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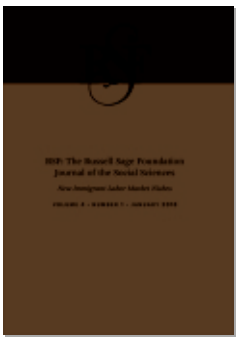

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Prior to the 1980s, Israel's national ideology discouraged emigration and entrepreneurship among its citizens. Yet, by the late 1990s, Israeli emigrants were one of the leading immigrant nationalities in Silicon Valley. Drawing on interviews, fieldwork, a literature review, and perusal of social media, I explore the origins of Israeli involvement in high-tech activities and the extensive linkages between Israeli emigrants and the Israeli high-tech industry. I also summarize the patterns of communal cooperation that permit emigrant families to maintain an Israel-oriented way of life in suburban communities south of San Francisco, and I compare these patterns with those of Indians, a nationality engaged in the same pursuit. I conclude by considering the impact of infotech involvement on Israeli immigrants and on the U.S. economy.

Keywords: immigrant entrepreneurs, transnationalism, ethnic communities, Silicon Valley

Israeli immigrants have among the highest rates of entrepreneurship of all national-origin groups in the United States, and they sustain similar patterns in other places where they have settled in Europe, South Africa, Australia, and Asia. Their rate of self-employment in 2000, according to that year's U.S. census, was 33.4 percent. Areas of economic specialization include garments, jewelry, construction and real estate, entertainment, restaurants, grocery stores, media, moving companies, and multiple professions (Y. Cohen 2009; Gold 2002).

Among their various realms of economic specialization, information technology has received the most interest because of its global economic importance as well as the particular conditions associated with its emergence. Indeed, Israelis and migrants from other countries who work as entrepreneurs, professionals, and financiers in high-tech and are engaged in other cutting-edge economic activities have been the focus of a growing body of attention. Regarded as the world's most powerful engines of economic growth and innovation, they are associated with the establishment of Silicon Valley and similar locations in other regions and national settings (Kotkin 1992; Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010; Saxenian 2006; Senor and Singer 2009). According to a report produced for the U.S. Small Business Administration, high-tech migrants have been found "to account for a disproportionate share of job creation and economic growth" in recent years (Hart, Acs, and Tracy 2009, 5).

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 Gold, Steven J. 2018. "Israeli Infotech Migrants in Silicon Valley." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 4(1): 130–48. DOI: 10.7758/RSF.2018.4.1.08. Direct correspondence to: Steven J. Gold at gold@msu.edu, Department of Sociology, Berkey Hall, Room 316, 509 East Circle Drive, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1111.

The economic desirability of these entrepreneurs has now been recognized by business experts, academics, government officials, journalists, and policymakers who had previously paid little attention to immigrant entrepreneurship (Hart, Acs, and Tracy 2009; Hohn 2012; Light 2010). Multiple nations now compete to attract these immigrants with ever more generous incentives, and high-tech immigrants have become associated with economically advanced host societies like the United States. At the same time, their countries of origin are well aware of their value. Seeking to benefit from their development magic, the homelands of these entrepreneurs have reformed long-standing policies regarding citizenship, offshore investment, government financing, money transfer, and taxation. As a consequence, environments that formerly favored protectionism now encourage global engagement through "tax incentives, government grants and funding of R&D, training grants, incubators for start-ups and support for venture capital" (Saxenian 2006, 104; Cohen 2010; Ray 2013).

In addition to reworking their financial and business-related policies, high-tech migrants' countries of origin have also revisited national understandings of patriotism, identity, occupation, military service, and place of residence. In many cases, perspectives on family, gender, culture, and religious practices have been transformed to encourage and endorse emigrants' involvement in the global economy (Frenkel 2008). Drawing on opportunities and resources associated with multiple locations, acquired from assorted nation-states, networks, and organizations, and motivated by an array of loyalties, affinities, and relationships, Israeli immigrants' extensive involvement in information technology is a product of such a transnational process.

Because "infotech" entrepreneurs enjoy unprecedented levels of income, state-granted permission to work and travel, and access to elite institutions, some observers argue that this group represents a fundamentally new category in the realm of migration. These migrants are distinct not only from laborers but also from other skilled migrants such as merchants and professionals (Saxenian 2006; Senor and Singer 2009). Such is the contention of Israel Drori, Benson Honig, and Mike Wright (2009, 1003–4), who identify infotech migrants as "transnational entrepreneurs (TEs)" and assert that they "are not simply passive adherents to institutional constraints, but actively mold them to suit their own unique initiatives. . . . TEs modify and create environments including new and existing institutions, as well as structures, inclusive of rules and procedures, that go on to define new and emergent 'rules of the game.'"

Drori and his colleagues point out that immigrant entrepreneurs are "frequently obligated to rely on their group's ethnic resources and social capital," of the type associated with enclaves or ethnic economies, for their economic viability, and their experience is codified with the language of marginality, as suggested in concepts like "Pariah people," "middleman minorities," "marginal men," and "disadvantage" theory (Drori, Honig, and Wright 2009, 1004; Portes 2010; Light and Gold 2000). On the contrary, transnational infotech entrepreneurs are able to obtain services, investment funds, and business contacts from mainstream sources. They are welcomed to the host societies' corridors of power—places to which, until quite recently, persons of their nationality, religion, or race had little access (Wishingrad 2015).

Given that "the debate on whether ethnic niches are harmful or beneficial for earnings continues to interest immigration scholars," infotech migrants' productivity and status can be seen as challenging widely accepted assumptions in the study of international migration (Lee 2013, 748; Portes 2010; Sanders and Nee 1996; Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996; Xie and Gough 2011). Accordingly, their achievements and the contexts that produce them are topics worthy of scholarly research.

This article explores the experience of immigrants from Israel who are employed in the United States in infotech and related high-level occupations—such as academics, engineers, managers, and venture capitalists—in order to gain insight into the ways in which highly skilled immigrants are involved in entrepre-

neurship. To consider the place of occupation versus nationality in the development of the high-tech niche, I include a cursory comparison of Israeli emigrants' patterns of involvement in infotech to those of Indians, the migrant nationality most heavily represented in this endeavor both in Silicon Valley and nationally (Wadhwa, Saxenian, and Siciliano 2012). Finally, I consider the implications of involvement in the infotech industry, both for immigrants themselves and for American society.

