Is there "Black Panther" Movement in Israel? Protests of Ethiopian Jews - Sources of Conflict and Policy Implications

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Abstract: The migration of various ethnic groups creates a challenge for policymakers in general and civil society in particular. The concerns, as well as maintaining the status quo, could present obstacles in creating a homogenous and equitable civil society. As an immigrant-absorbing state, Israel is challenged both socially and economically in these realms. The Melting Pot concept was one of Israel's founding blocks since the 1950's fail. Has it failed? Is there truth to the protesters' allegations of institutionalized racism? In light of the demonstrations and accusations of racism in Israeli society, what changes should be set in motion?

INTRODUCTION

Using violence to achieve one's goals has been part of human society since Biblical stories of Cain and Abel in the book of Genesis:

- "Behold, the wicked, the sheep, and the right, the land of the slave." (Genesis 4: 2).

But Cain was less successful than his brother, and therefore grew angry:

- "Well, there is no rest, no time; it must be very clean, and it will fall off its face." (Genesis 4, verse e.)

Eventually, Cain's jealousy overpowered him, and, in his anger and frustration, he killed his brother Abel.

The Biblical story may not be an academic source of violence and perception, but its principles demonstrate that violence is an ancient phenomenon. Thomas Hobbes (Hobbes, 1651), in his book *Leviathan* eloquently portrayed this human trait: "Man to man is an errant wolf." (Hobbes, 1651). Hobbes reinforced the premise that people may exhibit harmony and reconciliation, but differences of opinion bring struggles and violence.

In order to maintain domestic and foreign security, legislation to prevent and punish the use of violence is in the best interests of a democratic sovereign state. A normative, democratic view holds that internal security forces in the field (i.e., police and others) are protected by law and are responsible for ensuring civilian security (upheld by court decisions and regulations--Israel Police, 2013). Therefore, to ensure the security of its citizens, violence and the exercise of power must be justified and supervised to conserve order in society. Any other use of force, whether illegal or justified, is an offence. The result is that a normative framework of laws and practices defines violence as illegal and violates the individual's right to security.

The present case examines a group of Ethiopian Jews (Beta Israel) in Israel. Important to note that the immigration of Ethiopian Jews to Israel is characterized as a clash between two very different cultures (Edelstein, 2001). Furthermore, the integration of the two cultures created an acute identity crisis, characterized by difficulties in adaptation and alienation (Kozminsky, Cloire, 2010).

Over the past few years, various interest groups claimed that police officers in Israel showed discrimination against various minority groups in Israeli society resulting in illegal violence (Society for Civil Liberties, 2019). Many scholars argue that racial prejudice motivated this violence (1979, Turner & Tajfel).

Allegations of discrimination and violence are serious accusations, especially in a Jewish and liberal democratic state, and necessitate careful examination with empirical and qualitative studies. In addition, case analysis of discrimination or violence requires a precise methodology and theoretical definition.

The current researcher aims to examine two main issues:

1. Existence of racism towards Ethiopian Jews who have immigrated to Israel. For this purposes of this study, empirical and theoretical material will be analyzed to measure previous research in the field.

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2.   Justification for social protests by Ethiopian Jews in Israel

Since this study will focus on the issues of racial and violence, the research will concentrate on measures undertaken by the government between 2015 to 2018.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Background - Identity and Racism

Social psychology presents racism largely as a natural product and, in many instances, a sought-after trait of intergroup relationships. Human history is replete with phenomena of non-acceptance and violent expression, with racism manifested in hatred and violence of one group against another and characterized by associating people with different biological origins. The study of races has been widely expressed in the previous century, and even pseudoscience theories have been developed (a prominent example is Eugenics) (Levi Strauss, 2006). Psychological and anthropological perceptions imply a fear of the other as an evolutionary process, probably meant to contain a limited community and avoid the entry of others into it.

Fear of the other

Sociologists believe that because a person has access to a distinct part of the world, he maintains a positive self-similarity. These perceptions, predominantly based on external or other class distinctions, foster group identity, e.g., "us" versus "them", and a preference for one or the other. Researchers claim that if a community perceives a threat to its values, institutions or culture, a hostile perception toward other groups may develop (2000, Stephan & Stephan) (Haslam, 2006).

The Ethiopian immigrants in Israel created a community vastly different from the long-time Israeli populace, resulting in an inevitable categorization of "us" (veteran population) versus "them" (Ethiopian Jews).

Additionally, there exists a natural tendency to attribute human traits to an "internal" group and to exclude them from the "external" group. The members of the internal group share similar feelings such as hope, jealousy, love, etc. while the external group is devoid of its humanity with its negative and simplistic stereotypes (Haslam, 2006). Various other theories and perceptions explain the existence of discrimination and racism.

System Justification Theory

According to this theory, there is a belief that the status quo preserves the social status of the community of veterans, which sees inequality as necessary and natural. This fosters negative stereotypes towards those who try to change it.

Theory of Social Dominance

The theory of social dominance focuses on understanding and maintaining non-inequality among hierarchical groups and creating myths to preserve the status quo. These myths usually target the weaker groups in society.

Theories of Police Violence

The police department exists to enforce the laws and eliminate violence and crime. Various laws and regulations determine the boundaries of these powers (Police Ordinance, 1971; Haaretz, Aug 19, 2019; Ben-David, 2014). Therefore, the use of force by the police is conceivably legal, but problems arise when it is done illegally, in excess or in a way that goes unnoticed. These are indications of police violence.

Most notably, John Kissy's research revealed that police violence against immigrant groups is widespread in most countries of the world, usually explained by the perceptions that society considers immigrants and ethnic minority groups as threats to economic or social situations. However, as this is not a firm policy of either society or state, but often based on prejudices, it is open to interpretation by minority groups. (Police and Society, 2003)

In summary, the current chapter presents the theories related to the non-acceptance of the other group through the creation of negative stigmatization and social stagnation that may create police violence. Expressed through demonization, these perceptions of the inferiority of the other are often the basis for the exercise of excessive powers of authority or governmental mechanisms. The theories presented in this chapter portray the root of this phenomenon and some of its expressions.

