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Living on borrowed time: borders, ticking clocks and timelessness among temporary labour migrants in Israel

Robin A. Harper and Hani Zubida

'It's like clockwork', the saying goes, meaning that things are orderly, linear, dependable, and based on a universally shared, knowable concept of time. Standardisation facilitates communication, facilitates order and spurs development (Anderson 1991; Crosby 1997). Shared temporal references are a fundamental concept of social life (Sorokin 1943; Zerubavel 1982). Time is an orientation opportunity, allowing individuals to carve a place in that shared social space (Berger and Luckmann 1967). Sorokin (1943: 173) eloquently explains:

> (t)he possession of means and ways to 'time' the behavior of the members of any group in such a way that each member apprehends 'the appointed time' in the same way as do other members has been possibly the most urgent need of social life at any time and at any place. Without this, social life itself is impossible.

Durkheim (1965: 17) underscores this point, observing that 'If men ... did not have the same conception of time … all contact between their minds would be impossible, and with that, all life together.'

Cross-border migration offers an interesting challenge to these naturalised views of shared time structures. Due to transnationalism, nostalgia and cultural difference, migrants exist both according to local temporal norms and home-country timescapes. In this simultaneity, time is not linear but layered, with competing, sometimes contradictory strains, imaging home while living in the new rhythms of the receiving state. This is a normal result of transnationalism and common to all immigrants (Cwerner 2001; Griffiths et al. 2013). Unlike all immigrants, however, Temporary Labour Migrants (TLM) hold time-delimited visas. For these migrants, time is bracketed and ticking. Because there is a real and knowable limit, it raises the question of how TLM think of their time as migrants. Is it the same for them as it is for other immigrants or for natives?

We posit that for TLM, time forms a separate, exclusive, parallel experience that is similar – but not the same – for all immigrants, and is sometimes different from the experience of natives. The similarities derive from shared human experi-

ence; the differences emerge from disparate legal, cultural and social experience. Migration is not just about traversing a political border but also about living in a different space with different norms. As a result, the migration process infuses all parts of a person's life, even those parts that are seemingly distinct from the migration process. Obviously, all people have some constraints placed on their time, whether self-imposed, job-related or familial. TLM experience certain unique time constraints, which are state-imposed. The state may impose time constraints on migrants for access to society, restricting entry, exit and practices in daily life. The state may place similar constraints only on subjects who have circumscribed rights, such as prisoners and those in quarantine. However, unlike prisoners and those in quarantine, only migrants request (or escape from) this time subjugation at will. But even if time is different for TLM, which factors affect perceptions of time: time-delimited visas? Local time culture? Different seasons? Experiencing nostalgia and homesickness? Being far from events in the home country? Adam (2008: 7) takes up these questions and calls for a rethinking of time in terms of multi-dimensional timescapes in which 'identities are forged, sustained, discarded and reworked … in relation to significant others … understanding the significance in people's lives.' In this view, time is not linear but relational and entwined so that the past, present and future are interrelated and dependent on individual and collective contexts (Adam 1998). This certainly may pose problems if temporary migrants become permanent residents and their alternate timescapes do not match their new reality.

In this chapter, we consider how TLM in Israel experience time. We use the concept 'borders' expansively to demarcate not just political borders, but social borders, time borders and even life-cycle borders. (Political borders and clock time are social constructions, like other social borders.) We explore how time generates social and/or political borders and conversely, how crossing state borders generates new concepts of time. We show that when time borders are embedded in the TLM experience, time becomes non-universal and non-linear. Our findings about how TLM experience time emerge from interviews and subsequent conversations we conducted in Israel in 2010–12 with 38 migrants (legally and illegally present, refugee/asylum seekers) from 11 countries about their thoughts, experiences and opinions about life in Israel.[1]

We suggest that 'migrant time' is a bordering process that is unique to migrants. We show how two alternative timescapes, peculiar to TLM – 'rupture time' and 'freedom time' – shape migrants' understanding of time. Further, we show how these timescapes provide an opportunity for and an impediment to immigrant incorporation.

Migration and time in Israel

Like many countries, Israel is home to a large number of TLM who have become *de facto* permanent residents. There are between 250,000 and 350,000 migrants

– approximately two-thirds of whom have fallen out of legal status. They have been joined by an additional 60,000 refugees/asylum-seekers fleeing civil war and extreme poverty in Sudan and Eritrea. Migrants come from across Asia, Africa, Latin America and eastern Europe and comprise as much as 5 per cent of the total population and 11 per cent of the labour force in Israel (Nathan 2011).