METHODS

This multi-sited ethnography focuses on interviews with twenty-one Israelis employed in infotech and related high-level occupations such as academics, engineers, and venture capitalists. Interviews were conducted between 1991 and 2016 in California and among returnees (including former California residents) in Israel by the author and two Israeli women research assistants. Additional interviews and fieldwork data were provided by an Israeli journalist living with her family in Silicon Valley. Contacts were established through snowball referrals and via the networks of the author and research assistants. Four respondents were interviewed on multiple occasions.

Background information was obtained from additional interviews and fieldwork with about one hundred Israeli emigrants (forty-four women and fifty-three men, including both the wife and husband of nine couples) between 1991 and 2014. Locations included California and, for returned emigrants, several places in Israel. Further, interviews were conducted with persons with special knowledge of Israeli emigrant communities, including community activists, journalists, and employees of Jewish community agencies. Interviews were open-ended, but based on an interview guide. Most were audio-recorded, translated into English (if conducted in Hebrew), and transcribed. All names of respondents in this report are pseudonyms (Gold 2002; Gold and Hart 2013). Finally, additional data were collected through a review of the academic and journalistic literature, an examination of surveys and official statistics, and a perusal of websites regularly used by members of the Israeli high-tech community.

FROM CONDEMNATION TO ENCOURAGEMENT OF EMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Israel's status as a recently formed nation engaged in protracted conflict with many of its neighbors and populated by Jews from throughout the world suggests some of the reasons why members of its population have been well represented among high-tech immigrants. Israelis' propensity for emigration is explained by the population's relatively short tenure in Israel. As of 2007, almost 30 percent of Israelis were foreign-born, and 90 percent had resided there for three generations or less (Jewish Virtual Library 2014; Senor and Singer 2009). Thus, many Israelis possess abilities, expectations, language skills, cultural knowledge, citizenship, and contacts associated with the places where their families once lived. Israelis facing the difficulties associated with their careers, the Israeli cost of living, and the country's social or political alienation, security, and other concerns may find a solution in emigration (Gold and Hart 2013).

Israeli emigrants' inclination toward entrepreneurship can be traced to Jews' long history of self-employment as well as the presence of extensive Jewish and Israeli ethnic economies in the major points of settlement (Gold 2002; Kotkin 1992).[1] Their significant representation in technical occupations is associated with the importance of defense to the country's survival. Finally, the sheer number of Israelis with high-tech training can be attributed to the country's institutions of higher education and the arrival of almost 1 million immigrants from the former Soviet Union during the 1990s; many thousands of these Soviet immigrants had been trained as scientists, engineers, and technical specialists (Gold 2015).

Estimates of the number of Israeli emigrants in the United States have been subject to controversy and exaggeration by journalists and Israeli government sources (Gold 2002). The U.S. Census Bureau's 2011–2013 American

1. See O'Keefe and Quincy, this issue, for a description of Jewish immigrants' entrepreneurship in a very different time and context.

Community Survey (ACS) estimates that there were 139,980 Israel-born persons in the United States during that period (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). Drawing on U.S. and Israeli census data, Uzi Rebhun and Lilach Lev Ari (2010, 15) assert that the total population of Israelis in the United States—including those born in Israel, those born in other countries, and their U.S.-born children and American spouses—is 250,000. The actual number involved in infotech occupations is impossible to determine (as is their residency status in the United States—citizen, student visa, tourist, and so on), but journalistic sources and community activists claim that between 50,000 and 200,000 reside in the greater San Francisco Bay Area (Orpaz 2014).

The Israeli population is well endowed with contacts, skills, and aspirations conducive to migration, but the country's national narrative emphasizes settlement. Israel came into being to provide a homeland for the world's Jews following the Holocaust. Zionism (Israel's state-building ideology) called for the ingathering of the exiles and reviled departure. From its formation in 1948 until the 1980s, the country identified emigration as a personal failing and a threat to its military, economic, and demographic survival (Cohen 2010; Goldscheider 1996). For a brief time emigration was even illegal, and afterward it remained heavily stigmatized. Until recently—and to a lesser extent still—emigrants were depicted in political discourse, social science research, journalism, and popular culture as disillusioned, lonely, impoverished, subject to family breakdown and loss of Jewish identity, and alienated from coreligionists in points of settlement (Sabar 1999; Shokeid 1988; Sobel 1986, 55). In a famous 1970s statement, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called Israeli emigrants "moral lepers," "the fallen among the weaklings," and "the droppings of insects" (Ritterband and Zerubavel 1986, 113).

In addition to discouraging emigration, some forms of Israeli ideology prior to the 1990s denigrated entrepreneurship—a common means of survival that had been practiced by Jews in the Diaspora for millennia. Early Zionism posited that Israel was the location where Jews could finally extricate themselves from the debased livelihood of doing business in other people's countries. Instead, living on their own land, Israelis would become "new Jews" and make the desert bloom, often through ennobling agriculture (Almog 2000). Hence, whether in Israel or beyond, a Jewish business owner was regarded as a relic of the Diaspora—a self-serving tax evader incapable of living as a proud and self-confident Jew (Freedman and Korazim 1986, 144).

By the 1990s, however, the country's increased involvement in the global economy—in large part through activities and links established by Israeli emigrants in global centers of innovation and commerce—altered Israeli views about going abroad and engaging in infotech entrepreneurship. Such activities undergirded the country's transformation from a business-averse collectivist society with triple-digit inflation whose largest export was citrus to what is now celebrated as the "Start-up Nation," with high rates of entrepreneurial innovation, ties to the world's leading companies, extensive access to venture capital, and sustained economic growth (Senor and Singer 2009).

In addition to enjoying greater tolerance for travel abroad, infotech migrants have also benefited from the Israeli public's unique view of their occupation. Unlike the reviled Diaspora entrepreneur, Israeli infotech migrants are seen in a positive light and viewed as pursuing an endeavor that is "more than a tool for individual success or making profit. Rather, it contributes to the national project and Israel's political, economic and security needs." Such an endeavor is collectively oriented and associated with "transforming the world through the mastery of scientific knowledge" (Zilber 2006, 289). Although a garment manufacturer in Los Angeles and a software engineer in Palo Alto are both Israeli exiles running a business in California, Israelis would tend to see them as occupying different moral universes and would condemn the former while celebrating the latter.

In sum, Israel's migration-driven involvement in high-tech activities has transformed popular understandings of both emigration and entrepreneurship, reducing the disparagement of these activities and legitimizing their

benefits. These new understandings have allowed today's emigrants to be more confident and outspoken about their presence abroad than was the case for emigrants prior to the late 1990s.