Beta Israel Community

This chapter will present information about the historical development of the Ethiopian Jewish

community and review interactions between the Ethiopian Jewish community and European Jewry, including subsequent immigration to Israel and the initial difficulties.

Anthropological and historical scholars disagree on the origins of Ethiopian Jews. There are claims that Beta Israel descended from the tribe of Dan, one of the ten northern tribes that disappeared from history after the Assyrian conquest of the kingdom of Israel in 721 BC. Or that community members were converted in the first centuries A.D or that the Beta Israel community consists of Jewish immigrants from different Arab countries (Egypt and others) who integrated with the local population. Scholars claim that the community began to form as early as the First Temple during the time of King Solomon when Jews emigrated from the Kingdom of Israel to Africa (Kush). Other scholars contend that the community hails from a later period (Second Temple). Others even claim that the community formed in the late sixth century during the war between the Ethiopian Christian Caleb and the King of Southern Arabia. Other scholars claim that the formation of Beta Israel takes place in the 15th century.

Archaeological findings provide evidence of a strong influence of ancient Jewish culture on Christian concepts (Kaplan, 1987, p. 36). However, many findings prove that among Christian populations and not Beta Israel, there is actually a closer (and sometimes even greater) connection to Jewish traditions expressed in Sabbath observance and Jewish New Year's celebration (Rosh Hashana), etc. (Kaplan, 1987, p. 42).

In terms of community characteristics, Beta Israel lived in many villages over 150,000 square kilometres (Abbink, 1984). This dispersal characterized the community itself. Research has shown that Beta Israel is typically a mobile community that moves around for communication and wandering. Hagar Salmon's study illustrated the issue of mobility in the Ethiopian community, characterized by many crossings, such as trade, agricultural work and visiting new holy places, etc. (Salmon, 1993). The concept of roaming among places characterizes the Beta Israel community, which assembled as a result of wandering and mutual visits. These journeys also have an affinity for religion:

"If we go on the road together with Christians and come Saturday, we do not continue. On Friday afternoons, they make wheat with water and also give the horse a meal and prepare food for us before the Sabbath comes. We sit on the roadside. If the Gentiles want to wait with us, they wait. If they don't want to, they'll keep going, and we'll stay." "You never have one Jew with Gentiles, always a few, at least three, but many times more" (Salmon, 1993, p. 116).

These chapters emphasize the roaming nature of Beta Israel, as a tradition and means of communication within the region. The Beta Israel community was dynamic and characterized by a constant movement that maintained social connections. The nature of the community and its roots can be identified as they made their way to Israel.

The yearning of Ethiopian Jews towards Eretz Israel (Land of Israel) is recognized in many perceptions and sources. The first and most famous stories of immigration were in 1862 when Father Mahari (Beta Israel leader) tried to bring a large group of Beta Israel back to the Promised Land. The journey was unsuccessful, but this hope remained deep in the hearts of Beta Israel as a memory. (Israeli, 2015)

Relationship between Beta Israel and World Jewry

The Beta Israel community was almost completely cut off from the rest of the Jewish world. The initial awareness resulted from the influx of European colonialists and Christian missionaries to the African continent. Christian missionaries alerted the global Jewish community to the existence of a Jewish-Ethiopian community. Among the first activists was Jacob Feitlowitz, who visited the Beta Israel community in 1904-1905 (Shamai, 2002), which led to a renewed communication between Beta Israel and European Diaspora Jewry (Shamai, 2002).

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia (1935-1936), halted this connection broke down, and all activity ceased. Once the Italians were pushed out, and Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was installed (1892-1975), the relations between Jews and local authorities improved, and Beta Israel reconnected with world Jewry. In the mid-1950s, a group of 24 Ethiopian students enrolled at "Kfar Batya" Youth Village in Israel so they could educate others back home on Jewish and Israeli history, customs and culture. While several Ethiopian Jews immigrated to Israel in 1958, the Jewish Agency ceased is operations in Ethiopia due to government opposition.

In 1978 Rabbi Ovadia Yosef (1920-2013), Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel published a historical

opinion that recognized the Beta Israel community as part of Orthodox Judaism and called upon Israel to bring them to Israel.

Immigration of Ethiopian Jews to Israel

This recognition of Ethiopian Jewry initiated a movement to bring the community to Israel. This began an incredibly difficult journey for most as they left their villages and walked for weeks and months to reach the capital, Addis Ababa. Many died along the way due to the treacherous terrain and the resistance of the Sudanese authorities. The poem *The Journey to Israel* (Haim Idisis, 1959) described the complexity and anxiety, but also their hope and faith in Judaism and the mission.

Following the revolt in Ethiopia (1975) and the rise of the Communist Party, the plight of the Ethiopian Jews worsened and spurred many Ethiopian Jews to set out by foot through Sudan to make their way to Israel. The Israeli government expanded its funding, exerted pressure on the Sudanese government, and supplied ships to transport them via the Red Sea to Israeli shores. During the years 1975-1981, some 2,000 Ethiopian Jews arrived in Israel.

Three years later, 16,000 Ethiopian Jews flew to Israel via Europe in *Operation Moses* (Nov 21, 1984 – Jan 5, 1985). This operation was fraught with difficulties, dangers, losses in human life, and the disintegration of families.

After international pressure from the United States and Israel (including payment of $40 million ransom to Ethiopian authorities), the State of Israel launched the covert *Operation Solomon* in May 1991. Thirty-six airplanes flew to Addis Ababa and brought over 20,000 Jews to Israel.

From the year 2000 until the present, the rate of immigration has varied from hundreds to 3,500 persons per year.

Altogether, 35,000 Ethiopian Jews have immigrated to Israel. Sadly, nearly a fifth of the Beta Israel community lost their lives along the way due to the difficulties of immigration, famine, and dangers they encountered.

