing to find a job,

> he told her to change her family name on her CV. She got five interviews. "There are gaps here. The MOIA does not talk about that. Why are rights for French, US or Ethiopian immigrants different, the latest group going to an absorption centre? Those are in-built discriminations which increase stigma. If we don't deal with that, it will explode in our face". (Interview 11, 2014)

Special treatment and extra resources are also coupled with a paternalist attitude towards these groups. Stories related to the settlement of Bnei Menashe immigrants, or the settlement of Ethiopian immigrants were largely tinted with romanticised elements of their life in their country of origin, even orientalist and racist narratives. Below is an extract from a long conversation, which revolved around the working culture of Ethiopian immigrants:

> But, slowly, slowly, we educate them. Look, at the beginning, I also had problems with Ethiopians. Listen guys, the bus is not for free. You will pay 10 shekels. No way, no way, no way. [The deputy mayor] told me 'Moshe, give them for free'. For free, the bus will never be full! Never be full! For free, you know what, when you pay 10 shekels, you feel that you must come. Even if it's only 10 shekels. If it's for free, he does not feel like waking up in the morning, he does not come. And they have a problem. Among the Russians there was never a problem. Russians leave with full buses. With them, I ordered a bus, it left with 20 people. (Interview 16, 2014)

The injunction to assimilate — 'we educate them' — is therefore much stronger for groups who benefit from special status on the national level and receive more State resources. Can it be that when the local administration obtains fewer resources from the central government, it has a wider margin to implement a multicultural agenda? The more the MOIA is involved, the more the feeling that it is a local protector of the State. The figure of the *yoatsim* in particular seems to act as the guarantor.

1.4 A commitment to create 'pride' and 'self-confidence'

All the interviewees acknowledge that newcomers in Israel go through deep personal and family crises. As they experience a loss of control over their new environment — impossibility to communicate in Hebrew, encounters with a new administrative system, difficulty to find their way around their new home, lack of occupation etc. —, new immigrants are compared to 'children' or 'naked people' (see for instance interview 32 (2015)). In this context, the MOIA and the municipality usually join forces to accompany the immigrants the first few days after their arrival.

The resources invested in absorption, personal and community accompaniment, and the organisation of activities with MOIA and municipal budgets, among other sources, are justified by the local leadership to create 'pride' and 'self-confidence'. In fact, a further understanding of

integration follows an ideal of personal success and accomplishment of one's ambitions. Interviews insist on the institutions' responsibilities to provide an environment that fosters confidence, protection and empowerment among immigrants, in order for them to avoid crises associated with their immigration experience, or to recover after those crises.

The mayor of Acre, for instance, affirms that the feeling of trust and perceived equality suffices to transform individuals into active citizens. As regards Palestinian Israelis residing in the city, he argues:

> [Palestinian Israeli residents] voted for me in the last elections, a year ago, 93%. Why? Why would a person vote in such a… craze? Because they saw that they got everything, they felt equal, they felt part of the community, they felt that they were trusted, they felt that they were not marginalized, and when a person feels he is not marginalised, he wants, he votes, he wants, so… (Interview 32, 2015)

During our second meeting, he addresses a similar issue, regarding immigrants:

> What defines an immigrant in his essence, in his orientation, is his opening to the Israeli society, and his achievements. You can be an immigrant for many years. You did not learn the language as needed, you were not absorbed as needed, they did not take care of you as needed, the children are not in the proper institutions. They did not deal properly with your potential. So you remained an immigrant. You did not get anywhere, so you remained immigrant. And there are some who can be immigrants for 30 to 40 years. They are immigrants, mentally they are immigrants. They did not move anywhere. They stayed in the same place where they were on the first day. The same neighbourhood, the same house, the same misery, the same failure, the same everything. So what defines absorption? When the ministry of absorption decides that it is from 2014? What the hell? Those that arrived earlier, you already dealt with? This is what I tell you, there is no time. Because of that, I tell you, the policy of the municipality is much more advanced than the government. Because this thing of being an immigrant or not an immigrant. You are a resident of the city, we must deal with you. We must. It's in our soul. (Interview 58, 2015)

Kiryat Gat's mayor equally justifies the municipality's proactive policy:

> Me: That's my question: what did they miss in other cities?
>
> Aviram: I will tell you what. You know what makes the mix? Empowering every colour […]. Each community and community. I empower him. I tell him: you are a Bukhara Jew, wow, you are a Bukhara Jew. Bring your culture. You will have a community. Bring your old people. Yeah, handahanda. Ethiopian, Ethiopian. Russian. Moshe, bring them, bring them.
>
> Me: I even heard that you sometimes open a ceremony with some words in Russian, in Amharic

> Aviram: Yes, yes. I believe in that. Strengthen them. The moment the person becomes strong, he will open up. He is not scared. He is strong, he knows he is worth something, he has… Who comes and hugs you? One that has confidence. Confidence. The one that looks and is scared: open him. Give him. (Interview 19, 2014)

The extracts of the interviews with the mayors of Kiryat Gat and Acre demonstrate for the importance they attach to self-confidence, inner strength and feeling of pride and equality among populations who usually suffer from a discriminatory national narrative. Although they themselves adopt a rather paternalist discourse, and do not completely abandon the national framework that provided the 'adult socialisation' of immigrants, they justify communicative action aimed at improving the general position of marginalised groups through psychological levers. How does this subjective idea translate into activities and programmes?

> We cooperated with the MOIA on a programme called "massad klita" with funding from the Joint, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Housing.[104] The idea was to work on long-term integration. This project led to the creation of bridging centres. Another project was born from the first programme: Contribution to the integration of immigrants (*Mitram shiluv olim or Mishol*). (Interview 11, 2014)

The *Mishol* centre in Acre takes action in accordance with the principles dictated by community services: foster leadership among residents, facilitate dialogue between different groups — new and old-timer immigrants, immigrants and Israeli-born, Jewish, Christian and Muslim etc. Different activities are carried out: a weekly 'café' for new immigrants, a community theatre, a multi-religious women's group and so on. I participated in a 'café', and met the residents and the coordinator. The main purpose, in the words of the coordinator, was for them to meet and show what they were worth, outside the low-skilled jobs they occupy, or the poor decayed neighbourhood they live in. Three Russian-speaking women brought jewellery, bags and clothes they designed themselves to show their new creations to their friends. They also brought food and some drinks. They went to the local community garden. The coordinator brought her guitar and they sang Hebrew songs connected with the holiday celebrated the same week in Israel.

Another example is given by Kiryat Gat's deputy mayor, when she talks of the community centre which was recently renovated for Ethiopian immigrants residing in the city.

> Ayelet: And we say that there should not be special programmes for Ethiopians. On the other hand, I have the club for Ethiopians, that protect culture, for the elderly. Because we don't want. On the one

[104] See http://www.molsa.gov.il/SiteCollectionDocuments/MisradHarevacha/קהילה/עולים/cover%20report-nivi.pdf

hand, we help them to conserve their culture, but on the other hand we give them so they run, go to school, go to study, go to work, go to the army, become officers, what we understand to integrate in the society. But there is a cultural centre, the matnass, the community club, that protects their identity. In the evening, they go with their families to all their things. They have their identity, the place they find

Me: So would you say that the recipe when it comes to identity is people's self-confidence

Ayelet: you need it

Me: And on the other hand, integration in institutions, schools… It means, at home we are proud of who we are.

Ayelet: Exactly

Me: But in institutions, we don't want special treatment, to feel side-lined.

Ayelet: True. It's important. If you don't do that, strengthening their identity, you. You miss the point. (Interview 57, 2015)

Here, the focus is mainly on protecting and praising the cultural dimension of Ethiopian immigrants. Participation in the main institutions — school, the armed forces, employment — is still expected to help integration.

These issues of identity linked with pride and confidence are also relevant for immigrants who settled in Kiryat Shmona in the 1950s and 1960s, and their Israeli born offspring. Indeed, Tel Hai academic centre and the municipality both work on a *maabarot* museum, in memory of the transit camp that Kiryat Shmona once was. The project's objectives are described as freeing people from the feeling of being an 'underdog', a feeling resented by those early immigrants, and re-establishing a connection with the history of the place:

Avichai: The project was very labial, you know. It has a lot of challenges, a lot of difficulties but it, we need to deal with all the history, with the period of the *Aliyah* to Israel, how its story is presented and, and also the story of Kiryat Shmona. Because the story of Kiryat Shmona, until today it's not a story of heroism. It's a story of *Aliyah*, they came, they were thrown here but, they live their lives. Although it's really not true. It's an *Aliyah* that made this place, built a city, built a community, they were a partner in all the national factories of Emek hahula. So, we do, you know, we make the historical correction in the story. Huh.

Me: To brand the city anew, and take out the tragedy and the oppression story?

Avichai: "Yes, I think branding… heritage is, in my opinion, a very important player, in the present, but also in the future. Your historical story. Cause you can't, you can't live in a country, in a region

> that has such an amazing story, and not have any relation with it, or a place, a place in the script. And that's how the young people grow up here. They don't grow up with the impression that grandpa and grandma did something special. They grow up with 'we got to the city, it seems that we cooperated in the building of the area'. They also look at them differently on the regional level: those are *arsim*,[105] they are. All kinds of stigma that refer to things in the past. And this produces a feeling of being an 'underdog'. And when you feel like an underdog, you don't feel that you succeeded thanks to, thanks to the fact you are here; but because you are from here, I mean, although I am from here, I succeeded. And that's an approach that we try to change. Stop saying although I am from here, but thanks to the fact I am from here, thanks to the community, thanks to the values I was taught, I succeeded in life. And lastly, to encourage people to come back home. Because, branding, again I told you, it relates a lot to the historical context, the things you did.
>
> Me: Yes, it's like local patriotism, or local pride, let's say.
>
> Avichai: Absolutely.
>
> Me: That is missing here.
>
> Avichai: It is absolutely missing. (Interview 55, 2015)

The rehabilitation of non-Ashkenazi immigrants in the local public discourses, through 'communicative action', concrete programmes, cultural centres or even museums aimed at writing an alternative history of proud pioneering, is believed to emancipate immigrants from a feeling of marginalisation. However, this rehabilitation adopts similar patterns to the elite. Rather than proposing an alternative, they aim at reaching out to established narratives and include outsiders in these narratives.

The attempt of FSU immigrants to create an alternative path of integration has been much more successful, when compared with other initiatives to rehabilitate immigration within the nation-building project, such as the one described by Avichai. Through political representation, demographic strength and inclusive narratives — even partially — in the Ashkenazi core, they have gained increasing control of the institutions that regulate immigrant absorption, as well as political power in other spheres of public action.

2 The municipal department of immigration and integration in its institutional environment

In the previous section, I have highlighted part of a definition of integration, that focuses essentially on the Israeli conception of immigrant absorption — a bureaucratic process and

[105] *Ars* or *Arsim* (plural) is, as described in a Wikipedia article a "Hebrew slang term for the Israeli stereotype of a low-class young man of *Mizrahi* origin".

accompaniment of immigrants to Israel, that aims to facilitate their settlement in the city and their access to rights and entitlements. I have also shown that absorption has been extended at the city level to include a rather recent institutional setting, which involves a close relationship with newcomers, and is justified through the understanding that psychological well-being enhances the chances of newcomers successfully becoming a part in the host society.

This second section focuses more particularly on greater expectations that immigrants will access the main institutions — in the larger sense of the term — that is to say the social, economic and political institutions of the country. Here again, the role of the municipality and other local stakeholders in achieving successful access is highlighted, but more as a facilitator, the ultimate responsibility of being an active, productive and participative resident being left to the immigrants themselves.

2.1 Integration defined as the equal access to Israeli institutions

Israeli geographer Tovi Fenster argues: "issues of ethnicity and citizenship have been de-emphasized in immigration policies, since the sense of ethnicity is defined by the Jewish religion and the overriding emotional issue of return from 2,000 years of exile" (Fenster in Gradus and Lipshitz 1996). In fact, interviewees often mention the fact that immigrants immediately belong to the Jewish people, as the 'return to the homeland' amidst their Jewish peers should enhance accession to the Israeli nation. The following extracts mobilise the Zionist narrative of the return to *Eretz Israel* after 2,000 years of exile:

> For instance, the coordinators who work with me today, I always tell them the objective is to help. The girl here was an immigrant, I absorbed her. Some years after, she gives service, she helps. This is how it works. We are one people. (Interview 5, 2014)

> We are all together. We are citizens of Israel. We… think the same. We… Maybe, we are different, as we are individuals. But as citizens, we are one people. That's why I always say: stop dividing us in groups. The moment we came here, we became part of this country. (Interview 8, 2014)

> But, we grew up with what we call the love of *Eretz Israel*, and also the understanding that we are all immigrants, it does not matter from where. Although this is our land. We are — more correctly — returning citizens. OK? Our fathers were exiled from here. And we came back. All the time. We are the only people who have been saying "next year in Jerusalem" for 2,000 years. […]. In… 40 years, I will ask you: How do you feel? Like an immigrant? A pioneer? That? Everything! The ones from the 1950s, they say they are pioneers. And the ones who arrived in 1930, also say that they are pioneers. And the ones who arrived in 1881, also say that they are pioneers. Always pioneers. This country, is always… in the building. That's all. For me… It's the Jewish home. You understand?

> Everybody comes. (Interview 19, 2014)

These statements obviously put forward the Jewish identity of the newcomers, who are perceived as 'returning citizens' rather than immigrants.

Therefore, and particularly when this religious belonging is put in doubt, a usual first step in the country is to reinforce this religious belonging, through workshops on Judaism, or even through conversions. Those conversions are suggested, more or less strongly, in the case of immigration from Western countries. In the department for immigration and integration of Acre, numerous posters, in Russian, are hanging from the wall. They offer conversion courses, Torah classes but they also offer advice to find ways to prove one's Judaism when certificates are lacking. However, certain Ethiopian immigrants or Bnei Menashe immigrants from India must convert as a precondition to acquiring citizenship, therefore being targeted by a much more coercive policy.

Once the religious aspect has been 'corrected' (see for instance Djerrahian (2015)), I have shown that respondents envisage a segregated cultural and social life for new immigrants. Integration is mainly conceived as being into the main institutions, while allowing them to retain their language or cultural practices. This is what is usually described as an 'intercultural attitude' (Alexander 2003; Penninx *et al.* 2004; Crul, Schneider, and Lelie 2013; Schnell 2013), where immigrants are expected to share a common ground with nationals, through institutions such as education, labour, etc, while retaining their specific identities. This stance supposedly reconciles both the perceived failing assimilationist and multicultural approaches of integration (*Ibid*.).

Those institutions, mentioned regularly by interviewees, include religion, but also education, the armed forces and the labour market. Regarding this last point in particular, the economic performance of newcomers is often mentioned. In the previous chapters, I have already mentioned the importance of the immigrants' capacity to support their family and contribute positively to the local economy instead of being net beneficiaries, even if it involves important downward mobility. For instance, Arad's mayor says:

> Someone who works, who succeeded, his children are part of the education system: what do they have to do in the municipality! My house is in the neighbourhood (*shchuna*), it was always nice there, there were no, no reasons to go and request something from the municipality. I never got a shekel from the State, I never got a discount from the municipality. (Interview 8, 2014)

The capacity to accept downward mobility, to work at any job and climb back up the social ladder is also mentioned in an interview with a representative of the Union for Local Authorities in Israel:

> Gali: At the moment when he is black, Ethiopian, he is an immigrant. Even if his parents were born in Israel. But even for his needs, he acts like an immigrant. This weakness is very strong among the Ethiopian population. Russians are different. There is a woman here, her name is Clara. She was a biochemist abroad. She works here in cleaning, she brings coffee. She decided to work in whatever. You see the differences between different groups. One had the tools to lift herself up. Even though they gave up on their salaries, their career, working in their professional field, only to earn money and work. But the Ethiopian population don't manage to lift themselves up. They pass this weakness on to their children. […] The father is not relevant: he does not know how to read, to write, he does not know anything. The mother relied on the things she knew as a mother. What does a mother know? To keep her house clean, to raise her kids. The woman knew how to integrate through skills she had. […] If I would have taken care of a job for a father. What does the child want? His credit card! That his iPhone works! You can give money… You don't agree?
>
> Me: It's really…
>
> Gali: It's extreme! Of course, there is more than that. But if you tell your kid you can't give them a shekel, they respect you less. Because we live in a consumer society! Of groceries, shopping, going out and having fun: "Mum I want a yogurt, I want to go to the movies…" Who can provide that? (Interview 15, 2014)

Some of the ethnic stratification elements mentioned in this quote were already mentioned in the previous chapters, reinforcing the common stereotype that FSU immigrants are more productive. In this extract, the impossibility to provide in a society where consumption is an instrument of belonging, and a measure of success, makes you an 'immigrant', a status that you pass on to your children, even if they were born in Israel. Socioeconomic status is ethnically marked.

Here, Ethiopian immigrants are said to pass on their 'immigrant' status to their children, as if it was a genetic condition. This situation is envisaged as long-term failure. In fact, more usually, immigrants are seen as 'the lost generation', while their offspring are, without a doubt, Israelis. The mayor of Arad states:

> My son works for Elbit factory. He represents Israel in many countries abroad, as he is a very good professional. My daughter is an economist, she works for Hot. She also finished studying. They succeeded! They got married. I am already a grandma. Which is… something additional. They really are Israelis. There is no doubt. (Interview 8, 2014)

Their Israeli identity is even stronger when they marry outside their group:

> My wife's family is from Yemen. They arrived in the 1950s. She was born here. She is part of a society that is different from mine. Our children today are in a different reality. It would have been different if she married a Yemenite. [...]. Although I am Israeli, I like eastern music but also Jazz. My wife learnt to like jazz. We need to orient this and make it a social fact. (Interview 11, 2014)

> I said, for the next elections, there will not be divisions between Moroccans and Russians. My youngest son has a Moroccan girlfriend. My older son has a girlfriend from Ethiopia. (Interview 45, 2015)

Intermarriage is defined as a social fact, and a basis to understand the integration of the various groups, who form Israeli society.

Lastly, political stances are also of importance. Becoming Israeli implies relying less on immigrant parties like *Israel Beitenu*. Kiryat Gat's deputy mayor, a member of *Israeli Beitenu*, says:

> I have a niece in Kiryat Gat: She voted for Lapid. Now, young people go somewhere else. They are already Israeli. They don't feel Russian anymore. There are Israeli in society. They think it's better to vote for young parties like Lapid or Kachlon. (Interview 45, 2015)

Or Kiryat Gat's spokesperson:

> In one of the mayor's biggest achievements, for the first elections that he organised, 5,000 immigrants from FSU elected a black politician with a *kippa*. (She laughs). But maybe it shows something about the very specific composition of Kiryat Gat. (Interview 57, 2015)

This last remark brings me to the following subsection, where integration is also defined as the immigrants' access to political and decisional institutions.

2.2 Participating in decisions related to integration: immigrants' access to political and decisional institutions

2.2.1 Representation

The election of immigrant representatives in the municipal council plays an important role in the definition of an immigration and integration agenda. In the case of the four cities studied, those councillors have two main channels through which they have reached the municipal council: the nationalist immigrant party *Israel Beitenu*, which offered them support during the campaign and once elected; and/or being on a local independent list, which was the case for Ayelet, deputy mayor of Kiryat Gat and number 2 on the local list led by the current mayor.

The interviewed mayors clearly express their will to run in the elections in alliance with immigrant representatives. In Acre, the mayor stated that his two deputy mayors represented two important groups in the city: the Palestinian Israelis on the one hand, and the FSU immigrants, on the other hand. In Arad, the mayor herself, Tali, is an immigrant, in a city where 40% of residents are immigrants. New elections on 2 June 2015 demonstrated that this was not decisive since the immigrant candidate defined as Tali's natural replacement lost to his adversary, a non-immigrant candidate. In Kiryat Gat, the mayor also affirms that it was essential for him to have two deputy mayors representing FSU and Ethiopian immigrant groups in the city. Lastly, the mayor of Kiryat Shmona was reminded in an interview that his alliance with the immigrant representative was a key to his victory at the local elections.

Immigrant councillors are therefore representatives of the immigrant communities residing in the city. On the council they are usually in charge of immigration and integration. They supervise the work of the immigration and integration department if there is one, and supervise activities in other departments that target immigrants, such as in welfare, education or employment. In Kiryat Gat, deputy mayor Ayelet even chairs a forum where the main municipal agents and local actors involved with Ethiopian Israelis in the city meet. Less intensively, in Acre, deputy mayor Zion organises an annual forum to discuss immigration issues with municipal agents.

But more importantly, they are the main interlocutors of the immigrant residents in the city. Although they are not technicians but politicians, they are expected to keep their door open and act as intermediaries between immigrant residents and municipal services. As a 'one-stop-shop', they must be knowledgeable on all immigrants' rights of in Israel. In Kiryat Gat, deputy mayor Ayelet estimates that around 600 to 700 people stop by her office for various requests every month (Interview 57, 2015). Acre's deputy mayor Zion describes immigrant residents' demands as ranging from getting help for food, to dealing with issues of harassment (Interview 20, 2015). As I visited the Kiryat Shmona deputy mayor's office quite often, I witnessed some of the meetings held in his office: representatives of Second World War veterans reaching out to municipal resources to organise the yearly commemoration, or a Ukrainian immigrant asking for help to obtain a visa to visit her family in the eastern part of Ukraine which is under Russian control.

These officials are not only considered as their main contact in the municipality by immigrant residents, but also by municipal services. In Kiryat Gat, the unit for immigration and integration deals directly with FSU immigrants organising activities in the city. However, when it comes to activities organised for Ethiopian immigrants, the coordinator admits his preference for requests channelled through the office of the deputy mayor, who he prefers to negotiate with,

rather than negotiating directly with the beneficiaries (Interview 16, 2014).

The following extract illustrates how the mayor envisages the role of his deputies in Kiryat Gat:

> [I introduce myself to Aviram. He immediately starts by saying that there is no more diverse place than Kiryat Gat, and that is reflected in the local leadership: his deputy mayors are from the FSU and from Ethiopia. I remember that I have to ask authorization to record. Aviram tells me that I can.]
>
> Me: So one of your deputies is from the FSU, and one from Ethiopia.
>
> Aviram: Yes. They are deputies with a salary, it means that they are deputies with 'full time jobs'. It means that… it means that we are focused on giving services to the immigrant in a participative way. It means not… "go to the Absorption department and they will talk to you"… But… hum… here here, in the municipality.
>
> Me: It's included in the services of the municipality.
>
> Aviram: All the services… all the service of the service, come, come, come here. The mayor and his deputy at your service. You… don't speak Hebrew, you speak Russian? FSU mentality? Here is the deputy. You are from there, here! They also know them, their needs, their problems, on top of this. And like this, instead, or additionally, that the system will be available, yes, until you do this procedure and you get to the last of the departments, the last of the units, yes? You have… from the head, and then it trickles down. It does not matter to which department, it goes down. Hum, hum People understand, appreciate, and know that this is unique. This, this, this is what is important. (Interview 19, 2014)

It also shows that political representation is not enough, and that the municipality also arranges for immigrant residents to access municipal services in their mother tongue.

2.2.2 Multilingual service delivery

I mentioned earlier that municipalities acknowledge the fact that immigrants do not always master Hebrew, even after several years in the country. Being able to fully function in one's own language is seen as a right. Some interviewees have shown resistance and consider that, in the long run, Hebrew should be learnt. But elderly people are usually exempted from this expectation. A coordinator shares the story of his family's immigration to Israel and talks about his grandfather:

> For [my grandpa], he got everything he needed in life. He had his beach, his medical house, everything he needed, his supermarket. Everyone is Russian. Everybody speaks Russian. And he does not need Hebrew. And it's a small city. And he does not have a problem to live. (Interview 26,

2015)

In this context, municipal agents organise activities to fit this situation. An Arad community worker explains:

> If you want to attract more immigrants, you organize lectures that are not in Hebrew. Most of the immigrants here are FSU immigrants, from Russia, who are Russian speakers. If you want to attract them, you need something in their language. Among all those immigrants, there are many elderly people who don't even speak Hebrew. They speak only Russian. So for the Golden Age month, we organize activities that target this population. (Interview 42, 2015)

She also considers that this is made possible because Russian-speakers represent a large part of the population. When it comes to the small Ethiopian community hosted in the Orly absorption centre, she thinks that it does not make much sense to organise costly cultural events for a small number of families (*Ibid*.).

Apart from organising activities in Russian, Amharic or English, being able to turn to a municipal agent who speaks one of these languages, and who can address the issue without a translator is also seen as important:

> Elisa: In Welfare, it is written in the tender: preference for a Russian speaker. That's how. There are some Russian speakers in Welfare, but also in education, engineering, finance. In every department.
>
> Me: Is it because there are more Russian residents?
>
> Elisa: The municipality provides services to the city, so they have to take into account that a part of the residents speak Russian. I don't know who decides. In every department there are people.
>
> Me: So, everything here is in Arabic, Hebrew and Russian.
>
> Elisa: Arab and Hebrew are the country's official languages. If a quarter of the residents speak Russian, they need to provide services. I think that's why. I don't know. If someone comes to the city hall, they need to get a service. (Interview 5, 2014)

In an interview in Kiryat Shmona:

> Me: Do you try, if there is a tender for a social worker, do you try to find a Russian speaker?
>
> Abram: I try to promote it among the people I know.
>
> Me: You tell people you know, there is a tender, send your application.
>
> Abram: You have to try at least to get in. I can't make it happen. But of course, I try. Sometimes, also

> in agreements, the company Tanur
>
> Me: What is it?
>
> Abram: The water company: it's in cooperation with some municipalities. Today, there is a Russian speaker from 2014 at the reception. We have, in the department, an engineer speaking Russian. Some in the municipalities speak Russian. I tried that they will not get fired.
>
> Me: You laugh. It's a war. (Interview 6, 2014)

Having representatives 'within the system' enhances accessibility. It is also perceived as important to address proximity and feedback. The welfare services in municipalities put extra effort into mapping the needs of new and older immigrants and in closing the gaps. On top of mapping, they also see the importance of bringing the municipality into the neighbourhoods. For instance, several municipal services are decentralised and have their buildings in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of immigrants. The physical closeness is perceived to reduce the fear and 'threat' of entering a larger institution. *Mishol* and the Centre for Mediation and Dialogue in the Community — both welfare department programmes, community services, for the integration of immigrants — are located in the middle of two neighbourhoods in Acre. The new integration centre for Ethiopian immigrants, the *Moked Klita*, implemented in Kiryat Gat, is also in a neighbourhood north of the city. Their workers all confirmed it was less threatening and made wider participation of residents possible (Interview 36, 2015; Interview 39, 2015; Interview 44, 2015; Interview 46, 2015). Participation can also be ensured through bottom-up programme design, such as integration programs funded by the municipality of Kiryat Gat (Interview 16, 2014).

2.3 Redefining 'absorption'?

If immigrant integration, or more specifically 'immigration absorption' is a widespread term used by municipal and local services targeting immigrants in their daily work, the welfare departments and, more specifically, the community service unit, supervised by the community service located in the ministry of Welfare, is attempting to get rid of the concept of absorption to develop the concept of 'intercultural community development'. The director of the community service provides the following explanation:

> First of all, Michael tells me that they don't talk about immigrants. They did in the past. Now, the new concept is 'intercultural community development'. Immigrants are just one aspect. Conflicts are usually common between the different groups. "I am more interested in the social integration and the relations between communities". [...]. Michael insists on the importance of strong

communities instead of conflict. […]. “The strength comes from the fact we live together. […]. [Mayors] don’t understand that a strong city comes from the relations between the groups. […]. Ethiopians get a different treatment than the rest. I understand that people want to live close to people who resemble them, but you need to find spaces for interaction. (Interview 11, 2014).

Community workers in the municipalities convey the same message:

> Huh, you cannot only look at the Individual. You need to see the individual in his environment. I think that there is something is going on there. They really try to get more projects, they really try to make the individual, not only to look at his problems, but to integrate in the community. Try maybe, if you are alone, and you don’t have anyone, come and try to participate in one of the community activities there are. (Interview 42, 2015)

This new orientation applies to policies implemented by the municipal welfare department. Projects like *Mishol* or the Centre for Mediation and Dialogue in the Community, which I mentioned in the previous subsection, are part of the new policy. However, this discourse is not relayed by the municipal department or unit in charge of immigration and integration. It is found to some extent in the discourse of Shimon, mayor of Acre, himself certainly more accustomed to this language, as he was the director of Acre community centres (*matnass*) for many years. He talks of connecting people in institutions, talking, fostering mutual respect and tolerance:

> Shimon: The third thing was the story of the riots on Yom Kippur. There were riots in Akko seven years ago. We could have crashed from this, but instead, we moved on. We took the story of the Jews/Arabs (relations) as a lever. People hide the multiculturalism. We took this multiculturalism and we made it a priority everywhere of every place. Schools, kindergartens, community, politicians, religious people tatata we connected, connections with all and all. At every moment we connected people. And that was, instead of sinking, we rose with this story. That was a really, really difficult story.
>
> Me: The centre for mediation and dialogue in the community is a result of this story?
>
> Shimon: Yes. It was established right after. We got to the conclusion that we, as a mixed city,cannot let things like that happen. The fact that it happens here and it happens there, it happens everywhere. But that something that dramatic happens, it’s forbidden. And for it not to happen, let’s leverage it. Instead of hiding it, let’s talk about it. All the time. Talk, meet, organize common events. For instance there was the holidays festival… a month ago. There was Christmas and and Hanukah and we organized an event in Hof hatmarim hotel and it was… atomic. Jews, Moslems, Christians, there was a big event. Those are things that we did not do once. Naaaah, why do we need to highlight that? Yes. We need to highlight it. Multiculturalism is a central issue in the life of people, in the life of the city. If you are not tolerant, if you don’t know how to live with people around, you (inaudible). If you love me or you don’t love me? Don’t love me! But respect me. That’s the approach

> that we work with. You watch Al Jazeera, you see that they shoot in Gaza, fine, don't love me. You go with me in the street, respect me. Say hi, wait in line like a man, treat each other with respect. If you also love me, that's bonus. (Interview 32, 2015)

Acre's multicultural policy, also relayed on its Website, is unique among the four cities under scrutiny. Nevertheless, the local production of a multicultural model, especially in a city like Acre, which comprises a large group of Palestinian-Israelis, is extremely complex and very often contradictory. Here again, I witnessed the difficulty to produce an alternative discourse in a strong national ideological framework, where social stratification is deeply embedded in everyday life, as much as in politics. The multiculturalism imagined by the mayor is one that is built on a status quo, and does not rebel against the superiority of the Jewish establishment. Moreover, the informal discussions I have had with Acre's residents often led to statements such as "Arab-Israelis in Acre prefer to have a Jewish mayor, since it ensures them better access to funds available in the central administration". This type of declaration suggests the quasi-impossibility for Palestinian-Israeli leaders to lever resources.

Apart from the activities promoted by the community service, two other indicators serve the officials who address — or partly address — the issue of living together: the spatial integration of the different groups, in the neighbourhood and even the level of individual buildings; and the resolution of intercommunity conflicts.