ISRAELI EMIGRATION AND THE ORIGINS OF ISRAELI IMMIGRANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN HIGH-TECHNOLOGY OCCUPATIONS

Israelis began migrating to the United States soon after the country's formation in 1948, and the development of Israeli communities in the United States had begun to receive academic and communal attention by the early 1980s (Ritterband and Zerubavel 1986). Members of those communities were diverse in ethnicity, religiosity, and class background, but the population generally included young families with children (Y. Cohen 2009). Many earned a living through self-employment or as professionals. Israeli émigrés lived and worked within established Jewish neighborhoods in major cities, such as New York and Los Angeles (Gold 2002; Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010). Unlike most other Jewish immigrants, Israelis have often expressed ambivalence about living in the United States and raising their children as Diaspora Jews.

Israeli emigrants in high-tech occupations are in many ways similar to the broader Israeli-American population. However, their desirable job skills and American degrees make it easier for them to acquire legal resident status, earn more money, and be much less dependent on Israeli and Jewish ethnic enclaves in the United States for finding employment and a coethnic community. Finally, the largest concentration of infotech Israelis is found in ethnically diverse communities south of San Francisco rather than in the Jewish neighborhoods of West Los Angeles, Greater New York City, and Miami (Gold 2016).

In this environment, infotech Israelis maintain a communal orientation that underlies their creation of an ethnic economy and ethnic community. Ivan Light and I (Light and Gold 2000, 4) have defined an ethnic economy as "coethnic self-employed and employers, and their coethnic employees," and we discuss the conditions under which the development of symbiotic solidarity and trust between a group and its entrepreneurs facilitates the social and economic advancement of both. The literature on immigrant entrepreneurship documents the importance of shared resources to the business success of a wide range of populations—from Hausa cattle dealers in post-independence Nigeria to Korean greengrocers in contemporary New York City (Cohen 1969; Min 2008).

As a highly entrepreneurial group, Israeli emigrants display these patterns wherever they settle. However, Israel is a highly diverse and recently settled country whose subgroups vary in nationality, religiosity, educational level, and ideological outlook, as well as in a variety of other ways. When Israelis emigrate, they therefore tend to interact and build communities with the conationals whose backgrounds, occupations, and identities they share—Yemenis with Yemenis, Kibbutznicks with Kibbutznicks, Ultra-Orthodox Hassidim with Ultra-Orthodox Hassidim, and so on (Gold 2002; Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010).

Israeli infotech emigrants make up such a subgroup in the United States: their social ties are based on their shared military and educational experiences, their similar occupations, and their common residential location south of San Francisco. Lacking close ties with Americans, American Jews, and Israeli immigrants from backgrounds unlike their own, they collaborate in both their work lives and their social lives, as documented in ethnography and journalism. "They don't strive to become American. They see themselves as Israelis who live in the U.S." (Handwerker 2014; Saxenian 2006). Not surprisingly, then, their strongest collective commitments in the United States are to the other infotech Israelis with whom they work, socialize, and engage in activities that maintain their favorite aspects of Israeli life while living in the United States.

THE ORIGINS OF THE INFOTECH NICHE

Israeli emigrants' extensive involvement in information technology and other high-tech ventures can be traced to the 1970s, when the Jewish state languished through a period of geopolitical conflict and inflation. Seeking opportunities, young Israelis increasingly went abroad in search of advanced training and ed-

ucation. In her study of Silicon Valley, AnnaLee Saxenian (2006, 105) notes that between 1978 and 2000, more than 14,000 Israeli professional and technical workers emigrated to the United States. Upon completion of their degrees, a fraction stayed on to work. With training in engineering, science, and technology, many found jobs in leading U.S. electronics and computer firms, first in the Route 128 area near Boston and later near San Francisco.

Although Israeli emigrants in high-tech come from diverse backgrounds, many are affiliated with the male Sabra (native-born Israeli) elite. Brought together in selective high schools, youth programs, military units, and universities, they received advanced training in science and math while mastering leadership skills as military officers. For example, a significant number of veterans of Unit 8200, a division of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) devoted to cybersecurity, have gone on to take leadership roles in international high-tech industries (Swed and Butler 2015; Tendler 2015).

Israeli military and technical organizations provide an environment of shared training and service that catalyzes the lifelong, cooperative relationships that underlie Israel's innovative and collaborative high-tech culture (Senor and Singer 2009). In contrast, Israelis who do not share this background of combined high-tech military training and service—including recent immigrants, persons of lower-status origins, those from religious families, and women (who, though eligible for these programs, are underrepresented in them)—have less access to these networks and the resources and opportunities they provide and are less involved in high-tech professions (Swed and Butler 2015).

Sharing common backgrounds, infotech émigrés retained close yet informal connections as they built lives and careers in the United States. Along the way, they acquired contacts among American Jews, sometimes through the Israeli Economic Consulate in San Francisco. Israeli emigrants were also actively involved with U.S. investors, and their mastery of American ways of doing business facilitated cross-fertilization between the United States and Israel. Saxenian (2006, 109) quotes an infotech CEO who was also a retired IDF officer about the formation of this nexus: "One quarter of my university graduating class went to the United States and then stayed on to work in high-tech in Silicon Valley. They all started coming back to be entrepreneurs . . . they knew how to hire U.S. marketers and business developers."

Israeli infotech workers' degrees from American universities enable them to find excellent jobs in leading American corporations. When some of those who wanted to return home accepted employers' offer of the option of creating Israeli branches of American firms, the result was the expansion of leading American firms into the Middle East. "Intel and National Semiconductor set up integrated circuit design centers in Israel in the 1970s," notes Saxenian (2006, 106), "in order to retain highly valued [Israeli] engineers." IBM, Motorola, DEC, and Microsoft followed suit. Most of these plants flourished, and today the largest offshore research facilities of several U.S. electronics firms are located in Israel.

At present, a tremendous amount of social capital is shared among high-tech Israelis at home and abroad, as well as among Israelis and their friends and colleagues in diverse businesses in the United States and elsewhere. Sharing social capital serves as a vehicle for a variety of groups, nationalities, and industries to collaborate and to exchange know-how, investments, and innovative ways of doing business (Saxenian 2006).

