

Immigration, Security, and the Liberal State

Contextualizing the regulation of human mobility in a new security framework, this book offers an original perspective on the dominant mode of politics and evolving norms shaping the immigration policies of contemporary liberal states. In doing so, the authors challenge existing paradigms that privilege economic and cultural factors over new security ones in explaining the critical institutional and normative changes in migration management, from the early post-WWII through the post-Cold War era. Drawing on evidence from multiple sources, including media and elite discourse, policy tracking, party manifesto data and public opinion across Europe and the US, the book exposes the restrictive nature of immigration politics and policies when immigration is framed as a security threat, and considers its implications for civil liberties. Informed by a rich breadth of scholarly sub-disciplines, the findings contribute both empirically and theoretically to the literatures on international migration, security and public opinion.

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Immigration, Security, and the Liberal State

*The Politics of Migration Regulation
in Europe and the United States*

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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-29801-8 – Immigration, Security, and the Liberal State
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Frontmatter
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Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009298018
DOI: 10.1017/9781009298001

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First published 2024

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

A Cataloging-in-Publication data record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

ISBN 978-1-009-29801-8 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-009-29799-8 Paperback

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In memory of two A+ professors and human beings, Asher Arian and Aristide Zolberg, my beloved teachers, mentors, and friends, and the intellectual forefathers of much of this book's thinking about the phenomenon of human mobility; and to the members of my loving family, Michael, Odeya, and Erez Rosenband, who emotionally sustained me as I traversed the long and arduous journey of translating thoughts into words.

– Gallya Lahav

For Millie, an irresistible force of nature and a radiant light in my life.

– Anthony M. Messina

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Preface and Acknowledgements

This book is the product of many years of conversations and investigations. It has experienced several incarnations, all of which involved much sober reflection about the nature and political well-being of contemporary liberal democratic states as they are reflected in the politics associated with the movement of people across national borders. What began as a solo project for Gallya Lahav eventually led to a renewed collaboration between the two authors whose scholarly agendas have periodically and productively intersected, culminating in several co-authored publications during the past two decades.

The seeds of the project for Lahav were sown at Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris in December 1995, where she joined a group of her globally dispersed childhood friends and their spouses to celebrate the coming New Year. Their high-spirited reunion unfortunately ended with an unforeseen disruption at the departure gates, where an airline representative barred one of the American foreign residents in the group from boarding his flight to the US, claiming that he lacked the proper travel documentation. As a consequence of the US federal government shutdown which dragged on for eleven days between 16 December 1995 and 6 January 1996, her friend's departure to the US was derailed by an airline check-in agent, who acted as a proxy of the American state in France, scrutinizing the visas and travel documents of all US bound passengers that day.

Without recourse and lacking due process, this seemingly arbitrary and unanticipated interruption in her mate's travel schedule prompted Lahav to ponder the disturbing implications of the burgeoning role of private sector gatekeepers like airlines, and eventually other non-state actors such as university officials, employers, and hospital administrators, in sorting citizens from migrants at the various stages of human mobility, including those of migrant entry, stay, and exit. Located at the intersection between human mobility and human rights, the engagement of these non-state actors in the migration process and, particularly, their increasing authority to regulate the flow of persons across national

borders seriously undermined, in her mind, many of the key norms, policies, and practices of the liberal immigration and human mobility regime that had hitherto prevailed during the post-WWII period. Despite the personal inconveniences imposed by such impediments to travel, Lahav is eternally grateful to the Helmers and Darvasis (especially to Amit, and the late Ariel) for their practical professional insights and so much more.

From that point forward, the liberal state's adoption of exceptional and even draconian practices in managing human mobility only accelerated. Its formal operationalization of security norms regarding human mobility regulation precipitated the proliferation of gatekeepers at all points of entry and stay. It spurred an exponential growth in the number of new actors enlisted by the state in the service of an ever-expanding migration policy playing field. The business of sorting the vast universe of people on the move has exponentially grown since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US, the infamous shoe bomber episode two months later, and the terrorist incidents which followed at other transportation hubs like Brussels, London, Madrid, and Paris. In this 'new security' era, human mobility regulations have been increasingly linked to national security concerns which have severely compromised rights and even market priorities.

With the generous financial support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Lahav applied her normative concerns about securitization to her scholarly investigations of the changing migration gatekeepers and shifting liabilities across Europe and the US. Transcending the analytical framework that she had developed on the state previously, she set out to identify the central causes and consequences of the liberal state's devolution of many of its responsibilities for managing immigration to non-central state actors. Her objective was to explain the role of the security driver in influencing the trajectory of political party competition on immigration-related issues and, more importantly, immigration policy outcomes across the liberal states.

Along the way she became indebted to many accommodating academic hosts who facilitated the project's development. The scholars affiliated with the Robert Schuman Center at the European University Institute in Fiesole, Florence provided her with a lifetime of treasured inspiration and insights. She is especially grateful to Luciano Bardi, Helen Wallace, Philippe Fargues, Philippe Schmitter, Adrienne Héritier, Martin Rhodes, Rachel Epstein, Elena Jileva, Filipa de Sousa, and the late Peter Mair for their friendship and fellowship. She is also indebted to Virginie Guiraudon whose close collaboration on earlier projects inspired her to inquire more deeply into the mechanisms driving the new migration policy playing field and the values and norms underpinning it.