Beta Israel Today

Today, the community of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel is approximately 148,700-- 87,000 Ethiopian-

born and 61,000 Israeli-born. Data shows that approximately 60 percent of the Ethiopian population lives in two either central or southern Israel. The city of Netanya (in the center of the country) has the highest number of Ethiopian citizens (about 111,000), while the Ethiopian community in Kiryat Malachi in southern Israel comprises a significant percentage of that city's population (16.5% percent). (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018). In terms of population heterogeneity, according to the Bureau's statistics and other reports, about 89 percent of all marriages were between members of the community.

The proportion of participants in the labor force aged 25-60 among Ethiopian immigrants, is on the rise, from 65 percent in 200, to 72 percent in 2005 and 86 percent in 2008. However, the employment rate among Ethiopian immigrants is lower than the entire Jewish population. (Dayan, 2014) Additional findings indicate wage differences of approximately 1,800 NIS in favor of the veteran Jewish population. (Dayan, 2014)

To understand the gaps, and in light of the research questions, the wage differentials can be attributed to education. Field research conducted by the Taub Center highlighted various reasons for this. Firstly, there is a difference between Jews of Ethiopian immigrants (those who immigrated after the age of 12) and those who immigrated at a younger age or were born in Israel. In general, the population of Ethiopian origin has a poorer educational level compared to others in the Jewish population. Among Ethiopian students, the proportion of those eligible for a high school diploma is 54 percent of all 2012 graduates compared with 73 percent of all Jewish veterans. The rate of matriculation among Ethiopian immigrants was 56 percent compared with 84 percent of the general population. Gaps in education are also evident in the proportion of academic degrees. The rate of Ethiopian immigrants with a college degree who were born or who immigrated to Israel at an early age is approximately 20 percent compared to over 40 percent in the local Jewish population.

This data showed a significant gap between the Ethiopian community and that of the general population. In light of education-level gaps, there were also wage differentials. Data indicated that Ethiopian immigrants educated in Israel earn more compared to those who immigrated at an older age, although there existed gaps between them and the rest of the Jewish population. In looking at salaries of academics of Ethiopian origin, despite their inclusion in the upper tier

of the labor market, their income was relatively lower when compared to other employed persons in the category. (Taub, 2015) The general picture of Ethiopian-Israeli employment in Israel was positive and indicated a steady improvement in employment conditions and in education. However, there was an evident trend in the wage gaps between Ethiopian Jews and the general population.

Absorption of Ethiopian Jews in Israel - Initial Difficulties

For several reasons, the absorption of Ethiopian immigrants into Israeli society was complicated by many difficulties—

a)   Immigrant absorption centers that intended for temporary shelter became permanent residencies. Over time, there was significant poverty and misery reminiscent of a low-income slum neighborhood.

b)   Government plan to house immigrants in various cities failed, and most of the immigrants settled in a small number of cities with poor economic opportunities.

The Ethiopian community had many problems adapting to the laws and conventions of the Israeli culture and encountered cultural differences across the board--in the absorption process, society norms, culture, family, economic and religious values, etc. In essence, the Ethiopian community experienced a breakdown of their long-held traditions and practices over countless generations, which created a growing sense of miscommunication and frustration. The family support system that was the cornerstone for community members collapsed due to living apart from each other in different areas (Boston, 2008) (Ettinger, 2001). These difficulties mainly rose from interactions with secular Jews, different food and climate, family structure, and the status of women and men in particular. In addition to these challenges, there were economic difficulties and slow integration into the labor market.

Many issues experienced by the Beta Israel community have added to the gaps created between generations. The younger generation born in Israel rebelled against the authority of their parents, which caused their parents to feel insecure and often dependent on the younger generation. As a result, "role reversal" ensued, which caused problems in the family where traditions were undermined (Boston, 2008).

In summary, the integration of Ethiopian immigrants into Israeli society was difficult and complicated, with economic, social, and political ramifications.

The current chapter was dedicated to presenting the Ethiopian community and the general trends and employment in Israel. Immigration from Ethiopia was characterized by many difficulties, particularly in the transition with loss of life and myriad of dangers (Shamai, 2002). In addition, the adjustment problems of Ethiopian immigrants were exacerbated since many had lived in rural areas with vastly different traditions from the Western-Urban culture that prevailed in Israel during the 1980s and 1990s. In addition, there has been questioning and speculation by certain factions in regards to the Jewishness of the members of the community. All of these issues caused an open wound and negatively stigmatized members of the Ethiopian community.

Applied Section

The current chapter will cover significant instances of racial incidents against Ethiopian immigrants, including police violence that led to the 2015 protests and measures taken by the government to rectify the situation.

On a basic level, seeing a black person as lower on the social scale is a common stereotype against Ethiopian immigrants, which can then lead one to justify society's behavior related to distorted beliefs of occupational ability and career development.

Racism Cases

The issue of racism and discrimination had early roots that led to the questioning of Ethiopian Jewishness. Despite this social and religious stigma, there was a claim that racism toward Ethiopian immigrants was based on their very different appearance as opposed to the veteran population in Israel. Ethiopian skin color created an image of "different" that was accompanied by recent racial stereotypes (Haslam, 2006).

It is important to note that discriminatory attitudes toward Ethiopian immigrants are not limited only to them, explained Dr. Orit Ikthuyali, a historian of the country's early years who studied immigration from North Africa, including Jews from Yemen who were perceived as naive and undeveloped, "They were introduced as "Arab Jews", not harmful, but nice." Dr. Shubley reinforced her claim and wrote, "It was an

image of a man who did not stand for himself, a kind of pet who says thank you for everything that is given to him." She continued, "The first stigmas started with the Yemenite Jews that later moved to Ethiopian Jews." (Network 13, 11.02.18) Today, this stigma is predominant in the concept of the Ethiopian Jewish communities.

Additionally, cases of discrimination were prevalent in the media.