Israeli emigrants' initial successes in the high-tech and computer industries impressed Israeli politicians, business leaders, and policymakers and seemed to suggest a viable solution to Israel's economic challenges. Given the nation's exceptional number of highly skilled workers, the idea of employing them in the burgeoning computer industry seemed practical. However, Israel lacked the investment capital and management skill needed to bankroll and supervise the requisite level of industrial expansion. Toward this end, and as the country was evolving rightward politically from socialism to neoliberalism, Israel changed many of its economic regulations in such a way as to encourage the generation of investment capital—for instance, by removing restrictions on offshore investors and by allowing Israeli com-

panies to compete in global markets (Goldberg 2012, 28).

The Israeli labor force was technologically proficient but lacking in knowledge of finance and management; however, because venture capitalists commonly provide their clients with mentoring and management training as well as funds, workers were able to acquire these skills from their investor colleagues as they developed technology companies (Davone 2007). A major step in this process was the Yozma program, created by the Israeli government during the early 1990s to generate venture capital for Israeli start-ups (Avnimelech 2009). By 2009, the program had generated over $3 billion worth of investment and support for Israeli companies. Not only was the program successful in providing start-up funding for Israeli firms, but it also helped offshore investors and international corporations overcome their fear of investing in Israeli companies (Senor and Singer 2009, 168–70).

Indeed, as of 2008, Israel had more high-tech ventures per capita than any other nation. It led the world in civilian research-and-development spending per citizen and ranked second behind the United States in the number of companies listed on the high-tech NASDAQ stock exchange. With a 2008 population of less than 8 million, Israel attracted as much venture capital as France and Germany combined (with a total population of 140 million) (Brooks 2010; Senor and Singer 2009, 33).

The simultaneous and transnational development of infotech industries in Israel and by Israeli emigrants in Silicon Valley provided benefits to the growth and expansion of both. Emigrants in California helped Israel develop contacts with U.S. and international firms, facilitated the opening of branches of American companies in Israel, fostered access to large sources of venture capital, and generated contracts for Israel-based facilities. Emigrants shared with colleagues back home their familiarity with the social, business, and communication styles of American managers, investors, and firms. Finally, emigrants' participation in the dynamic, diverse, and creative "melting pot of ideas" environment of Silicon Valley allowed them to interact with a global network of partners (Orpaz 2014). In turn, research-and-development tasks requested by offshore colleagues were performed in Israel, which also provided additional workers.

Saxenian (2006, 105) argues that Israeli migrants' immersion in and familiarity with "technology centers in the U.S." propelled the country's phenomenal growth in high-tech. In contrast, she points out, larger, more affluent, and "more advanced industrialized nations that boasted well-developed technical education and research capabilities, such as Germany and France, failed to develop the entrepreneurial and technological dynamism that characterizes Israel today."

From the 1990s to the present, Israeli immigrants and firms that bridge Silicon Valley and Israel have played important roles as innovators and leaders in infotech. Companies that they started have been purchased or financed by major American and international infotech companies. Saxenian (2006, 110) cites the acquisition of Mirabilis's ICQ software by AOL in 1998 for over $400 million as the turning point. Created by a group of Israelis living in San Jose, the company gave its software to users for free, thus establishing "viral marketing."

Eric Benhamou, a Sephardic Jew born in Algeria and educated at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Arts et Métiers in Paris and at Stanford University, was another early success story. From 1990 to 2010, he was CEO or chairman of 3Com. The company, which was ranked as high as 294 on the Fortune 500 list, was sold to Hewlett-Packard for $2.7 billion in cash in 2009. Benhamou remains active in venture capital, start-ups, philanthropy, and business education, serves on the boards of several Silicon Valley firms, and speaks passionately about Israelis' "natural talent for entrepreneurship" (Scheck 2009; Shelah 2006).[2]

With continued growth, Israelis became not only sellers but also buyers of U.S. infotech firms. In 2003, Israel's largest high-tech company, Ness Technologies, purchased APAR Infotech, an information services firm with corporate headquarters in Pittsburgh, Penn-

2. See the Benhamou Global Ventures (BGV) website at: benhamouglobalventures.com.

sylvania, for $360 million (Hermoni and Dar 2003).

COETHNIC COOPERATION IN BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

In addition to profiting from offshore ties, the Israeli infotech community in Silicon Valley benefits from high levels of in-group cooperation. Members jointly engage in business, social, and philanthropic activities. A variety of volunteer and for-profit organizations and business accelerators provide recent arrivals with socialization, networks, and lessons in doing business with Americans (Efrati 2012). Initially informal, Israeli emigrants' associations have now become more visible, better organized, and more likely to be affiliated with the Israeli consulate (Orpaz 2014). These centers of collaboration are supplemented by newspapers, websites, and forms of social media useful for getting oriented in the Bay Area. Finally, community members often shop and socialize in a variety of Israeli-style shops and restaurants. Bucks of Woodside is well known as the restaurant where countless Silicon Valley projects were brainstormed over coffee and eggs, but Oren's Hummus, created by Oren Dobronsky—who had developed and sold four high-tech start-ups before entering the restaurant business—is a popular equivalent for Israeli immigrants (Pine 2012; Pollock 2014).

A unique aspect of the Israeli infotech subculture appears to be its high level of cooperation, as discussed in news stories and documented in our own interviews. That cooperation offers a rather striking contrast to the patterns generally observed among entrepreneurial ethnic groups—including Israelis engaged in other occupations (Gold 1994, 2002; Granovetter 1995). Ethnic businesses often operate within highly competitive, even parasitical, environments in which owners conceal practices and contacts from firms run by country men and women who often have skills, contacts, and business resources remarkably like their own (Gold 2002). For example, my research found that Israeli emigrant restaurateurs, garment manufacturers, and building contractors avoided collaborating with coethnics in order to protect their access to consumers and profit margins (Gold 1994, 2002).

In contrast, the infotech sector appears to reward openness and collaboration (Freedman 2008). Informants attributed this to conational loyalty, common emotional styles, shared language (Hebrew), ease in evaluating and communicating with coworkers and subcontractors, and acceptance of flexible work-family arrangements (Bluestein 2012; Gold 2002; Orpaz 2014). Although they occasionally referred to the presence of other nationalities, Israeli infotech migrants in Silicon Valley were most concerned with conationals and seldom described Indians or Chinese as competitors or rivals (Banerjee 2007). In a 2016 interview, a journalist who had lived with her family among infotech Israelis in Silicon Valley for almost a decade explained its increasingly cooperative culture:

> As a person who has been working in Israeli high-tech all my life, I can tell you that firgun [a Hebrew term meaning "unselfish delight in the success of others" (Kordova 2014)] wasn't the norm fifteen or twenty years ago, but has become the norm. There are tech meetups, open source, community activities, and they drive people to think well and help. Also, the innovation process requires many feedback loops. Connections are worth money, and cooperation too. People pride themselves in the "karma" they get by helping. If you help, it means you are someone. Also, let's say I am a good high-tech Israel exec in The Valley—it is in my interest to behave well, even towards competitors, since I may start-up a future company with them, get valuable connections through them, etc.