In Acre, the Centre for Mediation and Dialogue in the Community aims to produce a dialogue between the different communities. One of the most important activities is mediation between neighbours. Indeed, having residents from different religious and national backgrounds in the same building leads to tension and conflict, which are often translated into wider national issues — a simple fight between neighbours becoming the source of larger demonstrations linked to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Interview 36, 2015). The director of the centre gives examples related to housing culture. But also, she expresses her worries regarding the forced conversions experienced by the newly established Bnei Menashe in Acre.

On another level, *Mishol*, which organises the 'café' every Wednesday, Hebrew learning, a community garden, a community theatre and a multi-religious women's group, aims to foster leadership, encouraging immigrants to take on responsibilities, to lower dependence on welfare, but also to 'learn from one another'.

Other activities are organised in this spirit in other municipalities, but they are not institutionalised. For instance, the early childhood centre of Kiryat Gat has organised support groups for immigrant parents to learn about Israeli parenting culture. Kiryat Shmona's deputy

mayor also lists the reduction of neighbourhood conflicts as being part of his responsibilities.

To sum up, the municipal departments or units for immigration and integration act at the crossroads of a large range of social institutions — understood as established conventions or structures for social order — and institutions — understood as an organisation founded for a public purpose — to facilitate immigrant integration. Firstly, they facilitate the access of immigrants to education, the armed forces and employment, and they act towards increase their sense of belonging to a wider Jewish community. Secondly, those departments are established to become a mechanism among others, following a political resolve to include immigrants in decision-making — for demographic, strategic and political reasons. Lastly, they compete or cooperate — depending on the cities — with other municipal departments, the most direct competitor being the welfare department. In Acre, conflicts were rather open between both departments, the welfare department supervising two important immigrant integration organisations — *Mishol*, and the Centre for Mediation and Dialogue in the Community — as well as employing community and social workers directly appointed to work with immigrants. In Kiryat Gat, the welfare department directly supervises the various units dedicated to immigration — the unit for immigration and integration, but also the *Moked Klita,* which serve Ethiopian-Israeli individuals — therefore leading to better cooperation.

Before I turn to the next section I wish to briefly mention the differences that emerge from the four different towns where I conducted fieldwork.

In these two sections, Acre stands out as a distinct place. When it comes to immigration issues, it illustrates itself as being more proactive, with a dense institutional fabric (that I will describe in the next chapter) and affirmed resolute public agenda regarding multiculturalism. However, the coexistence of a Jewish population side by side with a Palestinian-Israeli population adds layers of complexity. Immigration has contributed to the growth of the city. However, interviewees not only mention Jewish immigration, but also rural-urban migration from neighbouring Palestinian-Israeli villages. The latter is perceived as a threat, and seems to partly drive the Jewish immigration agenda. In every conversation, in every encounter, there is always a fine line (sometimes not so subtle) between a desire to achieve peaceful co-existence, and the reluctance to create alternate discourses of inclusion. In fact, a pragmatic coexistence is not envisaged out of a nation-wide nationalist narrative that affirms the superiority of Jewish settlement over Palestinians in this disputed region. Moreover, within the Jewish population itself, I have identified incessant contradictions between a proactive policy, resulting in extra resources, to invest in the Caucasus Jewish community and the Bnei Menashe community, both experiencing higher levels of poverty in Israel; but the discourses justifying these initiatives is anchored in

paternalism and orientalism.

In Kiryat Gat, I have came across a similar issue of promoting pluralism while there are difficulties in moving away from paternalistic and somewhat racist discourse directed primarily towards Ethiopian immigrants and Ethiopian-Israelis. Even pluralism is described in terms that rely more on an out-dated vision of culture, rather than the potential to achieve a significant transformation of the society as a collective. Nevertheless, Kiryat Gat has successfully set up mechanisms of inclusion, notably in terms of the participation of the immigrant residents themselves in defining their activities, and a more bottom-up approach. This is at least visible when it comes to designing sociocultural activities. Similarly, the institutional set-up leads to less competition and therefore better cooperation between the different stakeholders, with much less conflict than in Acre.

Arad, as I have often heard, is a place where a minority became a majority. The high proportion of Russian immigrants has had the effect of rendering other groups virtually absent from public discourse, despite the diversity of immigrant groups who reside there— English and Spanish speaking immigrants, Black Hebrews, Ethiopian immigrants, asylum-seekers from various countries in Africa, but also numerous Bedouin residents in the area who come regularly to Arad for services. The interviewees tune the visibility of those many social groups down. Similarly, the department for culture, immigration and integration deals quite exclusively with Russian-speaking immigrants from the Former Soviet space. In the welfare department, there seem to be more contacts with a diversity of groups, but still, the lower participation of Ethiopian immigrants for instance, is understood along ethnic terms. The most visible minority after FSU immigrants is the growing ultra-orthodox Jewish community, most of them belonging to the *Gur* Hassidism, who are perceived by residents, local politicians and municipal agents I have met as an unstoppable threat to Arad's rather secular lifestyle, and as a growing social burden for the social services (a threat that I, like my informants, have failed to back up with statistics).

In Kiryat Shmona, I witnessed a much lower degree of intervention by public agencies. Segregated sociocultural activities exist. Altogether, it seems that there is a more significant presence of residents in the implementation of municipal activities. Indeed, I was invited to sit in during various meetings between the mayor, the deputy mayor and heads of various local branches of associations such as the associations of Ukrainians, the organisation for Holocaust survivors, the federation of FSU immigrants… who work with the deputy mayor and the councillor to operate activities.

3 A grounded-theory of integration

Based on the analysis of the in-depth encounters in Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona's municipalities, immigrant integration is defined by the main actors as a process, supported by the State and its representatives, which allows equal access to the educational, professional, social and political institutions of the country. Municipal action is viewed as the pursuance of Israel's immigrant absorption policy, as it was conceived from the first waves of immigration to Israel onwards.

This process varies in time, and if equal opportunities to access institutions are not ensured, policies provide for differentiated treatment, targeting individuals perceived as being subject to structural obstacles due to their age, family situation, lack of knowledge of the norms and rules of institutions, education and so forth. In these cases, State agencies affirm they have a role in defining and implementing mechanisms whose objectives are to reduce these obstacles, notably through affirmative action. Access to political institutions, in particular, is perceived as an important element to help include immigrants in decision-making, and therefore providing better services — for instance municipal services — to the plurality of residents in the city.

In addition to government action that aims to enhance openness of institutions for immigrants, and support mechanisms, municipalities insist that personalised guidance should be available to improve the pride and self-confidence of immigrants. In fact, the psychological well-being of newcomers is considered fundamental to avoid family and social crises, (inherent to the loss experienced during immigration), and to enhance integration and personal accomplishment.

Nevertheless, ultimate responsibility is left up to immigrants themselves. Public actors can implement mechanisms to reduce risks and levers, but newcomers must organise themselves in order to have political representatives defending their interests, in order to become involved in professional retraining and hence acquire skills which fit the needs of the Israeli labour market, and to actively participate in their community's development.

I will detail this definition in the following section.

3.1 Facilitating access to institutions, but ultimately leaving responsibility for access up to immigrants themselves

In accordance with the various fields of action mentioned by Michael Alexander, but also by Rinus Penninx (Penninx *et al.*, 2004; Heelsum & Mascareñas, 2013), action can be taken to improve the legal-political, socio-economic, and cultural-religious dimensions, as well as the

spatial dimension of integration. Here again, this is consistent with the findings presented above, although some distinctions must be underlined.

In my analysis, I have split the legal-political dimension of integration, as defined by Penninx, into two different categories of activities. On the one hand, I have isolated accompaniment and advocacy activities linked to access to immigrant entitlements, and sometimes their expansion beyond the legal period of time as defined by the central administration. On the other hand, I have analysed, more extensively, the right to represent citizens or to be represented as citizens in government institutions. As mentioned in the first part of this thesis project, new immigrants in Israel may acquire citizenship immediately, and therefore have the right to vote and to be voted for. While there are programmes at national level and in big cities, to encourage the political participation of groups who are underrepresented, I have not encountered such programmes in the four cities I have studied. The political representation of the various immigrant communities is the result of different trends: a dense fabric of community groups and associations among FSU immigrants, actions deployed by political parties such as *Israel Beitenu* to headhunt for representatives and train them, but also strategic alliances imagined by candidates with potential representatives of immigrant groups, especially when the community vote is significant for success.

The socio-economic dimension of integration mentioned by Penninx is important when it comes to the second set of activities I have identified; that is to say activities aimed at facilitating access to the country's socio-economic institutions: education, vocational training, job placement and participation in armed forces.

The cultural-religious dimension is more ambiguous. Indeed, the Law of Return provides that Jews abroad can immigrate to Israel. Interviewees considered this criterion to constitute proof of immigrants' belonging to the Israeli nation. The ethno-religious nature of Jewish immigration to Israel made it unique, in their opinion, and facilitated integration. Nevertheless, countless examples of the non-Jewishness of immigrants were mentioned in interviews. For instance, the Indian Bnei Menashe families settling in Acre had to go through a six-month conversion course in order to obtain full entitlements, their practice of Judaism being cast into double by the orthodox authority in Israel. However, non-Jewish FSU immigrants who did not fulfil the requirements of the orthodox authority did not experience any problems in obtaining their immigrant' entitlements. However, they face issues when it comes to marriage or burials, both falling under the authority of the religious authorities. And they might face social pressure to convert from clerks and peers. But, contrarily to certain Jewish groups immigrating from developing countries, access to rights is not correlated with the observance of Orthodox Judaism.

The cultural dimension corresponds to a more pluralist view, and is much more segregated. Immigrants are granted the right to access publicly funded sociocultural activities in their mother tongue.

Penninx et al's model includes the participation of the collective, apart from government institutions. However, results show that civil society plays a small part in the cities I studied. In Acre, mention of some charity organisations was accompanied by facts about the government funding they obtain. The *Garin Ometz* is an important citizens' association in charge of accompanying Bnei Menashe immigrants in the first years of their life in Israel. However, an interview with its representative, the coordinator of the programme for the *Garin Ometz*, whose position is funded by the NGO Shavei Israel, uncovered a paternalist approach, already appearing in interviews with municipal agents. In Arad, a school set up by immigrants to provide evening lessons for Russian speaking pupils was mentioned.

Nevertheless, if the role of the residents was rarely mentioned in sessions, the responsibility of immigrants for grasping opportunities provided by the institutions is fundamental. Similarly to other analyses of development programmes around the world, the government — at any scale — is responsible for reducing risks, offering levers and allowing access, but the immigrants are left with the sole responsible of building their abilities, organising representation and training to acquire skills which fit the labour market etc.

3.2 The central administration's persistent role

When exploring the motives which encouraged local governments to form immigration and integration policies, as well as the different sectors those policies address, I assumed that integration was a function of the State. As Favell argues, "sociologically speaking, we can, of course, conceive of integration taking place without the structure-imposing involvement of the state. Immigrants can be 'integrated' into the local labour market as employees or service providers, or they can be 'integrated' into complex inter-community relations at, say, city or district level. […]. Multiculturalism as a descriptive state-of-affairs, in this sense, could be the product of something that never had anything to do with the 'multicultural' policies or institutions of the state" (Favell (2003) reprinted in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, pp. 373–374).

Since integration is deeply related to citizenship and building the nation-state, "Integration is thus not only an ideal goal for society; it is also something a government sets out to achieve" (*Ibid.,* p. 373). In this context, Favell conceives of "[…] integration as a collective societal goal which can be achieved through the systematic intervention of collective political agency […]"

(*Ibid.*, p. 374). A year later, Rinus Penninx, Karen Kraal, Marco Martiniello and Steven Vertovec begin their edited volume *Citizenship in European Cities* with their definition of integration: a "process of becoming part of the society" (Penninx *et al.* 2004). They argue that the process occurs at three levels: individual, collective (e.g: immigrants' associations) and institutions (*Ibid.*). Again, government institutions or agencies are considered central to integration.

The findings coincide with these definitions of integration as a goal set by the government, a process, requiring the systematic intervention of collective political agency. Indeed, if the interviews stage various activities — linked to rights entitlements, access to educational, economic, social and political institutions, or to fostering an environment of mutual respect — organised by the State — at different scales —, they highlight the determining role of public action.

When I started the project, I drew the hypothesis that local governments would play a more important role, following decentralisation, in this process. However, the findings reveal that responsibilities are far from simply transferred from the central to the local administrations. Actors along different scales cooperate, sometimes overlap, or even direct responsibilities back to each other, leading a void in certain situations. As I have argued in the preceding chapters, unfinished decentralisation leads to fragmented governance.

The central administration, particularly the MOIA, but also the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Education (funding the network of *matnass*), the Ministry of Economy (funding the employment service), the Ministry of Development of the Negev and Galilee (funding the Youth Centres), is the main source of funding. They all require matching funds from the municipality, as well as proactive steps to 'earn' transfers of funding. These funds are more important for 'special populations', that is immigrants from Ethiopia and Latin America, and from Georgian, Bukharan and Caucasus Jews from the Former Soviet Union.

In this context, the municipality is expected to be a creative force in order to access those budgets. It also finds allies in the city: the *matnass* and the youth centres are an example, since they are not part of the municipalities, but they cooperate and deliver sociocultural services, as well as individual and group counselling to young immigrants. It is also expected to raise funds to match the government's transfers. Those funds correspond to between 10% and 25% of transferred funding, depending on the ministry.

If we consider integration as a goal set by the government, involving a range of actors, located at different scales, with members of elected bodies, but also of administrative bodies, public or private, I suggest we use the words 'governance of integration'.

I will develop this last point in the following subsection. However, it seems that the more the central administration is involved in defining activities to address integration, the more an assimilationist approach prevails. On the contrary, when funding is less important, municipal agents display a more pluralist or multicultural approach to integration.

3.3 Variations and occurrences between municipalities: the weight of the national

As I isolate interpretations of the concept of integration given by the interviewees in the four cities, some occurrences materialise, mostly concentrated around the bureaucratic process of absorption. These similarities show that this understanding derives from a national frame. They mainly consist in viewing absorption — an administrative accompaniment of immigrants associated with a set of rights and entitlements — as a core element of integration. In this context, the local administration concentrates its efforts on multiplying the work of the MOIA and other ministries involved. Even the very personal accompaniment offered by municipalities, while often the result of a municipality-led proposal to the MOIA, is mostly funded by the MOIA 'group *Aliyah*' programme.

Two findings balance what seems to be a quite straightforward devolution of responsibility to the local level: first, there is no provision in the municipal reform which obliges the decentralisation of immigrant integration functions to the local level. Municipalities decide voluntarily to become involved, and obtaining the budget is conditioned by the quality of their proposal. Kiryat Shmona applied for funding but was refused as recent immigration intake was low, and they did not have facilities to accommodate the immigrants following their arrival. Secondly, the cities sometimes challenge the criteria that determine the entitlements of immigrants. Being a 'new immigrant' is not a matter of years in Israel, local politicians argue, but a matter of their situation. They advocate individual assessment and longer accompaniment if needed.

This last point is linked to the second understanding of integration, a more classical account of integration as 'becoming a part of society' (Penninx *et al.*, 2004; Penninx, 2013). Here, interviewees consider integration effective if the newcomers successfully participate in what they consider to be the main institutions of the country: education, the armed forces, the work

force and religion. In that sense, it follows that what Michael Alexander or Nando Sigona have termed 'interculturalism' (Alexander, 2003), that is to say a model of integration reconciling the assimilationist and the multicultural model, by consenting to the pursuance of sociocultural practices as long as integration in the main institutions is achieved. This is particularly true for individuals going through direct absorption. Apart from one interviewee who remarked that he would not learn Russian because immigrants should learn Hebrew (Interview 16, 2014), there is a consensus that services in Russian should be provided in cities where a certain proportion of the population is Russian-speaking. In addition, spending on socio-cultural activities conducted in Russian accounts for a significant proportion of the municipality' budget for integration activities. This marks a clear change from the assimilationist ideology which characterised the Israeli integration model up to the 1990s.

Nevertheless, Jewish immigrants from developing countries who are qualified by the MOIA 'special populations' are treated differently. Learning Hebrew is considered a priority. Indeed, street-level bureaucrats dealing with Ethiopian immigrants, for instance, are not themselves Ethiopians. They believe that newcomers should learn Hebrew. One such bureaucrat states that after a while, she no longer wants the translator to be present, as immigrants should be able to understand her. However, she does speak Russian with FSU immigrants who use her office's services, regardless of the number of years they have lived in Israel. Jewish immigrants from developing countries also experience doubts regarding their religious practices. Forced conversions, which occurred in the 1980s among Ethiopian immigrants, were widely criticised. However, conversions are still common practice. Indeed, Bnei Menashe immigrants, from India, undergo a six month conversion course before they obtaining full entitlements (Interview 26, 2015). In fact, the more resources the State puts in, the more it controls the socio-cultural integration of individuals, conversion to Orthodox Judaism being the most coercive aspect in this respect.

In order to ensure that immigrants become part of society, at least at the city level, interviewees encourage their participation in political and technical positions in the municipality. While we may be tempted to see this as an indicator of municipality pressure, several other aspects must be taken into account. Among national political parties, political activities have been more and more locally anchored. This phenomenon was described in the 1980s (Gradus, 1983), and the analysis of the local politics of the four cities reveal that it has continued up to now. *Israel Beitenu*, more specifically, has systematised potential candidates' headhunting in municipalities. Moreover, mayors view alliances with immigrant representatives as a successful strategy to win over electorates. It is in the interest of political parties and individual candidates to bring immigrants into local politics, beyond the stated goal of supporting integration.

Lastly, the more rarely acknowledged understanding of integration as the fostering of a community of tolerance, respect and dialogue, is not a purely bottom-up approach either. While it is not promoted by the MOIA, an interview with the director of the community service at the Ministry of Welfare in Jerusalem shows that community work promotes the use of intercultural community development as a replacement of immigrant integration. The idea lying behind this is the promotion of dialogue between different social groups, and the fact that its members constantly redefine society. Unsurprisingly, policymakers with a background in social and community work are more acquainted with this lexicon and mention this approach in interviews.

To sum up, if the differences between the four cities seem to show that there is a local governance of integration, this apparent freedom of interpretation should be qualified by various factors. First, the process of absorption is very much defined by the State, and mostly funded by central administration. Second, what seems to be the adoption of a more multicultural model at local level applies to certain groups only (i.e. Groups which are considered closer to the mainstream Israeli population) and therefore in lesser need of sociocultural incorporation into Israeli society. However, the fact that these groups receive less public funding than immigrants from developing countries confirms that, when untied from central administration, local authorities show greater tolerance for expression of identity. Lastly, integration policies are mostly cantoned to administrative accompaniment or the organisation of sociocultural activities. The promotion of integration as living together is at a very preliminary stage.

4 Scales of integration

In this grounded definition of integration, the role of public agencies is being brought forward, but also, to a certain extent, the role of the immigrant himself/herself and his/her community. Public agencies range from the central administration (its ministries and the district and local representations of those ministries), to the municipality, composed of an elected body, the municipal council, but also of technical staff. The municipality is not the only local actor. It works alongside youth centres, cultural organisations funded by State funding — the *matnass* being the most important network of community centres, and funded by the Ministry of Education. But it also works with diaspora organisations such as the Joint or the Jewish Agency, NGOs such as Shavei Israel, or community groups. In addition, immigrants themselves are considered as responsible for their integration. They can proactively access local government, but can also decide on the type of activities offered by the municipality as described in Kiryat Gat, and they are the ones ultimately responsible for levering their own capacity to contribute to the city, as revealed by leadership programmes led by the welfare department.

In this constellation, responsibilities in immigrant integration are fragmented, although the State, at central and local levels, is a crucial actor. The multiscalar character of immigrant integration governance will be discussed in more depth in the upcoming chapter. Nevertheless, I wish to draw some preliminary remarks on this topic.

Indeed, in the previous chapter, I have suggested that one of the frameworks directing policymaking was provided by the experiences of policymakers. Policymakers produce scales, and, more specifically, they produce specific scales of integration. In terms of access to political institutions, they highlight the importance of national and local democratic bodies. The sociocultural activities are mostly described at community-level, and it might go beyond city boundaries. However, when it comes to questions of economic performance, policymakers were more inclined to believe that immigrants should rely on their own capacity to achieve economic results similar to citizens born in Israel in the long run. In this analysis that encompasses more actors than the previous chapter, new frames complement the previous findings. Notably, the terms determining sociocultural integration differ depending on the immigrant group considered — cultural segregation being considered acceptable for immigrants from developing countries for the elderly but only a temporary cultural segregation is envisaged for young adults and adults. Ethiopian or Indian immigrants are expected to eventually participate in mainstream Israeli cultural organisations. Additionally, when it comes to economic integration, the institutions are more tolerant than policymakers. They argue for facilitating access to the labour market, understanding that skills, norms and rules on the Israeli labour market differ from the immigrants' previous experiences.

What are the scales of integration endorsed by the interviewees, and what scales emerge?

4.1 The national scale: 'special populations' must integrate

The central government, through the different ministries, is still very present when it comes to immigrant integration in Israel. First of all, and even if there is a consensus in Israel that decentralisation has been taking place since the 1980s, Israel is still characterised by centralised administration. More particularly, when it comes to immigrant integration, municipal reform does not make it obligatory for municipalities to take an active role and devote a municipal budget to this topic (Razin, 2003). Therefore, adapting the municipal structure to the city's demography does very much depend on the willingness of the municipality to engage in this topic and invest extra resources. For the municipalities of depressed towns like the ones I have studies, mobilising these resources would be challenging.

In fact most of the municipal budget intended to support immigrant integration comes from national funding from the MOIA, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Economy. Despite the fact that municipalities have to put together projects and show central government their will and capacity to invest in immigrant integration activities, they are not the majority funders of these activities. Usually, the MOIA requests a 10% matching from the municipality, while other ministries require 25%. Although this is a small proportion, certain interviewees still believe it is an excessive burden for their budget. Local officials in Kiryat Shmona, for instance, have argued that this system favours municipalities with solid finances. Indeed, if a bid is available, Kiryat Shmona, whose municipality is tutored by the Ministry of Interior following several years of bad governance, does not have the financial resources to provide 25% of the budget. They therefore feel constantly excluded from these exceptional budgets.

The fact that the ministries transfer funding to the municipalities does not systematically translate into direct supervision. Results show that there are tensions between the assimilationist national scale, and a more accommodating and pluralist local scale. This tension is to the advantage of the local level in the cases of direct absorption, that is when immigrants decide to settle in the city and do not benefit from access to absorption centres, and to extra funding as 'special populations'. This increased flexibility seems to be the result of: lower funding; of better representation within the local institutions, since Russian-speaking veteran immigrants make up a huge proportion of the municipal agents serving immigrants; and maybe, of the cultural proximity of the FSU immigrants with the mainstream Israeli society.

However, 'special populations' who benefit from a higher funding also receive a clearer injunction to assimilate from the national level. Their entitlements are often conditional on implementation of practices of Judaism which comply with the standards set by the orthodox Jewish authorities. They benefit from longer periods of Hebrew learning, based on their national belonging rather than on individual assessment of language acquirements. Many of the interviewees working with Ethiopian or Indian immigrants did not speak the immigrants' mother tongue, while one of the hiring criteria is to be able to speak Russian. After some years in Israel, 'special populations', more particularly younger adults, are expected to interact with municipal staff in Hebrew whereas FSU immigrants are not accused of integration failure if they continue all their activities in Russian, even thirty years after immigration. The remarks are often, although not always, coupled with racist affirmations of the superiority of Israelis and Western immigrants over Jewish immigrants from developing countries.

4.2 A local scale enabling multiculturalism

Social theorists have raised doubts over the assumption that local level government is more accommodating — in the sense of promoting a more pluralist approach to integration — than central government. Among them, Hans Mahnig shows that in Swiss cities, “local conservatism prevails” (Penninx *et al.*, 2004). Nevertheless, other studies have demonstrated that many cities have initiated multicultural policies against a rather assimilationist national approach (Friedmann & Lehrer, 1997; Alexander, 2003).

In this study, it seems that the local scale makes a more pluralist approach to integration possible, at least when it comes to immigrants benefiting from the Law of Return. I have shown in the previous subsection that three factors seem to explain the adoption of a multicultural policy: the lack of supervision over the spending of funds transferred to municipalities to hire municipal agents in charge of immigrant integration; the monopolistic position of FSU immigrants in these positions in the municipality and in other positions dealing with immigrant integration in the city; and the perceived proximity of Jewish immigrants from the Former Soviet Union, and from other Western countries, with the mainstream Israeli population.

This translates into the use of a public budget targeting immigrant integration in the organisation and implementation of segregated sociocultural activities that benefit the immigrant population only. Having attended several of these events in the cities, my command of the Hebrew language was of absolutely no help in understanding the activities during these events, entirely conducted in Russian. For me, this constituted a substantial paradox, where integration was conceived of providing services outside what is perceived ‘Israeli’.

The justification for spending public funds on concerts, lectures or other performances in Russian was the confidence and well-being procured for immigrants through the promotion of these activities. Showing them they were welcomed and they ought to be proud of their culture was perceived as a fundamental empowerment tool to avoid a potential feeling of being the ‘underdog’, to avoid social crises, and to increase the success of their settlement in Israel, and the immigrant retention rate of the city.

4.3 The immigrant and his capacity

In this multiscalar environment, the role of the immigrants themselves also increases. Indeed, the theoretical model I described at the beginning of this dissertation links to recent developments in migration policy studies around frames of ‘active, participatory and productive

individuals' (Soysal, 2012) or of 'deservingness' (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012; Garcés-Mascareñas, 2015). Indeed, Soysal demonstrates that the new European social project focuses on individual responsibility in achieving a higher position in the labour market and active citizenship (Soysal, 2012). For Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas, deserving foreigners are evaluated along three dimensions: their place of residence, which provides access to rights; their performance (that is their economic reliability and their cultural integration); and their vulnerability, that has to be proved and accompanied by a denial of will and agency, as being an asylum-seeker requires the lack of a migratory project (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012).

This last account, in particular, is enlightening. Indeed, the connection between the place of residence and the treatment immigrants receive is very present. Immigrants are quasi 'investments' and securing their access to institutions should translate, in a near future, into their socio-economic contribution to the city. Secondly, this participation in the institutions is the main measure of immigrants' integration in Israel. Having their children in educational frameworks, and then in the armed forces, working, taking part in the political life of the city, volunteering, all these reinforce the rightfulness of the municipal agenda. Public action aims at fostering an enabling environment, removing obstacles to access institutions, but the immigrants are ultimately responsible for using their rights, taking advantage of them and eventually, contributing to the development of the city and the State.

Lastly, vulnerable immigrants are usually not treated as individuals, with personal accompaniment like other immigrants. They are seen as a group, a 'special population' with particular entitlements and measures of affirmative action aiming at correcting their vulnerability. Immigrants from developing countries are labelled vulnerable from the moment they arrive in Israel. Thus, they follow a specific integration path, where they are hosted, as a group, in absorption centres such as the ones operating in Arad and in Kiryat Gat. Their religious practices are corrected, and schemes for vocational training are designed even before their actual settlement in the city. Mapping is carried out in order to design the best programme for their needs. If some questions are raised, doubts are not always shared. For instance, a welfare worker in Acre explains that the forced conversion of Bnei Menashe immigrants and their settlement in religious communities may raise issues and create youthful rebellion in the long run. When I shared this comment with a high up member of the religious community, he asked me to repeat, arguing he did not understand my question, as the immigrants came to Israel to live as observant Jews, and there was no reason for them to question that now (Interview 36, 2015; Interview 47, 2015).

Conclusions

This chapter focuses essentially on the rescaling of State responsibility towards immigrant integration. Starting with the main municipal service in charge of immigration and immigrant integration, and expanding to its close institutional environment, I have analysed the local interpretation of immigrant integration, and its definition as a legitimate object of public action.

Immigrant integration is conceived as a process over time, in which public agencies are responsible for fostering a favourable environment for immigrants to quickly access the country's main institutions: religion, education, the armed forces and employment. In that framework, the bureaucratic process of absorption, partly decentralised to the municipality, is associated with personal accompaniment, immigrant-friendly public service delivery and local political representation. In that sense, it displays continuity with the national conception of absorption, as defined by the State since its very inception.

This continuity can be seen on two levels: first, the virtual absence of an alternative discourse that would get rid of the social stratification of Israeli society, which I could very roughly define as such: a core established group of Ashkenazi European Jews, followed by a peripheral heterogeneous group including immigrants from Africa and Asia and their Israeli-born offspring, as well as FSU immigrants, and lastly, a parallel marginalised group including Palestinian Israelis, and other Muslim and Christian groups. The assumption that an inherited discourse from the 'second Israel' would lead to a more progressive view of integration is not very relevant. In fact, the stories I collected are geared towards the inclusion of this 'second Israel' in the mainstream discourse of pioneering and nation-building, and the proximity of Arab Jews with Palestinians is in not at all accepted in the conversations.

Second, the weight of public funding in the design of a local policy sanctions the municipality as the executor, while the central administration still finds ways to impose its conception of integration by transferring funds. This is particularly true for 'special populations' who experience a much more coercive policy of assimilation than their Western and FSU counterparts. The delegation of responsibilities is not at all straightforward and negotiation is permanent.

Nevertheless, local discourses do introduce several breaks in the understanding of integration. A first one concerns the pluralist attitude adopted by municipalities, particularly for immigrants going through 'direct absorption'. Here, integration policies even include the idea of supporting one's prior cultural practices. In that sense, public funding targeting immigrant integration in

fact participates in the formation of a segregated socio-cultural landscape. This first step towards multiculturalism must be understood in the context of the massive immigration from the former USSR, and the formidable monopoly, on immigration and integration matters, exercised by Russian-speaking politicians, organisations and agents. But it has its limitations, and is still the privilege of several groups.

A second important break concerns the responsibility of immigrants in their integration process. In the previous chapters, I have already introduced the concept of active citizenship as well as that of deservingness, in order to better understand the limitations that local governments provide for the Law of Return. Here again, a more neoliberal conception of integration prevails. The introduction of a public function aiming at reinforcing the pride and confidence and newcomers, or in other words, to empower them, exists in a new context where immigrants come alone, as isolated households. If the absorption centres, the *Garin* or those infrastructures put in place for certain groups defined as 'special populations' virtually create new communities, individuals coming through direct absorption now rely on the *proyektorim* to obtain the necessary support during the first months following their arrival. The emphasis on their psychological well-being consists in providing them with the tools necessary to access the institutions. It is a mechanism which is intended to create a favourable environment for the immigrants' potential to be realised. This support corresponds to an idea that the immigrants deserve help at first, but will then become net contributors to the local economy and to the social development of the city.

This final remark leads to the following chapter. In one discussion with my supervisor, geographer William Berthomière, he asked me the following question: is this not the success of Israel's adoption of neoliberalism? The ability to make people believe that the Welfare state is still alive, and to transfer responsibilities to communities, without eliciting any protest, and without any major disruption in the way immigrants are welcomed in the country? I will attempt to answer this question, by examining the organisational characteristics of immigrant integration.