Case #1: "Depo Provera" Contraceptive for Ethiopian Women

In 2008, *Yedioth Ahronoth* newspaper published reports that Ethiopian women were prescribed contraceptives to prevent pregnancy without their consent and with no explanations of possible side effects. Recent U.S. studies into Depo Provera revealed that some of the women who used this medication suffered from serious illnesses, such as cancer, clinical depression, and suicidal tendencies (Eyal, 2009).

Later and following additional studies, it was revealed that contraception to prevent pregnancies of Ethiopian women was mandated by the Ministry of Health policy. Further investigation showed that Ethiopian women were "persuaded" to take birth control as a condition of their arrival in Israel. In the RA's Ethics Committee, it was felt that the sweeping use of Depo Provera among Ethiopian women raised serious concerns that this is a policy that reflected an ethnocentric, if not racist, bias.

Many doctors have stated that using this specific drug as a contraceptive was not recommended and should only be given in exceptional cases with the patient's consent. It could also be argued that the use of the contraceptive drug significantly reduced fertility and birth rates among Ethiopian women during 2008-2011 (Ziv, 2016). Using such drugs for the purpose of "preventing" births in the Ethiopian community was a health injury to Ethiopian women (Eyal, 2009).

Case #2: Ethnic Separation in Maternity Wards

Beginning in the year 2000, articles on maternity separation were published that highlighted an internal policy in some hospitals of ethnic segregation. In 2006, such a report appeared in the *Haaretz* newspaper, in which the two hospitals, Rebecca Ziv and the Western Galilee, were featured. In February 2012, the *Maariv* newspaper exposed this discrimination at Meir Hospital in Kfar Saba and Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva. To

understand how prevalent this phenomenon was, the organization "Doctors for Human Rights" researched the issue by having a presumptive pregnant woman telephone these hospitals and request to speak with their maternity wards--Soroka (Be'er Sheva), Meir (Kfar Saba), Carmel (Haifa) and Hillel Yaffe (Hadera). During the phone calls, the question was posed if the hospital's maternity ward separated patients based on ethnicity and/or the mother's request. In all of the aforementioned hospitals, the reply was that the words "try" to separate patients of different backgrounds.

When the study's results were published, the Israel Ethics Committee and its board members sent letters to the hospitals demanding adherence to a policy of non-discrimination. (Ziv, 2016).

Case #3: Blood Donation Affair

In January 1996, it became public knowledge that blood donations from members of the Ethiopian community were being discarded due to concerns that they may be infected with the HIV virus (prevalent at that time). The explanation that supposedly justified this practice asserted that during a three-month period ("window") that the blood would be available for transfusions, the presence of an HIV infection might be discovered. This scandal sparked a wide public discourse that was more about the conduct to the community. If the decision-makers had decided not to use the blood, then why did they not say that? Gadi Jibrakan, a member of the Ethiopian community from Rehovot, discussed the issue: "We fight and die in the military, go to the university, but that's not enough. It is not acceptable for a person to donate blood to help another person to save human life. He sits, a needle enters his body, a considerable amount of blood comes out of his body, and as soon as he turns his head, his blood is thrown into the bin. "(YNET, Oct. 31, 2006)

The state agreed and, after heated demonstrations, appointed a blood donation committee headed by Yitzhak Navon. After discussion, this committee presented its conclusions: "Disposing of the blood pack was done for purely professional-medical motives, according to a World Health Organization and Blood Services Global Policy. All countries south of the Sahara on the African continent are HIV-endemic, and there are no blood donations from members of those countries. Ethiopia is one of them." If there were a fault, the report stated, it would have been the attempt to hide this information from the public." (Haaretz, January 25, 1996).

As a result, the Health Ministry and Magen David Adom set clear guidelines related to blood donations: Anyone born or has lived over a year since 1977 in a country where HIV is prevalent including Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, will not be given blood donations and donations from these individuals will not be used.

President Yitzhak Navon summarized the committee's findings that this was a public health issue and not an intent to harm the Ethiopian community. The committee's conclusions did not bring about the fusion or treatment of social problems. (Ziv, 2016)

Case #4: Separation in the Educational System

In recent years, there was considerable evidence of discrimination and racism in the Israeli educational system. Findings showed that there were 47 schools where Ethiopian students accounted for almost 50 percent of the total school population. However, the percentage of the Ethiopian population in Israel was about 2 percent. The Ministry of Education long refused to reveal the full list of schools with high concentrations of Ethiopians. There was also evidence that Ethiopian students learned in segregated classrooms and not with the rest of the population. (Haaretz, 08.05.15)

Empirical findings confirm the study's claim:

Table 1: Educational Institutions that Account for more than 59% of all Ethiopian Students

A number of Ethiopian students	A number of Institutions	Percentage of Ethiopian students
926	4	100%-90%
329	2	90%-80%
801	5	80%-70%
895	7	70%-60%
140	7	60%-50%
1,765	17	50%-40%
4,039	38	40%-30%
13,056	260	30%-10%
22,610	340	

(Koch Davidovich, 2011).

The data in the table indicated that there was a concentration of Ethiopian students (which is about 1 percent of all students) in specific schools (Koch Davidowitz, 2011). In the past, the Ministry of Education implemented different programs for Ethiopian immigrants, such as the National Project for the Absorption of Ethiopian Jews and the PACT Program. The goals set out in these programs were the promotion and integration of Ethiopian immigrants into the Israeli education system, but in fact, these were not followed. Evaluations of these programs, as well as a State Comptroller's report, indicated that many failures are functional and economical, which would indicate that these systems failed to meet their goals. (Peled, 2016).

Police Violence

In the previous section, cases were featured to illustrate the existence of discrimination. These phenomena indicate a trend of segregation and the exercise of "over-authority" while violating rights. The current chapter will focus on police violence against Ethiopian communities in Israel.