Finally, the structure of the infotech industry often requires cooperation because teams of workers with complementary skill sets are most likely to be funded by venture capitalists—as suggested in a leading entrepreneur's presentation at an event organized by the Silicon Valley–based Israeli Executives and Founders Forum (IEFF) on "The Art of Building Billion Dollar Start-ups." The speaker advised his audience that "the ideal start-up size is 2-3 people; a hacker, a designer and a hustler. A one-person start-up can't easily address those three roles" (Soffer 2015).

BUSINESS SUCCESS AND COMMUNAL SATISFACTION

Much of the research on immigrant-driven infotech entrepreneurship has focused on production techniques, capital acquisition, willingness to take risks, and other business-related concerns. By contrast, social science research about immigration, ethnic entrepreneurship, and transnationalism emphasizes that the maintenance of relations between distant groups and locations relies on social, ethnic, national, and familial connections. These personal and affective ties and relationships underlie efficiency, good communication, innovation, trust, and successful collaboration (Kanter 1977; Nonini and Ong 1997; Saxenian 2006).

In other words, migrants' sentiments and decisions with regard to broader aspects of their collective life are not just peripheral to "the real story" of making money, but instead vital to the ability of transnational entrepreneurs to engage in economic activities. Moreover, it is important to remember that decisions about economic activities are not just made by the largely male groups of entrepreneurs but also depend on the appraisals of their spouses, children, extended families, networks, and communities (Aneesh 2003; Gold 2013; Kobayashi and Preston 2007; Ray 2013). It follows, then, that skilled immigrant entrepreneurs' identities and social engagements are worthy topics of consideration within a study of transnational entrepreneurship.

Indeed, research exploring diverse populations of high-level migrants has consistently emphasized the importance of non-economic factors in shaping transnational behavior (Salaff, Wong, and Greve 2010). In her research on Indian entrepreneurs traveling between their homeland and the United States, Manashi Ray (2013, 95) has found that "the family played a significant role both as the end goal and the means to achieve global migration and return . . . migrants' new ways of imagining migration and return and future work were guided as much by their own personal life-stage transition issues, nostalgia for the Indian way of life and feelings of nationalism as by the possibility of taking advantage of business opportunities."

Israelis involved in Silicon Valley's infotech industries are often economically successful and enjoy the area's high standard of living and good educational opportunities for their children. Like Yael, many value the tolerant and multicultural environment of the Bay Area over the culture of Israel:

> Well, I have been out of Israel for eight years, and I do feel an enormous difference. On the intellectual side, I always had a critique of how Israel treats Arab citizens, etc. But only after being here [in the United States] and seeing what ethnic equality looks like—it puts Israel in a very unfavorable light.
>
> [During a visit,] we were just floored by some of the racist comments that very good friends made that we were not aware of when we [previously] lived in Israel because either we made them [ourselves] or we were deaf.

Nevertheless, many Israeli emigrants claim that they don't feel fully comfortable in the United States and remain committed to Israel (Gold 2002; Sabar 1999). They often attribute this to cultural, linguistic, political, and national differences between Israel and Western points of settlement. (Remember that Israel's international involvement in infotech can be traced to the desire of Israelis working in the United States to return home.) An article in a Bay Area Jewish newspaper describes these differences:

> They're drawn here by the promise of affluence, lower tax rates and an entrepreneur-friendly culture. While some become U.S. citizens, they retain strong ties to the Jewish State—both personally and professionally. "It's very easy to take the Israelis out of Israel, but almost impossible to take Israel out of the Israelis," said [Shuly] Galili [executive director of the California Israel Chamber of Commerce (CICC)], who counts more than 200 members [in her organization]. (Brandt 2000)

Many emigrants claim that they would prefer to reside in Israel eventually, with their relatives and amid the country's familiar culture, language, and system of national identity. In fact, many Israelis do return home. Despite

their relatively comfortable positions in Diaspora communities and lengthy stays, many highly educated Israeli families do not consider their settlement to be permanent. In the words of an Israeli woman who, with her infotech worker husband and three children, spent eight years in Palo Alto:

> Israelis have a lot of problems about staying here. They say, "We will stay here for the time being." I went to school here [in the United States] growing up, and now my child is going to school here too. I have a lot of good feelings about [U.S. schools] compared to the Israeli school system. But we want to go back now. I have come to the conclusion that I can't bear this permanent sojourn anymore. Hopefully, we will be back in less than a year.

Religious, national, and linguistic identities are especially pertinent in shaping infotech emigrants' impression of the United States. Some high-tech Israeli emigrants appreciate U.S. forms of Judaism (Gold 2002), but most of them, coming from a secular and nationalistic background, resenting the influence of the Orthodox community in Israeli life, and unfamiliar with the Reform and Conservative denominations with which most North American Jews affiliate, disdain the idea of maintaining their Jewish identity, and especially their children's Jewish identity, through participation in American Jewish activities (Gold 2002; Shokeid 1988).

Accordingly, Israeli infotech workers with children were more likely to want to return home. Many had been raised as members of the elite of Israeli society, and many of them were very concerned about their children being deprived of a childhood similar to their own. Further, because Israeli culture emphasizes the centrality of a series of shared experiences to socialization and national identity, a child growing up abroad will be excluded from these forms of engagement, which are essential for both social membership and occupational success. Deborah and Havah, two Israeli parents, described their distance from American Jews:

> Deborah: Most of them [American Jews] go by the Reformed stream, and I tend to actually like it because it's more modern and it doesn't conflict with family life as much as the other streams of Judaism do. But I think that from a Jewish life perspective, it's really a lot like Christianity. There isn't that much difference.
>
> Havah: There is a big inability to relate to American Jews. . . . If I meet an East Coast kind of typical Jew, I don't know what I should do. I feel that there is a minority mentality there that I can't decipher. It is very embarrassing for me. He is trying to communicate in a way that is fathomable to another American Jew, and I can't figure it out.