Chapter 8 ◊ Multiscalar and fragmented governance of immigration and integration

The last chapter of this analysis relates more directly to the governance of immigration and integration. Here, governance relates to the transformation of the state's role and of the political regulation modes that are associated with that role. As described in the chapter two, through governance, the emphasis is on interaction with other actors, interdependency, regularity and rules of interaction and exchange linked to decision taking (Galès, 2011).

The assumption is that we are currently witnessing a multiscalar, polycentric, non-isomorphic type of city governance, a result of what Olivier Giraud (2012) has called 'unfinished decentralisation',[106] or what Monica Varsanyi (2008) describes as 'fragmented, incomplete, contingent devolution' of responsibilities. Decentralisation is not a straightforward devolution of power and responsibilities. The many actors in this multiscalar environment are involved in a constant bargaining process to gain, retain, or regain power and resources. This process does not necessarily lead to more 'coherent' policies (Vanier, 2015).

I have explored the question: "how to isolate local cases in a context of multiple interdependences?"[107] (Pollard & Prat, 2012). My proposal lay in methodologically isolating the local scale, as this provided a frame of observation; but when it comes to analysis, I adopted a fluid and unrestrained 'levels' approach in order to assess the socio-political space. As I have argued, the analysis therefore focuses on apprehending the "upwards, downwards and transversals links" (Brenner, 2004, p. 10), and identifying the endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors who inhabit the places for which they intend to form policies (Di Meo, 2008), more particularly immigration and integration policies.

In the specific context of small and mid-sized cities located outside core networks, I decided to try to apprehend the rescaling of governance in those areas less equipped to adapt to the devolution of responsibilities and the pressure for economic development. While this pressure is usually applied in Manichaean fashion, where towns either adopt the rules of the (neoliberal) game, or barely survive at the margins, I argue that the processes are more complex and I believe that a deeper understanding of immigration and integration policies in mid-sized cities, located away from large economic centres, may help us to better understand power rescaling processes.

[106] Translation of the author.
[107] Translation of the author.

This chapter therefore aims to answer the following question: how do the strategies deployed by social actors involved in immigration and integration policy formulation and implementation transform the governance that specifically targets this policy domain into a multiscalar and fragmented political space?

The main objective was therefore to map the actors associated with immigration and integration issues in each city. The charts I produced aim to draw attention to immigration and integration governance. Indeed, each institution hosts various actors, and each one of them may interact with the other. In doing so, they create and terminate relations, they facilitate cooperation or they initiate conflicts. Sometimes, their work overlaps, while some issues fall in between. The frameworks and logic applied when formulating policies, programmes and activities, may emerge locally, may be the products of negotiation or be adopted from central administration. Attempts to describe these relations therefore allow us to at least partially address the question: Who governs immigration and integration issues?

The first section presents the charts and the associated descriptions of each morphology. Secondly, I provide an analysis of the different institutional organisations, and the underlying logic of local governance. Lastly, I show that peripheral mid-sized cities, while they engage in immigration policymaking and produce a new socio-political space, are generally trapped in a neoliberal 'game' which favours interlocality competition to gain access to central resources. The State is defined as absent, but is in fact ever present, imposing new rules that make protest quite difficult. Innovation occurs but serves certain interests, the production of new scales contributing to the sustainability of neoliberal public affairs' management.

1 Four cities with four immigrant integration institutional morphologies

Over the last three decades, new conceptual tools have been invented to analyse urban/local policies. Subnational spaces are not governed by local government anymore but by urban/local 'governance'. French sociologist and political scientist Patrick Le Galès argues that governance is also related to politics, but includes public and private actors who participate in public action (Galès, 2011) Those actors form networks, are interdependent, and follow interactional rules and constraints (*Ibid.*). Governance did not replace government, claims Le Galès, but addressing local issues through a governance lens allows us to formulate new questions and to study policy formulation differently (*Ibid.*).

Other concepts were harnessed to describe the transformations of scales of power. Political scientist Clarence Stone coins the term 'urban regime', which refers to "informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to take and carry out governing decisions" (Stone [1989] quoted by Good, 2009, p. 18). Stone argues that this mode of governance emphasises economic development and growth. Kristin Good also draws on Barbara Ferman's 'arenas' (1996). For Ferman, actors, their identities and interests are represented through four arenas — economic, civic, intergovernmental and electoral (*Ibid*., p. 34). Ferman's analytical frame is quite close to anthropologist Jean Pierre Olivier de Sardan's definition of the arena as "(…) a site of concrete confrontations of social actors interacting around common stakes. It (the arena) is a 'local' space"[108] (Olivier de Sardan, 2010).

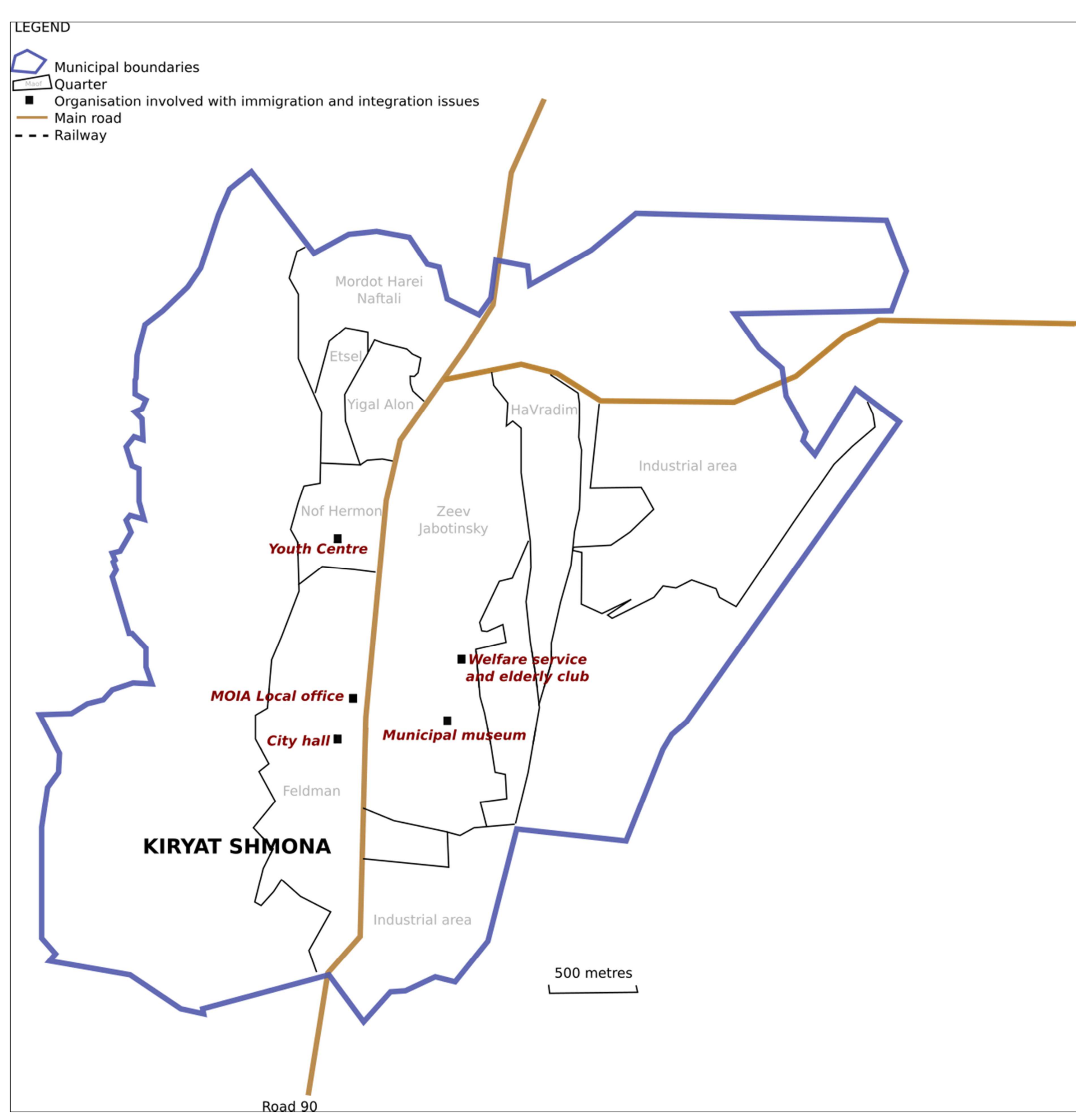
Concepts of governance — or arena — account for the fragmentation of responsibilities between cities, central administration, supranational institutions, transnational networks, civil society or the private sector. Descaling does not mean 'zooming in', but addresses the Deleuze-like character of these superimposed and polymorphic scales (Herod, 2011). The displacement of scales in immigration policies in the United States and Europe (see Alexander, Mahnig and Garbaye in Penninx et al, 2004 ; Varsanyi, 2008 ; Walker &Leitner, 2011 ; or Jørgensen, 2012) has been documented and proves that scales of decision are socially constructed as well as being continuously negotiated. In a context of 'unfinished decentralisation' (Giraud, 2012), the transfer of responsibilities towards the local scale is analysed as 'partial, incomplete and contingent' (Varsanyi, 2008). Indeed, immigration is shared at the very least between the State and cities, but also with transnational actors, resulting in an extremely diverse urban governance typology, from 'sanctuary cities' to 'exclusionary cities'.

Following this conceptual framework, I have described the network of institutions or actors involved in immigration and integration issues in each city. To do so, I have started with interviews within the municipalities with the first person being identified by external actors as knowing about immigration in the city. From their testimony, I have described the first links with other actors, and the second, and the third links, using a snowball effect.

In this section, I try to describe the immigrant integration governance in each city, starting with the least dense institutional fabric — Kiryat Shmona — and finishing with the city having the richest institutional fabric — Acre. For each, I present a first 'flat' presentation of their organisations, and a second mapping, resolutely multiscalar, which shows in a quasi-physiological fashion the interdependent relations of the multiple actors involved in this governance.

[108] Translation of the author.

1.1 Kiryat Shmona



8.1. 'Flat' representation of the organisations dealing with immigration and integration in Kiryat Shmona. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).

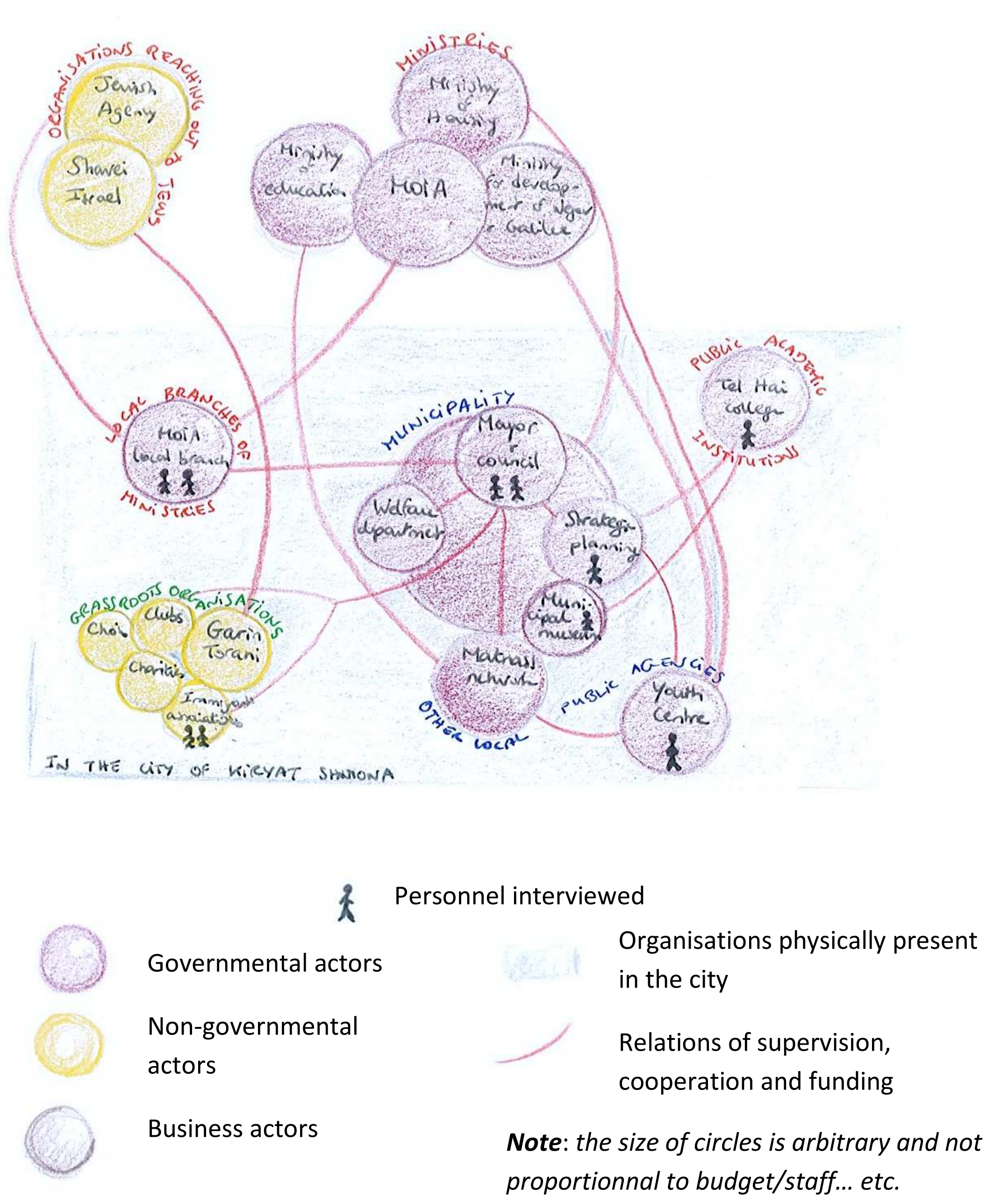


Figure 8.1. Multiscalar governance of immigration and integration in Kiryat Shmona. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).

In December 2013, I conducted a pre-fieldwork survey to select the cities I would work on. On Kiryat Shmona municipality's Website, the number for immigration and integration issues led me straight to the local branch of the MOIA. There, the MOIA local coordinator suggested I get in touch with the deputy mayor of the city, whom she identified as the relevant contact person for immigration issues in the municipality. Kiryat Shmona's council includes two municipal councillors: Abram, the deputy mayor, and another councillor, both representing *Israel Beitenu*. I spent several hours with Abram: I contacted him by phone first and then met him for an interview, which turned into a drive along interview in the city. He was also present when I

interviewed the mayor of the city. I shot a documentary movie in which he is the main character: I spent national election day with him, as well as two days dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Allies victory over the Axis powers during the Second World War. Lastly, we met again to watch the movie together, once with the presence of his assistant, and on a second viewing together with the mayor.

Abram is involved in all immigration-related issues in the city. Russian-speaking Kiryat Shmona residents contact him for any issues related to health benefits, visas or organisation of events. In that sense, he needs to be knowledgeable in numerous areas of immigrant entitlements. He also describes neighbourhood conflicts in which he acts as mediator. Similarly, municipal agents turn to him when they need an intermediary. Lastly, he and the other councillor supervise the MOIA budget in the city and write up proposals for programmes. Through his active role in *Israel Beitenu*, Abram also has direct access to *Israel Beitenu* representatives in the government, and claims to have privileged relations with the Minister of the MOIA, as well as other members.

Despite what he describes as close relations, Abram never managed to access the MOIA 'group *Aliyah*' programme. Today, Kiryat Shmona does not host a unit, let alone a department, for immigration and integration. Apart from the two councillors, the local branch of the MOIA is the main office which immigrants turn to upon arrival in Kiryat Shmona. The local office has an administrative role. However, the MOIA district office, operating in the Galilee area, organises sociocultural activities — ranging from lectures on Judaism, meetings to learn about entitlements, concerts and trips around Israel. A monthly list of activities is published at the MOIA local office. Kiryat Shmona only welcomes a handful of newcomers each year. The local office also deals with arrivals in surrounding villages. Its activities are limited, however.

The main department dealing with immigrants in the municipality is the welfare department, which Abram is in charge of at council level. Nevertheless, Kiryat Shmona immigrant residents have access to sociocultural activities in Russian. Abram mentions the club for elderly residents as a meeting place. The *matnass* also organises activities. Lastly, the city hosts several local associations — often derived from national networks — for Holocaust survivors, Second World War veterans, Russian speakers, Ukrainian immigrants, etc.

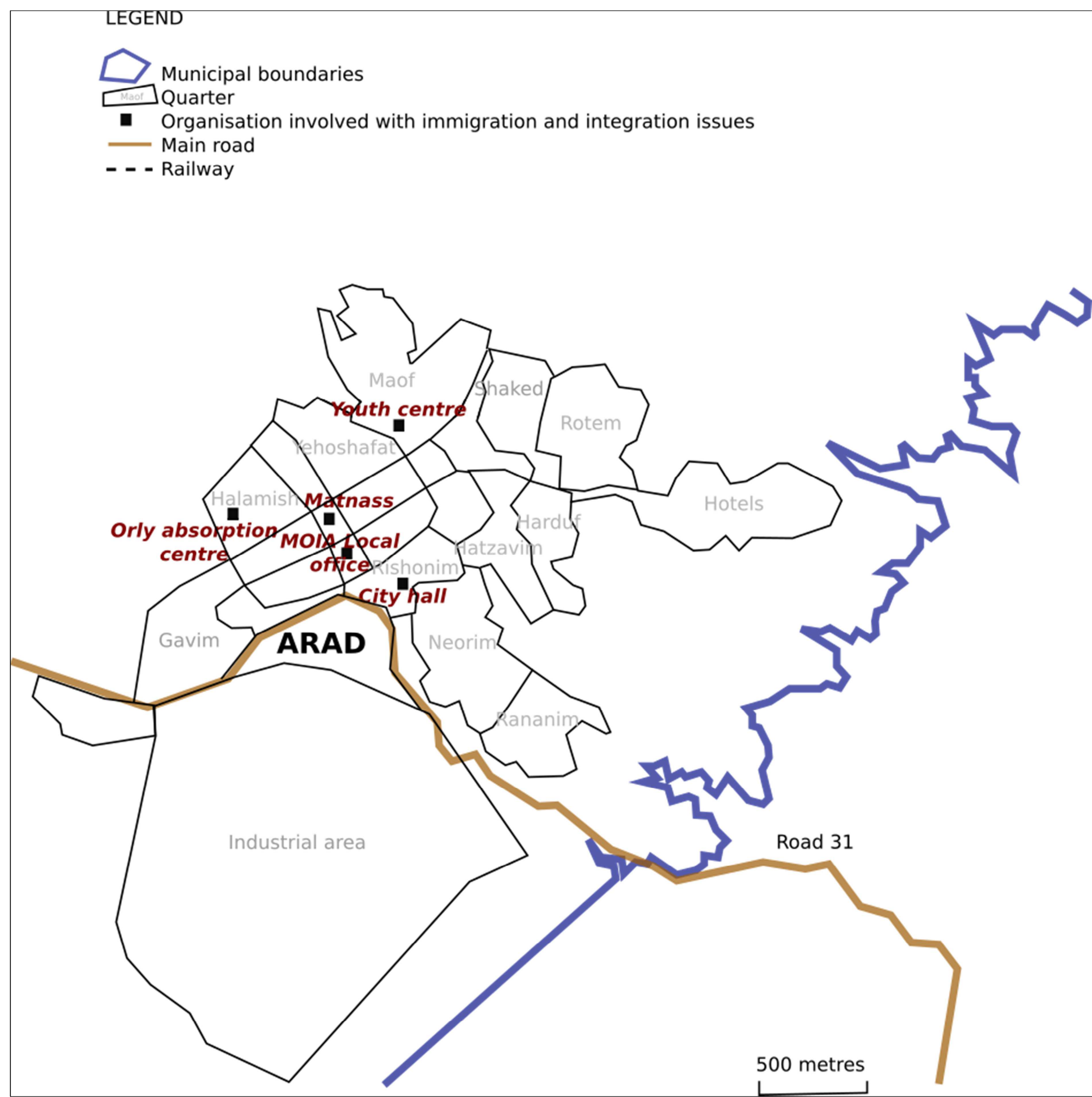
Another project mentioned by the deputy mayor, but also by the person in charge of strategic planning in the city, and by other residents I met during fieldwork, is the renovation of the municipal museum and its transformation into the Museum of *Maabarot*. Tel Hai College, located outside the city, together with the municipality, is pushing for recognition of transit camp' residents contribution to the construction of the Israeli nation. The project includes the

transformation of the modest museum (currently located in an old mosque), into a national museum as part of the Israel museum network. However, it also included a series of conferences in the city, with residents, led by historian Amir Goldstein. Interestingly enough, Abram advocates adding former USSR Second World War veterans' stories to the exhibition. So far, this request has not been accepted.

The *matnass*, (a network of community centres funded by the Ministry of Education), supervises a higher than average number of activities in Kiryat Shmona, and benefits from a high reputation. Notably, it supervises the Youth Centre, itself funded by the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee. The Youth Centre has been recently reorganised. Together with the municipal agent in charge of strategic planning, and other municipal councillors and agents, they engaged in issues related to demographic growth. Part of their work addresses the lack of lands for residential building. At the time of the interviews, they were working on the transfer of lands to the city (from Kfar Yuval and Kfar Gladi kibbutz), for future development. In 2016, Yuvalim (Kfar Yuval lands), were eventually transferred. However, this demographic growth project does not directly address immigration. The director of the Youth Centre only showed me a brochure of the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee and its project 'Go North' which encourages immigrants to settle in northern cities, with financial incentives. However, he is not directly working on this project at the moment. Some discussions took place in the municipality when a public debate arose regarding the settlement of French Jewish immigrants. It was, however, decided not to pursue this question.

Indeed, the municipality has avoided becoming involved in projects related to new immigration settlements. For instance, Shavei Israel approached the municipality to settle a group of new Indian Bnei Menashe immigrants. The municipality refused to become involved. However, the families have settled without this participation in 2016, and their integration is supported by a group of religious families constituting a *Garin* in Kiryat Shmona.

1.2 Arad



Map 8.2. 'Flat' representation of the organisations dealing with immigration and integration in Arad. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).

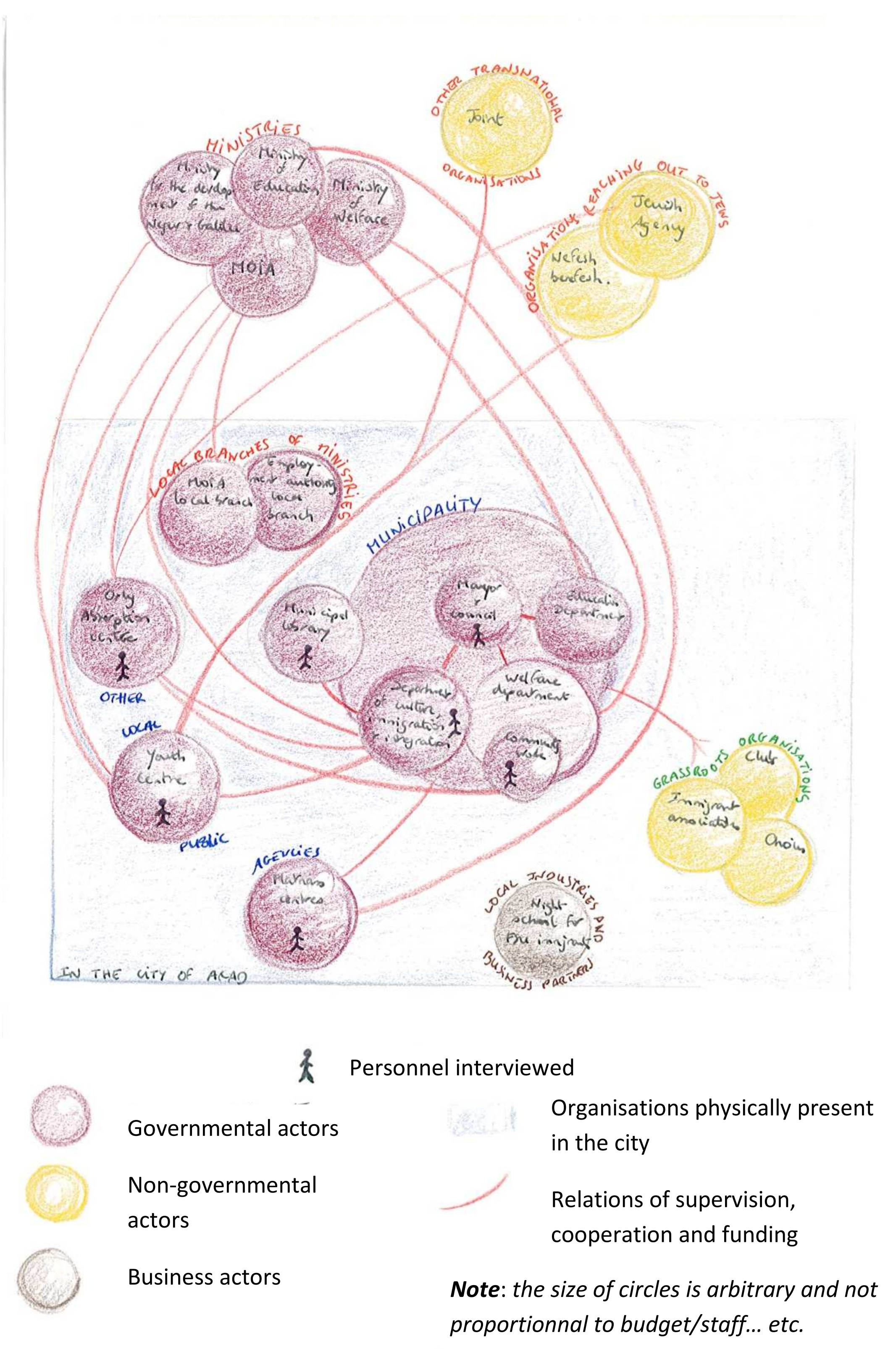


Figure 8.2. Multiscalar governance of immigration and integration in Arad. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).

Arad has two main specificities when it comes to immigration: it hosts a large group of immigrants who arrived from the 1990s on — around 40% of the residents —, and its mayor is

herself an immigrant from Moldova — in her words the first person elected from the 1990 FSU immigration. After her election, the mayor took over immigration and integration issues.

Nevertheless, the operation of immigration-linked programmes is in the hands of a municipal department dedicated to immigration, integration and culture. Its director, Miriam, has dealt with this particular issue, in the municipality, since the 1990s. During the early years of her career, Arad was still very much involved in outreaching to Jewish immigrants around the world, and more particularly in the former USSR. Miriam recalls the preparation work, including employment and schools mapping, listing the steps following settlement in Arad, and so on. However, she explains that immigration outreaching was brought to an end when a new mayor was elected. For years, Miriam worked mainly on accompanying newcomers during the first months of their arrival, and on providing cultural activities in Russian for the large group of Russian speakers residing in the city. The election of an immigrant mayor raised her hopes back up. And indeed, Arad reintegrated the State programme for outreaching, notably the MOIA 'group *Aliyah*' programme. But her hope was short-lived: after a short space of time the mayor ran for the national elections and became a Member of Parliament. The city elected a new mayor. And when I met Miriam some months later, she informed me that outreaching was over once again.

Due to the demographic composition of the city, the education and welfare departments also receive budgets specifically targeted at immigrant children or welfare beneficiaries. I met the person in charge of community work in the welfare services. Despite its 'welfare' connotation, the community worker Elena tries to reach out to a wide section of the population and organises activities around leadership, but also lectures, trips, cultural activities etc. She finds that elderly Russian-speaking people play an important role in the activities organised, especially those in Russian. Elena is one of the few people who mention the presence of other groups apart from FSU immigrants. Notably, she talks about the Ethiopian immigrants hosted by the Orly absorption centre, a population she finds reluctant to participate in activities organised by the municipality. She is the only person to mention a councillor representing them. And she also mentions the asylum-seekers living in the city. Indeed, a group of around 300 asylum-seekers, mainly from Sudan and Eritrea, reside in Arad. However, at the time of the interview, the municipality had just started mapping the needs of this group and thinking of ways to get involved.

Another municipal service mentioned during interviews is the municipal library. Apart from having several sections with foreign books — in Russian, but also in English, Spanish and French, the municipal library also organises cultural events, such as lectures or concerts, for the city's

immigrant residents, To this end the municipality transfers an MOIA budget to the municipal library.

The municipality closely cooperates with another body, located outside the local authority: the Youth Centre, supervised by the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee. The Youth Centre occupies a large building, and the availability of small flats makes it possible for the municipality to offer 'absorption flats' to newcomers for the first few days following their arrival in the city. The Youth Centre has immigration-linked activities of its own. First of all, it employs an immigration coordinator, whose position is funded by the MOIA, the Jewish Agency as well as Nefesh beNefesh. At the moment of the meeting with the director, the coordinator coordinated a programme for Russian-speaking immigrants learning massage therapy. They were hosted in Arad and interned in hotels' spas located near the Dead Sea. Other groups of English-speaking and Spanish-speaking youngsters were mentioned. The ultimate goal of these activities was the settlement in Arad of some of the programmes' participants.