The issue of exercising police power in the law, Criminal Procedure Enforcement Powers - Detention Law 1996, dealt with and dictated a list of rules governing the issues of the apprehension and detention of civilians if a policeman has reasonable grounds to fear that the person was endangering the safety of another person (Criminal Procedure Law, 1996). Another law called Public Security Powers, 2005 laid down rules on the subject of stalking. The overpowering goal of the governing institutions was to act in accordance with the law for the preservation of civil order based on democratic and liberal approaches. This law focused on privacy, but in practice, provided a loophole for action against minority groups. (Peled, Ben Artzi *et al*., 2017).

Violence against minority groups or groups of immigrants often appears in different places and cultures. Black men, especially those living in slums, are common victims of police investigations. According to U.S. studies, use of force by police is not randomly executed for everyone, but rather concentrated in neighborhoods where there is a high percentage of African Americans or Hispanics, i.e., that the police often uses the deadliest force in the most populous cities and those with the highest homicide rates. Moreover, studies have found a correlation between a police officer's race and the use of force. However, many studies in the field do not prove that U.S. police activity was racist and directed against African Americans (McGinley, 2016). This phenomenon has both anthropological and social explanations (2000, Stephan & Stephan; Police and Society, 2003). The starting point in assessing the issue of police relations

towards ethnic minorities is an analysis of the relationships between the State and its minority communities. The question is whether the state welcomes those who are different then the majority or, conversely, sees them as a threat to control, cultural homogeneity, and the economic welfare of the majority group in society.

Studies relating to the Israeli public's confidence with the police revealed that roughly 15 percent indicated they were mostly or very satisfied with the functioning of the Israeli police. Half of the interviewees stated they were dissatisfied with the police, with a third not expressing an unequivocal position.

Data in this field indicated that the number of Ethiopian complainants was 2.4 percent of all referrals, higher than the proportion of Ethiopian immigrants in the population.

Additional data indicated that concerning the cases investigated,

- Approx. 22 percent of charges of criminal acts related to Ethiopian immigrants ended with a criminal prosecution or a recommendation by the police to bring disciplinary proceedings against the police, compared to about 28 percent of all cases;

- Approx. 22 percent of cases related to Ethiopian immigrants on the grounds of guilt, compared to about 18 percent of all cases;

- Approx. 32 percent of cases related to Ethiopian immigrants did not find sufficient evidence for the prosecution, compared to about 34 percent of all cases

(Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Committee, 2016) (Casualty Survey Offense, 2014)

In general, direct contact between minority and violent groups can be inferred. According to Prof. Ben-Porat from Ben-Gurion University in the Negev, Ethiopian and Arab minority groups suffer from a higher level of police violence than the rest of the Israeli population (Maariv, 23/10/2018).

Violence

Case #1: Joseph Salmasa's Death

Joseph Salmasa, a young Ethiopian man, was arrested in Binyamina on March 1, 2014, on suspicion of burglary and assault of police officers. During the arrest, he was shot. After his arrest, the police officers decided not to investigate, but to release and subsequently interrogate him. Joseph was released at 9:05 p.m. A friend who arrived to pick him up found his body bound and unconscious outside the police station. He took the young man to the hospital, where he received treatment and was released. (News 13, 29.02.2016).

Afterward, Joseph's mental state deteriorated--he stopped leaving the house, was depressed and in disbelief about his surroundings. In July 2014, Salmassa's body was found in a quarry in the Binyamina area. The investigation determined that there was no suspicion of a criminal act. The police ruled his death a suicide since there wasn't any involvement of a third party, and all the laws and procedures were properly followed. A subsequent investigation resulted in charges against the police officers who were involved in the case for disciplinary and non-criminal offenses. (State Audit Committee, 2016). From complaints filed by his family, It is important to note that the young man had worried about being killed by the police.

Case #2--IDF officer Damas Pikeda

On April 26, 2015, a video was screened of a soldier, Damas Pikeda, holding a rock and a police officer beating an Ethiopian soldier in uniform (YNET, April 27, 2015). Riots broke out after the video was posted on social media. The community of Ethiopian Jews accused the police of racism and non-proportionate force. According to claims from witnesses: "After the policeman repeatedly asked the soldier to leave the area because there was a suspicious object nearby, the soldier refused to move and subsequently pushed the policeman. In response, the policeman exerted force to restrict the soldier from the area. Next, the soldier punched the policeman, who then punched the soldier. As a result, two police officers took control of the soldier and chained him, despite his resistance."(YNET, 14.06.15).

Attorney-General Yehuda Weinstein ordered the case closed against the policeman. "In view of the foregoing, the totality of the circumstances justifies the consideration of disciplinary treatment by a police officer and not criminal prosecution. In addition, the police officer has already been dismissed from his position in the police, and this should also discard the public interest in prosecuting him. The soldier's sect." (Shabbat Square, June 14, 15)

IDF officer Damas Pikeda pointed out that there is a perceptual problem of the relationship of the towards the Ethiopian community. Arguments on both sides attested to the fact of a great deal of disagreement and frustration on both sides.

Case #3: Story of a Young Man Arrested on the Street for Fear of Belonging to a Gang

The young man testified that the police "marked" him as problematic and stigmatized him since he was Ethiopian and associated with criminal elements.

"It is not easy to have such an experience that others are attacking us, spraying us. What and why? We didn't do anything; it's all stigmas here. The police always come to a bunch of Ethiopians, suspecting that we are criminals. Just last night, I was released, humiliated, and in pain. I'm discouraged by this; it's not the first time police arrive and honestly suspect we did something. "(Peled, Ben Artzi and others, 2017)

Case #4: Assault Against a Citizen of Ethiopian Origin

An incident of assault took place in Rishon Le Zion. Lior, an Ethiopian young man, was walking his dog when he was arrested by city officials who wanted him to identify himself. They claimed he stole the watchdog. After the dog panicked and fled, the young man started chasing her, and the police, in response, attacked him (Peled, Ben Artzi, and others, 2017).

In the incident, police were seen beating the young man as he tried to run from them. There was extensive information available on many websites, as well as various videos presenting the issue of police violence against Ethiopian immigrants in Israel (Ethiopian Jews Association, 2019).