GENDER AND ADAPTATION

Because of the class, gender, and ethnic characteristics of the Israelis who are most active in high-tech occupations (most are educated male military veterans), the resources and benefits of migration are unequally distributed among the population. In nearly every study of high-tech Israelis in the United States, we find that, even when migration was a "family decision" and the family as a whole has enjoyed economic benefits as a result of migration, the decision to migrate was generally made by the men, who were seeking expanded educational and occupational opportunities in the United States (Lev Ari 2008). Once in the United States, men often enjoy the benefits of such expanded opportunities and feel more comfortable in the country. Women and dependent children, however, have more negative views of migration and of life abroad. Men often wish to stay on, but women frequently exert pressure to return to Israel to participate in familiar social activities, interact with family members, and raise children according to Israeli and Jewish values.

Consequently, in the view of many Israeli infotech emigrant families, the high-paying jobs available to male Israeli workers do not fully compensate for the unfamiliar environment in which their children must be raised. In the words of a Silicon Valley resident: "Nobody knows if Israelis [in Silicon Valley] can perpetuate their culture. The only ones that have are the ones that have sent their kids back for military service."

In this way, infotech immigrants' coopera-

tion with each other, enduring ties to Israel, their country of origin, and selective consumption of Jewish communal services stem from their collective discomfort living in the United States. While they rely on coethnic networks to get into business, Israeli emigrants also depend on another set of collective activities to retain an Israeli outlook for themselves and their families in the United States.

RETAINING ISRAEL-NESS IN AMERICA

Israelis and their family members involved in the infotech industry patronize and sometimes run shops, restaurants, grocery stores and boutiques that satisfy their consumer and social needs. Other enterprises provide child care, recreation, Hebrew-speaking doctors and dentists, catering, and real estate and relocation services. Various political organizations, including the recently created Israeli American Council, provide a venue for Israeli Americans to express their views on the U.S. political system in order to expand their political influence (Gold 2016).

Reflecting Israel's desire to retain the interest and loyalty of infotech emigrants and encourage their eventual return, its government provides a package of cultural and economic services (N. Cohen 2009), including summer-in-Israel programs that allow Israeli-American youth to maintain language skills and an Israeli identity in the United States. The homeland also offers the Lone Soldiers Program, which enables Americans and others around the world to serve in the Israel Defense Forces. Finally, the Israeli government provides immigrants with a wide range of services and subsidies—assistance with job finding, renting an apartment, obtaining access to health care, and orienting children to Israeli life—if they seek to return. Such benefits are less generous than those available to olim (newly arrived Diaspora Jews), but they are nonetheless worth thousands of dollars.[3]

Emigrants' own activities and the services delivered by the Israeli government allow them to avoid involvement with American Judaism. At the same time, local Jewish organizations extend a variety of services to their cousins from the Middle East. Despite Israelis' feeling of distance from American Jews and the synagogues and community centers that they have created, many families are willing to participate in these activities because they fear that, without some form of institutional Jewish engagement, their children will lose their identity as Israelis and Jews (Gold 2002; Pine 2012).

Prior to the 1980s, in keeping with Israeli policies intended to discourage emigration, the American Jewish establishment withheld outreach or assistance to Israeli newcomers. Once Israel reversed its stance on the issue, however, local American Jews began to provide a number of services to emigrants. Such efforts can be understood as reflecting the host group's desire to assist coreligionists in need. At the same time, welcoming Israelis allows American Jews to replenish their own community, which has been subject to depletion by age, assimilation, and intermarriage. Toward these ends, American Jewish agencies, synagogues, and organizations have established Israeli-oriented chapters of philanthropic organizations, employed Hebrew-speaking staff members for communal services, created Israeli-style Hebrew school classes, child care centers, folk dancing, and sing-along events, and scheduled celebrations of Israeli holidays.

Despite their consumption of these services, many Israeli families are still uncomfortable in the United States and eventually decide to return home. (Visas also mandate their departure.) In fact, the incidence of return among infotech Israelis is so high that respondents spontaneously told me that they dreaded the summer months—many of their closest conational friends would be leaving then (Gold 2002). As Orly explained during an interview conducted in the summer of 2006:

> I am very tired of the Israeli community here because it is so transient. A lot of good friends have gone back. There was a huge episode of that this year—150 families at least went back. My son's day care was decimated because everybody left. The day cares in Palo

3. For more information, see the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration website at: http://www.moia.gov.il/English/Pages/default.aspx (accessed November 16, 2016).

> Alto don't want Israeli kids because they have everybody leave at some point. And I like the people that go back better than the people who stay. In many respects, I think it is right to go back, although it's a more complex life in Israel.

Other members of the Israeli emigrant population besides those involved in infotech express a desire to return (Gold 2002; Lev Ari 2008; Shokeid 1988). Moreover, rates of return are associated with economic and security conditions. Larger numbers of emigrants tend to return during times of relative peace and economic growth in Israel (as well as during U.S. recessions). Upticks in violence in Israel restrain remigration (Y. Cohen 2009).

Because of their valuable skills, infotech and other high-level professionals can be confident of finding a good job upon return. Drawing on work-based connections and their access to resources through government-run anti-brain-drain programs, infotech professionals are able to set up employment prior to remigration and are well represented among remigrants.[4]

In reflecting on their multiple migrations, some returned émigrés suggested that rather than solving their economic, affiliational, and family predicaments, the ever-present possibility of geographic mobility became a problem in itself. A woman in the midst of a difficult readjustment to Israel described migration as a Pandora's Box that she regretted opening. "I think we would have been happier," she opined, "if we had not traveled to the U.S. that first time."

Several factors tend to discourage high-tech migrants' permanent settlement: the availability of jobs abroad, the relatively easy process of migration and return, and personal and family-based ambivalence about various points of residence. In fact, these factors work to sustain transnational careers. Although regular travel may be frustrating for infotech emigrants and their families, and difficult for their countries of origin and settlement, their continuous travel across borders may also contribute to the industry's ongoing transformation as it creates new markets, delivers new sources of capital and labor, and introduces new systems of production.

A BRIEF COMPARISON OF ISRAELI AND INDIAN INFOTECH MIGRANTS IN SILICON VALLEY

Israelis are not the only migrant group known for their high-tech entrepreneurship; a sizable body of research demonstrates that Chinese, Taiwanese, and Indians helped to establish Silicon Valley and continue to play leading roles in its continuity (Saxenian 2006). Among these migrant groups, Indians are by far the most dominant population in both Silicon Valley and throughout the United States (Saxenian 2006; Wadhwa, Saxenian, and Siciliano 2012). A brief comparison of Israelis and Indians can reveal the importance of ethnic versus industry-based factors in determining these two migrant populations' involvement in infotech.