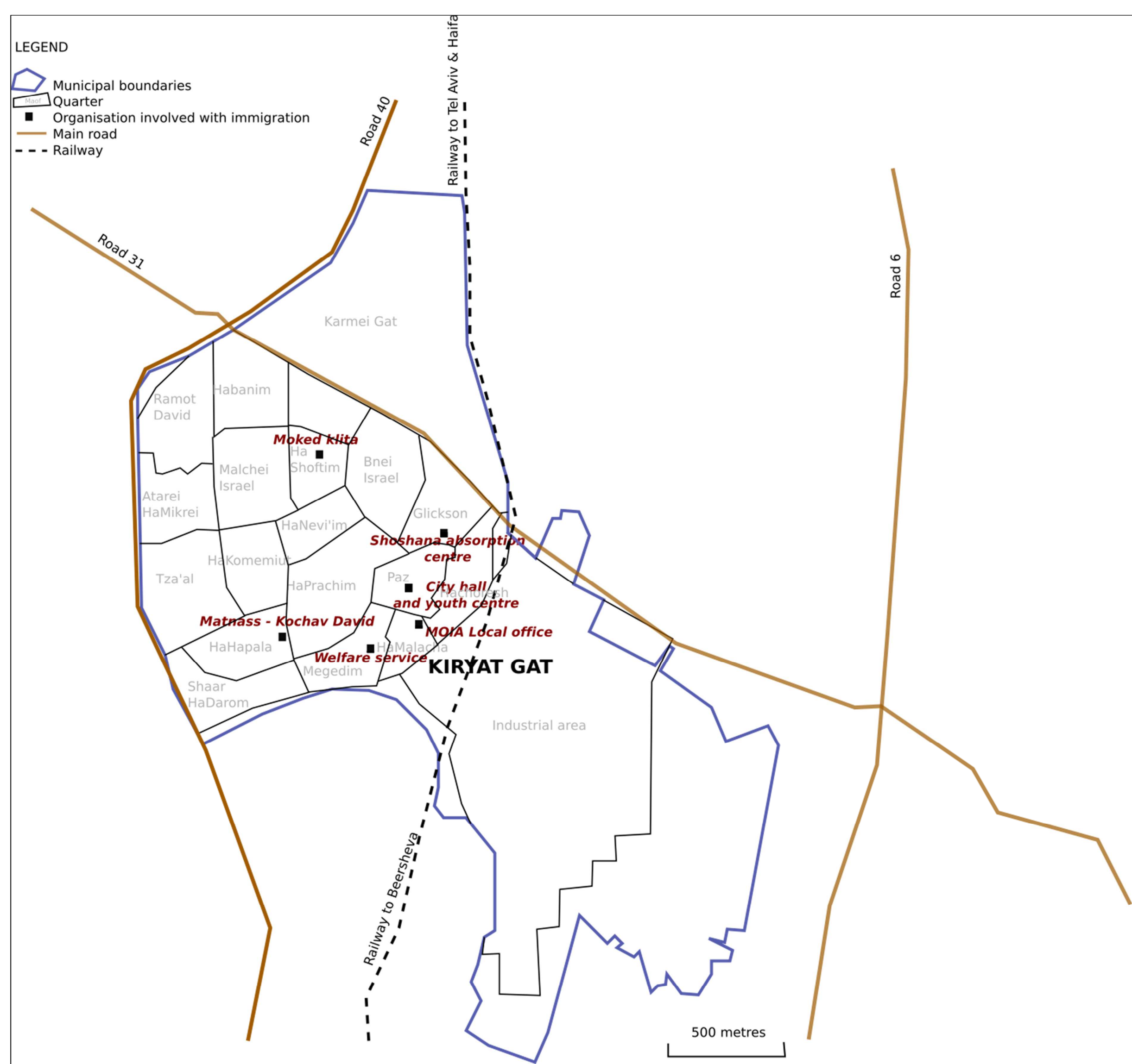
As in all the municipalities, the *matnass* is also widely involved in providing sociocultural activities in Russian. I met Natalia, who has worked at the *matnass* since the 1990s. Her wall is decorated with hundreds of signatures of Russian-speaking artists from the former Soviet Union. A member of the Russian intelligentsia, she has dedicated all her efforts to reconstituting in Arad a cultural life similar to her home experience. Using her networks, she first started to establish cultural salons in Arad. Nowadays, she organises concerts, poetry readings, lectures and health tourism excursions to the Dead Sea, etc.

The city also hosts numerous associations, clubs and local branches of organisations for holocaust survivors, second World War veterans, etc. FSU immigrants have also established a private evening school for Russian-speaking pupils to cope with what they perceive as an inferior educational programme in mainstream schools.

Two institutions play a role for immigration in the city. The local branch of the MOIA deals with the administration of the settlement of newcomers. However, I never managed to meet the local coordinator, and we only exchanged emails. Lastly, Arad hosts an absorption centre for Ethiopian immigrants. The Orly absorption centre changed place several times, from a hotel located on the outskirt of the city, with a view of the Dead Sea, to the present Youth Centre and now, to a north-west neighbourhood with a high concentration of ultra-orthodox Jews. The Orly absorption centre reaches out to the city, and does not work in isolation, despite the rare occasions it was mentioned in interviews with officials and municipal agents. Indeed, the coordinator in charge of social affairs described the involvement with schools, with sport

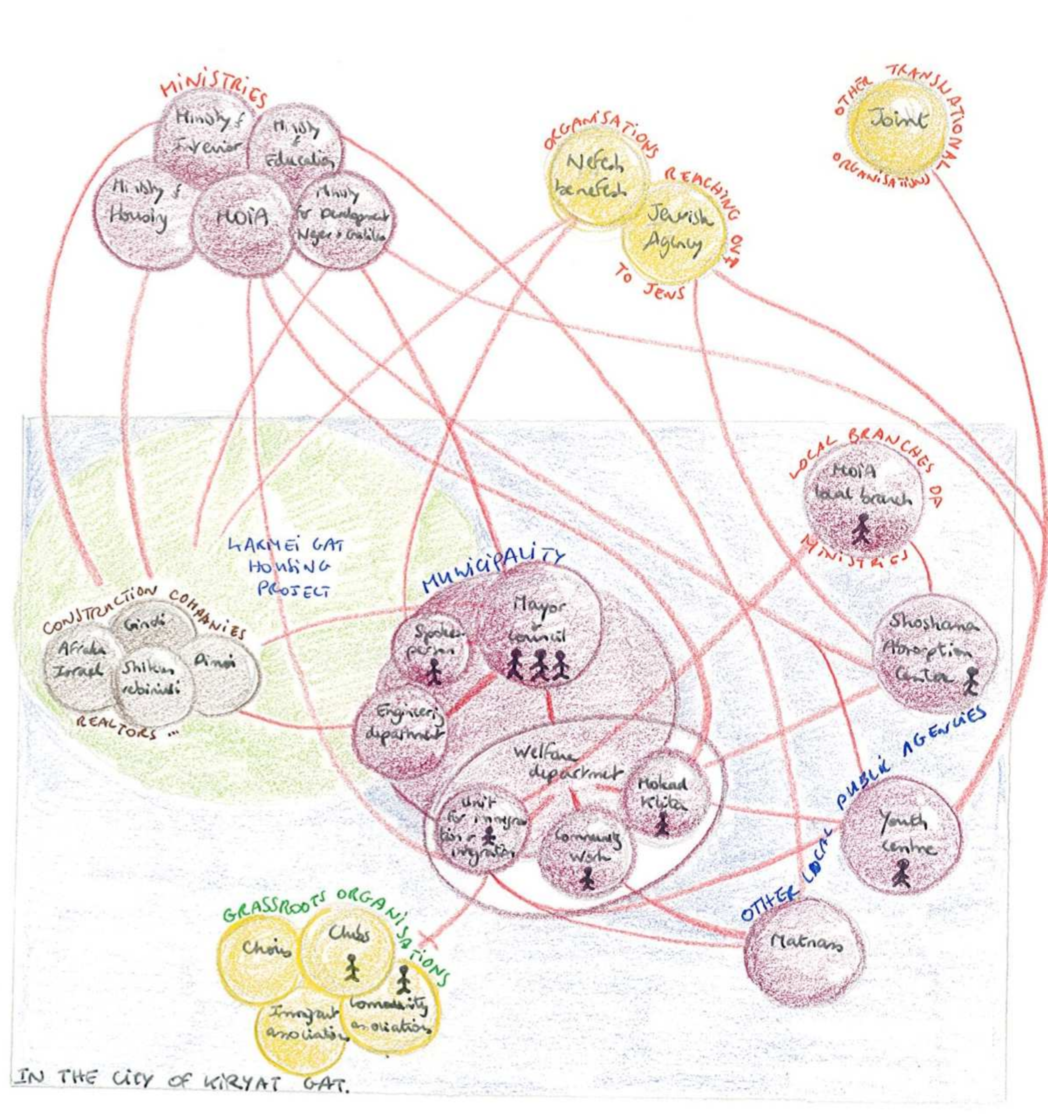
programmes, and even with the local police. However, the domination of the Russian-speaking immigrant groups tends to hide other groups.

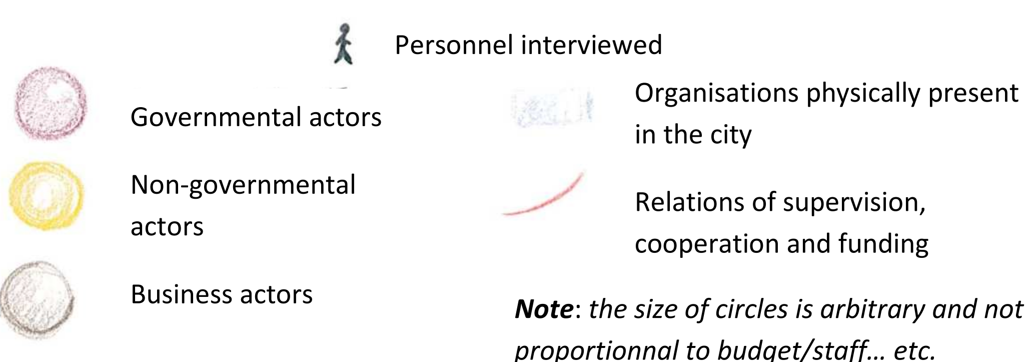
1.3 Kiryat Gat



Map 8.3. 'Flat' representation of the organisations dealing with immigration and integration in Kiryat Gat. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).

Figure 8.3. Multiscalar governance of immigration and integration in Kiryat Gat. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).





***Note**: the size of circles is arbitrary and not proportionnal to budget/staff… etc.*

After having selected Kiryat Gat as one of the field cities, I was given the telephone number of the deputy mayor. An Ethiopian immigrant who arrived with her family as a child, Ayelet is often perceived as the representative of Kiryat Gat's Ethiopian community, and therefore as the official dealing closely with immigration and integration issues. It is true that she takes an active role in representing her community, acting as an intermediary, advocating for their rights, and even chairing a municipal forum on Ethiopian integration in Kiryat Gat — an informal forum, which allows for better cooperation between the various stakeholders in the city, within municipal departments but also with the Youth Centre. But, it is the second deputy mayor, himself an immigrant from Russia and the representative of *Israel Beitenu,* who is officially in charge of immigration and integration issues for the council. The fact that both deputy mayors are immigrants is a source of pride for the city mayor who believes it is a symbol of the pluralist policy he has adopted. Given the political representation of immigrants and the multilingual municipal services, he believes Kiryat Gat is a model of immigrant integration.

When it comes to municipal services, the welfare department concentrates the largest part of municipal activities on immigrants. It supervises three units: the immigration and integration unit, the integration centre for Ethiopian immigrants (which I call by its Hebrew designation *Moked Klita*), and community work service. The first is located in the commercial mall where the municipal offices are, while the community work unit is ten-minutes walking distance from the city hall in a former avant-garde architectural building. The latter is located in the northern district of the city, where a large number of Ethiopian immigrants reside. In addition to these three units, the welfare department also coordinates with neighbourhood workers and social workers dealing with immigrants.

The immigration and integration unit of the municipality employs a municipal agent, with municipal funding. However, its main role is the optimal use of the annual MOIA budget it receives for activities. At the end of the year, Moshe receives a message with the amount of available budget MOIA could potentially transfer to Kiryat Gat. He needs to quickly submit a range of ideas for programmes and activities' in order to spend the budget. The budget is divided into spending categories, some of them related to the type of activities, and some to the population benefiting from these activities. Moshe does not come up with the ideas alone. He receives proposals from the various organisations dealing with implementing sociocultural programmes and activities in the city — the Youth Centre, the *matnass* networks, other community centres and clubs, choirs and resident associations. He selects the proposals that will most likely be implemented, based on his experience with the various organisations he works with, and he often rewrites the proposals in order to improve their chance of being accepted by

MOIA.[109] After the proposals are accepted and the budget transferred, he is in charge of assisting the transfer of the budget, or of executing the budget from the municipality. Moshe does not engage in immigration outreaching, nor does he provide accompaniment for the settlement of new immigrants. The MOIA local branch coordinator deals with this task.

Nevertheless, when it comes to Ethiopian immigrants, the municipality does not limit its role to sociocultural activities. The newly funded *Moked Klita*, a result of both deputy mayors' advocacy work for the MOIA, accompanies immigrants in accessing administration, vocational training and more.

The community work service also engages in activities with immigrants, particularly mapping their needs, transforming social phenomena into actual programmes etc.

Kiryat Gat does not participate extensively in outreaching to immigrants. Nevertheless, the massive construction project taking place north of the city — Karmei Gat — was a topic of discussion throughout the interviews. Karmei Gat corresponds to the construction of 8,000 units north of the city. The municipality cooperates with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Housing and numerous private constructors. It has been advertised extensively on the radio, in newspapers, and on giant banners along the main Tel Aviv road for some time. Afterwards, the political campaigns for the 2015 elections put Karmei Gat in the spotlight, and the project was a topic of intense debate between two candidates, both putting the housing crisis at the top of their concerns. At first, I was told that this extension project, which should lead to doubling the population of the city, was not targeting immigrants. Families looking to access property in a city well connected to the central region of Israel were the main targets of this construction project. Nevertheless, after the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris in January 2015, I found out that the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee encouraged mayors of peripheral cities to reach out to French Jews. Kiryat Gat organised a delegation aiming principally at marketing Karmei Gat to French Jews who were thinking of migrating to Israel. This delegation did not include representatives of the immigration and integration unit, but it did include the civil engineer. When I talked about this event to Ayelet and Malcha, I was told that there was indeed an attempt, but that it was marginal. This was not the only attempt as the municipality translated marketing material into English for a group of American immigrants represented by Nefesh benefesh who would like to organise a small community in Karmei Gat. However, they consider it also marginal.

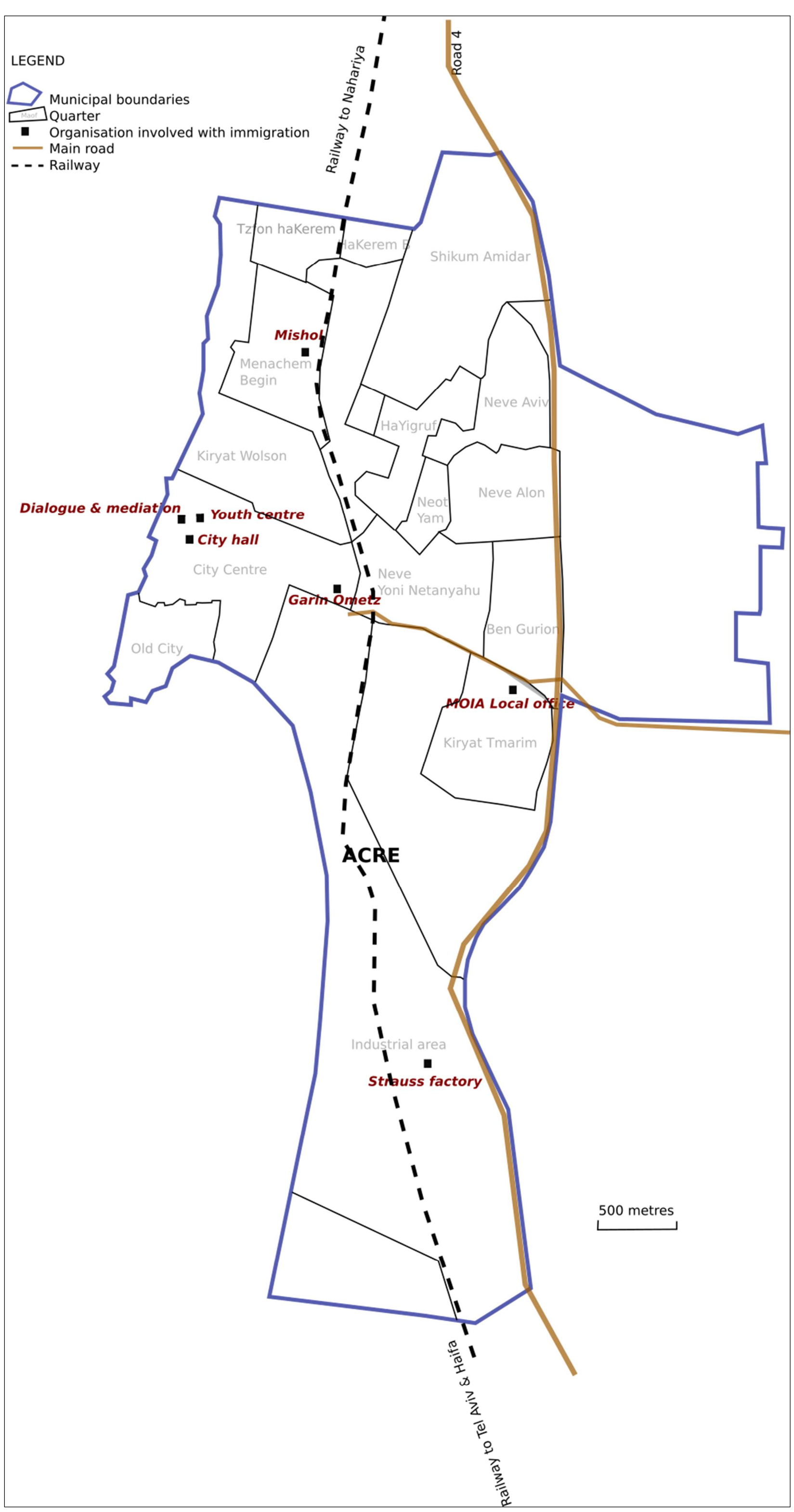
[109] The criteria for MOIA budget's spending at municipal level are updated and consigned in a booklet, available to all municipalities and to the public. The most recent version is available here: http://www.moia.gov.il/Hebrew/Subjects/ImmigrantAbsorption/Pages/nohalAvodaShiltonMekomi.aspx

Apart from the municipality, the Youth Centre, which is in the neighbouring office of the immigration and integration unit, also employs an immigration coordinator, as well as a coordinator for Ethiopian Israeli youngsters. They provide training and leadership activities for young people, mainly from Ethiopian families. They do not deal with outreaching. The institutional 'file' is quite sophisticated. Indeed, the immigration coordinator was hired by the Youth Centre and administered by the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee, but her salary was paid by the NGO *Kolei negev*, while activities were usually funded by MOIA and JAFI. She receives training and professional supervision from the Joint.

The *matnass* network, funded by the Ministry of Education, also plays an active role in delivering sociocultural activities matching the needs of the population. Together with the community centres and other clubs, the municipality argues that the city is served by a grid of community centres, matching the residential composition of each neighbourhood.

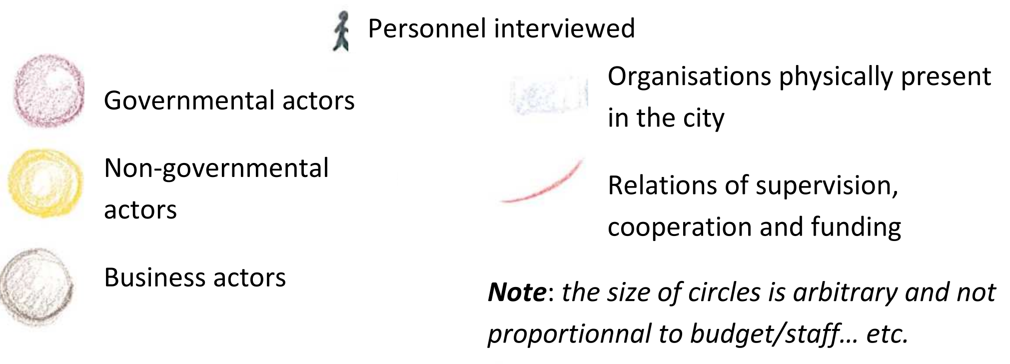
Another important actor is the Shoshana absorption centre, which, like the Orly absorption centre in Arad, hosts Ethiopian immigrants during the first years of their settlement in Israel. Nevertheless, the municipality has advocated for the absorption centre's residents to stay in Kiryat Gat and obtained benefits to access property in the city, although Kiryat Gat is not enlisted by the government for access to property for Ethiopian immigrants. Indeed, officials believe it would mean a second 'immigration' for these newcomers whose children study in local schools, and who often work in the city. The settlement of Ethiopian immigrants is therefore not considered transient but is anticipated in the long run. The Shoshana centre is funded by the MOIA and JAFI.

1.4 Acre



Map 8.4. 'Flat' representation of the organisations dealing with immigration and integration in Acre. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).

Figure 8.4. Multiscalar governance of immigration and integration in Acre. Realised by Amandine Desille (2017).



Acre holds a specific position among the four cities chosen for fieldwork. Indeed, unlike Arad which was built on empty land, or Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona which were built on the ruins of Palestinian villages, Acre expanded around the old Palestinian walled city. Up until today, a large number of Palestinian Israelis reside in the city, on both sides of the walls, accounting for a quarter of the population. In this context, numerous existing mechanisms to encourage cohabitation of Palestinian and Jewish Israelis could be extended and adapted to immigrants.

Acre is the only city in the sample which engaged in a new city brand encompassing the diversity of its population. The 'Acre city of Mediterranean cultures' vision is part of a larger effort to address tourism issues, but the mayor believes it also directs attention to collective goals of living together in mutual respect. Efforts are made to restore pride among the Palestinian Israelis, but also among the numerous Jewish groups in the city, whether they immigrated from Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen, Russian or Azerbaijan.

The mayor also argues that the municipal council reflects these efforts. Indeed, one of his deputies is a Palestinian Israeli affiliated with the Islamic Movement, while the second, Zion, an immigrant from Ukraine, is affiliated with *Israel Beitenu*. Zion is in charge of immigration and integration issues in the municipality. He supervises the municipal department for immigration and integration and he chairs a forum every year to define the annual agenda of the department. Additionally, like other local officials, his door is always open for consultation. He recalls dealing with family issues as well as employment and administrative issues for immigrant residents, who believe that, as they voted for him, they are entitled to request help directly from him, bypassing municipal departments.

The immigration and integration department of the city is located in the anti-missile shelter of the municipality. It is accessible from a back door, on the main street, where a large sign, which has lost most of its colours, says 'Immigrants Club' (*Moadon le'Olim*). It is the largest department in the four cities. It employs the deputy director, Elisa, two Russian-speaking advisers, and an advisor officially hired for his English speaking skills but also born in the FSU. Another agent was hired through a programme targeting the integration of Caucasus Jews — most of them having emigrated from Azerbaijan. Apart from this last agent, all of the agents' salaries are funded by the MOIA "group *Aliyah*" programme. Their work includes outreaching to Jewish candidates to immigration, in order to attract them to Acre. Russian-speaking workers do so through the numerous JAFI representations in countries of origin. The person in charge of English-speaking immigrants works with Nefesh BeNefesh on the one hand — the organisation has added to its pre-immigration trip the city of Acre —, and Shavei Israel on the other hand, for the immigration of Indian Bnei Menashe immigrants. The mayor, the deputy mayor and the deputy director

regularly travel to reach out to remote communities and to present the city of Acre to them. Their work also includes activities linked to the settlement of immigrants, from the moment they arrive at the hotel in Acre, to accompaniment to various administrations, flat hunting, Hebrew learning and the organisation of sociocultural activities in Russian. Until 2006 another person used to work with French immigrants, under the 'group *Aliyah*' programme. Today, he works part-time as the mayor's advisor on French affairs. Part of his work still involves outreaching and immigration issues, but he has no ties with the immigration and integration department, and is directly supervised by the mayor.

During my numerous encounters with the immigration and integration department's agents, I often asked if they could help identify other actors. However, I was faced with very defensive answers, and was assured that no one else could do their job. One of my interviewees in Jerusalem suggested I meet with the person in charge of the Centre for Mediation and Dialogue in the Community (*Merkaz leGishur veDialog beKeila*). This centre is located in a northern neighbourhood of the city, known for high levels of cohabitation between Palestinian Israelis, old timers and new immigrants. It is supervised by the community work service in Jerusalem and in Acre. In Acre, community work is part of the Welfare department. This centre focuses mostly on conflict resolutions among tenants in the same buildings. It relies on welfare and community workers in the municipality, but also on volunteers in the community, who act as mediators. Immigrant workers and volunteers play an important role when this mediation concerns immigrant residents. The director mentioned another centre supervised by the community work service: *Mishol*.

Mishol is the acronym for Centre for the Integration of Immigrants (*Merkaz leIshtalvut leOlim*). First created by the Joint, it has been adopted by the community work service. In Acre, it is located in an Eastern neighbourhood of the city, with a high concentration of immigrants. *Mishol* organises a weekly café for immigrants, a community theatre where Palestinians, old timers and immigrants meet (the Western Galilee College is a partner to this project), as well as a group of women from all backgrounds. It also hosts a community garden funded by the Jewish National Fund. Their goal is to empower the residents who are in difficult social situations through fostering leadership and peer support.

The immigration and integration department is openly dismissive of the Welfare department as an actor in immigrant integration, although large human and financial resources are invested to this end. However, they cooperate with the education department as well as the human capital development department, accompanying new immigrants to those departments and helping them to enrol their children at school and to find a job. Those departments also obtain specific

budgets for immigrants. For instance, the human capital development department, which obtains most of its budget from, and is supervised by, the employment authority of the Ministry of Economy, obtains an MOIA budget for Caucasus Jews. It was also widely involved in mapping the skills of the newly settled Bnei Menashe immigrants, finding a budget from the Ministry of Economy for vocational training and supporting job placement in Acre.

Another organisation involved in immigrant integration which is mentioned by municipal actors is the Youth Centre. As in other cities, the Youth Centre was established by the Joint and is now supervised by the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee. It employs an immigration coordinator, with MOIA funds which transit through the *Garin Ometz* association. The immigration coordinator deals with immigrants between the ages of 18 and 45 - approximately. She helps mostly with Hebrew learning, access to education, vocational training, access to employment. But she also mentions activities linked to conversion to Judaism and cultural activities.

As in other cities, Acre counts on a MOIA local office, mainly dealing with administrative issues — entitlements, vouchers for Hebrew learning and vocational training etc. The same district office which provides activities for immigrants in Kiryat Shmona also issues a monthly list of activities available at the local office. The *matnass* also offers sociocultural activities adapted to the different groups in the city.

Lastly, when it comes to the third sector, the *Garin Ometz*, a religious group of families which aims at contributing to the development of Acre, has an important role in the settlement of Indian Bnei Menashe immigrants. Shavei Israel hires a coordinator within the *Garin Ometz*. He, as well as other volunteers in the community, helps out the families, from their accommodation needs, to the organisation of religious events and holidays.

There are many associations in the city, such as the association for Holocaust survivors and the association for Second World War veterans, but also charity organisations providing food, clothing or furniture to immigrants in need. The municipality affirms that they support those organisations by providing offices or funding.

Through these descriptions, I have presented the various actors involved in immigration and integration issues in these cities, as well as the cooperation and conflict patterns appearing during the analysis. I acknowledge that I may have missed some people or organisations as some were discovered after several months of fieldwork. Mapping the actors and understanding their role compared to others is rather complicated when the ground is often reshaped through

elections, budget issues, the agenda etc. However, I do believe it illustrates the state of the immigrant integration institutional system at the time of my fieldwork.

2 What do the charts tell us?

In the following subsection, I will try to describe the convergences and divergences between these four charts, starting with involved actors. Actors rank from politicians to technical actors in the municipality, but also other local stakeholders, affiliated with nation-wide organisations, with transnational or local organisations. Through supervision, funding, training and other cooperation schemes, these actors, whose offices are located in the city, have relations with actors at national or transnational levels, or with other local actors. These descriptions reinforce the assumption that immigration and integration governance is multiscalar, and characterised by superimposed and polymorphic scales, themselves constantly reshaped in an on-going process of rescaling.

The second point aims to shed light on the reasoning at work in the four cities. Indeed, the set of cooperating actors provided me with some ideas regarding the orientation of these governance schemes.

2.1 Mapping the actors

Contrarily to the four 'flat' representations, the four diagrams make it possible to identify at a glance all the actors involved. The municipality has an important role, and can be divided between local officials, the politicians who are elected by residents; the municipal agents, the department directors and their workers, themselves divided into departments and units. Among municipal agents, some work at the city hall while others work in offices spread throughout the city, or in community centres, like *Mishol* or the *Moked Klita*'s workers.

Other expected actors are the MOIA employees working in the local offices of MOIA, as well as MOIA employees working in the two absorption centres I was able to visit: the Orly centre in Arad and the Shoshana centre in Kiryat Gat.

The *matnass* network, or the Youth Centre, also plays an important role in immigration and integration issues, hiring multilingual staff, opening a position for an immigration coordinator and organising specific activities targeting immigrants in the city.

These institutions have ties with supervising bodies. Even within the municipalities, the welfare department, the education department, or the human capital development department, find

themselves much more closely supervised by their respective ministries than by the municipal councillors in charge of their field. Much of their budget comes from the ministries, with a matching fund from the municipality. Training is organised through the ministries. The involved ministries are numerous: MOIA, the Ministry of Welfare (more particularly the community work service), the Ministry of Education (more particularly for the *matnass*, and the education department), the Ministry of the Economy (the employment authority), the Ministry of the Interior (in charge of municipal boundaries, of municipal budget supervision and of granting an equity grant), the Ministry for the Development of Negev and Galilee (Youth Centre) and even the Ministry for Housing (Karmei Gat project). In addition to the ministries appearing in the diagrams, other bodies are also involved, such as the JAFI or the Joint, two transnational Diaspora organisations which are very active in Israel when it comes to immigration issues.

Additionally, other local, non-governmental actors play an active role, from immigrant associations representing specific groups of immigrants, to religious communities like *Garinim Toraniim*, which, subsequent to their mission to alleviate poverty and encourage community economic and social development in distressed towns, also engage in immigration issues.

Representing the actors/institutions dynamics requires avoiding a simplistic division between transnational, national and local scales. The local actors identified are not isolated from the national institutions, although they are entrusted to decide upon the activities they implement. Budgets, analytical models and specific lexicons flow between these actors. Complicated financial arrangements lead to situations where an agent is obliged to account for his activities to multiple actors located at various levels of government, and also, sometimes, to non-governmental and private actors. In the following subsection, I will focus on the description of these multi-actor' dynamics.

2.1.1 Local political activity

The literature has shown that processes of administrative and political decentralisation have forced local leaders to take upon themselves new responsibilities, a significant one being urban economic development. In this context, and from the 1980s onwards, scholars witnessed a localisation of political parties' activities (see for example, in France Gaxie (1994), and in Israel Elazar (1988)). This trend has continued and it is clear that local politics has borrowed significantly from national politics, following a party system, adapting political programmes to the city's circumstances and using statistical tools.

In this context, *Israel Beitenu* positions itself in Israeli cities and affirms its place as the immigration party. The party headhunts representatives in the cities. Russian-speaking immigrants accessing local politics seem to be approached by the party, invited to the conferences and workshops. In general, the party offers support to understand public administration and politics in Israel, and offers shortcuts. Local officials who belong to *Israel Beitenu* claim they have better access to politicians and funds. More particularly, as the MOIA is *Israel Beitenu*'s 'preserve', local officials who are members of the party, and in charge of immigration and integration issues, benefit from a direct channel. All of them claim that they know the Minister, Sofa Landver, very well, and hang photos on their walls where they appear alongside either Minister Avigdor Lieberman or Minister Sofa Landver.

Apart from Arad, mayors are not members of *Israel Beitenu*. In Kiryat Shmona, the mayor is affiliated with the Likud party — here again, in his interview, he explains that he accessed politics "to be close to the tap" (Interview 22, 2015), and that he changed parties when he was offered better opportunities, a move he might repeat if one of the right-wing parties offer him a position on their lists that might allow him access to Parliament. In Kiryat Gat and Acre, both the mayors set up independent lists, but were active in the past as members of Likud.