The current chapter featured events of violence and racism towards Ethiopian Jews in Israel. These events illustrated the phenomenon of discrimination that existed in society. The use of police force described the oppression and distrust of community members.

Protests in 2015

These events started a chain of events that led to demonstrations in Jerusalem on April 30, 2015, and in Tel Aviv on May 3, 2015, when the Ethiopian community gathered to protest the treatment by the police towards Ethiopians and also in the context of the previous events (contraceptive measures against Ethiopian women, the blood donation scandal, and maternity ward discrimination). (Ziv, 2016; Eyal, 2009).

Demonstration in Jerusalem

The discussions and instigation for the protests began in social networks, and subsequently on the streets. The first demonstration on April 30, 2015, was attended by more than 1,000 civilians in Jerusalem near the Israeli Police Building. The protesters' goal was to reach the prime minister's house, but security forces prevented them. While the protesters' intention was to hold a non-violent demonstration, the demonstration became violent, with 14 injured.

Comments from one protester following the demonstration--"We stopped being suckers, this story is over," he said. "If we need to, we'll also sleep here and set up a tent - until the time is over. For years we have been accepting this racism, and this pressure has exploded." (Walla 01.05.2015).

A rally, supposed to be non-violent, escalated into clashes with police and security forces. The demonstration sparked media discourse and renewed public discussion about the attitudes and perceptions towards the Beta Israel community.

In summary, the 2015 protest in Jerusalem pointed to the existence of deep gaps in society. The pressures felt by Ethiopians ignited clashes that were extreme and violent.

Demonstration in Tel Aviv

In May 2015, a demonstration was organized in front of government offices in Tel Aviv at Azrieli intersection. According to various reports, Ethiopian immigrants, as well as Knesset (Parliament) members, writers, and members of social organizations who sought to identify with the struggle, took part. As the demonstration progressed and grew, Ayalon Road—the main artery in Tel Aviv--was blocked, causing major traffic delays of several hours. In spite of the inconvenience, the demonstration was supported by cultural activists who identified with the situation and protested against the discrimination.

Segnao Panta, one of the organizers, discussed the special nature of the gathering on social networks. "There were no politicians or 'dignitaries' as they like to say," says Penta. (Haaretz, 03.05.2015)

Demonstrations by the Ethiopian community highlighted two important points:

1. Discrimination and attitudes towards the Ethiopian community manifest as racial segregation.

2. This discrimination, although it continued over a long period, did not reach the media or public consciousness.

The demonstrations pointed to the gap between the pictures presented by institutions, the media, and public opinion with the actual situation. Arguably, the affairs of Joseph Salamsa and Damas Piccada were merely the last straw and not the issues that caused the protests.

Protests, violence, and widespread support among Ethiopian Jews indicate the existence of internal narratives that do not necessarily relate to police violence but mainly focus on the disconnect that exists between Israeli society and Ethiopian immigrants.

Government Policy to Eliminate and Fight Racism 2015-2018

Following protests in 2015, an inter-ministerial committee was formed to prevent racism in society (Government Resolution 1958).

The main functions of the committee were:

- Coordinate and synchronize government activities to prevent racism and discrimination;

- Receive complaints and direct them to the relevant government offices to monitor the situation;

- Monitor the implementation of the inter-ministerial committee recommendations to combat racism (recommendations of the Palmore Commission);

- Write and publish annual reports detailing the activities of the unit and government ministries concerning the handling of complaints regarding racism and discrimination; institute prevention and policy measures to promote equality and prevent discrimination;

- Examine the need to enact legislation to prevent racism and discrimination; prepare proposals for the Ministry of Justice and promote them with the relevant professional bodies in the Ministry of Justice;

- Formulate a list of experts, professionals, actors, and producers of Ethiopian origin with the relevant skills and with access to the media to diversify the list of experts appearing in the media;

- Produce proactive broadcasts by the government to produce and promote appropriate messages to eradicate racism.

The anti-racism team committee submitted its recommendations to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, which addressed a wide range of topics: media representation, law and justice, education, and more. The report included 53 recommendations for implementation, including appointing a "Commissioner of Discrimination and Racism" in each government office (Government Resolution 1958).

The goals and direction of the government's plan to eradicate racism have set relevant narratives for the existing problems. In addition, the emphasis is on addressing institutional racism, racism in government services, racism in culture, and mass media.

The unit is currently dealing with citizens' complaints, with its vision of "preventing and eliminating institutional racism - in government offices and public institutions - against the background of skin color, origin, nationality, and religion towards all groups in Israel (Government Unit for Coordinating the Fight against Racism, 2018).

It could be argued that the Commission's view duplicated existing laws which haven't been executed in the field—

- Equal Employment Opportunity Law 1988;

- Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty;

- Prohibition of Discrimination in Products, Services, and Entry into Entertainment and Public Places.

Education

The issues of discrimination against Ethiopian immigrants and the existence of separate programs have led to ongoing discussions. Resulting from the May 2015 protest, a government plan called a "New

Way" was formulated, aimed at replacing all existing plans in this area and reshape the educational system in Israel. Highlights:

• eliminate segregated programs for students of Ethiopian origin. These programs foster discrimination and increase social and cultural gaps;

• increase funding to raise the level of education in schools where most students (or a higher percentage) are Ethiopian;

• expand program activities of "informal education" for young leaders;

• implement a stronger relationship with parents through regarding changes in the program or the nature of their studies;

• recognize the heritage of the Beta Israel community in schools with appropriate educational activities.

In order to implement these programs, inter-ministerial committees were set up in collaboration with various government agencies and third-sector activity groups (Government Unit Report to Coordinate the Fight against Racism, 2018). The government decided to allocate 192 million NIS from government sources for the four years 2016-2018 (48 million/NIS/year).

Details of the Four-Year Plan

• NIS 92 million—promote academic achievement and empower schools;

• NIS 24 million—student needs;

• NIS 56 million--informal activities and strengthen preparation for the IDF;

• NIS 20 million—training, empowerment, placement, and employee training (Peled, 2016).