According to Vivek Wadhwa, AnnaLee Saxenian, and David Siciliano (2012, 2), who analyzed a random sample of 1,882 out of the 107,819 engineering and technology companies formed in the United States between 2006 and 2012, 24.3 percent of these companies had at least one immigrant founder. India was the number-one source of immigrants starting engineering and technology companies in the United States during this period, accounting for 33.2 percent of the total. Israel was the sixth-largest source, contributing founders of 3.5 percent of all immigrant-created engineering and technology companies during the period (ibid., 3). Looking at Silicon Valley alone between 2006 and 2012, Indians accounted for 32 percent of the immigrant-founded companies, while Israelis created about 2.5 percent (ibid., 26).

Perhaps the greatest difference between these two nations is in their population. Israel has approximately 8 million citizens. In contrast, India is the second-largest country in the world with 1.252 billion citizens. With over 3 million residents in the United States, there are approximately twelve times as many Indians here as Israelis, who number 250,000 (Cen-

4. See the Israel Brain Gain Program website at: http://www.israel-braingain.org.il/article.aspx?id=7120 (accessed November 18, 2016).

tral Intelligence Agency 2013). Despite Israel's smaller population, Israeli Americans have close and enduring relations with the sizable, educated, and influential American Jewish population of some 6 million.

Their differences in size notwithstanding, the two countries have a number of features in common. Both became independent in the late 1940s, share a legacy of British colonialism, and are noted for their extensive and entrepreneurial diasporas (Dossani and Kenney 2002). Immigrants from both countries are better educated than both the average American and the average member of their country of origin (Cohen 1996).

Given Indian immigrants' high educational levels and sizable numbers, high-tech is only one of several professional niches they occupy in the United States; they are also employed as engineers, health care professionals, managers and administrators, and supervisors and proprietors of sales jobs (Eckstein and Peri, this issue). In contrast, infotech is the only well-known realm of Israeli professional specialization in Silicon Valley and the United States.

Israeli emigrants had an earlier start in Silicon Valley than Indian immigrants; their involvement dates back to the early 1990s. Moreover, Israeli infotech emigrants are more likely to have U.S. degrees, and more of them have attained permanent resident status than workers from India. As of 2012, Indians held the largest share of the 262,569 H-1B skilled worker visas in the United States with 168,367, or 64 percent. Israelis were not listed among the top twenty H-1B nationalities and held fewer than 1,000 such visas (Arora and Gambardella 2004; U.S. Department of Homeland Security 2013). These figures reflect the different modes of entry into the United States taken by Indian and Israeli infotech migrants. Israelis find it easier to stay on.

Both Israel and India rely on ties between immigrants in Silicon Valley and home-country institutions to foster infotech growth at home and abroad. Owing to Israel's higher level of national development, more advanced infrastructure, and cutting-edge research and development facilities, Israeli transnationals can link up with profitable high-tech firms back home that specialize in, for instance, research and development as well as hardware design and manufacturing.[5] In contrast, India-based firms are best known for providing low-cost software. In their report on the globalization of the software industry, Ashish Arora and Alfonso Gambardella (2004, 12) assert that, "at the risk of some exaggeration, one can say that multinational firms came to Israel to do R&D [and] to India for inexpensive skilled workers."

Despite their later start in Silicon Valley, Indians had increased their involvement by 2012 in a wide variety of industrial activities, yielding expanded access to venture capital and a growing number of start-ups (Chadha 2015; Dahad 2015). A 2015 article in the Indian newspaper *Firstpost* noted that Sundar Pichai and Satya Nadella were the CEOs of Google and Microsoft, respectively, Vinod Khosla was cofounder of Sun Microsystems, Amit Singhal was a senior vice president of Google, Shantanu Narayen was president and CEO of Adobe, and Padmasree Warrior was chief technical officer of Cisco. Their many MBA degrees and their high levels of English fluency (compared to other migrant nationalities) have made Indians especially well represented among the ranks of managers of U.S. infotech firms (Dossani 2002, 26).

Fieldwork and journalism conducted in Israeli and Indian infotech communities reveal that ethnic networks are of vital importance to both populations in providing referrals, advice, access to funds, and sources of mentoring (Eischen 2011). Israelis and Indians alike pragmatically reach out to conationals in the United States and their country of origin for work-related information and connections. Members of both communities also mention being motivated by national loyalty and pride to support the advancement of their coethnics and their homelands in high-tech.

I have already reviewed Israeli emigrants' tendency to cling to their home-country identity and social practices even as they pursue careers in the United States. In a like manner, Indians are said to "look to their [country] of birth as [a place] to return to, subject to the

5. Israel's literacy level is close to 98 percent, while India's is about 75 percent (Central Intelligence Agency 2013).

right conditions such as professional opportunities" (Dossani 2002, 26). The leading infotech scholar Vivek Wadhwa explains the theory and practice underlying Indian immigrants' networks:

> One reason . . . Indian entrepreneurs have a very strong support network here in the U.S. [is that] thirty years ago, when Indians began building momentum in Silicon Valley, that first generation of successful startup founders worked hard to help those who followed. They built organizations and created a U.S. ecosystem of successful Indian entrepreneurs—and, crucially, angel funders—to accelerate the success of newcomers.
>
> They decided to forget which part of India they were born in and just to focus on the cause. When the first generation of Indians in Silicon Valley succeeded in shattering the glass ceiling, they decided to help others follow their path. They realized that they had all surmounted the same obstacles. And that they could reduce the barriers to entry for others behind them by sharing their experiences and opening some doors. (Chadha 2015)

In sum, the patterns of involvement of Israeli and Indian infotech immigrant communities in Silicon Valley and with conationals back home reveal surprising similarities. This is striking given the two countries' vastly different sizes and disparate histories, cultures, and levels of development. These common patterns can be traced to not only the structure of the infotech industry but also the two migrant communities' shared interactions and experiences of studying and working together.

In fact, fieldwork, journalism, and academic research reveal a significant amount of intergroup collaboration among Israeli and Indian infotech entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley (Kapur and McHale 2005; Mohan 2013; Sheth 2007). Acting as host during Indian president Pranab Mukherjee's visit to the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament), Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu indicated his awareness of India's and Israel's accomplishments in global infotech as he joked, "Hindi and Hebrew are the main languages of the Silicon Valley, [although] you sometimes also hear English" (*Times of India* 2015).