Foreign labour complementing the Israeli workforce has been a constant since the founding of the state. Until the 1980s, Palestinian day labourers formed the bulk of that. Following the 1988 Palestinian civil uprising (intifada), Israel closed the borders to Palestinians and began importing foreigners to supplant Palestinian labourers. Israeli employers realised the profitability of migrant labourers and demanded more visas for agricultural and construction workers rather than making capital investments to modernise conditions or make jobs more appealing to Israelis (Bartram 2004). Over time, employers demanded expansion of the policy to include entry of migrants to care for the elderly and to provide household assistance (i.e. caregiving). Some argue that the policy expansion was also intended to weaken the Palestinian hand in negotiations (Raijman and Kemp 2007). Table 5.1 summarises the number of legal migrant workers in Israel in 2010.

The policy to bring in workers is essentially an indenturing programme: Israel issues permits to specific recruitment agencies for a given number of migrants per year to work in agriculture, construction, hospitality, ethnic cookery/catering, nursing/caregiving and welding. In all but caregiving, there are fixed annual quotas (Harper and Zubida 2010). Israeli policy is designed for voluntary, rotating, temporary contract migrants. When contracts expire or are cancelled or workers fall out of status, there are few ways to adjust one's status. So Israel uses deportation as the main mechanism for compulsory repatriation. Many workers actually choose to become illegal workers if they are dissatisfied with their working conditions or if their contracts are about to expire. Ironically, and in contrast to the experience in most other states, workers without employment contracts ('illegal workers') have more freedom over their own time than their legal counterparts, as they are outside the time limits imposed by work permits and may take or leave jobs at will. However, clearly, they trade employment freedom for more precarious residency status (Kemp 2007; Willen 2007).

As would be expected, over time, TLM have raised families in Israel. Although they live on the periphery of Israeli society, children of some migrants – the Israeli Interior Ministry estimates there are about 1,200 children of migrant workers in Israel and an additional 2,000 of refugees/asylum-seekers – self-identify as Israelis and are being socialised as Israelis through the school system (Zubida et al. 2013). Many are stateless, as there are few means to adjust their status and to claim Israeli citizenship or to claim the citizenship of their parents' countries of origin. Some 600 are awaiting adjudication of their cases, while about 620 have been provided a means to permanent residency (Sa'ar 2006; Goren 2014). Although the Israeli government envisioned a temporary labour fix and a policy of time-delimited rota-

Table 5.1 Legal migrant workers in Israel, 2010

Country of origin	Total (000's)
Total	108.6
Asia	82.8
India	7.5
Turkey	2.4
Nepal	6.4
China	8.0
Sri Lanka	4.5
Philippines	25.9
Thailand	25.0
Other	3.1
Africa total	0.4
Europe total*	24.3
Bulgaria	2.1
FSU	11.1
Germany	0.2
United Kingdom	0.2
Romania	9.8
Other	0.9
America Oceania total	1.1
USA	0.4
Others	0.6

Source: Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013.
Note: *Including FSU European Republics.

tion of workers, many migrants (and now their descendants as well) are increasingly becoming a permanent segment of Israeli demographics. For the workers who imagined short stays and quick returns home, time morphed the locus of their lives.

Examining time

Modern Western standard temporal references are linked to the virtually universal use of the Gregorian calendar, the Christian era, international standard time and clock time (Zerubavel 1982). These structures pose a host of uncontested, shared, accepted temporal practices. The year begins in January and ends in December. Throughout most of the world, the official date of reference is the birth of Christ as the before/after time demarcation point. Zero hour is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and all understandings of clock time are plus or minus GMT. Standard time marks out days into seven equal units in each week. There are twelve months in every year. Months may be 30, 31 or 28 days long. Adjustments are made every four years, adding an additional day to February. Seasons are anchored to dates

rather than climate, temperature or harvests. This naturalised temporalisation is sequenced and relatively invariant (Elchardus 1988). Any attempts to deviate from these constructs are disruptive, full of conflict and likely to fail (Zerubavel 1977, 1982). Because of socialisation and general acceptance, these systems of time appear universal and organic. As Edelman (1996: 129) cautions when thinking about seemingly universal units: '[c]ategories are especially powerful as shapers of political beliefs ... when they appear to be natural, self-evident, or simple description rather than devised.' Due to the widespread acceptance and convenience of shared time, there is no contemporary, serious discussion about altering the construction of the calendar, clock and seasons; all remain currently uncontested.