Their alliance with *Israel Beitenu* members, since in each of the cities, one of two deputy mayors is an *Israel Beitenu* member, is often seen as strategic. During the first years of the massive immigration from the FSU, immigrants voted en masse for former Prime Minister Izhak Rabin (Jones, 1996), but their votes shifted to the Right a long time ago, to immigrant parties such as the former *Israel Be'Aliyah* or *Israel Beitenu*. By taking advantage of the immigrant votes in the city, they ensure their seat at the municipality. Contrary to Arad, were FSU immigrants account for almost half of the population, in other cities the immigrant candidate cannot hope to run alone, and can only add his voters' voices to the majority.

2.1.2 Municipal departments

The immigration and integration department, or unit, in the municipality, thus demonstrates loyalty to the councillor in charge of immigration and integration — who is in all four cases, an *Israel Beitenu* member. The department represents his operative arm. Being deprived of this is difficult, as expressed by Kiryat Shmona deputy mayor. However, this unit does not enjoy the same status in each municipality. This is one element for consideration in the analysis. Indeed, as Gali, from the Union of Local Authorities in Israel argues:

> I think that the location of the integration coordinator in the hierarchy, and where he sits in the municipality, says a lot about how he is considered in the municipality. Is he a department

> manager? Does he belong to the social affairs department, as a coordinator? Does he belong to the education department? In that case, the emphasis is on children, as in Ramat Gan. It depends. Sometimes, it is even an independent unit, an economic corporation. In Haifa, it's an economic corporation. There are advantages, there are disadvantages. Is it integrated? I deal with integration but I don't look at education, welfare, culture, sport. I don't leverage all the partners in order to help the immigrant population, in all sectors. What is my mandate as an integration manager? Do I deal with employment? What is my role? How is my role perceived? Is it broad? Limited? To what extent does the MOIA give me tools. […]. If you ask me, the bottom line, everyone does what they can. There is not exactly cooperation. Even with the third sector. They work in parallel lines. The Ministry does not provide a budget for the local authority which will transfer to NGOs. It funds the NGOs. It might be that in a city, NGOs work with immigrants and I, the local authority, do not even know. (Interview 15, 2014)

In Acre, immigration and integration is dealt with by an independent department, with five workers. However, in Kiryat Gat, both the immigration and integration unit and the *Moked Klita,* are under the supervision of the welfare department. In Arad, the department is independent, but merged with culture. In those two cases, the emphasis is more on sociocultural activities for already settled immigrants, and they have not developed activities related to outreaching, and little is done to accompany new immigrants (especially in the immigration and integration unit of Kiryat Gat). Lastly, there is no department or unit in Kiryat Shmona.

Another element which needs to be mentioned is the fact that the immigration and integration department or unit is not a 'professional' department, in the sense that recruitment is not based on an educational background linked with immigration and immigrant settlement. Workers come from various backgrounds and are hired based on their linguistic knowledge — although this is not systematic — and their motivation. They do not have much supervision apart from an annual conference, and they are not requested to attend regular training.

On the contrary, the Ministry of Welfare supervises the welfare department, which also deals with immigration. The department hires multilingual social workers, psychologists, and community workers for its community work service. They undergo regular training, which conditions their advancement within the department. For instance, I met one community worker in Acre who manages the *Mishol* centre. She was on her way back to Acre after a day at the social workers' school in Tel Aviv, which she attends once a week. She told me that she took classes there intended to help those who work with immigrants to acquire intercultural skills.

Their educational background, training and close cooperation with the Ministry result in workers also adopting a lexicon and an approach designed in Jerusalem. When I met the director

of community work in Jerusalem, at the Ministry, he explained that the word 'integration' was being replaced by 'intercultural community development'. The programmes developed aim to foster community leadership, providing a space for peer support, and in short, to encourage residents to take active role in city development. The differences struck me when I attended activities developed by *Mishol* for instance, where, rather than being told to be retrained to acquire skills fitting the Israeli market, they were asked to bring with them their crafts, food and drinks they had at home, and to show what they already knew, rather than doing what they were expected to do. One cannot be too naïve and power relations do also exist in these contexts. I have already identified, on several occasions, the idea of the higher deservingness of an immigrant considered as participative, and there are clearly types of activities encouraged to make residents responsible for themselves and for the city. At the same time, it also encourages dialogue and contact with other residents, whereas the immigration and integration department encourages sociocultural segregation.

Other municipal departments involved are the departments of culture, education and employment (called 'human capital development' in Acre) as they often obtain a specific budget to be spent on activities targeting immigrants living in the city. These departments, unlike the welfare department, elicit less animosity and represent less of a threat for the immigration and integration department, and they collaborate closely.

The coordination of all these workers, without even mentioning actors located outside the municipality but who are nevertheless active in the city, is not an easy task. Each of the actors must defend their unique character in order to obtain funding and to retain their employees. The delegation of responsibilities to local levels leads to conflict and overlapping as much as institutional vacuum. Financial applications reveal these overlaps.

However, some attempts at cooperation were described during interviews. In Acre, the conflict between immigration and integration, and welfare, is easier to identify. However, I was told that deputy mayor Zion organises an annual meeting to define the agenda within the municipality. Similarly, actors can meet when a group arrives and must be dealt with rapidly. For instance, all interviewees have described the settlement of Bnei Menashe immigrants as a successful experience in cooperation. All the municipal agents involved met to map needs, to define programmes and implement them. Other attempts have been made by agents to organise a forum, but so far there is no successful institutionalised forum. In Kiryat Gat, there is a forum chaired by Ayelet for the integration of Ethiopian immigrants. Workers from different departments of the municipality, as well as from the youth centre meet, and chat, using social networks to better guide immigrants through the administrative maze. In Arad and Kiryat

Shmona, I did not hear of any initiative to cooperate with the various actors involved. It may be that the smaller size of the municipalities facilitates informal meetings and helps information flow more quickly.

2.1.3 Actors of the periphery

The diagrams display other actors outside the municipality, which I will qualify as typical actors of the periphery.

Indeed, the MOIA 'group *Aliyah*' programme, which the municipality benefits from, mostly funds immigration and integration agents in municipalities of the periphery.

Similarly, the Ministry for the Development for the Negev and Galilee is, as its name indicates, dedicated to activities implemented in the peripheral districts of the country. It adopted the Youth Centres, which, in three of the four cities under scrutiny, have an employee dealing with young immigrants.

Diaspora organisations such as the Joint, JAFI — through the partnership2gether programme, for instance, — and Nefesh beNefesh — through its 'Go North' programme—, are also present. They deal with issues related to immigration and community development, and they have designed programmes and organisations aiming at attracting immigrants to regions suffering from out-migration. Their programmes focus on raising awareness, offering incentives and personal guidance. However, these programmes mostly benefit rural villages located in these regions. For instance, around Kiryat Gat, villages receive an increasing number of English speaking immigrants.

The religious *Garinim*, in Acre or in Kiryat Shmona, both deal with the settlement of Bnei Menashe immigrants. *Garinim Toraniim* are typically present in peripheral towns to participate in community social and economic development.

This subsection sets out the characteristics of the various actors involved in immigration and integration issues. Each of these actors is involved in a range of activities and takes decision based on their fields of expertise and action. What do certain combinations of actors reveal about the reasoning which underlies policies? What are the motives these charts illustrate?

2.2 Distinct reasoning which defines immigration policies

The diversity of actors involved in immigrant integration in the four cities corresponds to different orientations and reasoning. A predominance of a certain mix of actors might mean that a certain logic prevails, but it seems that in general, these logics coexist. In policymaking, logics refer to "broader cultural rules and beliefs that structure cognitive ideas and guide decision-making as well as the behaviour of actors in the policy field" (Jørgensen, 2012).

Analysing the charts and descriptions of the immigrant integration urban governance in the four cities, it seems that three main 'logics' define immigration policies. First, immigration policies are identified with housing availability. Immigrants can settle if there are housing units to rent and to sell. Here, two different kinds of housing are involved, either state housing usually for retirees, or new cottage-style constructions. Secondly, these housing strategies are linked to logics of demographic growth. The four cities under study were planned to host a much larger population than they have ever reached. Being remote from employment centres, they were not attractive to the Israeli population, and immigrants who were offered housing and entitlements there left as soon as possible. Therefore those cities are characterised by out-migration and an ageing population. There are vacant flats, and empty schools. These reasons are evoked to encourage demographic growth through new mechanisms. Lastly, there is also a logic of maintaining the well-being of the current population. In this case, the actors involved with delivery of sociocultural activities are more prominent.

2.2.1 Urban development

As mentioned in previous chapters, housing policy has always been a cornerstone of Israeli immigration policy (Berthomière, 2002). However, times of mass construction are long gone, and today, erections of new neighbourhoods are somewhat rarer. Nevertheless, local officials still strongly associate availability of housing with immigration policies. If there is no construction, they argue, there is no possibility for the city's sons and daughters, or for outsiders, to settle in the city. Building work is also associated with economic revival and dynamism.

The mayor of Acre's affirms that new housing is being built at a much faster pace than when he started working in Acre. Similarly, his spokesperson argues that Acre is now considered a safe city for investment. When I met the deputy mayor, he invited his assistant to explain where she bought a house and the current value of this house, in order to illustrate that housing was a good investment in Acre.

However, the pace of housing construction in Acre is nothing compared to Kiryat Gat's colossal Karmei Gat, project, a housing complex in the north of the city which aims at hosting 8,000 units: 'a Zionist move', in the words of its mayor, aiming at supporting the State to solve the housing crisis. Although it is not directly marketed at immigrants — apart from the various initiatives I mentioned in the previous sections which are aimed at French Jews and American immigrants —, it does appeal to many families in the central area of Israel who cannot access property in the centre due to high real estate prices, and who agree to move away from the centre. It is worth mentioning here that, although the national marketing campaign reached out to Israeli households, the local campaign was much more based on the population diversity of Kiryat Gat. Huge banners in the city displayed Ethiopian immigrants, traditional religious Israelis etc, informing them that affordable housing units would also be available in the Karmei Gat quarter.

At a much more humble scale, Kiryat Shmona has been struggling with the ministries to obtain new construction lands in the northern areas of Bimat Tel Hai and Yuvalim. In 2016, Yuvalim lots were transferred and marketing began. However, they mostly target Kiryat Shmona's inhabitants and Israeli families who wish to move into the area. The Youth Centre has been very much involved, along with the municipality, as their goals include demographic growth. Construction means that they can better position themselves and retain the new generation in Kiryat Shmona.

In Arad, a new neighbourhood is also being planned, close to the Dead Sea. This area will offer building sites for individuals who have a development plan that includes a tourism project, such as a unit for country lodging, or a small business.

References to new housing in the city do not always imply villas and nice apartment buildings. Most of these cities are the target of public housing schemes. In this context, immigrants represent a significant proportion of the beneficiaries. All four cities criticise the fact that their city hosts a disproportionate amount of public housing, leading to a vicious circle: the more public housing available, the more beneficiaries there are in their city, and therefore, the more social charges the city has to pay for.

These urban developments, whether targeting the poor or middle-class households, are very much concomitant to national decisions, particularly at the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Housing. Nevertheless, municipalities have become important advocates and are involved in numerous claims for construction lands. Geographer Eran Razin has documented this phenomenon in many cities in Israel. The cities argue that the rural councils surrounding them take most of the available lands, preventing cities from developing and keeping them in

situations of underdevelopment. The professionalisation of Israeli mayors and a mix of actions towards the High Court, ministries, media and public opinion have led to a greater success rate for such claims.

Immigrants are considered as one group of potential beneficiaries of these new developments, but not only.

2.2.2 Demographic growth

Urban development is often coupled with demographic growth policies. However, demographic growth policies also exist based on currently available housing.

Indeed, the cities under scrutiny have suffered, since their establishment, from waves of out-migration that often strongly countered the large groups of immigrants settling at each period of mass migration to Israel. After the first years following settlement, many families who could afford to leave and look for better professional perspectives in the centre did so. And each new wave of immigration provided a temporary fix to counter out-migration.

It has been 25 years since the last large wave of immigration, and no one foresees a new large immigration movement, even from France (even if increased flows of migration have been registered, numbers do not exceed 7,000 immigrants per annum). Therefore, municipalities in the periphery are once again witnessing the consequences of out-migration, large availability of state housing and an ageing population. Schools have emptied and some have already closed. Raising municipal taxes is becoming difficult.

In addition to urban developments, cities invest in 'demographic growth' (*Tzmicha demografit*). To this end, three main mechanisms are used. Programme officers in the municipal immigration and integration departments/units funded by MOIA participate in actions aiming at encouraging immigration to their cities. Local leaders also take part and travel around the world to appeal to Jewish communities abroad. Secondly, MOIA provides incentives to those immigrants who accept to settle in peripheral areas. Monetary incentives are conditioned by a minimum stay in the city. Nefesh BeNefesh also participates and encourages English speaking immigrants to settle in the peripheries, for instance through the 'Go North' programme. Thirdly, Youth Centres, under the supervision of the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and Galilee, are responsible for retaining current residents in the city, for bringing back former residents who have left the city but still have a family and affective attachment, and to attract new residents to the city. This is done through personal accompaniment of young families, training and support to access jobs etc. Youth Centres are also involved in local economic development projects. For instance, in

Kiryat Shmona, the Youth Centre works with the municipality and an NGO focusing on economic development to create 'quality' jobs — whereas in Kiryat Shmona, factories are still the main employers — for an educated middle-class population which has trouble settling in the present job market.

2.2.3 Quality municipal service delivery

Following the Youth Centres' mission of 'retaining current residents', municipalities concerned about losing present inhabitants invest in activities to maintain their population. In this case, other actors are more important, such as schools or community centres.

In terms of education, providing good quality education is an argument put forward by all interviewees. When asked how they positioned themselves with regard to other cities, to retain or attract new residents, they all claimed that they made significant investments in order to provide an excellent education system.

Apart from formal education, extracurricular activities are an important aspect. The mayor of Acre, for instance, insists that a mayor should ensure that children have the possibility to attend physical or artistic activities after school for their development, but also, to be busy and avoid being left alone in the streets. Similarly, Kiryat Gat's mayor handed me a full calendar of activities and assured me that having so many free activities was an asset.

Cultural services are significant. FSU immigrants in particular are expected to be great cultural consumers, and municipalities put great efforts in providing the population with lectures, workshops, concerts, performances and trips to the countryside. In this context, actors such as the *matnass* network, community centres, but also an immigration and integration unit that organises sociocultural activities for immigrants, are essential.

The four municipalities have adopted, to some extent, these three types of orientation, but at different scales. Kiryat Gat does not usually encourage immigration to its city. Nevertheless, it has engaged significantly in reaching out to market the Karmei Gat neighbourhood. Acre has more widely engaged in issues related to demographic growth, with tremendous emphasis on immigrants. The presence of a large Palestinian group is very probably a lever to access funds. Indeed, among the beneficiaries of the MOIA 'group *Aliyah*' programme, mixed cities such as Acre, Nazareth Illit or Ramle rank very highly and hire more municipal agents (Interview 9, 2014). All cities invest public funding in providing immigrants with sociocultural activities in their language, more especially the city of Arad.

3 Between claimed autonomy and constrained autonomy

By identifying actors involved in such public issues as immigration and integration, I have tried to understand the extent to which these marginalised cities gained autonomy. Indeed, the transformations of power that have occurred since the 1980s in Israel have proved to have effectively favoured cities located in the central district of the country. *De facto* decentralisation benefits cities which already had the means to finance their own development, leaving behind many cities and towns in the northern and southern districts. Beside Tel Aviv, there is no city that is considered 'autonomous' and able to break free from the national framework.

Nevertheless, I have witnessed increased attempts by local governments in the periphery to gain autonomy, first by claiming, and then by trying to design, local policies. Those attempts are usually mixed with strategies to access subsidies and budgets available for peripheral and underdeveloped regions. In this sense, local governments play a double game, claiming their autonomy on the one hand, while relying on programmes that confirm their dependence to the central administration, on the other hand.

Immigration and integration programmes follow this pattern. Indeed, some cities proactively design immigration policies and invest in activities to 'integrate' immigrants. Nevertheless, the institutional diagrams show that resources essentially come from central administration.

In this context, various questions are raised: does the adoption of an immigration agenda facilitate access to national resources? Do municipalities design an agenda on the understanding that it will bring them public funding? Or do they seek funding after having determined municipal priorities? Findings show that both these strategies seem to collide, local officials playing the role of brokers, creating articulations between scales.

3.1 Claiming or rejecting the periphery label

When I began this research project, I formulated the hypothesis that political and administrative decentralisation gave local governments the opportunity to benefit from greater autonomy and therefore to control their future. Indeed, cities located in the periphery were long abandoned to the whims of central administration, from immigrant settlement and housing plans to industrial development. Following the emancipation from central administration, I argued, municipalities hoped that they could adopt new approaches like city branding, strategic planning or local economic development, to free their communities from the negative connotations they have endured and to gain new residents and new investments.

This hypothesis was quickly confirmed in the second interview I conducted with the deputy mayor in the city of Kiryat Gat when she justified Kiryat Gat's Karmei Gat urban development project:

> Being a periphery, it's good because you get extra budgets. But actually, we want to distance ourselves from the peripheral approach. We want a different perspective. In the periphery, residents are seen as weaker. The socio-economic dimension is more difficult. But it's the egg and chicken story. Our idea is to operate a shift in thought. […]. Kiryat Gat decided to fight differently: Give us lands and we will develop them! Yoav, Shafir and Lachish have lands, they cultivate them less than before, so give them to us! (Interview 2, 2014)

However, this type of declaration is not as common as I at first expected. Indeed, Kiryat Shmona follows what can be viewed as a rather counter-intuitive approach. The mayor of Kiryat Shmona has run his campaign with the (roughly translated) slogan "Nissim knows how to bring State money to the city". My first interview in the city, with deputy mayor Abram, confirmed this trend. Indeed, he explains how they have been struggling to degrade the ranking of the city:

> Abram: First you have to look at the socio-economic situation. If you look at the socio-economic situation here, we rank 5. We are like Karmiel, Ma'alot, or other cities which have a good ranking, economically speaking. Because of that we miss a lot of money. Someone decided that we were 5. Because of that, we don't get money to balance that.
>
> […].
>
> Me: So how did you get to rank 5 in this situation?
>
> Abram: We don't understand either. We are trying, checking what we can do to get back to 4, at least, because 4 would give us millions more. In 2004, the procedure started and ten years later, nothing got out. Our tail is not out of it so I don't even speak of our entire body. (Interview 6, 2014)

For Abram, and this was confirmed in other interviews with the mayor, and also with other municipal agents, the matching funds required to obtain State money are impossible to secure for a small poor municipality. Struggling to survive, strategies of impoverishment are assessed as potentially more rewarding than any attempts to attract businesses and industries.

Those two stances represent the two ends of a wide spectrum. Indeed, Arad engages in bringing new taxes to the municipality, through land claims, but also through a new tourism masterplan, or attracting new residents through the displacement of military bases. However, at the same

time, the closing of several factories in the city during fieldwork was followed by public declarations reminding the government of its responsibilities to the peripheries it itself created.

Arad's apparently contradictory claims are more probably part of a strategy adopted by other cities to exploit their situation — the need for the welfare of their population, the need for infrastructures — and argue that support from central administration will put an end to their predicament. For instance, the mayor of Acre, whom I met a second time at the end of my fieldwork to expose my findings, told me that there are budgets available for cities, even though direct transfers have been drastically reduced. Knowing how and when to access these funds is key:

> Me: But, to answer the question 'are municipalities independent policymakers', I think local authorities can succeed if they are good brokers, which means that they know where to find the resources and to leverage them
>
> Shimon: To leverage them. There is money in the country. There is money in the country. You need to know how to access it. We know how to access it. We built cultural institutions here. That they will not build in 1,000 years in other settlements. Centres for music, for culture, youth at risk, *matnass* in the old city. There are maybe 30 to 40 centres, social centres. In sport, in culture, in… (Interview 58, 2015).

3.2 Immigration programmes: funding strategy

With this strategy in mind, having a clear immigration encouragement agenda can be a lever to obtain extra municipal funds. Funds transferred from the MOIA are not substantial. However, they usually require a low matching fund of 10% of transferred funds. Additionally, they provide funds in the long term:

Indeed, departments receiving funds related to the immigrant population, such as education or welfare, viewed those funds as structural for quite long period of time. Immigrants were considered as such for twenty years after their arrival, even though they could obtain citizenship immediately after immigration. Some municipalities have negotiated for elderly immigrants, who arrived in Israel longer than twenty years ago, to continue to benefit from discounts, entitlements etc. for a longer period.

Secondly, funds such as the 'group *Aliyah*' programme provide 100% of salaries for municipal agents for several years, up to 3.5 positions can be funded. Other funds under this programme require 25% matching for the first year of the programme. Considering that salaries are a high burden for municipal budgets, this is a considerable help. It also creates jobs in these cities.

The MOIA also transfers funds for the organisation of activities, such as described by the person in charge of immigration and integration issues in Kiryat Gat. This budget is retransferred to many local community centres and associations, multiplying its effects in the community.

The sum of the various transfers is a small but very reliable source of public funding.

3.3 The local government as a development broker

Among the various actors congregating in the governance arena, the municipality takes on a central position. Indeed, despite the predicament in which these cities find themselves, they negotiate their role. In a multiscalar governance of immigration and integration, municipalities assume responsibilities in designing an agenda geared towards immigration, and in implementing activities related to this agenda. A substantial part of their job consists in reaching out to various bodies for funding. Nevertheless, from the moment these institutions come into the picture, they have a voice in municipal policy.

As I have outlined in my theoretical model, the mapping or defining of the social actors involved in the definition of the 'public issue' — immigration and integration —, and then involved in the treatment of this issue enables us to understand the politics of scales. By intervening, actors produce a scalar space (Giraud, 2012). In this case, this space is fragmented and polymorphic. The explosion of the various phases of policymaking — formulating a policy, finding the means to operationalize it, designing activities and/or working procedures and then implementing them — among actors located at different scales, leads to a permanent negotiation between those actors, between different frames of understanding.

In this multilevel environment, local officials in the four cities act as brokers, middlemen or 'ferrymen' (or in French '*passeurs*' in Pollard and Prat (2012)). They use their affiliation with national parties, such as *Israel Beitenu* or Likud, to access information about available budgets. They arbitrate and mediate between what they perceive as the local population's best interests, the need to set up economic development mechanisms, the benefits they are entitled to as a peripheral municipality, and other available budgets and subsidies.

Even though municipalities are not the main funders of the activities they carry out in the city, their actions are essential to facilitate their implementation. Only if they proactively reach out to funds, establish units with professional agents, encourage multilingual services, or negotiate for new buildings to be constructed etc. can they claim to have an immigration and integration policy.

Conclusions

If the preceding chapter aimed at providing a definition of immigrant integration, as a collective goal and an object of public action to be achieved by institutions, this chapter focuses on the various actors involved with this collective goal. In this sense, it presents the governance of immigration and integration, as a virtual space where multiple actors, located at various scales, meet around a common interest, (immigration and integration), and initiate actions which impact them. Multiscalar governance is the result of an explosion of the various phases of immigrant integration policymaking.

This governance of immigration and integration is based at local level. In fact, the presence of local officials geared towards this issue is crucial to the production of a local agenda. More specifically, the municipal councillor in charge of immigration and integration, in each case an immigrant himself, holds a particular position as broker. Usually affiliated with the *Israel Beitenu* party, he has direct access to the MOIA, *Israel Beitenu*'s preserve. His operative arm is the department or unit in charge of immigration and integration within the municipality. He supports the successful channelling of a budget towards the municipality, while this department and its associated budget secures its legitimacy in the council. The conflicts that arise with another municipal department — the welfare department, and the associated community work service, *Mishol*, the *Moked Klita*, the Centre for Mediation and Dialogue in the Community — reinforce the quest for the legitimacy of a department that usually has a smaller budget and is voluntary established, although it requires less attention than welfare.

Another feature of the governance of immigration and integration are the peculiar arrangements in peripheral areas. What I have called the 'typical' actors of the periphery collide in these spaces, from MOIA or Ministry for the development of Galilee and the Negev programmes, to Diaspora organisations such as the Joint, JAFI, Nefesh beNefesh or Shave Israel, to the religious groups *Garin Torani*.

Looking at the different morphologies and the density of actors in each city helps to define the logic underlying each local agenda along two axes: one that defines the proactive or passive attitude of the municipality,; and one that defines the type of intervention it puts forward (although they often overlap and cross), either urban development, demographic stability or the status quo. If the two first encourage immigration through construction and immigration outreaching, the last focuses on actors who deliver sociocultural services in order to serve immigrant residents, without the goal of attracting new immigrants.

But more importantly, the charts unveil the double game of the municipalities, which on the one hand claim their autonomy, while on the other hand relying on programmes which confirm their dependence on central administration. If we look at immigrant integration, the same paradox is evident, and it is quite impossible to affirm that a local agenda was established to support the integration of newcomers, and therefore the municipalities reached out to available budgets or that those budgets available led the municipalities to set a local policy. In any case, there is constant negotiation where the municipality, in which the immigrant council members and their operative department, act as brokers.

In this startling situation, decentralisation produces new channels to access central administration funding, and strong leaders benefit most from the new rules of the game. It is partly anachronistic though, to repeat conclusions drawn in the United States in the late 1980s already. For instance, the 'entrepreneurial state' as defined by Eisinger, and Cox and Mair, already described the necessity for cities to participate in interlocality competition to access federal grants (Kevin R. Cox & Mair, 1988; Eisinger, 1988). This trend has continued since and new networked hierarchies of power are constantly being produced, notably through the successes and failures of cities to attract public funding, private investments and other types of resources. However, I demonstrate that small and mid-sized cities also take part in this competition, although they target grants that are designed for the margins. It means that even funds which are imagined for more fragile communities answer the same neoliberal logic, once again reinforcing old hierarchies of power.

To return to the question mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, I believe that the State of Israel has indeed managed, without major resistance, to shift to a neoliberal management of its administration. The fragmentation of power has had the effect of reinforcing the position of certain actors. Through their newly acquired power, protest is neutralised, but this power is insufficient to actively transform national contexts. It does induce changes, at a very slow pace, but they almost always resonate with a neoliberal ideology that encourages self-responsibility and competition, to serve so-called economic efficiency. Kiryat Shmona is perhaps the only city which refuses to adopt such discourse, relentlessly calling the government to its responsibility. In this city, the discourse of deservingness and active citizenship is also much less prevalent. Ironically, the mayor's slogan which proudly markets the ability of the mayor to bring in State funding contrasts with a situation of economic failure.

Chapter 9 ◊ General conclusions

This doctoral work aimed to measure the extent to which mid-sized cities located at the margin of capitalist economical networks govern the social life of the places they administer, or are being governed. Far from a straightforward answer, the analysis revealed complex relations of interdependences, reproduction of national frameworks and, only occasionally, protests against those frameworks.

This general conclusion is organised along three sections. The first section replaces this research project within the wider framework of social geography, beyond the Israeli experience: firstly, it emphasises the mutual constitution of the concepts of scale, place and agency; secondly, it highlights the contribution to the study of 'ordinary cities'; and finally, it suggests the extent to which this work contributes to migration studies. The second section focuses more particularly on the Israeli case. In fact, the analyses of immigrant integration policies in the four towns under scrutiny have permitted to reach a deeper understanding of the transformations of power in those development towns, established at the borders of the new state. Secondly, it unveils the motives of those towns to engage in immigrant integration policymaking. Thirdly, I challenge this engagement with questions of local democracy and participation. The third section proposes several recommendations, based on the analysis. It also presents the limitations of this research work and perspectives for the future.

1 From the singular… to the general?

In the introduction, I have suggested that this work could contribute to a better understanding of 1) the mutual constitution of scales and places, with the interventions of social actors; 2) the 'ordinary city', and its orientation towards a potential future, for which it acts and takes part in larger rescaling and placemaking processes; 3) immigrant integration policymaking, and more particularly policies made at the city level. Beyond the findings of the doctoral project, anchored in the Israeli multiple and complex realities, can we 'rescale' the results? To which extent the analysis has enabled an understanding of these loaded concepts?

1.1 Multiscalar governance

If social theorists have, for the most part, let go of the conception of scales as space envelops, current scholarship is dominated by critical stances which suggest that rescaling is a strategy of the State to devolve responsibility, in a context of capitalist accumulation. If I adhere to the description of these scales — "a mosaic of superimposed, tangled, crosscutting, and unevenly

overlapping interscalar hierarchies whose units are rarely coextensive or isomorphic" (Brenner in Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 33) —, I argue that the production or reproduction of scales is a micro process which involves multiple social actors whose actions target particular places.

Brenner's conceptual framework discards the social actors, and rather emphasises State and institutions: "the institutional configuration, functions, history, and dynamics of any one geographical scale can only be grasped relationally, in terms of its upwards, downwards and transversal links" (Brenner, 2004, p. 10). Here, he hints towards the existence of relations of interdependency, which I agree with. Similarly, Le Galès's contribution on European cities and governance, brings back the emphasis on horizontal interactions with other actors, interdependencies, regularity and rules of interactions and exchanges, the autonomy of sectors and networks vis-a-vis the State, temporal dimension, coordination processes of political and social acts and sometimes, constraints linked to decision (Galès, 2011, p. 66). However, a most stimulating argument for this work is Di Meo's idea of intentionality of the actors. In fact, for Di Meo, those actors are located at different scales, so that endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors cross the territory for which they *intend* to form policies (Di Meo, 2008, pp. 6–7). The *multiscalar governance* that I have adopted is therefore grounded on those actors, located at different scales, but who have the *intention* to form public actions, policies and strategies that impact the places they govern.

Earlier in this work, I have asked: how can I, in the context of a doctoral research, reconstitute the many dimensions that underlie decision-making processes from past experiences and collective patterns, to present judgements and future imagined possibilities? I therefore suggest to analyse — through narratives, discourses and biographic performance of the actors — their meaningful social interventions. Those endogenous, exogenous and transitional actors put in tension the 'upwards, downwards and transversal links' of scales, because of these very intentions and their consequent interventions.

Methodologically, this means that the enquiry should focus on the social agents who cross places. Based on their interests, they produce, reproduce, and contest the hierarchy of power which organises the social life of a bounded territory. Di Meo (2008) argued that the actors undertake territory-oriented public actions. The place itself informs the actors, since it contains unique features, a legacy of multiple layers of social interactions and material traces of those interactions, as much as it is informed by the actors. As Young and Kaczmarek (2000) says, when it comes to small Polish communes: "As local government constructs policies which reflect their own priorities they are both shaped by an already existing set of institutional resources, and in turn themselves shape (to a degree) geographical variation in development". In an open and

unbounded view of place, these layers contain bits of the local, the national and the global: as Schnell (2007) suggests, the place is a hologram of the internal and external forces that impact it.

