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"We are similar in that we're different": Social Relationships of Young Russian Jewish Immigrants in Israel and Germany

In the sociology of migration, the initiation of social relationships between immigrant and native residents is one of the central aspects of the process of integration. But the process of integration takes place over several generations. Whether a person is ever completely assimilated, to the point of giving up his or her original identity, is debatable. Yet there is agreement that the first generation acquires a range of knowledge and qualifications which are necessary for life in their new society, that the orientation toward the culture of their origins remains intact, and that social relationships are limited primarily to inter-ethnic contact (Esser 1989; Heckmann 1992).

Studies concerning first generation immigrants have focused mainly on adults who are or intend to become active in the work force. In the present study, however, we have concentrated on the social relations of first generation adolescents and post-adolescents with members of the receiving society.

The data used in this study was collected for the project titled "Russian-Jewish Immigration in Jerusalem and Berlin: A Comparison".[1] The project focuses on the process of social integration of young Russian Jews who emigrated to Israel and Germany and had resided in the new society for roughly five to six years at the time of the interview (1995/1996). The interview subjects were 38 young Russian Jews in Jerusalem, whose mean age was 24 years, and 46 in Berlin, with a mean age of 22.6 years. The interviews in Israel were conducted exclusively with university students, while the Berlin group consisted of 35 university students and 11 individuals preparing to enter the university or other educational institutions. The central question of this study can be summarized as follows: Do the different approaches to Russian Jewish emigrants taken by Israel and Germany—approaches which are historically, politically, and culturally distinct—have diverging effects on the process of integration, and thus on the immigrants' future perspectives in the new society? In this paper, we have dealt only with a part of this question, namely social relations between emigrants and native residents.

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The First Generation—Adults and Youth

From a perspective that draws on theories of adolescence and post-adolescence, one may be inclined to assume that young immigrants, especially young first generation immigrants, tend more than adults to maintain social relations with members of the receiving society. Adult emigrants who enter the workforce often experience a loss of status (Heckmann 1992). This is equally true, or even more so, of those who are looking for work. Young people who are integrated in the educational system, however, share equal status with native students on a purely formal level. Since friendships tend to be established between persons of the same status, the structure of opportunity to form inter-ethnic friendships among students should be markedly better than among adults. Secondly, from the perspective of developmental psychology, adolescent and post-adolescent phases are coupled with specific developmental tasks such as separation from the familial home, increased attention to others in the same age group, initiation of heterosexual relations, and the search for a career (Hurrelmann 1994).

For young emigrants, these developmental tasks occur within the same time frame as the process of emigration, which itself involves upheaval. Because a structural openness to the possibilities for action is inherent in both adolescence and the process of emigration, we can assume not only that young emigrants who are encumbered neither by work nor by family find more opportunities to form relationships with native residents, but also that their interest in, or orientation toward, establishing inter-ethnic contact must be higher than that of middle-aged emigrants.

By "orientation" we mean the subjective evaluation and desirability of social relations with native residents. In this context, the term "social relations" refers to a meaningful relationship over a discrete period of time from the perspective of the ego, not a short interaction or "encounter".

The assumption of a more rapid social integration of young people who are integrated in the educational system, in comparison to adults, is based on research of both subject groups. Nevertheless, we can assume that the groups differ from one another both in the numbers of native friends and acquaintances they have, and in the structure of their opportunities for and orientation toward social relations with native residents.

Israel and Germany: Different Strategies in the Integration of Russian Jewish Emigrants

Israel and Germany are considerably different in their political and ideological attitudes toward Russian-Jewish emigration. All Jews who migrate to Israel are officially welcome according to the 1949 Law on the Right of Return. Israel seeks to assimilate immigrants into its society rapidly and completely. The extreme policy of absorption has relaxed somewhat over the past two decades, so that immigrants' maintenance of cultural practices that they have brought with them from their countries of origin is tolerated longer. Nevertheless, the goal of absorption politics has remained the transformation of immigrants into Israelis, and not the promotion of immigrant cultures set apart from Israeli society.[2]

Germany's political stance toward Russian Jews is less clear. On the one hand, the state feels historically obliged to admit Jews who are suffering under anti-Semitism. At the same time, Jewish immigrants are expected to contribute to the establishment of a "new Jewish life", thus providing evidence that it is once again possible for Jews to live in Germany. On the other hand, immigrants in general are actively kept out of Germany. In 1990/91 this ambivalence led to a situation in which prospective Russian Jewish immigrants were required to apply for a residence visa for the Federal Republic of Germany in their country of origin, rather than simply entering with a tourist visa and being permitted to stay, as had been possible before.

Israel pursues the objective of turning immigrants quickly and smoothly into members of Israeli society by various insertion techniques. The "Ulpan" language schools, for example, are responsible not only for language instruction but also for conveying Jewish culture and religion. Immigrants are introduced to the country and its people through class trips. The kibbutzim play a unique role in this process by offering young emigrants in particular a chance to live in a kibbutz for a period, with both sides having the right to terminate the stay if desired. Because Jewish immigrants become Israeli citizens immediately upon arrival, they are eventually required to perform military service, which naturally implies extremely close contact with native residents, whether desired or not. The universities are also similar in this regard: native and immigrant students are housed together in dormitories.

