**From War to War and 'Ongoing Displacement':**

**New Immigrants (Olim) During the 'Iron Swords War'**

**Research Program**

1. **Scientific Background**

We will add later.

1. **Research Objectives and Significance**

***Objectives of the Study***

In this study we intend to investigate the absorption processes of new immigrants faced with the reality of "a double war": We will address the question of how the situation of a "double war" structures the immigrant practices of their absorption processes in the State of Israel and in Israeli society. Specifically, we will focus on immigrants from 5 countries that constituted about 84% of all immigrants (olim) in the years 2022-2023, in whose countries a war either took or is taking place in the last two years. Some of them have already experienced war in their country of origin, and some are presently experiencing war there. And now new immigrants are experiencing the Iron Sword War in Israel. In other words, they are undergoing **"a double war".** Moreover, because of the war in Israel, some have become internal displaced persons (IDPs) in Israel and are experiencing ongoing displacement.

This case is unique and very interesting because war and the processes of ongoing displacement disrupt daily life and put to the extreme the dynamics of the absorption process. In this specific context, these factors have the potential to reshape and create new dialogues about the ways individuals and communities create a new discourse of personal and community absorption processes.

On a theoretical and analytical level, our research is positioned at the intersection of three main areas of study. These are: (a) theories of immigration absorption, which include the 'melting pot', multiculturalism, and transnationalism; (b) the role of migrant cultural capital and (c) the personal and communal day-to-day practices involved in the absorption of immigrants. By combining these perspectives, our study offers a multifaceted view of the immigrant absorption process. This triangulation provides a nuanced and comprehensive lens through which the phenomenon of immigration absorption can be understood and analyzed.

***Expected Significance and Fields Of Contribution***

To date, in migration research, there are almost no studies focusing on the absorption process of immigrants in the context of a double war. The research proposed here seeks to make a significant contribution in four main knowledge areas:

1. *First,* Theories dealing with the absorption of immigration vary between different perceptions of the melting pot, multiculturalism, and transnationalism. In the Israeli case, they are also expressed in policy. Each one deals differently with perceptions of immigrant absorption. In this study, we will seek to learn from them the new patterns of absorption that are created in war and reconstruct the existing theories.
2. *Secondly,* this study will address a theoretical void concerning migrants who experience 'double war' scenarios – one in their country of origin and the other in their destination country. Existing migration research often deals with the absorption of immigrants who move from war-torn countries to relatively peaceful ones. This research will broaden this scope by focusing on those who have migrated to a country also experiencing conflict.
3. *Thirdly,* the research will illuminate the effects of ongoing displacement on absorption processes. It will explore questions like: How does ongoing displacement status influence and shape the absorption processes?
4. *Fourthly,* the study aims to fill a theoretical gap in understanding migrant cultural capital and diverse intercultural reactions in contexts of transitioning from one war to another. This will offer an opportunity to deepen our comprehension of migrant cultural capital's role in the absorption processes of immigrants, emphasizing the significance of cultural capital in global ongoing migration processes.
5. **Detailed description of the proposed research**

**Working hypothesis**

The basic assumption of this research is that war intensifies the processes of daily life. By examining these processes under extreme conditions, we can gain clearer insights into the dynamics of everyday life in non-war times. In this research we focus on the migrants' absorption processes and their practices. The study will follow an inductive research approach, so there are no predetermined working hypotheses. The research process will evolve by following our main research questions:

1. How do war and *a double war* shape the processes of absorption of migration in the receiving country?
2. How are *ongoing displacement* alongside a *double war* reflected in the absorption of migration in the case of naturalized immigrants?
3. In which ways and how do processes of migrant absorption during the war affect areas of incorporation into the State of Israel and Israeli society?
4. How does *migrant cultural capital* shape practices of coping with processes of absorption during the war?

# **Research Design and Methods**

# ***Case Study***

To investigate the ways in which ongoing migration and a double war shape the processes and practices of immigrant absorption, this research focuses on immigrants who have arrived in Israel during the past two years (2022-2023). In the years 2022–2023, about 113,807 immigrants arrived in Israel from 114 countries (Ministry of Absorption 2023). However, 84**%** *of them are from 5 countries and/or regions where a war is taking place.* Approximately 81% of these immigrants are directly from countries and/or regions experiencing war, and an additional 3% where there is an indirect involvement in war (See table 1). *These immigrants, who arrived in the past two years, are currently experiencing a double war - the war in Israel "Iron Swords War" and the ongoing war in their countries of origin.*

This population represents four categories of new immigrants during the "Iron Swords War"