Since time is treated as a common commodity, it has the appearance of *meaning* the same thing for all people. Rigid categorisation restricts the visibility of important processes. Attempts to log events in relation to the clock and map uses of space often overlook both simultaneity and the meanings attached to space and time (Urry 1991; Rose 1993; Moss 2010). That is not to say that all aspects of life are temporal; they are not. However, they are nonetheless constrained by our own organic, psychological, cultural and other internal and external environments (Elchardus and Smits 2006). In thinking about this functionality of the ordering of time, Parsons (1951: 301) noted that people acted 'so that different times are set apart for different activities, with different people'. That is, we simplify our understandings of the openness and complexity of time. By 'defuturizing the future' (Luhmann 1967), we can imagine a fixed sequence of stages that tells someone what should come next. This expectation for the individual is projected on to the society as a whole. Although many have posited that, as society becomes more globalised and complex, there will be an individualisation of the life cycle (Giddens 1990), empirical evidence reveals that variation is more limited (Elchardus and Smits 2006). However, in all of these cases, we can connect the multiple streams of time that run simultaneously: the countdown to the return, the time away, the time in the country, remembering, imagining and forecasting, and so on. As Adam (1994: 13) observes:

> We can grasp time in its complexity only if we seek the relations between time, temporality, tempo and timing, between clock time, chronology, social time and time-consciousness, between motion, process, change, continuity and the temporal modalities of past, present and future, between time as resource, as ordering principle and as becoming of the possible, or between any combination of these.

The meaning of time and migration

Studying the relationship between time and migration is not novel. Green (2006) identifies three common types of examinations of time in migration studies: linear, convergent and divergent. The *linear* model posits an implicit before and after comparison (e.g. sending country to receiving country). This model assumes that

time interacts with space and affects experience. The *convergent* model compares how different groups arriving at the same time in the same place experience migration. Here, the study of time interacts with issues of urban reception, local policy or ethnicity. Differing reception patterns, class, skills, ethnicity, language and ability to interact with the local population each yield different modes of incorporation and identity. In the *divergent* model, time explains divergent outcomes among same-origin immigrant groups that arrive at different times or settle in different places (Foner 1979; Gabaccia 2000). The divergent analyses, for example, question why there are different outcomes for immigrants arriving 100 years ago and today.

Time of arrival and generationality have been a key concern in recent migration studies (Rumbaut 1994; Kasinitz et al. 2004; King et al. 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 2006). These studies explore the effects of individual development, time of arrival and family composition at and during migration. Similarly, there is growing academic interest in exploring the impact of migration on adults who came as children, teenagers, adults or even second and third (or even subsequent) generations (Buriel 1993; Berry 2001; Nakash et al. 2012; Zubida et al 2013; Shoshani et al. 2014). Also, an increasing number of articles examine ageing immigrants who, whether by desire or by chance, find themselves in the receiving state long after they intended to leave (Gelfand 1989; Mui 1996; Jones-Correa 1998; Treas and Batalova 2009; Yahirun 2012). New research considers migrants who returned to their country of origin after a protracted sojourn abroad and focuses on their reintegration. The role of the life cycle itself in migration trajectories remains, however, understudied. Here, the key questions are: How does immigration affect life-stage perspective? And, conversely, how does life-stage perspective affect the immigrant experience?

This intersection of time and migrant status generates dual gender-time-based borders that separate past, present and future. By crossing a political border, time is bracketed and this affects such time-dependent activities as pregnancy, nursing and the menopause. King et al. (2006: 249) observe the generalisation of the universal migrant time experience, writing:

> that descriptions, analyses and explanations for the migration of 'people', by aggregating the very different characteristics, motivations, agencies and relations of men and women, end up by failing to accurately portray the migration behavior of either sex.

Yet the King et al. analysis ignores the unique time constraints for reproduction; biological clocks do not run in concert with visas. Tenure abroad may be at the expense of bearing children with one's spouse or partner; children may not be nursed by their mothers or may never know their fathers. In other words, time-delimited visas and time-based contracts erect time-based borders that shape family relationships.