With the mutual constitution of scales, places and social actors, we rally to Massey's progressive cities. She argues that:

> the reconstruction of spaces and places within the City was an active part of the reordering of the wider relations within which the City is set and the aim was that the local reconstruction would respond to—and hopefully even influence— the remaking of the wider relations. (D. B. Massey *et al.*, 1999, p. 107)

Later on, she states:

> For development towards city-dom what is needed is positively activated *interaction.* This could mean the bubbling-up of new activities, it could mean specific policies to trade on or maintain the potential effects of intersection (to turn it into interaction). (*Ibid*., p. 115)

Through an analysis based on micro-histories, rather than macro structures, the variegated landscape of immigrant integration policies make sense. In fact, at the beginning of the project, all the typical variables — political orientation, socioeconomic situation, demographics and historical trajectories of the places — were rather similar among the four cities studied, and therefore suggested similar involvement in immigration issues. However, each one adopted a different policy towards immigration. The desire of the leadership to consider immigration issues as part of the agenda, beyond the formal responsibilities of the subnational government, proved crucial. This desire often hides, behind the walls of the city hall, electoral interests and power struggles on the council: representing a fifth to a quarter of the population, and providing a budget to the municipality which pays for several salaries are two sources of power for elected immigrant representatives on the council.

However, these personal interests are not the only reasons which push certain municipalities to adopt immigration policies. In a context of relative deprivation, in those places of difference, produced by the elite, immigration is one of the controllable domains of policy. In fact, motivated by a desire to resemble the centre, the control over selection of newcomers is seen as an attempt to enter a wider competition and to rescale development strategies. If the success seems mitigated, at least, it informs us of the on-going construction of the city with small 'n' neoliberalisms, in which immigration issues in Israel, usually of an ethno-religious nature, are reframed through economic criteria. Beyond Berthomière's proposal 'immigrant logics vs. State logics' (2002), the city logics emerge and add tensions. However, it also plays the role of neutralising those tensions, in part, at the city level.

Against these three sets of actors (State, immigrants and cities), non-governmental actors, grassroots organisations… are missing. Ironically enough, the cities that have a thinner organisational structure for immigration and integration issues, and are therefore labelled as less capable of taking action for themselves, are more prone to cooperate with a 'civil society', be it grassroots organisations, residents' representatives, local branches of national ethnic associations etc. In fact, in Kiryat Shmona and Kiryat Gat, the absence of the MOIA 'group *Aliyah*' left some space for immigrant residents. This provides new pointers for the study of democratic channels in mid-sized cities.

1.2 The 'ordinary city': between innovation and dependence

The dialectics between place, scales and social agents is a fertile ground to analyse the potential of cities which were stereotyped as playing a 'punitive game of catching up'. It reveals their orientation towards a potential future, and the innovative steps city leaders and their staff take to try and reach out to this ideal, even when it means adopting policies and programmes beyond the formal requirements of administrative and political decentralisation.

Béhar has suggested that mid-sized cities are fields of innovation (Loubière, 2011). The creativity of these places is displayed in the following aspects: firstly, the cities under scrutiny have elaborated innovative programmes to rehabilitate the city's population base — from immigration outreaching to housing development. Secondly, the professionalization of leaders lies mainly in the development of their 'brokerage' skills: benefiting from the fragmentation of power, they have taken advantage of the many actors they could reach out to, in order to capture more resources (in an environment where resources are becoming scarcer and more and more contingent upon self-funding). Thirdly, these places have acted as powerful neutralisers of various logics — State, city and immigrants at the very least — which collide in the governance of immigration. They have elaborated a synthesis between a national ideological framework whose symbol is the Law of Return, the pressure from immigrants to preserve sociocultural practices, and the economic interests of the city.

However, each step towards resources, and each adaptation of the national ideological frame, translates into a growing presence of the State in the many interstices of governance. Our analysis unveils the development of pathways of high dependency between actors located at different scales, who need each other to maintain their power — whether it be their position, budget or prestige etc. One of the main results is the difficulty to design alternative paths of belonging. In chapter 4, I have asked about the role of the 'singular'. I argued that those singular cases play a role in constituting the core. In the towns, the State is under disguise. But it is also in conflicts with locally-produced organisations, norms and logics.

The four cities under scrutiny have displayed institutional features that make us reflect on the rescaling processes occurring in mid-sized cities. In fact, the nature of scales in the case studies is polycentric — with the municipality, the ministries, but also transnational diaspora organisations and grassroots organisations as four main organisational aggregates —, interdependent and multiscalar. The different quasi-organic morphologies of the institutional features of immigration policies display many interactions, that look as many arteries connecting the different organs they revolve around. The municipality emerges as a new centre of gravity, in competition with the central administration, deploying connections with donors and grasping resources. But with every new connection, a new pathway of interdependency is created.

This dismisses the idea that cities located out of the core networks are completely isolated. They do take part in the rescaling of power, even if these activities are not as substantial as in global cities. What about their role in immigration issues?

1.3 Immigration and the (mid-sized) city

Over the last decade, scholarship and practitioners have together questioned the potential for cities to be more accommodating than national frameworks — the latter suffering from a conservative backlash.

This work does not provide a clear answer to the question of whether cities are more accommodating, or, whether, on the contrary 'local conservatism prevails'? To understand the extent to which a city is more inclusive or exclusionary, if it belongs to those 'sanctuary cities' which are countering conservative, and even racist, national policies, my proposal is mainly methodological and suggests a need to ground research in place, and to acknowledge that the social actors in these places intervene, therefore producing continuity or change. The main question to be resolved is to define the interests of each group, their strategies and their weight in the governance of the place under scrutiny.

Even though our research focused on Jewish immigrants in Israel, the adoption of more pluralist attitudes is limited to some privileged immigrants; and NIMBY logics for immigration settlement restrict the Law of Return. Pluralism and assimilation coexist in the city, and are rendered parallel with an economic imperative for the beneficiaries of the former, and moral obligations for the beneficiaries of the latter. Groups who are perceived as less capable of becoming productive individuals are still supported, in the name of the moral obligation to help new Jewish immigrants to *Eretz Israel* but their deservingness is conditioned by the necessity to comply as rapidly as possible with *a priori* defined norms and customs of the host society —

including orthodox practice of religion (which a minority practices in Israel) and mastery of the Hebrew language. In that sense, even in the ethnonational framework delimitating the Israeli national immigration policy, some trends appear that are more general to immigration issues in the world. The observed trade-off, for which desirable individuals 'buy' their freedom, while vulnerable groups undergo more coercive assimilationist policies, feeds into a literature that highlights frames of 'active citizenship' (Soysal, 2012) or 'deservingness' (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012). Faist's proposal applies here, and adds a new layer to the already exclusionary Law of Return:

> It is not only the categorization of people along nationality/citizenship and thus the accident of birthplace, but also their distinction with respect to economic utility and social adaptation that make a difference to the life chances of many individuals. (Faist, 2013, p. 1644)

The raising interest for the 'economic utility' of immigrants, even in the Israeli context, is I believe deeply related to Glick-Schiller and Çağlar's proposal. They connect immigration and placemaking, arguing that cities position and market themselves in order to attract migrants, themselves neoliberal agents. Indeed, they claim that "When it comes to urban studies, the robust literature on the neoliberal remaking, reimagining, and competitive marketing of cities is strangely silent about migration" (Schiller & Çağlar, 2010, p. 2).

Kymlicka (2015)'s call to go beyond 'neoliberal multiculturalism' is certainly timely. My first hypothesis was based on the belief that the inclusion of immigrants in policymaking could lead to more accommodating policies. But, immigrant participation in councils is not entirely a guarantor of pluralism and openness. It is certainly a first step, but it should be accompanied by many other mechanisms.

2 Municipalities engaging in immigration and integration matters

This second section provides a brief summary of the findings regarding the production of scales and places by social agents in the four towns under scrutiny. Immigration issues emerge as a rather recent sector of intervention for municipalities. The adoption of local immigration policies is correlated with neoliberal pressure for interlocality competition for resources. Beyond an apparently simple devolution of responsibilities, the cooperation and conflicts between the various actors involved in immigration issues reveal the production of a new socio-political space, which I have called a multiscalar governance of immigration and integration.

Secondly, place issues, and more particularly the 'sense of place' as imagined in the towns, will be the focus. New immigrants disturb this collective imaginary, and oblige the residents to redefine 'who belongs'. Under the pressure of local development, deservingness — that is the

definition of newcomers who are welcome to settle in the town, and to receive support from the public agencies — is reframed. While the ethno-religious criteria is still essential entailing a moral obligation to support Jews coming to Israel, the economic performance of new immigrants is a dimension that social actors put forward. They embrace the Zionist project of ingathering of exiles, but, for their towns, they would rather reach out to those who they perceive to be contributing and productive members. In addition to their economic performance, participation in community life, including local politics, is another variable of these new frameworks of deservingness.

Lastly, the role of peripheral towns' residents and leaders is emphasised. Far from being dispossessed of political agency, their influence becomes more obvious once we take a step back, and try to understand what an analysis at the margin can bring to an understanding of the national. In fact, and particularly at the time this thesis was being written, when right-wing populist politics were proving so successful across North America and Europe, we cannot ignore the 'shared destiny' of immigrants living at the frontiers, and their influence on politics in Israel. The perpetuation of neo-Zionist hawkish politics finds its most virulent backers in these towns, wrongly depicted as 'powerless'.

2.1 How immigration became a new channel for resources? Towns engage in rescaling economic development strategies

This doctoral research addressed the autonomy of four frontier towns in Israel, Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona. Three years after the formulation of the hypotheses, the measure of their autonomy is limited. Forced to enter the 'interlocality competition' induced by a more neoliberal approach to government in Israel, their access to resources is dependent on their proactiveness. Municipalities gain access to funds through public tenders, for which they must provide a matching budget, proof of their 'ownership' and capacity to run the programmes they compete for. The result, one might say, is the same: public funding is still critical to run local projects. But the rules of the game have changed: securing funds requires professionalism and the ability to prepare a financial package with a wider range of donors. However, even if funds come predominantly from central administration, the level of inspection is lower and allows greater flexibility. For example, in the case of immigration and integration policies, I have shown that municipal programmes, even though they are mainly funded by the MOIA, are more pluralist than the assimilationist policies enforced by Israel before the 1990s — a result of decentralisation on the one hand, and pressure from one of the largest waves of immigration to Israel, on the other hand.

In a context where budgets are distributed on a competitive basis, rather than in accordance with redistribution of resources based on demographic, economic and social criteria, the professionalisation of municipal leaders and staff is decisive. At the beginning of this study, I asked the following question: how do the strategies deployed by social actors involved in immigration and integration policy formulation and implementation transform the urban governance that specifically targets this policy domain into a multiscalar and fragmented political space? Giraud suggests that defining the social actors involved in the definition of the 'public issue', and then involved in the treatment of this issue, helps understand the politics of scales (Giraud, 2012). By intervening, actors produce a scalar space, he says (*Ibid.*). And indeed, leaders and municipal staff are pressed to become talented brokers. In fact, where the national is still quite present, a local governance emerges out of the brokerage of actors located in the city who attempt to access funds and programmes at central level — as well as funds located in the third sector, or even in the Diaspora. Even if this does not exactly translate into local autonomy, these empowered actors find their personal interests satisfied and work to neutralise issues arising from the progressive withdrawal of the State. Hence the transition to a neoliberal State does not trigger any significant social unrest, but rather isolated acts.

Having said this, what is the weight of immigration issues in this competition for resources? I explored the question whether immigration is a possible lever for a city's economic development and social change on the one hand; and if there is a positive correlation between cities that are engaged in actions aiming at rescaling their development strategy, and cities that proactively address immigration issues, on the other hand. The answer is two-fold: efforts of the municipality to address immigration issues at the town-level is indeed often linked to the above-mentioned competition for resources. However, it is mostly reduced to an 'in-place economy' approach. Here, Acre in particular, and Arad and Kiryat Gat to some extent, count on immigration as a way to attract more residents: immigrants justify applications for larger public budgets, maintaining public services, and they also become tax payers. Immigration issues are dealt with in parallel with housing development projects, and with culture, rather than with employment issues. In this sense, the first hypotheses I formulated in 2013, when I thought that new residents were seen as potential actors for local economic development or entrepreneurship no longer appear valid.

What is confirmed, however, is that there is a parallel between a leadership who agree — if not in its declarations, but at least in municipal management — to the new rules of the game, and an increased involvement with immigration issues. Kiryat Shmona still refuses to compete with other municipalities, and calls on the government to respect its responsibilities towards a frontier town that has undergone the conflict with Lebanon for decades. And it has refused to

form a more proactive policy towards immigration. On the other side of the spectrum, the mayor of Acre's belief's that "There is money in the country. There is money in the country. You need to know how to get it. We know how to get it" (Interview 58, 2015), corresponds to the relatively large resources targeted at immigration.

Nevertheless, peripheral towns seem to have access to a differentiated range of resources. In fact, if they are forced to engage in interlocality competition, they do not compete with Tel Aviv or other cities in the metropolitan areas. Through the mapping of actors, emerges a field of peripheral donors, which, in a way, maintain them in their peripheral position. They have access, and they can pretend to reach out, to marginal budgets: from the Ministry for the Development of the Galilee and the Negev, or, in this case, from the MOIA. Similarly, if they favour an in-place economy, rather than a productive economy, it is often because they cannot compete for new industries and businesses. To put it bluntly, municipalities investing in immigration policies and their implementation, do so in order to reach out to central funding, for which poorer towns have first priority.

Leitner (in Sheppard & McMaster, 2008), in her work on European immigration policy, elaborate on the new scalar fixes in Europe. She argues that new hierarchies of power are based on old hierarchies of power. In the Israeli case, there is not a clear core/periphery (with the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem axis representing the centrifuge force). I have argued earlier that cities with large Palestinian-Israeli citizens could be considered peripheries within the core district, as their access to resources is lower. Similarly, several cities in the centre suffer from low economic status, such as Lod or Ramle. Whereas *kibbutzim* located at the borders were generally considered as part of the Centre. In these archipelago-like networked hierarchies, differences are maintained along time, and inequalities are reproduced. However, this peripherality does not completely deprive the cities and their actors of will and a capacity to intervene; in short, of autonomy.

2.2 NIMBY: Reframing deservingness, limiting immigration

One of the specific questions I have raised is to what extent may an enquiry 'at the margin' allow the researcher to identify 'practices, identities and autonomies' (Carrier & Demazière, 2012) that either reproduce or produce specific scalar spaces of politics? What stems from the analysis is that enquiry in the margins provides new insight which helps to better understand 'national' phenomena. These towns are products of central planning. They are the result of the production of places of difference. However, they also wish to resemble the centre. Following Scott's

subaltern politics, which I have developed in the theoretical chapter of this volume, the research confirms that actors borrow from the centre and its hegemonic national ideological frameworks.

This is particularly salient when looking at city officials' own immigration experiences and how they are presented to the public. A first important remark is that these stories are those which are known to the public, since they act as representatives of larger communities established in the towns. Their biographical performances, socially meaningful, are interventions that bend scales. In fact, they participate in the rescaling of integration issues, where the self is more responsible, the city is the space of 'multiculturalism', where sociocultural practices are segregated, and the nation, the scale of belonging, where access to institutions — conventions or public institutions — must be assured. In their narratives, they reconstitute a story of immigration success, based on values of the self-made man. They integrated thanks to persistent effort and their desire to help their peers led them to public office.

But the analysis of their discourse shows the extent to which these leaders adopt a conservative stance. They are more inclined to limit immigration to newcomers they believe will contribute to the town. Other interviewees have adopted similar discourses. The towns that invest in immigration programmes undeniably try to reach out to those they perceive will become contributing residents. But, contrary to some immigrant politicians I have met, they point out the need to help out immigrants after they settle, in order to remove obstacles to integration.

The immigrant-integration-narrative framing at work is as follows: immigrant integration mostly concerns Jewish immigration, under the Law of Return. This 'repatriate' migration should not lead to major crises, since immigrants and Israeli-born residents are part of 'one people'. The municipality, partly taking over what was once the responsibility of the State, should therefore act to empower these new immigrants, and support their access to institutions — from religion, education, the armed forces, employment and politics —, so that they will become net contributors to the city.

In that context, and after analysis, the proposal of Favell (in Giugni & Passy, 2006) remains highly relevant: "Integration is thus not only an ideal goal for society; it is also something a government sets out to achieve" (*Ibid.,* p. 373). Favell conceives of "[…] integration as a collective societal goal which can be achieved through the systematic intervention of collective political agency […]" (*Ibid*., 374). There is indeed a crucial role of public agencies, in defining integration and in administrating it. This role has been determined from the 1950s, with the elaboration of absorption policies, with the help of the Israeli scholarship at the time (Ram, 1995). The terms of

this public function has slightly changed since then. Let us therefore look more closely at these processes.

Access based on religion is crucial. With 30% of immigrants believed to be non-*halachically* Jewish (Lustick, 1999), there is a lot of pressure to demonstrate religious belonging, even when they do not observe a religious life. Narratives of interviewees always include several sentences proving to their interlocutors — myself, in this case — that they come from a religious family, spoke some Hebrew before they immigrated, or were simply defined as Jews when they lived outside Israel. The annex I have included on 'joint research' also contains a dialogue with a government clerk proving the type of pressure non-Jewish immigrants may experience.

A second institution immigrants are strongly oriented towards is the labour market. The perceived economic contribution of immigrants has been highlighted in this project. Since there were not activities undertaken by the municipalities or other actors in enhancing entrepreneurship and business creation, why are immigrants perceived as an engine of development? The answer is two-fold: first, and I have mentioned it in the previous subsection, immigration is linked with place and placemaking, and participates in the repositioning of the cities on the national and transnational map (even when it simply means that those immigrants permit to reach out to budget, to maintain public services and to gain new tax payers); second, it is linked to an understanding of desirable vs. deserving individuals. And indeed, proactive outreaching programs seem to have a corrective effect on age/education of immigrants coming to development towns. Contrarily to Lipshitz's analysis (1998) carried out some years after 1990s immigration, controlling immigration to the city translates in the settlement of a younger workforce. Nevertheless, out-migration in the upcoming years could be expected, reinforcing the idea that those cities are transitional settlement areas. Once immigrants find their way through the labour and housing market, they might remigrate to the centre. To avoid out-migration — of immigrants and of Israeli-born —, cities invest more and more in the remaking of their image, diversity being one of the elements highlighted in those new — although rather preliminary — strategies.

These poor towns do not always manage to attract the young working families that they target. Sometimes, newcomers do not fill the ambition of cities when it comes to their education and employment prospects. It does not mean that the city does not spend public funding for their sake. Immigrants who are perceived as being net receivers, usually from developing countries, fall under the 'moral obligation' of the city, in the Zionist project of ingathering of the exiles. Here again, the desirable vs. deserving frame comes into action. Additionally, immigrants from developing countries are the objects of targeted policies, and supplementary budgets can be

requested from central government when a population of individuals from Ethiopia, India, or Azerbaijan settle in the city — as is the case for Acre and Kiryat Gat. Their 'vulnerability' is a condition for the city to adopt specific policies toward their settlement, but it also implies that they will be the target of top-down, paternalistic decisions, intended towards the group as a whole, rather than individuals.

Lastly, immigrants are expected to participate in political institutions. In that sense, they are responsible for electing representatives who will defend their interests in local government. Here, the cooperation with an older generation of leaders from the African and Middle Eastern communities, and the new immigrants predominantly from the FSU, shows that the main cleavages of the 1990s are slowly disappearing and being replaced. Solidarity grows out of a 'shared destiny' in their predicament. The attempt of *Shas* and *Israel Beitenu,* during the 2015's elections, to focus on welfare politics, rather than ethno-religious politics, is symptomatic of these changes.

There is a continuity of the absorption policy of Israel from the national to the local level. In addition, even though development towns are the result of coercive, state-led production of places, they have not exactly managed to produce alternative paths of integration. In fact, these towns have facilitated the emergence of leaders from African and Middle East communities from the 1960s onwards, as well as the growth of new political movements and parties which better represent immigrants, such as *Shas* or *Israel Beitenu*. Nevertheless, better observation of sociocultural pluralism is restricted to Western immigrants, and those towns have even limited any further immigration around new frames of deservingness based on socioeconomic participation.

The case of Acre is very interesting to assess the possibility of fostering pluralism, out of national politics of belonging. Indeed, local leaders go to tremendous effort to encourage peaceful co-existence in such a disputed State. But despite these efforts, they do not succeed in shaking off a national ideology in which Jewish citizens are considered superior to their Palestinian peers. Paternalistic, condescending discourses are as present as in other towns which are marked by the conflict.

2.3 Transformative potential of integrating immigrants within the political project?

This brings me to the weight of social actors in the orientation of places and scales. Israel, the State, its cities and its immigration policies cannot completely be understood without the

conflict, and the conflict cannot be understood without those cities and immigration. As Uri Ram and Jeffrey C. Goldfarb argue, there are mutual relations between conflict and culture: "the way in which the conflict shapes ordinary lives, and the way in which ordinary lives in turn affect the conflict" (Ram & Goldfarb, 2009, p. 2).

After living for several years in the centre of the country, spending time in those towns between 2013 and 2016 was quite a culture shock, and brought to light a new layer of Israeli society, and its politics. This aspect of the society became even more crucial at the time of writing the thesis, since it strongly echoed the growing success of nationalistic, conservatory and populist politics in the United States and in Europe — the milestones of which have been the European response to the so-called 'refugee crisis' at EU level, as well as at national and local levels; the 2016 'Brexit', where the fracture between London and large cities vs. rural and small town England determined the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union; and the more recent election of Donald Trump as president of the United States in November 2016, here again supported by a conservative rural America voting against the urban dwellers they have come to despise.

In this international context, an analysis of the political weight of Israel's periphery suddenly becomes more pressing. In fact, from 1995 onwards, Israel has witnessed the "[…] emergence of two mutually antagonistic alternatives: a liberal, secular, Post-Zionist civic identity, on the one hand, and ethnic, religious, Neo-Zionist nationalistic identity, on the other" (Ram, 2000). For the Neo-Zionist camp, their orientation towards ethnic nationalism endorses the Jewish people as the legitimate citizens.

In this context, immigrants who settle in the periphery, once 'trapped' (Yiftachel, 2000), gain political weight and momentum. Right-wing nationalist political parties have virtually no opposition in these towns. They foster a growing resentment against the post-Zionist Tel Aviv bubble. And their claims to have supported the construction of the state, at the price of their sacrifice, are increasingly audible (*Ibid.*). Kiryat Shmona's project to open a *maabarot* museum is one symbol of these claims and the actions led by leaders in these towns.

The *maabarot* museum, not yet a reality when writing this volume, holds the promise of a 'rebranding' of immigration in the city. It came together with a series of lectures, then called 'academia at the square' (*academia bakikar* in Hebrew), which actively involved the residents of Kiryat Shmona, who gathered archives and retold the story of the town. Arad's municipal museum exhibits a story of 'chosen' immigration, away from the narratives of development towns. Acre's rebranding 'the city of Mediterranean cultures' leverages the architecture, culture and folklore of the many groups of immigrants from the 1950s to now. Through those examples,

immigration and placemaking are deeply intertwined, and serve as a basis for economic projects, mainly tourism-based. But they are also symbolic projects, highlighting the various elements of the Jewish presence in Israel, re-writing the pioneering narratives, and redefining immigration within new 'diversity' discourses.

This raises the question whether this is not just a façade, by a political clique who have largely reduced politics to provocative declarations and 'band aid' actions, while stratification continues. But even if it is a mirage, it has the power to rally those frontier town' residents who do agree when they speak of Palestine, and are active opponents of any peace process — even if they disagree on the definition of what it means to be Jewish, leading to harsh opposition between secular residents (often FSU immigrants) and religious residents.

3 Recommendations, limitations and perspectives for the future

This last section briefly presents some recommendations to cities engaging with immigration outreaching and immigrant integration. Second, it concludes with reflections on the scope of the work, as well as research perspectives for the future.

3.1 Some recommendations

Although the scope of this work does not explicitly enables the definition of a clear set of recommendations for municipalities in mid-sized cities which wish to engage more proactively in immigration issues, the following remarks can provide new leads. I will briefly address four issues in particular: leveraging immigration issues for economic purposes; alternative pathways of integration; local democracy; and institutional cooperation.

Along this work, I have demonstrated that mid-sized cities in Israel have started to engage in immigration outreaching. In that sense, they have deployed resources — human and financial — to travel abroad and convince Jewish candidates to immigration to make their way to their cities, to ensure a personal accompaniment (with the figure of the *proyektor*), bring some sense of familiarity with the design of segregated sociocultural activities and multilingual service delivery, and finally to guarantee some political representation of the immigrant individuals in the city council. Those efforts are made, because immigrants hold the promise of a demographic burst, but also an economic boost. Nevertheless, municipalities do not dedicate many resources to build support systems and infrastructure for the economic integration of immigrants. New comers face a vacuum, partly filled with access to vocational training, and only marginally offering entrepreneurship workshops and support. Larger schemes could be envisaged, which would not leave immigrants as mere characters of (and this is just an example) a tourism plan,

but would apprehend their potential in actively participating in the design, the operationalization and the execution of tourism activities.

Second, immigrant integration is still very much defined within the national project, dominated by a white European Jewish definition of citizenship. I assumed that investigating in places mostly inhabited by immigrants from Africa and Asia, as well as FSU immigrants, would provide a fertile ground for the analysis of alternative pathways of integration, and a more open 'imaginary of place' (Walker & Leitner, 2011). In fact, those cities' residents are important supporters of political parties offering an alternative citizenship — such as the *Shas*, or *Israel Beitenu*. It is true that the reinterpretation of the Law of Return at the local level has permitted new comers to benefit from a more open understanding of integration, particularly when it comes to sociocultural practices, i.e. with the public funding of a segregated landscape of culture for FSU immigrants. Nevertheless, the adoption of local multiculturalism is limited to immigrants coming from Europe. Assimilationist attitudes still prevail when addressing the integration of immigrants from Ethiopia, India, or even Azerbaijan or Uzbekistan. Similarly, the rehabilitation of *Mizrahi* immigrants in nation-building, is often an attempt to join the mainstream narratives. In that context, a multi-actor debate is profoundly lacking, to capitalise on the micro-history of those places, and invent a more open imaginary of place, inclusive to the many groups constituting those heterogeneous places.

Following this point, I also raise the question of local democracy. Even though Israel exhibits a progressive case of immigrants' participation in local and national politics, I believe we should not content with the inclusion of a small number of immigrant politicians, who partly reproduce patterns of domination. Nor should we rely on the municipal department of immigration and integration as a satisfactory institutional setting to channel the interests and needs of the immigrant individuals in the city. Conflicts often arise between this department, and the community work unit, which proposes to replace immigrant integration with 'intercultural community development'. As the director of the community work service at the Ministry of Welfare argue: "Now, the new concept is 'intercultural community development'. Immigrants are just one aspect. Conflicts are usually common between the different groups" (Interview 11, 2014). The activities of community work, ranging from leadership, inclusion of residents' associations, community associations… etc, hold the promise of a better representation of immigrants in decision-making and planning. Reaching out to residents' associations, committees, or even facilitating their establishment, although often seen as a threat, can increase the legitimacy of the various actors engaged in immigration and integration activities. Kiryat Gat's bottom-up design of activities for immigrants, or Kiryat Shmona's inclusion of various immigrants' associations in meetings, are first steps towards this local democracy. Ben Elia

(2006) has strongly suggested that the fourth generation of local governments in Israel ought to open new pathways for local democracy. This could be an important project to undertake.

To achieve the creation of a wider space of debate and collective bottom-up planning, a better coordination between the various actors is necessary. If we are to acknowledge a shift from local governmental to multiscalar governance, new forums must be established, to foster the encounters between the various actors, and define where competences and activities overlap, or lack. I have recall in the previous chapters some experiences of collaboration. However, Kiryat Gat's committee, or Acre's temporary cooperation between departments, both revolved around the integration of a particular group — Ethiopian immigrants and Indian immigrants — rather than were based on the idea of collaboration around the issues of immigration in general.

In brief, for local governance to function and offer better perspectives for local democracy, it has to provide with spaces of dialogue, debate and participation.

3.2 Limitations and perspectives for the future

At the beginning of this section, I have recognised the limited scope of this doctoral work. Several steps could be undertaken in the upcoming years to cope with these various limitations. A first limitation corresponds to the time of the investigation. I have chosen to focus on the discourses and narratives produced in four cities at the moment of the inquiry. In that framework, I could not assess the long-term impacts of those discourses. I hope that the last chapter of this volume, which highlights the organisational features of immigrant integration policies, provide the reader with some linkages between policymaking and policy implementation. However, I could not address issues of remigration of immigrants, formal integration in the labour market, access to housing, educational trajectories of immigrants' children… etc. An interesting task would therefore be to examine the impacts of the policies I have set to analyse between 2013 and 2016 in several years, and offer a more longitudinal study of immigration in those towns.

Second, I have decided to analyse this policy domain from the municipality, outwards. This raises the issue of censing and mapping the actors. In fact, the first interviews were conducted within the wall of the city hall. There, I have obtained authorisation to conduct the research, by the spokesperson and the mayor or deputy mayor in charge of immigration-related issues. If that enabled me to navigate freely in the various institutions, with the legitimate 'stamp' of the government, it meant that all interviews have trickled down from the municipality out. In order to prevent the mapping of actors to be an unfinished puzzle, I have shown the charts I had sketched to various interviewees, some months after our first encounter. Exchanging on these

drafts enabled me to complete the maps, hear their reactions, and strengthen my analysis of cooperation and conflict relations between actors. Nevertheless, I acknowledge the fact that this has limited the analysis, somehow. A future task could include the censing of actors from the point of view of the ministries, or even more challenging, from the immigrants themselves. In that last case, a better understanding of the 'accessibility' of the various organisations could emerge.

A third reflexion concerns the methodology I adopted. In order to analyse the micro-politics of those cities, and show the production of new hierarchies of power, I have focused almost exclusively on the voices of the various actors involved in immigration integration issues. Although I am still deeply convinced of the importance of the task of rehabilitating agency in the production of scales, and in placemaking, I would like to explore more systematically the 'embodiment' and practices, beyond the 'sounds' I registered during interviewees. Victory Day, the short documentary movie I have filmed in 2015, has captured to some extent those bodily practices. It has provided a new kind of micro events, necessary to understand the power dynamics and relations. In parallel, and although it differs a lot from the footages I have filmed, the preliminary attempts to transform questions of governance in data visualisation (such as maps and charts), have triggered new issues related to materialities, embodiments and visible demonstrations of State, power, and institutions.

Finally, I would like to raise the question of joint research. This project has provoked many thoughts regarding ethics and participation. The annex I have produced on joint research reflects on the importance of conceptualising the encounters between the researcher and the participants to the research. In this dynamic, I have adopted some participatory methods, bringing back photos, charts and even results of the research to interviewees, to obtain confirmation, make adjustments, and simply, to show that I was grateful for the time they spared me. However, those were very small steps, compared to the possibilities offered by participatory action research. Participatory action research disagrees with the statement that scientific production is the only true knowledge, and holds the potential to acknowledge for a multitude of actors in the production of knowledge. It is therefore a participatory and collaborative process, involving researchers, decision makers and citizens. Additionally, it is a cyclical and iterational process. This type of research has been more common in the fields of education, community economic development and strategic planning, but also urban studies. Under those terms, we could therefore draw the basis of a sustainable channel between knowledge production and policymaking, especially in such a policy domain as uncertain and complex as immigration and integration policymaking.