1. **Immigrants who directly experienced war in their country of origin** and are recognized as *refugee-immigrants* in Israel, and some are currently experiencing a second displacement during the Iron Swords War. Most of them have family members living in the war zones in their home countries. An example of these immigrants are those from the Ukraine. It should be noted that this war is still ongoing (12.2023). In addition, most of them have family members in their home country, and some even have family and friends on both sides of the conflict (for example, in Russia and in the Ukraine).
2. **Immigrants who came to Israel during a period when their country was conducting a war** and are recognized as *immigrants* and not as *refugee-immigrants*. An example of these immigrants is those from Russia and Belarus. Similar to the immigrants from the Ukraine, they have family members in their home country, and some even have family and friends on both sides of the conflict.
3. **Immigrants who, at the time of their immigration, were from areas where a war was happening in a different part of their home country and after their departure, a war started in the city and region where they had lived**. Most of them now have family members living in the combat zones. An example of these immigrants are those from Ethiopia (in the Amhara region).
4. **Immigrants whose communities in their home countries have experienced war in recent months but were in Israel at that time**. Most of them now have family members living in the combat zones. An example of these immigrants are the "Bnei Menashe" who immigrated to Israel from India.

Although all above immigrants are undergoing *the processes of absorption* in Israel during the Iron Swords War, the distinct war experiences from their countries of origin (the mentioned categories) combined with their cultural migrantcapital, offer a deeper and more diverse understanding of the processes of absorption. By examining these varied experiences and cultural capitals, we may gain a more comprehensive understanding of migrant practices and nuances of absorption processes in general.

# ***Research Methodology***

The complexities of absorption under a double war, ongoing displacement and migrants' cultural capital, call for a flexibility and a diversity of research methods. We therefore propose a mixed-method design that combines qualitative and quantitative data (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). While qualitative research methods aim to capture socially constructed realities by means of subjective experiences, quantitative research methods aim to capture external realities by means of objective indicators. The combination of both types of data produces a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study (Sale, Lohfeld, & Brazil, 2002). In our study, qualitative data will be collected through in-depth interviews, ethnographic observations and digital ethnography, as each provides a different form of migrant absorption practices.

Quantitative data will be collected by means of an online survey, through which we will describe, characterize and analyze different types of migrant absorption practices. The mixed methods design will provide a holistic view of the phenomenon of absorption from war to war. All types of data will be collected in each of the four migrant group categories mentioned above as follows:

**(a) In-depth Interviews**: To deeply understands absorption processes during a double war, our study will include around *70 in-depth interviews*. We will interview about 60 immigrants, with an approximate distribution of 15 interviews with migrants from the four categories mentioned above, all of whom have arrived in Israel during 2022-2023. Additionally, around 10 interviews will be conducted with policymakers and professionals involved in immigrant absorption during the Iron Swords War. These interviews will enable immigrants to express their own views on the absorption process during the war, and for workers to provide insights into their experiences and the policies they attempted to implement.

As researchers for more than 20 years dealing with immigration and absorption, we already have connections with interviewees and key informants. In addition, we will use the snowballing method (XXX) to examine our phenomenon.

The interviews will be conducted in any one of the following five languages, as chosen by the interviewees: Hebrew, English, Amharic, Russian and Ukrainian. Between them, the two researchers speak all of these languages, and they will engage research assistants who speak these languages.

We aim to capture a range of experiences by interviewing both men and women from each category, focusing on their unique narratives, interpretations, and perspectives on their absorption. The in-depth interviews, which will be based on interview guidelines, seek to understand the follow issues, for example: how they feel about their daily absorption in Israel; what were their pre-immigration experiences of the war in their country of origin and in Israel;, how they are managing with the ongoing displacement; which coping mechanisms they are adopting in the Iron Swords War, whether, and if so, and how they interact with Israeli society. Each interview will be meticulously documented and transcribed word-for-word to enable a comprehensive and detailed qualitative analysis.

Additionally, we will conduct *10 in-depth interviews* with experts and professionals working in migrant-related fields to understand the state and personal response in Israel to migrant absorption during the Iron Swords War.

We anticipate that most interviews will take place post-war, focusing on retrospective experiences. However, we have already started gathering preliminary data amidst the ongoing conflict.

**(b) Participant Observation** at events and volunteer activities that related to new immigrants during the Iron Swords War. This approach will help us understand both the formal and informal aspects of the absorption processes.

**(c) Digital Ethnography:** In the current digital age, where social media plays a significant role, especially in the context of migration, gathering digital information from migrants is essential for understanding their experiences. This research will employ digital ethnography, a method rooted in interpretivism, to gather data from social media platforms (as discussed in Babis in 2021). This approach aims to comprehensively understand cultural and social experiences. Specifically, we will establish a network of Facebook connections within each research group during our fieldwork. This network will expand through social media interactions, enabling ongoing digital data collection beyond the fieldwork period. We will focus on Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, and others monitoring individual and community pages/groups. Data collection will include screen captures of Facebook posts relevant to Israeli culture, encompassing text, images, and videos, along with the comments on these posts. These different narratives and textual materials will be read through a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Watzlawik & Born, 2007) that emphasizes the overt and latent dimensions of text, rhetoric, textual hyper-talk and silences, normative genres and more**.**

**(d) Online Survey:**