All of these approaches suggest that there is a relationship between time and how migration plays out. We will call this stretch of time that individuals spend as

im/migrants *migration time*. Griffiths et al. (2013) do a masterful job of summaris-
ing the various understandings in the literature of migration time as the multiple,
layered time experienced by migrants. We conceptualise migration time more
simply as the chronological period that stretches between emigration and having
no end (immigration) or emigration and a definite end (return migration or new
emigration). Migration time includes all of the stages in between these beginnings
and endings. Migration time will not be the same for all im/migrants. Since there is
no 'monolithic migrant', there can be no monolithic migration time. This approach
allows us to think about time and migration as a special experience, distinct from
the normal life cycle in the home country; it is a time apart. We use this concept like
the centre of a wheel into which and from which all spokes of migration time-related
issues radiate. In this way we can begin to ask how migration status might affect
understandings of time, and the implications this has for immigrant incorporation.

Migrants encompass a spectrum of immigration statuses, each with its own time
borders. Immigrants normally maintain some transnational connections to the
home country, but intend a fresh start in the receiving state. Refugees are thrust into
a new culture, often with the understanding that there is no return to times gone by
and places abandoned. Time must begin again. Asylum-seekers remain in limbo,
unsure if they may stay or if they must return. Since determinations of asylum may
take years to adjudicate, these migrants exist in a kind of timelessness, pursuing a
future that may never transpire. TLM occupy a bracketed time period in which the
state bureaucracy determines entry, exit and duration of tenure. Time abroad is a
known delimited tenure as a means to (a better) life at home. For those 'temporary
labour migrants' who cross the border without valid visas, work without proper
authorisation or overstay visas, time is self-defined and open-ended. Migrants play
chicken with the host state, always tempting/stretching time: How much longer?
What will happen tomorrow? Imprisonment? Deportation? How long since the
migrant had the peace of mind of secure tenure? These are the questions that con-
struct the time frame of unauthorised migrants.

Cwerner's (2001) seminal work on migration time describes how migrants have
parallel time modes in which they must adjust to local understandings of time, live
a life far from the ones they love (and thus on an alternate life timeline), gener-
ate communities which exist apart from the dominant society and also from the
home country, and finally carve out their own path. Part of the migration process
is unlearning their own understandings of time in order to make sense of the new
society. Migrants must adjust to the pace of life, to weather and climate and to the
local calendar for holidays and business hours. However, Cwerner (2001: 15) cau-
tions that the sociology of migrant time must not perceive all migration activities as
functionally different from the lives of natives. Cwerner (2001) posits that migra-
tion is but one reference point in one's life, not one that shapes and colours other
experiences and relationships.

We argue that Cwerner (2001) ignores the fundamental reality of TLM: they

are invited guests and their tenures are limited. During the time when TLM are present, they are subjects. Their existence in the host country is predicated on the state granting them a certain amount of time in-country. The host state conceives of TLM as existing within a mutually profitable parallel timeline. The state codifies this relationship in a time-delimited visa that stipulates migrants' movements, their ability to enter, exit, return or extend their stay. Although non-citizens may make agreements to remain for a certain length of time, the state has the final word and migrants' desires are often immaterial. These migrant-specific modes shape concepts of time that impact life trajectories. Migrants' main agency is to follow the time constraints stipulated in their contracts or break the contracts and the law. Since migrants are subjects, migration time is dependent on the receiving state's whim: a migrant may lose status and face immediate deportation at any time. (This is what Griffiths et al. (2013) call 'frenzied time' and what we refer to elsewhere as 'arbitrariness' (Harper and Zubida 2010).) Since many TLM take on debt to pay visa fees and acquire start-up funds, migrants are often willing to work incessantly to repay loans quickly and then to make the maximum money possible within the bracketed visa time. The migrant must complete his goals before the visa expires. As soon as he crosses the border, he must act *as if* any given day might be his last day. This visa clock also imposes constraints on the reproductive clock, inhibiting or precluding procreation if far from a partner. It stops the clock on direct intimate physical contact and opens opportunities for reimagined relations through writing, telephoning and, more recently, social media. Visa time limits generate identifiable geopolitical time-based borders. Our findings reveal two distinct timescapes experienced by TLM: 'rupture time' and 'freedom time'.