Lahav's research and thinking about the project were also enriched during her residence at the Swiss Forum for Migration and Mobility Studies

(SFM), at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. There she reunited with her former German–American Academic Council (GAAC) ‘young scholar’ classmate, Gianni D’Amato, who hosted her under the most delightful conditions at the vibrant SFM Center he has prominently led as part of the Swiss National Science Foundation’s NCCR-On the Move program. Her roommate, Nicole Wichtman, and office mates, Didier Ruedin, Denise Efonayi-Mäder, Rosita Fibbi, and Robin Stünzi, made her research as stimulating as the beautiful walks and lunches they enjoyed together. So too, did her many Swiss colleagues, especially Sandra Lavenex, Christin Achermann, Ola Söderström, Janine Dahinden, Mihaela Nedelcu, and Laurence Crot whose respective wisdoms were generously extended. She is also grateful to Nadja Rinchetti and Elena Pascale for sharing their spaces, families, and meals, as well as the guidance and encouragement they provided during her fieldwork.

The project was also enhanced by time Lahav spent at Tel Aviv University, Israel and particularly because of the generous hospitality of Noah Lewin-Epstein, Moshe Semyonov, Yossi Shain, Anastasia Gorodzeisky, Michal Shamir, Azar Gat, Tal Sadeh, Hanna Lerner, the late Avi Beker, as well as the members of its resourceful staff, Maya Politis Ginzburg and Yonit Shahr, and the exceptional graduate students in the International Migration program and the Political Science Department, especially Orni Livny and Adi Hercowitz-Amir. They not only shared their expertise about the notable Israeli case regarding the security challenges posed by migration and human mobility for liberal democratic policy makers, but their grounded approach to investigating such a sensitive subject was inspiring. In Israel, Gal Ariely, Orit Hochman, Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom, and Jack Jedwab (from Canada) were terrific collaborators who encouraged Lahav to refine her threat politics model and apply it the politics of immigration more generally. She is also thankful to two renowned scholars in the field, Rivka Reichman and Sergio Della Pergola, who introduced the Israeli case to students of migration, as well as the Ruppin Academic Center, and particularly, Shosh Arad and Karin Amit. They have considerably expanded the professional networks and scholarship in the field by developing, organizing, and advancing regular educational programs for a meeting of the minds in the maturing research stream of international migration. So too did the many scholars on the American west coast who graciously welcomed Lahav during the book’s final production. She is grateful to Jack Citrin, as well as the Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) at Stanford University, and the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies (CCIS) at the University of California, San Diego for hosting her, especially David Laitin, Adam Lichtenfeld, David FitzGerald, Claire Adida, Warren Tam, and the great researchers there.

Many other professional colleagues also influenced the course and contents of the project. Martin Schain, Gary Freeman, Asher Arian, and

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Aristide Zolberg particularly shaped both authors' perspective regarding the unique contributions political scientists and behaviourists can make to the study of international migration.

Lahav would be remiss if she didn't acknowledge her home academic institution, Stony Brook University, and especially its Political Science Department. She is not only grateful to her faculty colleagues, Leonie Huddy, Stanley Feldman, Jeffrey Segal, Frank Myers, and Mathew Lebo, for their professional support and life friendship, but also to the outstanding student research assistants who contributed to the project. She is especially thankful to Daniella Alva, Brandon Bennes, Robert Bird, Ellen Birk, Bowen Cho, Marie Courtemanche, Samuel Jens, Akhtra Khan, Patrick Lown, Sen Payel, Joseph Sandor, Zachary Truelson, Yamil Velez, Johanna Willman, and Yangzi Zhao. Messina wishes to recognize the valuable contributions Sarah Thomas and Leslie Angus made in preparing the book's bibliography and the resources provided by the John R. Reitemeyer endowment at Trinity College which defrayed the financial cost of their assistance.

Both authors extend thanks to John Haslam of Cambridge University Press for his unwavering support and editorial guidance during the book project's long gestation and to the anonymous reviewers for their insightful criticisms of the original manuscript and sage advice. We also extend our appreciation to Tobias Ginsburg, Robert Judkins, Carrie Parkinson, and Santhamurthy Ramamoorthy at the Press for their respective interventions in facilitating the production process. We assume responsibility for any errors in the book.

Our personal debts are numerous. Lahav wishes to recognize the many people who offered emotional relief and sanity over the many months and years during which the project percolated and ultimately came to fruition. Like her venerable co-author, many congenial academic hosts and colleagues were not only precious teachers and gifted fellow researchers but became dear friends. Their unwavering support matched the contributions offered by the reliable and unshakeable cheers of many lifetime friends, neighbours, and family, especially members of her Zoomily and Fab 4 groups, as well as the wise Lurdes Potzenek, Jill Gross, and Karen Schwartz. Lahav is especially and forever indebted to her beloved husband, Michael, her children, Odeya, and Erez Rosenband, her mothers, Eva Meyerowitz and Rosalie Rosenband, and her sisters and their families – the Lieblings, Agmons, and Franklins. She also wishes to acknowledge the lessons she learned from her now deceased fathers, Eitan Lahav, Mike Meyerowitz, and Paul Rosenband, concerning the virtues of unadulterated truth and perseverance. Their lives continue to illuminate her own life's path. Messina is particularly indebted to his best friend, colleague,

and wife of 43 years, Frances Hagopian, whose patience with him during the writing process was constantly tested. She repeatedly reminded him that the end of his labours was in sight and, in so doing, buoyed his spirits during the inevitable moments of frustration and discouragement. As always, she was his intellectual and emotional North Star.