Fostering a conducive environment to 'living together' — beyond 'neoliberal multiculturalism' or 'welfare chauvinism' (Kymlicka, 2015) — is a question that, I believe, deeply motivates our generation of scholars. As we engage increasingly with the 'field', with the people we meet during our research (who have been transformed from informants into participants in the research process) the ethics of our project are constantly being questioned. Similarly, the lines between research, active engagement and politics are also blurred. Today, just as much as fifty years ago, when immigration issues revealed the cracks in our societies (Tripier, 2004), scholars in social sciences must participate in a larger societal debate. A step I hope to take together with my peers.

Annex 1 ◊ Use of the concept 'neoliberalism'

In *The neoliberal city: governance, ideology and development in American cities,* Geographer Jason Hackworth (2007) points out that neoliberalism has become "the next popular metaconcept in social sciences. [...] States, provinces, policies, eras, people, countries, and institutions have all been deemed "neoliberal" or "neoliberalising". [...] Neoliberalism is everywhere, and apparently, everything" (p. xii). And indeed, neoliberalism seems to be the cause and the consequence, the root of all urban issues today, and the only possible path cities will take. It looks as it is altogether interchangeable with the concepts of globalisation, postmodernism, capitalism and a finance-based dematerialised economy.

The term 'neoliberal' is quite recurrent in this thesis. Its controversial meaning therefore calls for a working definition, in the framework of this doctoral work. In this annex, I will first present the origin of the concept, which has changed a lot from its first use within the liberal philosophies of Enlightenment to its renewal in the 1940s, particularly developed with the work of the Mont Pélerin Society, to the academic works of Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedmann at the Chicago School. Next, I will present the development of a more 'political phase' of neoliberalism (Storper, 2016), induced by Thatcher and Reagan governments. From that moment on, neoliberalism has been tinted with conservatism, and is closer to 'capitalism in its millennial manifestation' (Harvey). The third part will therefore look at the Israeli case and the penetration of a neoliberal ideology with the Patinkin boys in the 1960s, to the current 'start-up nation'. Lastly, and as a conclusion, I will try to sum up some of the proposals made by various theorists to use neoliberalism as an analytical category.

1 Origin of the concept

When one looks up the word 'neoliberal', one is referred by the Oxford English Dictionary to the word 'liberalism', which is defined as the adoption of a liberal political view, "favouring individual liberty, free trade, and moderate social and political reform" (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/liberal?q=liberal+).

Neoliberalism is in fact inspired by the liberal philosophy of Enlightenment. Liberalism then meant "limited states, whose legitimacy comes from free citizens in self-governed democracies, rather than subjects governed by royalty or clergy" (Storper, 2016, p. 6). It was revived in the 1930s by the Freidburg ordoliberalism school, and the Waller Lippmann Conference held in Paris in 1938 (Mirowski, 2014; Venugopal, 2015; Storper, 2016). This renewal was institutionalised in 1947 with the constitution of the Mont Pélerin Society in Switzerland, a

group of intellectuals who aimed at pushing forward a neoliberal agenda (they already used the term) against the welfare state (*Ibid.*) — hence the use of 'liberalism', which precisely aims at freeing citizens from what was perceived by the Mont Pélerin Society's members as an oppressive ruler.

Michael Storper (2016) therefore claims that early liberal economists made a distinction between inequality coming from properly functioning markets and inequality generated by powerful interests who take more than their proper share; while recent critics of neoliberalism "caricature market economies as inherently oppressive and inegalitarian" (Storper, 2016, p. 9). It is true that economists of the Chicago School, although their economic model meant at preventing monopolists and rent-seekers, started designing what resembles today's neoliberalism (*Ibid.*, p. 14).

The confusion between the liberal philosophy and neoliberalism can also be explained by more recent definitions of neoliberalism. In fact, the term neoliberalism changed quite radically when it became a way to describe the political reforms led by Thatcher and Reagan, but also by international organisations as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, soon followed by many other governments. Neoliberalism therefore meant a wave of market deregulation, privatisation and welfare state decline (Venugopal, 2015). Moreover, it was accompanied by the support of "different types of new organized interests, mostly private and increasingly plutocratic" (Storper, 2016, p. 15).

2 Contemporary meanings of the concept of neoliberalism

Nowadays, neoliberalism is no longer used by its supporters, but "exclusively by scholars who are critical of markets, de-regulation, and capitalism in general" (*Ibid.*, p. 10). What makes neoliberalism coherent today?

Brenner defines the neoliberal discourse as one emphasising "market-driven growth, flexibility and locational competitiveness" (Brenner, 2004, p. 3). Brenner also argues that deregulation does not mean that the State withdraws but that its role shifts to favour the capitalist enterprise of accumulation. Similarly, Harvey (2005) argues that neoliberalism is a political project aiming at creating new means of capital production (cited in Clarke, 2008).

This political project is channelled through new political parties and new institutional forms, emerging partially through scalar restructuring, that act towards the expansion of the scope and reach of corporate capital, the indirect 'economisation' of areas of social and political life, and benefits from the rise of population control technologies (Clarke, 2008, p. 136). When it comes

to city governments, this scalar restructuring, through the "political pressure for market-oriented and voluntarist modes of governance, based on the principles of devolved and outsourced responsibility" (Peck, 2013, p. 147), is usually implicit with the use of the term 'governance'.

In that context, the concepts of scaling, governance and place-making that I mobilised in my theoretical framework do echo with neoliberalism. In fact, John Clarke argues: "new spatial and scalar organisation — and their implication with questions of multiple, graduated, or overlapping sovereignties — seem to me to bear directly on the issues of 'making up place'" (Clarke, 2008, p. 144).

3 Neoliberalism in Israel

The social, economic and political changes inherited from a flexible accumulation regime, technological advances and globalisation hit Israel a little later. Indeed, we can date the shift of Israel from a semi-socialist society to a free market economy to around 1985 (Kay 2012), a shift that has occurred through remarkable pressure from the United States.

In his article "From Altneuland to the New Promised Land: A Study of the Evolution and Americanization of the Israeli Economy", Avi Kay analyses the Israeli shift from a semi-socialist planned economy to today's free market economy. Even if he dates pressures to adopt a more liberal approach to economy to the 1960s, Kay shows the role of the 1973 Yom Kippur war in triggering major changes (Kay, 2012). Indeed, a combination of the costs of war, economic disruption and fuel price increases led Israel into spiralling inflation in the 1970s. At that time, the Chicago university-trained free-market advocate Dan Patinkin, accompanied by his students, the Patinkin boys, started to get more and more present in the Israeli media to lobby for economic changes (*Ibid*., p. 107). The Likud, elected in 1977, was then promoting, at least in its discourse, a pro-market ideology. Kay describes the meeting of economist Milton Friedmann with Likud leader Menachem Begin. Friedmann submitted a reform proposal for Israel to move forward a market economy. But these recommendations were only followed by marginal changes in policy, and public expenditures actually rose during that period (*Ibid*., pp. 108-109).

Inflation and public expenses led to a situation such as "by mid-1984 Israel was totally dependent on the United States for its economic survival" (*Ibid.*, p. 111). The United States did apply some pressure but seeing that there was no change, it decided to freeze all monetary transfers to the country. This ultimatum had the expected effect. In 1985, the government adopted Israel's 1985 Economic Stabilisation Plan.

Central budget cuts also have an impact on social expenditures: education in particular suffers from the withdrawal of the State. Welfare expenses increased a bit, but it is more of a 'band aid' effect, the State having given up on solving deeper social problems (Kimhi, 2015). But more importantly for our matter, immigration absorption policy changed entirely, from a State responsibility to individual responsibility.

Conclusion: neoliberalism as an analytical category?

In order to escape the totalising effect of neoliberalism, which runs the risk of turning it into a 'contextual wallpaper' (Venugopal, 2015, p. 169), I now turn to two proposals of what Rajesh Venugopal has named 'deep neoliberalism' (*Ibid*., p. 170): Aihwa Ong and Jamie Peck's. Ong suggests that neoliberalism is a radically decentred and amorphous phenomenon. In fact, "Ong treats neo-liberalism's spread by examining it as an assemblage of technologies, techniques, and practices that are appropriated selectively, that come into uncomfortable encounters with 'local' politics and cultures, and that are mobile and connective (rather than 'global') (Clarke, 2008, p. 138). The term 'assemblage' is helpful to understand practices of articulation, disarticulation and re-articulation (*Ibid*.). In turn, Peck argues that neoliberalism is a decentralised and deeply contextualised force (Peck, 2010 cited in (Venugopal, 2015, p. 170).

Following Peck or Ong's proposals, "neoliberalism is but one transformative pulse among many, and not necessarily the dominant one" (Peck, 2013, p. 134). Neoliberalism coexists with other political projects, he argues. It is omnipresent, but it does mean that it is an all-determining superstructure. "More like an ideological parasite, neoliberalism both occupies and draws energy from its various host organisms—bodies politic ranging from post-Soviet states to East Asian developmental regimes and European welfare states—but it cannot, ultimately, live entirely without or outside them" (*Ibid*., p. 144).

In that sense, it brings us to understand some common trends, which were also common to the governance of the cities under scrutiny — from the withdrawal of the central State in the social and public life to the resulting rescaling of responsibility and the devolution to subnational governments, private actors or even the residents themselves; the rise of 'active' citizens; and the penetration of market logic in the regulation of public life —. At the same time though, Storper argues that "as in policymaking in general, much urban policy change is indeed less motivated by macro-ideology than by a complex pragmatics of dealing with an urban environment shaped by changing technologies, migration patterns, lifestyles, economic specialization, and economic development" (Storper, 2016, p. 29). Only through the analysis of people's and institutions' interests and actions can polices be understood. Neoliberalism

therefore stands as one of the ideological frames influencing the way they narrate their experience and view the future.

Annex 2 ◊ Immigrant integration

Immigrant integration has been a constant object in this doctoral project. However, I have decided to not dedicate a full section of the theoretical background to defining it, mainly because its ontological and epistemological implications have been discussed so often in the literature of the past few decades, but also because I adopted a grounded approach to integration, informed by narratives and statements recorded during the data collection period.

Nevertheless, it cannot appear in this thesis title, be the central topic of one chapter, and recur so often in each page of this work without a brief overview of those works focusing on immigrant integration.

I will start this annex with an entry in a dictionary of geography. In Jacques Levy and Michel Lussault's *Dictionnaire de Géographie*, integration means the inclusion of a reality A into a reality B, therefore changing reality B and creating a new reality (Lévy & Lussault, 2003, p. 516). Following this definition, the integration of immigrant populations involves their inclusion into the new society, but also the change experienced by this society. This definition allowed me to accept terms such as incorporation, inclusion or integration as quite interchangeable. Assimilationist and multicultural models are two opposite visions of the new reality entailed by immigrants' incorporation: assimilationist policies provide for the abandonment of a previous identity and culture to fully embrace the host societies' values in order to gain full membership; multicultural policies provide for the protection of ones' identity and culture and lead to a pluralist society.

Integration here means a rather successful inclusion in society, which is not always the result of immigrant settlement. Canadian social psychologist John Berry describes a typology where integration is one of the possible outcomes of immigrant settlement: "Berry regards assimilation, integration, marginalization, and separatism as a continuum stretching from complete inclusion to total exclusion of minority groups from the host society" (Berry (1991) in (Remennick, 2003, p. 26).

1 When integration means performing as well as a national average

The literature on immigrant integration can usually fall into two categories: more theoretical works focusing on integration as a result of identity politics in the nation-state; and empirical studies which consider that integration is the moment when immigrants perform as well as nationals.

The Israeli scholarship has focused primarily on the latter, producing large amounts of knowledge on immigrants' and second-generation immigrants' performance in education, occupation, spatial integration and more (see for instance Cohen & Haberfeld, 2007; Haberfeld, Semyonov, & Cohen, 2000; Kanas & Tubergen, 2009; Remennick, 2003; Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004). Regarding integration as 'the moment when immigrants perform as well as the receiving country's nationals' is practical as it allows us to define dimensions of integration, which are measurable and comparable. This is actually the most dominant approach of integration in the scholarship. Studies usually focus on one or several of the dimensions of integration: politico-legal, socio-economic, cultural-religious, and spatial. Research sets indicators (civic rights, political rights, employment and earnings, education, language proficiency, religiosity, spatial segregation, social networks and so on) and compares the performance of immigrants to the results of the native population.

There are three main limitations to this approach. First of all, it does not take into account the power relations between the different groups, and the socio-historical processes that led one particular group to become the benchmark population for integration assessment. Similarly, it raises the problem of the unit of comparison. Indeed, the systematic 'ethnic lens' adopted by scholars often ignores the diversity among immigrants in terms of class, religiosity, region of origin, gender and more. For instance, in the case of former Soviet Union immigrants in Israel, measures are often made looking at the whole population of immigrants from the former USSR, while differences between Russian Jews, Georgian Jews, Caucasus Jews and Bukhara Jews are substantial and often lead to racism among FSU immigrants themselves (Bram, 2008).

Second, integration is not so much measured as 'non-segregation' (Ruiz-Tagle, 2013a). Let me give an example to illustrate: integration will mean that immigrants are not concentrated in the same neighbourhood. If they are, the policy will aim at dispersal. The same applies to social networks: multiplying contact with the local population is seen as a sign of integration for immigrants, although locals are not requested to have contacts with immigrants to be integrated in their society (Schinkel, 2013).

Last, immigrant integration measurements look at their performance without assessing the feelings and perceptions of the main object of those measurements. In this context, it is worth mentioning the work of Karin Amit, who takes into account the perception of the immigrants themselves when studying integration of Western immigrants rather than performance in terms of education, occupation or housing (Amit, 2008).

2 Nation-states, citizenship and foreigners

Addressing the first limitation, measuring integration by comparing it to the native population also calls for an analysis of the norms and standards of dominant groups. It means that there is a dominant group to which the rest should adapt. The same dominant group is the one that defines Otherness, but also the one that controls access to society membership (Hans van Amersfoort in Martiniello & Rath, 2010; Paulle & Kalir, 2013; Hans Mahnig in Penninx *et al.*, 2004). When we ask ourselves "who is the dominant group?", "who decides", we are challenging the ontology of 'integration'. This inevitably leads us to look at the abundant scholarship developed around the nation-state and citizenship (Castles, 2005; Cresswell, 2006; Favell in Giugni & Passy, 2006; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Brubaker and Favell in Martiniello & Rath, 2010; Sassen, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Indeed, the politics of citizenship in the nation-states is fundamental to understand the construction of a figure of 'outsider'. In nation-states, citizens are equal, they enjoy full membership, they should be ready to perform sacred acts (e.g. be drafted to the army), they belong to a community of culture, they enjoy democratic participation, they belong to one single nation and they are entitled to important privileges (Brubaker in Martiniello & Rath, 2010).

The control of access to the political community can be observed through the politics of belonging, defined as the "specific political projects aimed at constructing belonging in particular ways to particular collectivities (…)" (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Politics of belonging largely call for the study of power relations within society. Indeed, the established group – through the appropriation of scarce material and symbolic resources – exists as a group and achieves dominance (Paulle & Kalir, 2013). The nation-state is the relevant scale to analyse the making of citizens against outsiders (Cresswell, 2006; Favell in Giugni & Passy, 2006; Favell in Martiniello & Rath, 2010). Indeed, French sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad states, "immigration is the limit that reveals what [the State] is intrinsically, or its basic truth" (Sayad in Martiniello & Rath, 2010)

The new patterns of migration led to deviations from the nation-state model with which States struggle (Brubaker in Martiniello & Rath, 2010). The methodological nationalism adopted when framing the debate along the nation-state boundaries is also challenged today (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Vertovec, 2007). Globalization and the strengthening of supranational organizations (like the European Commission) accelerated the displacement of claims towards supra and sub-levels (Castles, 2005; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Sassen, 2005).

And indeed, as I showed in the theoretical chapter of this doctoral project, subnational spaces are worth investigating to understand the new developments of immigrant integration issues.

New works on immigrant integration and the city have been published (Caponio & Borkert, 2010; Penninx *et al.*, 2004; Schiller & Çağlar, 2010) based on the assumption that "in every European context, most immigrants live in cities. That is where the jobs, housing, schools, support services (whether governmental or non-governmental), religious and leisure facilities, and their own social networks are concentrated" (Penninx *et al.*, 2004).

3 Public action towards the integration of foreign-born populations

In exploring the motives pushing local governments to form immigration and integration policies, as well as the different sectors those policies address, I assumed that integration was a function of the State. As Favell argues:

> Sociologically speaking, we can, of course, conceive of integration taking place without the structure-imposing involvement of the state. Immigrants can be 'integrated' into the local labour market as employees or service providers, or they can be 'integrated' into complex inter-community relations at, say, city or district level. […]. Multiculturalism as a descriptive state-of-affairs, in this sense, could be the product of something that never had any- thing to do with the 'multicultural' policies or institutions of the state. (Favell (2003) reprinted in Martiniello & Rath, 2010, pp. 373–374)

Nevertheless, as integration is deeply related to citizenship and nation-state building, "Integration is thus not only an ideal goal for society; it is also something a government sets out to achieve" (*Ibid.,* p. 373). In this context, Favell conceives of "[…] integration as a collective societal goal which can be achieved through the systematic intervention of collective political agency […]" (*Ibid*., 374). A year later, Rinus Penninx, Karen Kraal, Marco Martiniello and Steven Vertovec introduce their edited volume *Citizenship in European Cities* with their definition of integration: a "process of becoming part of the society" (Penninx *et al.*, 2004, pp. 1–16). They argue that the process occurs at three levels: individual, collective (e.g. immigrants' associations) and institutions (*Ibid.*). Again, governmental institutions or agencies are considered central to integration.

How do we account for the role of national ideology and institutional involvement of Israeli government in immigrant integration? So far, Israeli scholarship has explored the role of governments and institutions in two cases: the segregation of Jewish immigrants who arrived in Israel after the establishment of the state and originated from North African and Near East countries (Khazzoom, 2005; Shama & Iris, 1977; Tzfadia, 2007; Yiftachel, 2000); and comparative studies of similar groups of Jewish immigrants who settled in Israel and elsewhere to unveil the impact of institutions on integration (see for instance the impact of institutional

differences (immigration policy, labour market structure, education, welfare) on the performance of FSU immigrants in Israel and Canada in Lewin-Epstein, Semyonov, Kogan, & Wanner, 2003; and integration of Moroccans in Israel and the Netherlands in Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1998).

4 Types of policy responses

Michael Alexander has developed an immigration policy typology. Five policy types derive from the attitudes or assumptions of local authorities, applied to four domains (legal-political, socio-economic, cultural-religious and spatial): a non-policy, considering migrants as a transient phenomenon; a guestworker policy, where migrants are seen as temporary workers; an assimilationist policy, where migrants are seen as permanent, and their otherness will disappear; a pluralist policy, where migrants are permanent but their otherness is supported; and an intercultural policy, where migrants are seen as permanent, but their ethnic otherness should not be overemphasised (Alexander, 2003; Penninx *et al.*, 2004, pp. 57–84; Schnell, 2013).

Israel is representative of at least two of these models: an inclusive model as "(The Law of Return) became the most important legal expression of Israel's self-definition as a Jewish state. It established ethnonationalist citizenship that, in principle, encompassed all Jews, and only Jews, by virtue of their ethnic descent" (Shafir and Peled in Semyonov & Lewin-Epstein, 2004). However, this model has been highly challenged by the FSU immigrants of the 1990s, who have pushed for a more pluralistic model, as many newcomers were not Jewish (Elias & Kemp, 2010; Lustick, 1999). Israel also adopted a guest worker policy towards non-Jewish foreign workers (Alexander, 2003; Elias & Kemp, 2010; Raijman & Kemp, 2002; Schnell, 2013).

5 The immigrant himself as ultimately responsible for his integration

In the past decade, integration has been increasingly viewed as 'civic integration'. Myrte Hoekstra's doctoral work shows that major immigrant cities in the Netherlands have emphasised of late the economic independence and social participation of immigrants as a prerequisite for their integration (Hoekstra, 2014, 2015). This corresponds to a larger shift where the 'deservingness' of immigrants is widely adopted by policymakers at European level (Soysal, 2012), country and city levels, but even among civil society organisations (Garcés-Mascareñas, 2015). In Europe, "integration acquires a new purpose – the purpose of achieving social cohesion in society driven by active, participatory and productive individuals" (Soysal, 2012). Soysal's approach of "active citizenship" is not isolated. Prominent intellectuals such as

Arjun Appadurai, Manuel Castells or Zigmunt Bauman all claim that we are witnessing a polarization of citizens: desirable, mobile, highly-educated individuals on the one hand; marginal, low-skilled, malleable labour force on the other hand (Appadurai, 1996; Bauman, 2013; Castells, 1998). Similarly, geographer David Ley calls active citizens 'homo economicus' (David Ley, 2003). In this doctoral work, I emphasise more particularly the concept of 'deservingness', as developed by Sébastien Chauvin and Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas. They show that new categories of deservingness are being designed, where economic performance, social integration and vulnerability become new variables through which integration is viewed (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2012).

Israel ethno-national immigrant regime has also incorporated 'active citizenship' features. Already in the pre-state period, 'penniless' Jews were excluded from the construction of a Jewish home in Zion (Shilo, 1994). Stories of 'non-productive' immigrants who were discouraged from coming to Israel in the 1960s/1970s can be found in literature (for instance the fiction *Aliya* of Liel Leibovitz). Nowadays, regulations towards degree equivalency (for lawyers, medical employees, psychologists…) are at the advantage of English-speaking Western nationals while other immigrants must take exams if they want to practice their former profession in Israel.

Conclusion

The concept of integration has generated a fruitful scholarship, where one can easily get lost. This thesis aims at contributing to the debate, but is limited to the role of agencies in integration, and therefore more towards the debate on the governance of integration: its definition as an object of public action, its framing and the outcomes it aims at. In this grounded approach, I have shown that immigrant integration is conceived as a process in time, in which public agencies have the responsibility to foster a favourable environment for immigrants to quickly access the country's main institutions: religion, education, the armed forces, employment and politics. Under that framework, the bureaucratic process of absorption, partly decentralised to the municipality, is associated with personal accompaniment, immigrant-friendly public service delivery and local political representation. In that sense, it displays some continuity with the national conception of absorption, as defined by the State since its early years.

Annex 3 ◊ Joint research, when research and participants co-produce knowledge

The last few decades have witnessed a fundamental change in social sciences. Today, there is a wide consensus among social theorists that there is not one single truth, but multiple truths, not one single reality but multiple realities, that objectivity is not possible and that subjectivity is inherent to research. Self- and collective narratives are performances, anchored in spatial and temporal frames, as well as situational. In this context, the researcher is not a simple observer of social life. He/she is an actor who participates in the construction of social life.

This subsection will briefly present the principles of this co-construction of knowledge. Then, several examples will explicitly show the disruption caused by my presence – as a PhD student, as an immigrant, as a woman – in my encounters. But these interpersonal subjectivities are present at every moment of the research: from the definition of the arena and the mapping of actors, during interviews, as I transcribed interviews from Hebrew into English, and even more during the process of restitution in writing.

1 Principles of 'joint research'

In a perspective of constructivist grounded theory, Kathy Charmaz acknowledges the researcher's active role in shaping the data and analysis. While conducting research, the analysis must take into account researchers' and participants' relative positions and standpoints. Indeed, the researcher introduces subjectivity as "realities are multiple and the viewer is part of what is viewed" (Charmaz, 2001, p. 366). For her, "researchers and participants co-construct the data through interaction" (*Ibid*.).

This position has also been adopted by Franco Ferrarotti. Ferrarotti coins the concept of 'Joint Research' (Ferrarotti, 2003, p. 53). In this communication between the observer and the narrator, he maintains: "Every biographical interview is a complex, social interaction, a role system, a system of expectations, orders, norms, and implicit values, often also of sanctions. Every biographical interview hides tensions, conflicts, and power hierarchy" (*Ibid*., p. 27-28). And indeed, being invited to a meeting with a local politician as a PhD student induces power relations or conflict between academic knowledge and local practices, among other tensions. The following two examples will shed light on this complex interaction.

But moreover, adopting a reflexive approach induces an understanding that we – as social scientists - study social actors, who themselves locate their actions in comparison to other social

actors, and in comparison to their expectations. Their experience is analysed by them in comparison to what they had in mind and to the meanings they attribute to things. In that sense, researchers engage in comparing comparisons (Remaud *et al.*, 2012, p. 18). If we are to escape ethnocentrism and ideological judgment at the moment of analysis, "it is always preferable to compare the difference of hierarchies of evaluation forms within each culture in given circumstances." (*Ibid*., p. 19). The adoption of a constructive grounded theory therefore makes it possible to situate knowledge not only at the time and place where it was produced, but also to identify with whom this production took place.

2 Grabbing opportunities: the researcher to legitimate an area of public action

The sessions I conducted along fieldwork almost always occurred during working hours. I wondered what the reason was that let people spend two hours of their working day in the company of a doctoral student. Some people I even met several times. I believe that part of the interests of those agents was the potential power they could gain from showing that immigration and integration could legitimately be an area of responsibility of the municipalities. Indeed, the municipal reform law does not provide that municipalities should take over immigration and integration issues. It is rather a voluntary sector of municipal intervention. Most of the budget derives from the Ministry of Immigration and Integration. The matching funds of the municipality against national budget amount to 10%, while usually requested matching by other public agencies is 25%. Therefore, it is a relatively marginal topic, usually pushed forward thanks to the immigrant councillors, who were elected by their communities.

I would like to give two examples of the use of my work: one occurred in Acre municipality, after the two attacks which occurred in Paris in January 2015 and triggered a wave of immigration from France to Israel; one occurred in Kiryat Shmona, after I shot the documentary on Abram.

In Acre municipality, I had several meetings with Christian, a former staff member of the immigration and integration department, today an advisor to the mayor on French relations. Christian was employed for two years to outreach to French immigrants, as a municipal agent, but financed by the Ministry of Immigration and Integration. Seeing the relative failure of his efforts – only twelve families from France have settled in Acre -, his position was made redundant in 2006. However, his role towards French immigration to Acre was reconsidered in February 2015. Indeed, on the very day of the attacks on the headquarters of Charlie Hebdo in Paris, on 7 January 2015, I had an interviewee planned with Zion, deputy mayor and city councillor in charge of immigration and integration. We watched the terrible news together on

his computer. Following our session, I met two more municipal agents: the director of the employment department, as well as a staff member of the department of immigration and integration dealing with English speaking immigrants. Lastly, on 10 February 2015, I met the city mayor. Four days after our meeting, Christian sent me an email saying:

> Another piece of news: I was summoned by the deputy director of the municipality for an emergency meeting on Jewish French immigration, which will take place tomorrow at the city hall. Did your meeting with the mayor of Acre stir up renewed interest for the immigration of Jews from France???

Christian believed that my intervention has helped to bring together a forum on the potential of French immigration. In September 2015, there was another meeting involving Christian, the city mayor and myself. It seems that no action was taken apart from what Christian called 'renewed interest'. However, this meeting brought him back to the centre of immigration issues. Even if he had worked ten years for the municipality, the department of immigration and integration did not consider him as their colleague. Indeed, one of the staff, Oleg, talks about the absence of policies towards French Jews:

> Oleg: Look, first of all, nobody until today offered them [French Jews to come to Acre].
>
> Me: What? Don't you know Christian?
>
> Oleg: There is Christian, but I don't know what he does.
>
> Me: He works on twin cities but until 2006, he was a coordinator from the Ministry, like you, and they tried for two years to bring French people here. That's how I met him, with the spokesperson. I have to meet him again, but they sold some houses, more for investment than Aliyah.
>
> Oleg: This I know. But we don't count investment. We count people.
>
> Me: I think the idea was to get them to invest, so when they leave France, they come where there is a home. (Interview 26, 2015)

The situation of Christian therefore probably changed after my intervention and after the establishment of this forum in February 2015.

The second example I wanted to present was the one of Abram, whom I filmed and who was the main character of the documentary Victory Day (2015). During the shooting, it was quite evident that the topic of immigration in Kiryat Shmona suddenly enjoyed renewed interest. Officials were eager to talk to the camera, and share their views. But for Abram who had been struggling to get the municipality engaged, it was even more crucial. In his attempt to leverage this

opportunity, Abram informed a local journalist, Avner Lotan, who works for *Yediyot Acharonot*, that I was carrying out research on the topic and gave him my cell phone number for a short interview. Lotan contacted me in September 2015. At the end, the article was not published but we can see here that the involvement of academia supported Abram in his struggle to impose immigration as a public issue.

3 Being a non-Jewish immigrant female researcher in Israel

Being a PhD student has an influence, as we have just seen. But other facets of my identity were also crucial in determining the goal of my research in Israel.

First of all, being French – and this is difficult to dissimulate when they hear my name and my accent – proved to be quite difficult to describe the scope of my research. Very quickly, I was considered a researcher on French immigration, while it was fundamental for me to adopt a spatial approach rather than an ethnic approach in determining fieldwork. In the first session organised with the spokesperson of Acre municipality in June 2014, even before I could explain what the purpose of my visit was, the spokesperson called and invited Christian, formerly in charge of French immigration, to our meeting. Christian has little to do with the current immigration and integration policy in Acre. The first half hour of the meeting therefore revolved around topics that were marginal in Acre today. Any mention of my French nationality would generally trigger reactions of the same kind.

The fact that I was myself an immigrant was also special. Indeed, my interlocutors were careful to explain the best their city could offer for immigrants. However, they also usually assumed I was a Jewish immigrant and that I had gone through the usual bureaucratic process of 'absorption' which entitles immigrants to many rights and privileges for a time period within which it is believed integration occurs. However, I sometimes told them that I was not a Jewish immigrant. Reactions varied, from unease to indifference. Here, I would like to transcribe an interview at the local branch of the MOIA in Kiryat Shmona. The session involved three of us: the local officer, the regional supervisor and myself. At the end of the interview, the regional supervisor Hila asked:

> Hila: You also ascended (a term reserved for Jewish immigration to Israel)?
>
> Me: I, not exactly. I am here for five years. My partner is from here, from Kfar Yuval. We met while I was doing my Masters, in Belgium. He was working, after the army. And he wanted to come back home. I said why not? And I came.
>
> Hila: Ok.

Me: But I don't have all the rights. I am not Jewish. I first had a B1. Now I am a resident.

Hila: Ok. Why did not you convert?

Me: Huh. Because I… It's not me. I'm curious, I'm learning a lot. But, my identity is important to me. What my parents gave me.

Hila: But. Wait, we've been there. Ok. I, actually, lived in a very very Jewish family. But I am… a badass, ok? I arrived here thanks to the rights I got from Grandma and Grandpa, from both sides, ok?