Rupture time

TLM experience migration time from emigration to the end of the tenure, normally the visa-allotted period. Personal status laws and the visa process dictate their experience as migrants. The host state decides how many people may come, for how long and what they can do, normally irrespective of migrants' needs. Rupture time suggests that migrants are living on migrant time only to be removed abruptly from that status. For TLM, rupture can be normal and expected or normal and unexpected. It can be normal and expected because TLM are likely ultimately to leave. Departure may be desired or unwanted or even traumatic for migrants and their family, but it is an expected part of their experience as TLM. But rupture time can also be normal and *unexpected*, since migrants can be removed before their allotted time as TLM has elapsed or if they have overstepped their visa-determined time. In both cases, TLM are required to leave after a set period. There is an end to their tenure; and that end is what we refer to here as 'rupture time'. We explore now how these ruptures affect their stay.

Migrants and citizens differ in their rights to territory. Migrants depend on the host state to grant permission to enter, exit and conduct their daily lives. Citizens,

by contrast, maintain unlimited access to their own national territory, entry, exit and residency rights. In short, citizens have unlimited time and migrants do not. Citizens can even confer this access to unlimited time to their descendants as property rights (Shachar 2009). Migrants' lives are largely defined by applying and waiting for time: time to get a visa, time to enter a country, time to work, time to leave. A Filipina caregiver explained how she waits and waits for a determination about her child's case. She came to Israel to work and sent her child to the Philippines but was so depressed that she brought her daughter back to Israel, knowing she had no status. When the government offered a regularisation of status to some children of TLM, she applied immediately. She had already waited several years for her case to be determined.

> I don't know how I feel, really … [*laughs*] because always they are changing the new, the date. 'Oh it's tomorrow', and then … We never know.

Since there are almost no legal mechanisms to adjust status, deportation is Israeli policy for those who do not leave in a timely way. The individual is powerless to negotiate status: the state informs and the migrant submits. This lack of agency in determining the length of tenure is the 'normal condition' for TLM who must apply for time, be granted time and are subject to the time limits imposed by the host state. When visas end, the result can be resignation, as an Indian caregiver explained: 'My time will be up and I will go home.' Or it can be an attempt to stretch the departure date and become a visa overstayer.

For others, the actual time issued by the state is unimportant, as working in Israel is a stepping stone to go where they really want to be. A Filipina caregiver explained that she wanted to go to Canada and it was bureaucratically impossible from the Philippines because there were too many applicants. She was under the impression that if she applied from Israel, it would be easier.

> But in here, if I can already enter in Israel, Israel is an open country. Then you have good, good relation with Canada so I can already cross country.

Time is also perceived as a bridge to the future in Israel. Migrants recognise that the law provides almost no options for permanence. Still, some long for the legal right to remain. They believe that spending time and working in Israel should confer a right to remain (*ius tempus*). Another Filipina caregiver explained:

> I think, Israel, like other countries should, when, should apply the law just like in Canada, if you stay there for two years, you will be an immigrant, in Singapore if you stay in one year you will be an immigrant … in Filipino stay there for fifteen years or twenty years maybe I think maybe I think, I think they deserve to be an immigrant. They already spent most of their time here, and one way or another they already help the families in Israel because they do their labour here!

For those with a normal departure date who are unwilling to leave, becoming a visa overstayer is always an option, albeit a risky and stressful one. One

Filipina caregiver explained how overstaying the visa was complicated and unpleasant.

> It is good to be here in Israel because it is easy to earn money. There is one thing not good, you know, because we are now illegal. So, we are like they are treating us like animals. Before when I was pregnant with my first baby, three months pregnant, my husband took, took (the immigration police) took him. They sent him to the Philippines. I stay here alone. After four years, they bring him back here. I cannot stay here like this.

Migrants recognise their subjecthood, even when they overstay and attempt to stretch their tenure. As a follow-up, we conducted an interview with one of our interview partners from a deportation facility. The respondent, a Filipina caregiver, had overstayed her visa by a decade and was a prominent activist for TLM rights. Despite her long-standing social connections in Israel, she was deported to the Philippines one day after being arrested. She rationalised the state action regardless of the significant harm this will do to her personally.

> I don't have any bad feelings about Israel or the immigration police. They are just doing their jobs. I know that [being in Israel without a visa] is a criminal offence, for being here and being an immigrant. I think there is a reason for everything … They are right to send me back. They want me to go back. I should go back.

Here, rupture is immediate and expected. The TLM knows that this is the state policy, and even though she sought to extend her stay indefinitely, once captured she is resigned to accept the limits on time.