Outcome of the Program Activity

Twenty groups were set up with a budget of 200,000 NIS. Seven positions were allocated to psychological counselors to reduce the number of students referred to special education. As part of informal education, 320 scholarships were awarded to 12th graders (Rabinovich, 2017).

State Comptroller Audit Committee Findings

Following the events and clashes between the Ethiopian community and the police, and due to the poor state of affairs in society, significant scrutiny was undertaken in this area. The government placed responsibility on various ministries such as the Ministry of Economy and Industry, the Ministry of Welfare and Social Services and the Civil Service Commission. However, other ministries such as the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Interior were also given the responsibility to promote quality employment of Ethiopian immigrants.

The State Comptroller's Report 63c found failures relating to the areas of police responsibility, primarily in the field of handling complaints related o police officers. In addition, issues were identified in both the education system and the higher education system. The following steps were required:

• receive information from police regarding complaints about police officers from all sectors, including the issue of how claims were answered, were they questioned and whether those found guilty were penalized;

• receive information from the Israeli police on the number of police officers suspended in 2015, background details and penalties within a 2-week period (by February 29, 2016)

• issue progress reports on the installation of cameras in interrogation rooms and prepares follow-up reports;

• present detailed reports related to student data of Ethiopian immigrants and academic staff in higher education institutions.

Employment Activities

Work to integrate Ethiopian Jews immigrants into employment opportunities. Various programs were implemented, with emphasis on academic and technological professions.

Comparisons of 2015 Protest to Black Panthers Movement in the U.S.

The Black Panthers movement emerged in the United States in the late 1960s. The basis of this movement was discrimination against African Americans and police violence against them. The

movement grew into a large organization, and at its peak, including 48 branches in the US and abroad.
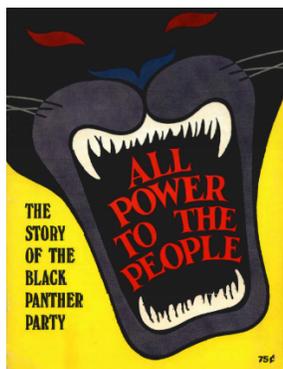
Picture 1: Party Call of Black Panther:

(Cannon, 1970)

Party Call - *All Power to The People* introduces the concept of upheaval and fundamental changes in the existing concept.

The Black Panther movement described itself as the nature of the beast--does not attack first, but knows how to defend himself and deal with his enemies. The movement demanded revisions to existing perceptions of the white population in the United States as well as change attitudes of African Americans toward its group identity. The perception of Black Panthers and movement goals were summarized in ten key points:

1. It mandated freedom for the entire black population. This freedom is defined by American law, which only exists on paper. The "melting pot" concept defined by the nation's ancestors was not applied to the black population in the United States. The movement called for the elimination of social classes and liberty for all populations;

2. Required proper employment for the African-American population of the US. Government policy was aimed at developing employment only for white populations, with blacks left behind in the periphery; the movement required peripheral investment to integrate this population into employment on equal terms with the rest of the population;

3. Sought to abolish the capitalist concept that robs the black population of creating wealth;

4. Required the settlement of housing issues for disadvantaged populations through supervision and arrangement of tax payments;

5. Required access to education that can leverage it to achieve;

6. Demanded exemption from military service for the entire African American population in the U.S. and refused to help capitalist conquests around the world;

7. Demanded the end of violent behavior from the police towards civil society and sought to abolish all violent behavior towards blacks and eliminate discrimination in this field;

8. Required complete freedom for all prisoners held in federal and local prisons since their incarceration was not done according to law;

9. Required that the judicial system and legal decisions be made for the black population through adjudicators;

10. Required housing, education, and food supply, a deliberate movement to create peace and a society that goes by law. Finally, the movement requires autonomy in all matters relating to the internal conduct of community members (Cannon, 1970)

US government response was fierce anxiety toward the growth of the Black Panthers and its influence in American society. There was also a strong public opinion against it that advocated for the end of the movement and eventually led to its closure in 1977.

Arguably, the conceptions of the movement presented a new, revisionist idea that based on giving the group autonomy and granting financial compensation. The movement itself promoted revolutionary notions more radical and probably based on a Marxist approach, not only on constitutional and legal statements but on the social distribution of resources in society and the granting of cultural and social autonomy.

DISCUSSION

Racism---fear of the other and cultural segregation--are inseparable for human beings. Anthropological theories and research in the field indicate the magnitude of this phenomenon in Israel and abroad (Police and Society, 2003; 2000, Stephan & Stephan; Haslam, 2006). The negative perception toward the other (the different) and its lack of acceptance are expressed in sociological and anthropological

perceptions they have developed and exist in today's society. Perceptions and theories in the field, discuss the fact that society divides its citizens between "us" and "them, and as a result, treats them with less respect and esteem.

The Israeli case of Beta Israel is slightly different:

1.   First, Israel is a democratic Jewish state whose basic laws rule out any discrimination and preference based on color, religion, and gender (Equal Employment Opportunity Law; 1988, Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty; Prohibition of Discrimination against Products, Services, and Entry into Entertainment and Public Places).

2.   Israel has a long history of absorbing immigrants from different countries and races. Nonetheless, discrimination against new immigrants is apparent--from the cases of previous immigration and especially public discussion toward the distribution of goods among new immigrants and the veteran population (Blender, 2018). Discrimination and deprivation towards various waves of immigrants (employment, social, and religion) and minorities have taken place with previous immigrants from Yemen, Russia, and Morocco.