Me: Yes.

Hila: My mum told me, for Pessah, don't eat matzah outside. I would take the matzah and go out. The children ask me: what is it? I tell them: "the bread of Jews. Take it, it's not tasty". It's really not tasty. Really, it's not tasty. […] But without anything, it tastes like nothing!

Me: What are you trying to tell me?

Hila: I want to say that if you want to stay in Israel, convert. Do it. Look. You can look at the glass half full or half empty. Ok? You have a partner… Jewish?

Me: Yes.

Hila: You want to have children from him?

Me: (pause) I guess yes.

Hila: Ok. At the end, you want your children to be fine?

Me: Yes but

Hila: That's for the children.

Me: Yes but for the children, it's important that both parents feel strong and secure.

Hila: There is no problem. But they will grow up here, in Israel. Why do they have to hide and carry something with them. You can transmit your identity to your children without any connection with that. He [your partner] will give his education. Without any connection. The children will only gain from that. But you, and your children, it will be easier personally. So it's another tool (we laugh). That's it! Someone forces you to eat what you don't want? No! You will pass it. First, it enriches you as a person. It's a lot of knowledge. It's tradition, also all the habits, and you are a good student. Masters! Go ahead!

Me: That's my doctorate.

Hila: You did it already! So it will be your fourth degree, ok! It's nothing. Look at it as a diploma.

> Me: It's a bit more than that.
>
> Hila: It's nothing for you. If you like to study. Look at the glass half full. You don't do it for you. You do it for your children and your partner. Believe me. For your partner, it's very good. Not so much for him, but for his parents. […] Give this as a present to your children. (Pause) Look, we went through that, in our flesh. Ok? There, we were Jews. We arrived here, they said we were Goyim. And they said Russians, Russians, Russians all the time. Russian prostitutes and all that. Ok? We went through that. And you see, we look all right! (We laugh) Do it, why do you mind? Someone takes something from you? No. You add up. Because I still speak Russian, I write in Russian, I still eat what I am used to. I have a friend, a close friend of mine, she observes the traditions. She eats at my place what she is allowed to. I eat at her place everything! Ok? And we get along fantastically. She in her direction, I in my direction. I am secular. I eat what I eat. Her husband eats anything that moves, and she eats what she wants to eat. And we don't annoy each other, we respect each other. And it's good. We're good. It does not bother her. Really not. My son in law does not eat all what my daughter eats. I bring her food. He looks and says, "what's this? Yurk!" I tell him, say yurk again and you will not get what we prepared. My husband cooks too. (Pause) Here and there, we came from different cultures. When I came to Israel, someone changed me? No. I was in the communist party. This part stays in. You can't avoid it. Here, the same way I spoke there in Russian, I speak in Hebrew (we laugh). That's it. Think of it. (Pause) Do you have other questions? (Interview 50, 2015)

Considering that Hila deals with a rather large population of former Soviet immigrants who are themselves not Jewish (Elias & Kemp, 2010; Lustick, 1999), this type of discourse inside the institution evidences the pressure those non-Jewish immigrants can experience. The first part of the transcript shows the obvious importance of showing that she herself is not part of those non-Jewish immigrants, but that she lived as a Jew before her immigration to Israel. The second part is a relatively consistent pattern in my sessions with Jewish Israelis: it shames the mother – who transmits Judaism – for not making the effort to convert and ease up her children's life. If I do not convert, she asks: "Why do they have to hide and carry something with them"? It is also much reinforced by gender, as men engaged in relations with Jewish Israelis do not 'threaten' the Jewish identity of their potential offspring. Lastly, she shows that the converting process is no more than several years of studying, it is a 'diploma', therefore minimising the extent to which conversion to Judaism leads to major life changes, from the organisation of the week, separation of dairy and meat – including use of different cooking tools -, clothing, to the use of birth control and so on.

This psychological violence I experienced during and out of the research framework could have been avoided by dissimulating my non-Jewishness and by taking a fake Jewish identity. However, I believe that this brings insights into the research. The presence of non-Jews in the

four cities constituting fieldwork is not marginal. In Acre, a colleague translated signs hanging outside the department of immigration and integration, which advertised courses for conversion to Judaism. Bnei Menashe immigrants from India whose Jewishness is considered uncertain went through group conversion. Similar procedures were imposed on Ethiopian immigrants for some time in Israel. However, the public agencies minimise the effect that those conversations can have in the long run. Indeed, someone born Jewish does not have to observe to be Jewish. However, converting to Judaism means engaging in a religious life, which is not a mainstream life style in Israel.

The different strands of scholarships I have been influenced by replace the researcher at the heart of the research. Far from being an objective observer of the society, the simple act of research makes him/her a participant to the research. Similarly, interviewees orient the research. In this project, I want to do justice to this 'joint' effort. Additionally, through several stories, I emphasised the reflexive path I have engaged in throughout this thesis.

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References on Israel are divided along volumes and articles addressing the geography of Israel; the political system of Israel; Israeli economics; and evidently, immigration and integration in Israel.

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List of interviews (names with * were modified for anonymity purposes):

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Interview 2. (2014, May 29). Interview with Ayelet*, deputy mayor, Kiryat Gat municipality.

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Interview 5. (2014, August 3). Interview with Elisa*, director of Aliyah and absorption, Acre municipality.

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Interview 11. (2014, August 27). Interview with Michael*, community work department director, Ministry of Social Affairs.

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Interview 15. (2014, October 7). Interview with Gali*, in charge of Aliyah and absorption, Union of Local Authorities in Israel.

Interview 16. (2014, October 23). Interview with Moshe*, Aliyah and absorption unit, Kiryat Gat municipality.

Interview 17. (2014, November 9). Interview with Zeev*, founder of 2SH.

Interview 18. (2014, November 12). Interview with Edna*, Kiryat Gat branch manager, Ministry of Immigration and Absorption.

Interview 19. (2014, November 26). Interview with Aviram D., Mayor, Kiryat Gat municipality.

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Interview 26. (2015, January 26). Interview with Oleg*, Aliyah and absorption coordinator, Acre municipality.

Interview 27. (2015, February 2). Interview with Izhak A., former planner of Kiryat Gat.

Interview 28. (2015, February 2). Interview with Menachem*, director of the absorption center, Kiryat Gat.

Interview 29. (2015, February 3). Interview with Carmel*, director of the human capital development center, Acre municipality.

Interview 30. (2015, February 3). Interview with Christian*, advisor to the mayor of Acre.

Interview 31. (2015, February 8). Interview with Raz*, head of the industrial park, Kiryat Gat.

Interview 32. (2015, February 10). Interview with Shimon L., mayor of Acre.

Interview 34. (2015, February 22). Interview with Shlomo*, director of AMI, Jerusalem.

Interview 36. (2015, April 2). Interview with Batia*, director of the center for mediation and dialogue in the community, Acre.

Interview 38. (2015, April 27). Interview with Reut*, director of community work, social affairs department, Kiryat Gat municipality.

Interview 39. (2015, May 6). Interview with Vicky*, manager of Mishol community center, welfare department of Acre.

Interview 40. (2015, June 2). Interview with Tami*, director, Economic Corporation, Arad.

Interview 42. (2015, June 2). Interview with Elena*, community work, Arad municipality.

Interview 44. (2015, July 8). Interview with Mordechai*, director of community work, social affairs department, Acre municipality.

Interview 45. (2015, July 21). Interview with Alexander*, deputy mayor, Kiryat Gat municipality.

Interview 46. (2015, July 21). Interview with Mekonen*, director, Moked Klita, Kiryat Gat municipality.

Interview 47. (2015, July 29). Interview with Avshalom*, Garin Ometz, Akko.

Interview 48. (2015, July 29). Interview with Olga*, Acre branch manager, MInistry of Immigration and Absorption.

Interview 49. (2015, August 2). Interview with Boris S., deputy mayor, Kiryat Shmona.

Interview 50. (2015, August 2). Interview with Hila*, in charge of the Galilee district and Yulia*, Kiryat Shmona branch manager, Ministry of Immigration and Absorption.

Interview 54. (2015, August 28). Interview with Nissim M., mayor and Abram*, deputy mayor, Kiryat Shmona municipality.

Interview 55. (2015, August 30). Interview with Avichai*, Strategic planning, Kiryat Shmona municipality.

Interview 56. (2015, August 30). Interview with Amir G., Professor of History, Tel Hai University, Kiryat Shmona.

Interview 57. (2015, September 1). Interview with Ayelet*, deputy mayor and Malcha*, spokesperson, Kiryat Gat municipality.

Interview 58. (2015, September 16). Interview with Shimon L., mayor and Christian*, advisor, Acre municipality.

Detailed table of contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 5

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 7

RESUME 10

תקציר מנהלים 13

PREFACE 15

CONTENTS 17

CHAPTER 1 ◊ GOVERNING OR BEING GOVERNED? A SCALAR APPROACH OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF STATE POWER AND AUTHORITY THROUGH THE CASE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION POLICIES OF FOUR FRONTIER TOWNS IN ISRAEL: AN INTRODUCTION 19

1 TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE HIERARCHIES OF POWER: TOWARD A NEW GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION 20

1.1 From decentralisation to multiscalar governance 21

1.2 Immigration and integration issues in the contemporary city 23

1.3 A neoliberal immigrant? 24

2 GOVERNING OR BEING GOVERNED? 26

2.1 On immigration in Israel 26

2.2 The city in Israel 28

2.3 The peripheral mid-sized city in Israel 29

3 ON THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRATION ISSUES, AN INDICATOR OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETAL AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS 31

3.1 Contributing to a better understanding of rescaling and place-making processes through agency 32

3.2 Contributing to a better understanding of the peripheral, mid-sized city 33

3.3 Contributing to a better understanding of immigration and integration policy processes . 34

4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: SCALE, PLACE AND PEOPLE 36

4.1 Agency 36

4.2 Place 37

4.3 Scale 38

5 OUTLINES 39

CHAPTER 2 ◊ TO GOVERN OR TO BE GOVERNED? RE-INTRODUCING AGENCY AND PLACE TO ACCOUNT FOR RESCALING IN MID-SIZED CITIES 42

1 TRANSFORMATION OF SCALES OF STATE POWER, AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY 45

1.1 Scales, rescaling, scalar fixes and scalar flux 45

1.1.1 From spatial envelopes 46

1.1.2 …To a de-territorialised process? 48

1.1.3 Rescaling as a process of transformation of the State and society 49

1.2 The city: a multiscalar political and social space 50

1.2.1 Strategic subnational spaces 51

1.2.2 Urban/local governance 54

1.3 Understanding rescaling of the State through immigration and integration policies in the city 57
1.3.1 Immigration and integration in the city ... 58
1.3.2 Scales as a core concept: founding works on scales, immigration and integration ... 61
1.3.3 Current limitations addressing the production and transformation of scales: ordinary cities, placemaking and agency ... 63
2 SOCIAL AGENTS SIT IN PLACE, THEREFORE ARE INFORMED BY IT ... 65
2.1 From place to (the mid-sized) city ... 66
2.1.1 Place, locale, locality ... 66
2.1.2 When is the city a place? ... 70
2.1.3 Ordinary cities? Specificities of small and mid-sized cities ... 71
2.2 Rescaling and the making of place(s) ... 74
2.2.1 Placemaking for economic development ... 76
2.2.2 Placemaking and resistance at the margin ... 78
2.3 Inclusive and/or exclusionary imaginaries of place ... 80
3 SOCIAL AGENTS PRODUCE AND TRANSFORM SCALES OF POWER, AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY ... 83
3.1 Agency, meaningful interventions and politics ... 84
3.1.1 Defining agency ... 85
3.1.2 A quick glance into methodology ... 87
3.2 Identification of social agents: the State, its elected and technocratic institutions, and the immigrants ... 89
3.2.1 Local officials ... 90
3.2.2 Institutions and their staff ... 93
3.2.3 Immigrant officials and agents ... 96
4 TO GOVERN OR TO BE GOVERNED? ... 98
4.1 Conducting an inquiry 'at the margin' provides a rich angle to address State rescaling processes ... 98
4.2 Immigration issues participate in the rescaling of city development strategies ... 100
4.3 Local leaders' belief in the potential of immigration to drive development impact the production of scales ... 101
4.4 As local leaders define integration, they influence the dimension and scale of the transformation of immigrants' into full-fledged members of their society ... 102
4.5 Immigration and integration issues become public actions and create a multiscalar governance ... 103
CONCLUSIONS ... 104
CHAPTER 3 ◊ IMMIGRATION AND FRONTIER TOWNS IN ISRAEL ... 108
1 PEOPLE: IMMIGRATION IN ISRAEL ... 110
1.1 A brief history of immigration to Israel ... 110
1.1.1 Immigration before Statehood ... 113
1.1.2 Immigration from 1950s to 1980s ... 114
1.1.3 1990s FSU mass immigration ... 117
1.1.4 Immigration in Israel today ... 119
1.2 Immigration and its institutions ... 121
1.2.1 State-organised immigration settlement: Immigration institutions before the 1980s ... 121
1.2.2 Direct absorption and individual responsibility: Immigration institutions after the 1980s ... 123
2 PLACES: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE AND STRUCTURATION OF ITS PERIPHERIES ... 126
2.1 Spatial organisation of immigration ... 127
2.1.1 The Sharon plan ... 128
2.1.2 The National Outline Plan 31 ... 132

2.1.3 Nowadays 132
2.2 Periphery, Mizrahi identity and politics 135
2.2.1 Rehabilitation and adoption of a modern, new Jewish identity 136
2.2.2 The 'second Israel' and the rise of a Mizrahi consciousness 137
2.3 Towards a more complex stratification of Israel society 139
2.3.1 The development towns as backers of new social and political positions 140
2.3.2 Acre, from an old Palestinian urban centre to an immigrant settlement town 142
2.3.3 Kiryat Shmona and Kiryat Gat: from the maabarot to cities, two distinct paths 147
2.3.4 Arad: a minority becomes a majority 155
3 RESCALING OF STATE POWER: ABANDONMENT OR OPPORTUNITY? 160
3.1 Evolution of City-State relations in Israel 161
3.2 Immigration and the city in nowadays Israel 164
3.3 New integration paths in peripheral mid-sized cities in present day Israel? 166
CONCLUSIONS 168
CHAPTER 4 ◊ GROUNDING THE RESEARCH IN PLACES, LISTENING TO THE ACTORS, ACCOUNTING FOR SCALAR PROCESSES: METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS 170
1 CONSTRUCTIVIST GROUNDED THEORY 171
1.1 Main principles 172
1.2 Grounding the research project in place(s) 175
1.3 Engaging with the actors 178
1.4 Toward the emergence of a scalar approach 179
2 SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES 180
2.1 The city in the urban hierarchy 182
2.2 Demographic characteristics of the city 184
2.3 Socioeconomic exclusion of the city 186
2.4 Political orientation of the city 186
3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS 187
3.1 Social actors 188
3.1.1 Local officials and street-level bureaucrats in the municipality 189
3.1.2 Non-municipal stakeholders involved in city governance 189
3.2 Methods for data collection and analysis 190
3.2.1 Absence or obsolescence of written policies 191
3.2.2 The biographical method 192
3.2.3 Collective narratives 194
3.2.4 Political discourses to account for absent policy papers 196
3.2.5 Dealing with institutional discourses 198
CONCLUSIONS 200
CHAPTER 5 ◊ IMMIGRATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY: RESCALING OF THE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 204
1 CONSENSUS ON THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION OF IMMIGRATION IN CITIES 206
1.1 Aliyah as a process of Jewish regeneration 206
1.2 Beyond metaphor: the expected effects of immigration on cities 212
1.2.1 Aliyah and socioeconomic development 212
1.2.2 Demographics 217
1.2.3 Cultural diversity: a marketing tool? 219
1.2.4 Politics 222
1.2.5 Access to public funding 226
2 OUTREACHING TO 'ACTIVE, PARTICIPATORY AND PRODUCTIVE INDIVIDUALS' 228

2.1 Adopting a policy to outreach to specific immigrants 230
2.2 A requirement that fits FSU and Western immigrants' reputation.................................. 231
2.2.1 Educational excellence 231
2.2.2 Culture.. 232
2.2.3 Work ethics 233
2.3 About other immigrants.. 234
3 BREAKS AND RESISTANCES... 236
3.1 Costs of immigration 237
3.2 Refusal to be take responsibility in place of central administration 240
3.3 Need for cooperation 241
4 TOWARDS A RESCALING OF IMMIGRATION POLICYMAKING? 242
4.1 An attempt to outreach to active, productive, participative individuals 244
4.2 Belief in in-place economy 245
4.3 Immigration brings public funding... 246
CONCLUSIONS: RESCALING TOWARDS THE LOCAL LEVEL? 247

CHAPTER 6 ◊ MEANINGFUL INTERVENTIONS: LOCAL IMMIGRANT POLITICIANS PRODUCE SCALES 249
1 MEETING WITH IMMIGRANT LOCAL OFFICIALS 251
1.1 The process of integration.. 252
1.2 Representation 258
1.3 Mediation 263
2 BIOGRAPHISATION, BIOGRAPHIC PERFORMANCE AND MEANINGFUL INTERVENTIONS 266
2.1 Biographical performance.. 266
2.2 Telling a story: from fragmentation to continuity 269
2.3 Collective and individual narratives 270
2.4 Biographisation is a socially meaningful event.. 271
3 RESULTS OF THESE INTERVENTIONS.. 272
3.1 Integration 273
3.2 Representation 275
3.3 Mediation 278

CHAPTER 7 ◊ A GROUNDED-THEORY OF INTEGRATION: IS THERE A LOCAL INTERPRETATION OF IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION? 283
1 THE MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION.. 285
1.1 Absorption as a bureaucratic process 286
1.2 Personal or community accompaniment 290
1.3 A segregated sociocultural landscape.. 291
1.4 A commitment to create 'pride' and 'self-confidence' 294
2 THE MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN ITS INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT 298
2.1 Integration defined as the equal access to Israeli institutions... 299
2.2 Participating in decisions related to integration: immigrants' access to political and decisional institutions 302
2.2.1 Representation 302
2.2.2 Multilingual service delivery... 304
2.3 Redefining 'absorption'? 306
3 A GROUNDED-THEORY OF INTEGRATION 311

3.1 Facilitating access to institutions, but ultimately leaving responsibility for access up to immigrants themselves *311*
3.2 The central administration's persistent role *313*
3.3 Variations and occurrences between municipalities: the weight of the national *315*
4 SCALES OF INTEGRATION 317
4.1 The national scale: 'special populations' must integrate *318*
4.2 A local scale enabling multiculturalism *320*
4.3 The immigrant and his capacity *320*
CONCLUSIONS 322
CHAPTER 8 ◊ MULTISCALAR AND FRAGMENTED GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION 324
1 FOUR CITIES WITH FOUR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION INSTITUTIONAL MORPHOLOGIES 325
1.1 Kiryat Shmona *327*
1.2 Arad *331*
1.3 Kiryat Gat *335*
1.4 Acre *340*
2 WHAT DO THE CHARTS TELL US? 345
2.1 Mapping the actors *345*
2.1.1 Local political activity 346
2.1.2 Municipal departments 347
2.1.3 Actors of the periphery 350
2.2 Distinct reasoning which defines immigration policies *351*
2.2.1 Urban development 351
2.2.2 Demographic growth 353
2.2.3 Quality municipal service delivery 354
3 BETWEEN CLAIMED AUTONOMY AND CONSTRAINED AUTONOMY 355
3.1 Claiming or rejecting the periphery label *355*
3.2 Immigration programmes: funding strategy *357*
3.3 The local government as a development broker *358*
CONCLUSIONS 359
CHAPTER 9 ◊ GENERAL CONCLUSIONS 361
1 FROM THE SINGULAR… TO THE GENERAL? 361
1.1 Multiscalar governance *361*
1.2 The 'ordinary city': between innovation and dependence *364*
1.3 Immigration and the (mid-sized) city *365*
2 MUNICIPALITIES ENGAGING IN IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION MATTERS 366
2.1 How immigration became a new channel for resources? Towns engage in rescaling economic development strategies *367*
2.2 NIMBY: Reframing deservingness, limiting immigration *369*
2.3 Transformative potential of integrating immigrants within the political project? *372*
3 RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE 374
3.1 Some recommendations *374*
3.2 Limitations and perspectives for the future *376*
ANNEX 1 ◊ USE OF THE CONCEPT 'NEOLIBERALISM' 379
1 ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT 379

2 Contemporary meanings of the concept of neoliberalism 380
3 Neoliberalism in Israel 381
Conclusion: neoliberalism as an analytical category? 382

Annex 2 ◊ Immigrant integration 384

1 When integration means performing as well as a national average 384
2 Nation-states, citizenship and foreigners 386
3 Public action towards the integration of foreign-born populations 387
4 Types of policy responses 388
5 The immigrant himself as ultimately responsible for his integration 388
Conclusion 389

Annex 3 ◊ Joint research, when research and participants co-produce knowledge 390

1 Principles of 'joint research' 390
2 Grabbing opportunities: the researcher to legitimate an area of public action 391
3 Being a non-Jewish immigrant female researcher in Israel 393

Bibliography 397

Detailed table of contents 422

Tables of illustrations 428

Acronyms and Hebrew terms 429

Tables of illustrations

FIGURE 2.1. LOCAL POLICY RESPONSE, DEPENDING ON LEADERSHIP STYLE AND SENSE OF PLACE. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE.... 44
FIGURE 2.2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: A DIALECTIC BETWEEN PLACE, SCALE AND AGENCY. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE 105
TABLE 3.1. IMMIGRATION BY YEAR BY CONTINENT OF ORIGIN. SOURCE: CBS (2015D)... 119
MAP 3.1. DEVELOPMENT TOWNS IN ISRAEL, BY TIME OF ESTABLISHMENT. SOURCES: ORNI & EFRAT (1978), LIPSHITZ (1998). REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE.. 130
MAP 3.3. ACRE IN 1940. SOURCE: GOVMAP.GOV.IL (2017)... 143
PICTURE 3.1. OLD CITY OF ACRE. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2015) 144
PICTURE 3.2. ACRE'S HARBOUR. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2015) 144
PICTURE 3.3. TOURISM MAP OF ACRE, TAKEN IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2015). 146
PICTURE 3.4. *MARKET OF AL KHALISA IN 1927. SNAPSHOT OF A PHOTOGRAPH HANGING OUT OF THE YOUTH CENTRE (2015)*......148
PICTURE 3.5. THE MAABARA. CREDIT: MUSEUM OF KIRYAT SHMONA... 148
PICTURE 3.6. THE MUNICIPAL MUSEUM OF KIRYAT SHMONA. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2014)... 149
MAP 3.5. KIRYAT GAT IN 1940. SOURCE: GOVMAP.GOV.IL (2017).. 151
PICTURE 3.7. SHIKUN IN KIRYAT GAT. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2015). 152
PICTURE 3.8. THE SILO IN KIRYAT GAT. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2015). 152
PICTURE 3.9. *FIRST HOUSES IN ARAD. SOURCE: THE ISRAELI PHYSICAL MASTERPLAN (1964, P. 58)*..156
PICTURE 3.10. ARAD. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2014).. 157
PICTURE 3.11. HOUSES BUILT TO HOST IMMIGRANTS IN 1990 IN ARAD. CREDIT: AMANDINE DESILLE (2014)........................... 158
FIGURE 4. 1. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS OCCURRING FROM 2014 TO 2016, AT INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS, THAT HAVE AFFECTED NARRATIVES. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE 178
FIGURE 5.1. SLIDE ON INTERNAL MIGRATION IN KIRYAT SHMONA. SOURCE: MUNICIPALITY OF KIRYAT SHMONA (2015).............. 210
TABLE 5.1. EVOLUTION OF THE RESIDENTS IN ACRE, ARAD, KIRYAT GAT AND KIRYAT SHMONA. SOURCE: STATISTICAL ABSTRACT OF ISRAEL (2016)... 212
TABLE 5.2. IMMIGRANTS AGED OVER 65, SETTLING IN ACRE, ARAD, KIRYAT GAT AND TEL AVIV, BETWEEN 2007 AND 2011. SOURCE: CBS (2012) 218
FIGURE 5.2. RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS, MARCH 2015, FOR THE STATE AS WELL AS FOR ACRE, ARAD, KIRYAT GAT AND KIRYAT SHMONA. SOURCES: HAARETZ NEWS ARTICLES (2016). REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE.................................. 224
MAP 8.1. 'FLAT' REPRESENTATION OF THE ORGANISATIONS DEALING WITH IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN KIRYAT SHMONA. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017).. 327
FIGURE 8.1. MULTISCALAR GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN KIRYAT SHMONA. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017). 328
MAP 8.2. 'FLAT' REPRESENTATION OF THE ORGANISATIONS DEALING WITH IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN ARAD. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017). 331
FIGURE 8.2. MULTISCALAR GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN ARAD. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017)332
MAP 8.3. 'FLAT' REPRESENTATION OF THE ORGANISATIONS DEALING WITH IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN KIRYAT GAT. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017). 335
FIGURE 8.3. MULTISCALAR GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN KIRYAT GAT. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017). 336
MAP 8.4. 'FLAT' REPRESENTATION OF THE ORGANISATIONS DEALING WITH IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN ACRE. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017). 340
FIGURE 8.4. MULTISCALAR GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION IN ACRE. REALISED BY AMANDINE DESILLE (2017) 341

Acronyms and Hebrew terms

Aliyah: Jewish immigration to Israel. A Hebrew term meaning 'ascent'.

Ashkenazi: Jew of European origin.

Ayarat Pituah (plural: *ayarot pituach*): Development towns.

CBS: Central Bureau of Statistics

Eretz Israel: Generally refers to the biblical land of Israel

Falash Muras: Members of the Beta Israel community in Ethiopia who converted to Christianism.

FSU: Former Soviet Union

Hagira: Immigration. Generally refers to non-Jewish immigration to Israel.

Halacha: Collective body of Jewish religious laws derived from the written and oral Torah.

JDC: Jewish American Joint Distribution Committee.

Kibbutz (plural *kibbutzim*): Collective communal rural settlement, where land, property and means of production belong to the community.

Klita: Absorption. Generally refers to integration in Israel.

Knesset: The parliament of Israel.

Kur YiTuch: Melting pot. Generally refers to the assimilationist policies of Israel.

Maabara: Transit camp for immigrants.

Mizrahi: Since the 1970s, it refers to Jews emigrated from the Middle-East and North Africa.

MOIA: Ministry Of Immigration and Absorption.

Moshav (plural *moshavim*): Rural settlement, where land and property are private.

Moshava (plural *moshavot*): Jewish settlement established by members of the 1st and 2nd *Aliyot*.

NIMBY: Not in My BackYard.

Proyektor (plural *Proyektorim)*: Agent hired under the MOIA programme 'Group Aliyah'.

Ulpan: Hebrew classes.

Yidud Aliyah: Outreaching to Jewish immigration abroad. Literally 'encouraging immigration'.

Yishuv: Establishment of a Jewish national home in Israel.

Yoets (plural *Yoatsim*): Ministry clerk working at MOIA. Literally 'counsellor'.

Zabar (plural *Zabarim*): Israeli born in Israel. Literally 'prickly pear'.

Abstract: Mutations of scales of power, as well as the role of immigration in the physical and symbolic production of the city, are analysed through immigrant integration policies in the cities of Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat and Kiryat Shmona in Israel. Jewish immigration policies, as defined by the State of Israel from 1950s onwards, are challenged by decentralisation. However, only some local governments actively make local immigrant integration policies. The inquiry shows that these mid-sized cities proactively formulate a local policy in order to “choose” the immigrants that settle on the one hand; and to access new channels of public resources on the other hand.
In that context, the implementation of an immigrant policy in the city leads to interdependence between actors located at various scales of power. With the fragmentation of responsibilities, actors compete to obtain the public and private resources for immigrant integration.
Immigration is part of the making of place. Through the reintegration of former waves of immigration, and the imagined potential of future immigrants, immigration is foreseen as a demographic, economic or cultural renewal. It is a lever to redefine the development scales of those frontier towns.

Résumé: Les mutations des échelles de responsabilité, ainsi que le rôle de l’immigration dans la production physique mais aussi symbolique de la ville, sont analysés à travers le prisme des politiques locales d’immigration et d’intégration mises en œuvre dans les villes israéliennes d’Acre, Arad, Kiryat Gat et Kiryat Shmona. La politique volontariste d’accueil des immigrés juifs en Israël, datant des années 1950, est mise à l’épreuve de la décentralisation. En réalité, seule une partie des autorités locales mettent en place des politiques locales d’immigration et d’intégration. L’enquête montre que ces villes moyennes font souvent le choix de former de façon proactive une politique locale afin de « choisir » les immigrés qui s’y installent d’une part ; et de développer de nouveaux canaux d’accès à des ressources publiques d’autre part.
Dans ce contexte, la mise en place d’une politique d’immigration dans la ville engendre une situation d’interdépendance entre des acteurs situées à des échelles de pouvoir différentes. Avec l’éclatement des responsabilités, les acteurs sont mis en concurrence pour obtenir les ressources publiques et privées dédiées à l’intégration des immigrés.
L’immigration prend part à la fabrique du lieu. Via la mise en valeur de la contribution des anciennes vagues d’immigration, et le potentiel imaginé des futurs immigrés, l’immigration est envisagée comme un renouveau démographique, économique ou culturel. Conçue comme un levier, elle permet de redéfinir les échelles de développement de ces villes frontières.

תקציר: שינויים בקנה המידה של הכוח, כמו גם התמורות בתפקידה של ההגירה בעיצוב הפיזי והסימבולי של העיר, מנותחים דרך מדיניות שילוב מהגרים של ארבע הערים הישראליות: עכו, ערד, קרית גת וקרית שמונה. המדיניות לקליטת עליה, כפי שהוגדרה על ידי מדינת ישראל מ 1950 ואילך, מאותגרת בידי תהליך הביזור. יחד עם זאת, רק חלק מן הרשויות המקומיות בישראל מייצרות מדיניות הגירה ושילוב ברמה המקומית. מן המחקר עולה כי ערים בינוניות מקדמות מדיניות מקומיות באופן פרו-אקטיבי בכדי לאפשר להן "לבחור" את המהגרים המתיישבים בתחומיהן מצד אחד; ובכדי לקבל גישה למשאבים ציבוריים מצד שני.
בהקשר זה, הטמעה של מדיניות הגירה בערים הובילה תלות פנימית בין שחקנים הפועלים בקני מידה שונים. עם פיצול האחריות, השחקנים השונים מתמודדים בניהם על משאבים ציבוריים ופרטיים המיועדים לשילוב מהגרים.
הגירה היא חלק מבניית מקום. דרך שילוב מחדש של גלי הגירה קודמים, ודרך הערכת הפוטנציאל של הגירה עתידית, ההגירה נתפסת כמחדשת הדמוגרפיה, הכלכלה והתרבות. זהו מנוף באמצעותו ניתן יהיה להגדיר מחדש קנה מידה לפיתוח עבור ערי פריפריה.