Most research on rupture (as a prelude to return) examines the event as an abstract concept: people are (unexpectedly) removed from their daily lives. Here, using a real-time SMS exchange between a migrant (caregiver and visa overstayer for more than a decade) and our research assistant, we chronicle the very moment when the immigration police demanded entry to her home (shared with other long-term visa overstayers) to take her into custody for deportation.[2]

> 11:33 *Migrant*: we are in [*gives address*] door are stil nocking the door by force me … Someone is on the way right now. tell me if something happens … Pls tel to Hani that the pulis (police) attacking ur rigth now they are not stopping knocking d door.
> 11:38 *RA*: Dont open the door!
> 11:42 *RA*: Are you ok? …
> 11:44 *Migrant*: Yes but they are stil attacking us rigth now they are in the fronth of our door. THANKs IF anything happen i wil tel u if they are distroying the door.
> 11:45 *RA*: Help is on the way. everything will be ok! i'm here for you. be strong they will be there soon.
> 11:50 *Migrant*: We are pinponited by are flatmate name [*redacted*] we r a little bit nervous we are in the room now they are stil in d door.pls tel Hani n tolk to [*longtime migrant*] …
> 11:58 *Migrant*: We conot make a noise they are outside or in d fronth of our door.

its almost 2hrs … [*more back and forth about immigration police banging on the door.*]
12:19 *RA*: They wont break the door. dont open the door until i would say its ok
12:26 *Migrant*: Ok they are there the helper just tel me pls went we opene the dooe please thanks alot may the bless u. They are stil ther i think …
12:33 *Migrant*: We are in d room praying n waiting …
13:13 *RA*: We need you to go out of the window to another appartment or building, can you do that?
[*From this moment, no further contact could be established. The RA came to the office and asked Hani what to do. The RA then contacted a number of prominent Filipinas to get advice and share Migrant's story.*]

RA writes later:

> Tried to call Migrant again and a man answer the phone and said: '[*RA*]?' I hanged up … After 3 days I tried to call Migrant again. She answered me and told me that she was released but that they caught [*another migrant*] and [*that migrant*] decided not to fight and to go back to the Philippines.

This text conversation reveals how time can become a border. The state decision to deport is the erection of a policy-imposed metaphorical border. The offer of time – the visa – is the way into the state and the decision to revoke it is the erection of a border that the migrant (at least legally) cannot traverse. All of this transpires without any input from the migrant – just as abruptly as he gets the decision to approve his visa, he will face the decision to deport him. This is a time-generated border over which he has no control. In both return and deportation, the border closes migration time.

Freedom time

'Freedom time' operates at the opposite end of the spectrum: time opens a border to new identity options and the border (and its crossings) offer new time options. We use the term 'freedom time' to refer to opportunities that come with traversing the geopolitical border. To contextualise, we often think about the disadvantages of labour migration. For example, labour migrants often work under harsh conditions. Their civil rights may not be respected in the host country. They frequently have little protection from unscrupulous employers and employers' families. In Israel, there are special issues. Even when the state offers protection for workers, the numbers of labour inspectors and their ability to follow up on all claims is extremely limited (interview with Department of Labor representative Iris Maayan, 2011). Migrant employment in Israel is tied to visas and work permits. Employees are bound to one specific employer. If the migrant loses his/her registered employment post, after 90 days he/she must secure and register a new position or lose the residency visa and be incarcerated and deported. However, TLM can offer some opportunities. To see this, we need to focus on the sending countries and the context from which these migrants came. Normally, economic conditions are limited

in the sending country. (We know that labour migrants seek economic advantage in the receiving state.) Most labour migrants emigrate from states with precarious access to food, medical care and jobs. Furthermore, these sending states may curtail civil rights for their citizens, including freedom of expression and/or assembly. The home countries may be rife with state-sponsored and everyday street violence and corruption. Our research partners recounted experiences comparing life in their home countries with life in Israel. Although they sometimes decried the experiences they had had with their employers in Israel, they also noted that there were time-based advantages to being in Israel. For example, one interviewee from Ghana explained that he had four children in Israel and two others in his home country. He worried about the physical safety of his children in the home country, but not about his children in Israel. The Israel-based children had reacquired parts of the day that had been denied to his children in his home country by violence. In the home country, it was unsafe for children to be out after dark. In Israel, it is normal for children to be outside the house during the evenings and even at night. Children in Israel enjoy freedom of movement and assembly and parts of the day that simply did not exist for his children in Ghana. As a parent, he did not worry about them being on the street after dark, as he had done when in Ghana. By being in Israel, these TLM had regained lost parts of the clock and were freed from this time border. Labour migration provided a 'freedom' that was denied them in the home country.