The community of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel, Beta Israel, has gone through the same difficulties and perhaps their immigration process was indeed more complicated. At first, their Jewishness and affiliation with the Jewish people were questioned by the Rabbinate itself (Appraiser, 2002; Kaplan, 1987, p. 42). The Beta Israel community, prior to its rise, was in a difficult situation. In Ethiopia, they had to deal with a hostile Christian community, and in Israel, they faced a lack of recognition. The immigration to Israel was also accompanied by many difficulties from both neighboring African countries as well as in Israel. The story of the Beta Israel immigration is riddled with episodes of danger and humiliation before arriving in Israel with a disrespectful attitude from the local community. The community's absorption into Israeli society was complicated by--

•   minimal support from Israeli governments to improve the situation;

•   difficulties and lack of a positive response from government institutions towards the specific needs of the community;

•   creation of ghettos with large concentrations of Ethiopians population in poverty which lead to a disastrous absorption process;

•   social exclusion and discrimination (Haslam, 2006; Boston, 2008; Dayan, 2014).

(This discrimination was also reflected in the education system (Koch Davidowitz, 2011).

At the beginning of 2000, reports surfaced of racism and discrimination against the minority: blood donation scandal, maternity ward separation in hospitals, segregation of children in the education system, and the use of contraceptives against Ethiopian women were just a few of these factors (Eyal, 2009; Peled, 2016; Koch Davidowitz, 2011; Haaretz, January 25, 1996; Ziv, 2016).

Police violence against the community has added fuel to this fire. The 2015 demonstrations and most recently, protests in 2019, cannot be attributed to one specific case; they are an expression of the humiliations experienced by the community during many years. These issues contributed to the caustic situation--sociological factors (disengagement of the patriarchal family structure), economic (low economic income), and social (disrespectful attitude towards members of the community) are the causes of protests.

The ethnic-racist perception also appeared on television, which portrayed members of the community as worthless or "fools", where the State did them a "favor" and brought them to a better place. This perception supported the argument that "they" (members of the Ethiopian community) should say thank you "us" (members of the Israeli white, veteran community)) for bringing them here and allowing them to live, work and be in Israel. This perception on the part of some citizens of Israel gives credence to racism and a basic violation of equality. Moreover, it built an invisible wall to hold back members of the Ethiopian community and deny them real opportunities to integrate into civil society as citizens among equals. Police violence in this phenomenon "played" the role of a social perception regulator giving voice to social opinions that are expressed not by law but by public opinion.

In light of the findings of this study, it can be argued that the social protests of 2015 brought about significant changes in different ways:

1. Social - by raising awareness and bringing into the light the existence of discrimination, violence, and rejection

2. Activation of government and media mechanisms to address these issues with committees and various programs to reduce clashes. They began to investigate racism and discrimination. Today we can see recommendations in this area that indicate the need for eradicating discrimination and racism. Measures such as: recruiting and retaining officials from minority members, training police officers, implementing anti-discrimination legislation, publishing of crime statistics, eliminating education system segregation programs and others, indicate an improvement in the overall trend.

However, other elements that were supposed to lower the level of violence are missing. Given the distrust of police institutions, solutions to third have yet to be implemented (Crime Victims Survey, 2014). These measures would focus on the establishment of--

*   independent institution to monitor and "police the police" vis a vis systematic discrimination;

*   supervisory institutions monitor police actions;

*   creation of ethnic diversity in government offices and units;

*   liaison with community members to report discrimination.

The main result and benefit of the protests are awareness and a desire to change earlier narratives of neglect and disregard as well as the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee and new policies to define and implement changes in legislation, employment and education (Report of the Government Unit for the Coordination of Racism, 2018; Government Decision 1958).

Comparing the case to the protests that occurred in the US (Black Panthers) can indicate similarities on the one hand and fundamental differences on the other. Similarities between the two movements were in the arena of reducing racism in society, giving equal opportunities to community members, and social support. On the other hand, the main difference lies in the fact that the Beta Israel community perceived itself as part of the Israeli and Jewish tradition and in full affiliation with the Jewish people and state. Therefore, it did not require autonomy or separation from the State, but rather an awareness and inclusion of the conditions of equality and dignity (Israeli, 2015; Abbink, 1993, 1984).

Based on these observations, the recommendations of the study emphasize two main paths to improve the existing situation:

1. Reduce stereotypes in the media;

2. Change discourse and social norms in actions and steps and provide educational programs to instill and develop sensitivity to inequality in Israeli society.

In order to reduce social stereotypes, one must focus on giving equal opportunity to the community, nurture the young talents and introduce the tradition and the history of community members into public consciousness in an effort to reach reconciliation and understanding. These actions will not produce immediate changes, but rather long-term results. In order to provide a short-term solution, the focus should be on strengthening public institutions and third-sector organizations. The focus should be on the development of governmental immediacy to integrate community members into key places in society and enact legislation to combat racism.

In summary, the protests in 2015 were a response of Ethiopian Jewry to a social and intergenerational crisis. However, it is impossible to give a definitive answer to these issues and to change the situation in such a short period. The general trend after the 2015 protests showed that small,l but tangible changes could only occur if there are joint actions to eliminate racism in society and promote the status of Ethiopian Jews in Israel.

SUMMARY

Police officers are not born racist. They become racist in a society where racism is more deeply rooted in people's minds. The frequent violent encounters between the police and minorities occur in many parts of the world. Violence in Paris, London, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem all stem from the same root: social racism under the guise of police.

The encounters between the police and minorities, since the beginning of the modern police force, have been many. Police units around the world have

confronted protests and demonstrations by various groups based on ethnicity, affiliation with crime organizations, perceptions of association, and others.

Adding to the difficulties faced by immigrants in breaking down cultural barriers are issues in finding jobs, locating housing, and dealing with geographical and occupational segregation. Social separation causes mutual suspicion and sometimes hatred between minority groups and police in Western countries. The common perception held by police officers that crime among minorities stems from cultural traits, not socioeconomic issues and discrimination, has often led to over-policing, unnecessary and excessive arrests, and violence. Neglect and social apathy towards minority groups only contribute to further friction. Police practices were not created in a vacuum, but are the result of social perceptions such as the difficulties of access to housing, welfare, education, and health programs. Police are the only representative of public opinion and crises that have occurred within minority groups and between minority groups and the local population. The eradication of this phenomenon is a broad and complex issue that requires considerable investment and a desire to overcome the phenomenon of racism and discrimination.

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