The importance of nationality in fostering cooperation and accessing home-country resources allows groups like Indians, Chinese, and Israelis to limit other nationalities' access to the infotech niche, thus imposing social closure. At the same time, however, the nationally diverse "melting pot of ideas" milieu of Silicon Valley encourages collaboration among varied populations who exchange complementary skills and assets in a mutually beneficial manner (Orpaz 2014; Saxenian 2006).

Social science research often attributes migrants' social patterns to essentialized cultural characteristics. This brief comparison of Israeli and Indian infotech entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley suggests that structural and industry-related factors should also be considered as important explanations for the strikingly similar social practices of apparently dissimilar groups engaged in the pursuit of common ends.

COMMUNITY-BASED IMPACTS OF ISRAELI EMIGRANTS' CONCENTRATION IN INFOTECH

Israeli migrants' infotech involvement has had considerable impacts on both migrants themselves and on American society.

Through their extensive involvement in high-tech, Israeli immigrants enhanced their access to income and self-determination. They are now much freer to travel, to live where they wish, and to pursue more lucrative and prestigious careers than would have been possible had they followed other pursuits. Further, through their immersion in transnational spaces like Silicon Valley, they can enjoy the affluence and what many describe as the "quiet life" outside of Israel while simultaneously interacting with fellow Israelis. They find satisfaction in visiting the homeland regularly, contributing to its development through their careers, providing philanthropic support, and lobbying host-country governments on Israel's behalf.

At the same time, a considerable fraction of Israeli emigrants involved in high-tech entrepreneurship remain ambivalent about being outside of the home country. Israeli women

find it difficult to raise children in U.S. suburbs and often feel isolated from family, friends, and home-country institutions that permit married women in Israel to maintain a more satisfying work-family mix than is available in the United States (Gold 2002; Lev Ari 2008). The children of Israeli immigrants feel compelled to make momentous decisions about their future place of residence while still teenagers, since prospects for full participation in Israeli society are hindered for those who do not serve in the Israel Defense Forces.

Israeli migrants involved in infotech have also had a significant impact on the United States. Since the start of the Great Recession in 2008, economists, policymakers, business leaders, and journalists have expressed concern about the country's reduced ability to attract and compete for high-tech entrepreneurs on a global scale. This finding is emphasized in a recent report by Wadhwa, Saxenian, and Siciliano (2012), who determined that the number of Silicon Valley start-ups created by immigrants was substantially reduced between 2005 and 2012. In 2005, 52.4 percent of new enterprises included at least one key founder who was an immigrant. By 2012, that proportion had dropped to 43.9 percent. Even more ominous, the study concluded that "immigrant founded companies' dynamic period of expansion has come to an end" (Wadhwa, Saxenian, and Siciliano 2012, 2). Viewing as a major threat the international competition for migrant entrepreneurs coming from countries that offer more attractive subsidies or better economic conditions than the United States, U.S. politicians, CEOs, and business experts have endorsed policies and incentives to ensure the continued supply and retention of this valuable form of human capital (Bluestein 2012; Hart, Acs, and Tracy 2009). Exemplifying this perspective, the CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Thomas J. Donohue, asserted in 2012, "We should allow the world's most creative entrepreneurs to stay in our country. They are going to contribute and succeed somewhere—why shouldn't it be in the United States?" (Hohn 2012). Such sentiments underlie the implementation of immigrant investor visas.[6]

Israel continues to be a reliable source of skilled workers. To ensure their availability, leading Silicon Valley institutions have collaborated with Israeli immigrant organizations. For example, in October 2014, the first California Israel International Business Summit was held at Microsoft's Mountain View campus. The event drew 25 companies and 400 attendees (Cherney 2014). Similarly, in 2015, the Stanford University Graduate School of Business (GSB) held its third annual Israeli Entrepreneurship Fair, with the target constituency being Silicon Valley firms with at least one Israeli founder. Sponsored by the GSB's career center and the university's Jewish student association, the event sought to identify employment opportunities for recent graduates while pursuing goals shared by Israel and the GSB (Wishingrad 2015).

From the U.S. perspective, Israeli émigrés' enduring interest in the U.S. economy is gratifying. While the number of high-tech workers from Taiwan, once a major source country, has recently flat-lined, Israelis and emigrants from other countries continue to enter the United States at a good clip. Policymakers hope that these migrants will continue to supplement America's high-tech labor needs over the long term.

CONCLUSION

Israeli infotech migration began when individuals sought opportunities abroad during a period when Israel discouraged both emigration and entrepreneurship. Relying on social and human capital they had already acquired in Israel, they achieved economic success in a manner that both drew on and contributed to the growth of the infotech industry in Israel and the United States. In response, Israel transformed its economic and labor market policies in order to enhance high-tech immigrants' participation in the global economy.

Despite the increased legitimacy of such endeavors, we see that migrants' choices are not simply economically based. Rather, Israeli em-

6. See U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, "Immigrant Investor Visas," available at: travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/immigrate/Immigrant-Investor-Visas.html.

igrants evaluate the quality of life where they settle in the host country in light of numerous factors, including opportunities for retaining religious, cultural, and national identities. California offers many benefits, but Israeli emigrants remain nostalgic for home and find the Bay Area to be a less than ideal location for socializing Israeli children. In response, immigrants, the Israeli government, and American Jewish organizations provide services to make the environment more acceptable to these emigrants.

Our cursory comparison of Israelis with Indians—the largest group of immigrant entrepreneurs both nationally and in Silicon Valley—reveals marked similarities in their means for succeeding in California while also facilitating home-country development. Both groups stress in-group collaboration, national loyalty, and a desire to overcome exclusion.

In conclusion, transnational strategies can provide infotech migrants with significant options and resources both at home and abroad, but only if they endure unfamiliar and sometimes uncomfortable environments that test their identities and create difficulties for their families. Migrants often deal with such challenges by reinforcing their ties with conationals and their country of origin. In this, we see that collective, familial, and identificational issues still shape patterns of work and travel in the contemporary global economy and thus deserve continuing attention in studies of global migration.

Dealing with expanded options for work and travel may make life more complex for migrant families and more challenging for their countries of origin and settlement. At the same time, however, regular travel among infotech migrants may contribute to the ongoing exchange of ideas and the maintenance of networks that generate innovation.

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