> My children are out late at night … You know how the Israeli kids are, out at 2, 3 in the night. You can't do that at home. You can't be out then. It's too dangerous ... People shooting on the street. It's just too dangerous … I don't worry about them at all here in Israel at night. Not at all … not at all.

In this view, time to a TLM is not only a general concept related to the state-granted visa, but also a change and improvement in daily life. Although there are constraints in the long term, there is an increase in their freedom time in daily life.

Ironically, this form of migrant freedom time is juxtaposed in an inverse way with a native 'constraint time'. That is, while migrants describe improved living standards and increased freedom in Israel, their native counterparts often describe an equal offsetting loss of freedom as a result of the arrival of the migrants. Natives complain vociferously about foreigners, being shut in their homes, afraid to negotiate the streets, especially at night or when they are alone. This generates two opposing and competing timescapes: for migrants, this new timescape opens the clock borders and allows freedom of movement; for the local population, their own fear, hostility and xenophobia narrow their time and restrict their geographical, spatial borders, curtailing their movement and the time they feel they can spend outside, in public. The clash over access to freedom time can lead to resentment, public unrest and local demands to deport the migrants under the call for public safety (Sheen 2011; Hovel 2014). This sentiment within the local population is accompanied by a sense of closure, an erection of borders both geophysical and temporal, and a

sense of a ghetto community emerges. Areas that are 'declared' migrant-dominated are deemed as unsafe or unwelcoming for the native population. With the arrival of migrants, locals perceive their neighbourhoods with foreboding, as dangerous and no longer navigable in the evenings. Darkness is associated with closure. This perception of change disproportionately affects women. Community groups and the media report gender-related sexual harassment (assault, rape, etc.) through the prism of migrant male offenders and local women victims (see Kubovich 2012, 2013). This new apprehension turns the hours after dark into a taboo time for women (see Derfner 2012; Jeffay 2012) and results in demonstrations by locals (see Figure 5.1) and in violence towards foreigners. Locals try to reborder the areas where they had been dominant in an attempt to regain the time and spaces perceived to have been taken from them in the new bordering process associated with the arrival of the migrants.

　　TLM freedom time has other positive gendered borders as well. For many female TLM, time abroad can be a transformative experience. For some, their position in the family or community was subservient and limited by a culturally dictated, patriarchal hierarchy. When abroad, women can become decision makers, drawing up their own schedules (within the limitations of their employment contract or, like everyone, their working conditions). They gain agency in the use of times of the day

5.1　A protest by residents of southern Tel Aviv against the Israeli High Court of Justice's ruling to override the law allowing incarceration of migrants for up to three years. (The sign reads: 'Supreme Court Judges, we [the Israeli residents of southern Tel Aviv] are detained without trial for more than five years!!!)'

and personal time to come and go as they please. These modes of decision making and control of time may be closed to women in their home country. (We note that this may also be true for lower family-status males like third and fourth sons or children from second or subsequent wives.) A Nepalese caregiver explained how she and her colleagues generated opportunities that would never have existed in her home country.

> If we were home, we would never go out. Here, we go to work but then we go to our friends' houses. We stay overnight. We even have an apartment for all of us to share to make parties and just to eat food and rest on the weekends. We could never do that at home. We decide our time.

Still others take this new time away to form relationships that would not have been possible before. For some, that means building friendships with people from other ethnicities/nationalities or classes than their own. Some break from tradition and marry outside their ethnic, national, religious or racial group. Some use the opportunity to experiment with their sexual orientation, something that would have been almost impossible in their home country. Some marry an Israeli, whether to secure status or for love. This phenomenon has a significant impact on the idea of Israel as a homeland for the Jews. Some Israelis worry that such intermarriage could eventually make Israel less Jewish, and threaten the Jewishness of Israel and its reason for being. It also has implications for the state's ability to manage migrants' time in Israel, effectively weakening the state's control over who can be in the state at any time. Once a migrant (who is legally a foreigner) marries an Israeli citizen, the migrant's legal status shifts and is now covered by laws of family integrity. The clock starts again and the former migrant (after much bureaucratic status adjustment) has a claim to remain in the country. If the couple has a child, that child is eligible for Israeli citizenship. This changes state control over migrant time. It also enables the migrant to bring other family members from their home country and thus alter the entire liminal aspect of the state control. A long-time Filipina migrant explained how marriage to an Israeli changed her life trajectory and offered stability to her son (after much bureaucratic wrangling.) She further noted that after settling in Israel, she was able to help her sisters to come as well.

> When I came to Israel I never thought that I would stay here 20 years – I thought I would get married in the Philippines. Look at me today I am married to an Israeli … After I made it, I invited my sisters here. [My son] was born here and he has a citizenship, a few months ago he got it. Only now when he is 10 years old! The decision came from the Israeli court system, they would not give the child a passport so [my husband] decided to take the best lawyer money can buy and they went to court … And they made the government give [my son] a passport.

For many migrants, coming to a new country means discovering time and physical freedom. Although their work and attempts to make money to send home may take up most of their waking time, it appears that they are also freed from certain

kinds of fear and are able to rescue lost time from the clock. The lack of violence on the streets creates a time freedom that in their home country seemed impossible. Moreover, migration can enable female migrants to establish agency and restructure the power relationship in their favour. And, finally, through this newly found freedom time, migrants form families with rights to remain in Israel indefinitely, further reducing the ability of the state to determine their timescapes.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter we have presented labour migrants' experiences with time and borders. Building on the extant literature, we showed how various time experiences create time borders for TLM. These concepts of time relate to the migrants' condition of being abroad – immigrants, emigrants and subjects of the receiving state. Temporary labour migrants are different from immigrants. Immigrants are expected to adjust and become permanent residents or citizens. In contrast, the tenure of TLM is delimited by the state and state institutions. TLM must consequently conduct their lives knowing that time is borrowed and limited. Whether a migrant returns to the sending country or remains in the receiving state, timescapes and understandings of time change, and in some cases diverge and/or converge with the timescapes of the local inhabitants and significantly affect them. As a result of their (im)migrant status, migrants traverse multiple borders – political, social, biological and cultural – all of which are related to time. Each of these border crossings affects their migrant experience.

We have introduced new conceptions of migration time based on our work with migrants in Israel: 'migration time', 'freedom time' and 'rupture time'. The first, 'migration time', sets aside migration as a special experience that all migrants have, different from everyday life. 'Freedom time' is, we believe, the first instance in the literature that an examination of time and migration is perceived to be an opening of a border, an expansion of time, for migrants. However, while this timescape is a liberating experience for some TLM, when juxtaposed with the locals' timescapes it constrains the geophysical environment. This is a significant aspect of the meaning of time and affects the potential for immigrant incorporation.

By contrast, rupture time is experienced by almost all migrants, whether permanent or temporary, and marks the power of the state at the time-border to demand submission from the migrants and acceptance of state bureaucratic decisions. This is especially pertinent for TLM as the limits and extent of their time is demarcated by the state at the very moment of entry. The fear of deportation is a fear of a real state-imposed time and space border. For those with tenuous residency rights, like TLM, especially in a state like Israel where there is little ability to adjust migration status to permanent status, return is a normal part of the migrant experience. Knowing that the visa and new way of life will end is nonetheless disruptive and potentially traumatic. Migrants are subjected to the arbitrary imposition of a border

and the anticipated fear of that imposition. In Israel, this reality surfaces during times of social unrest because of the conflicts with the local community.

These fundamentally different and in some cases contradictory conceptions of time and timescapes have significant implications for immigrant incorporation, immigrant exclusion and TLM policies. These intersections create possibilities, new limits and new geophysical timescapes. How does a government ease transition or develop a plan for transition, even if these are made legally possible? What does it mean for democracy and normal democratic behaviour of local civic and political engagement if 'strangers' have been sharing space but not time for decades? If adjustment of status is not an option – as it is not in many ethnic states – what does it mean for migrants when their time has run out? What happens when migrants use alternate timescapes to contest their own liminal existence? Migrants may inhabit or imagine or live alternative/parallel timescapes, but they also live in real communities with other migrants and natives alike. Reimagining time will be a critical issue for immigrant incorporation of TLM who, in some cases, have become *de facto* permanent residents.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1 We recruited interviewees through open announcements at community-based organisations and by distributing advertisements in churches and the central bus station (places known to have many migrants). The interviews followed approved protocols with human subjects. Interviews lasted one hour and were transcribed, coded and analysed using standard procedures for qualitative research. All interviewees gave their consent for their interview material to be used in published material.

2 The text is presented as it was written using SMS spellings, misspellings and typos. We have purposely left the dialogue unedited.

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