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2 In a talk show on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel (ARD, April 5, 1998), participants debated the question of whether it is right to admit only Russian Jews who are Jews according to the laws of the Halachah, i.e., those born to a Jewish mother, into the Jewish community. The Israeli diplomat Avi Primor, explained that Israel does not have this problem, since all immigrants become Israelis and, as is well known, there are also non-Jewish Israelis.

In Germany however, history leaves no room for expectation or hope that Russian Jews can be assimilated into German society in the same way that *"Aussiedler"*—ethnic Germans arriving from Russia or the Baltic countries where their ancestors moved one or two centuries ago—can. Because it is hoped that Russian Jews will be able to contribute to the revitalization of the Jewish community, social integration of the immigrants is left to that community. The state government is responsible for the material well-being and the procurement of gainful employment for immigrants (assistance in finding jobs, unemployment benefits, retraining, housing, language courses for those under 60). The Jewish community by contrast sees itself as responsible for the social, cultural, and religious well being of the immigrants. The division of labor between state institutions and the Jewish community is best expressed in the symbolism of the language courses. The state government promotes induction into the workforce through language classes. For this reason, 60-year-olds are no longer eligible for the courses. The Jewish community, however, is interested in social integration and therefore offers language classes for this age group as well. Because the Jewish community seeks to win Russian Jews back to Judaism, it offers a variety of activities, especially for young people. Group outings are especially popular, and present an opportunity to introduce children and young adults to Jewish culture and religion.

The contrasts can be summarized in the following way: Whereas in Israel Russian Jews are not merely encouraged, but expected to assimilate into mainstream society, in Germany they are expected to strengthen the minority Jewish community.

A further difference between Israel and Germany, which establishes the structure within which opportunities for social relations with native residents arise, is the difference in numbers of Russian Jews who emigrate to Israel and to Germany. While 45,000 Russian Jews arrived in Germany after 1989 (Bubis 1996), 700,000 went to Israel (Leshem and Lissak 1999). This figure is more than 10% of the total population of Israel. This could mean that, despite all state efforts to promote assimilation, these immigrants may be able to limit their contacts to fellow immigrants.[3] By contrast, immigrants to Germany find but few fellow immigrants from the same country of origin with whom they can initiate social relationships. For this reason, they might be more likely to seek contact with native residents than the immigrants in Israel. It also appears to be relevant to the establishment of social relations whether a person arrives alone or with a family. Those who are able to retreat into their families are probably less motivated to make new social relationships than those who have to make their way on their own in their new society.

3 The fact that Russian Jews exhibit strong tendencies toward "domestic integration" (Elwert 1982) has led to the formation of a new party in Israel, which mainly constitutes a pressure group for the "Russians", as the immigrants are called. (In the 1999 elections there were two 'Russian Parties'.)

The Network of Immigrants: Numbers of Network Members and Structures of Opportunity

Our hypothesis that young, first generation immigrants, who have a solid footing in the educational system, are more likely to form contacts with native residents than adults who work or are unemployed, has been confirmed, we believe, by the results of this study. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the immigrants in Israel and 50% of those in Germany claimed at least one native resident among their circle of friends or acquaintances.[4] This is not entirely comparable with the results of the study by Schoeps et al. (1996), which, using a different set of questions, differentiated only by age and not by education. Nevertheless, their results also point to the same trend. Thirty percent of Russian Jews under 30 reported having "regular" contact with native Germans, compared with only 12.5% of those over age 45. If we first consider the complete network of both subject groups, it appears that the immigrants in Israel generally have a significantly larger network, than their counterparts in Germany, but this difference is accounted for by the fact that the first group reported more Russian friends in their network. They also have slightly more native friends, but this difference is too small to be considered significant. Looking at the network structure, we are unable to detect a significant difference between the two groups: native residents made up 22% of the network members in Israel and 20% in Germany.

Where do immigrants meet new friends and acquaintances after arriving in their new country—whether people from their country of origin or native residents? Subjects reported meeting the individuals in their respective networks in educational institutions, in leisure activities (including activities in the Jewish community), through family, through friends, through a job, in the army, in the kibbutz, and in other contexts.

The immigrants in Germany form contacts with native residents largely through educational institutions. All other contexts were less decisive. These results are surprising inasmuch as the subjects in the interviews repeatedly emphasized the fact that the university is not a place to meet other people.

In Israel, however, there are more opportunities for meeting native residents. The educational system was also reported as playing an important role, but it did not represent the central opportunity for forming social relationships as it did for the immigrants in Germany. Other contexts, such as work, the army and the kibbutzim were also frequently mentioned. The fact is that there are more opportunities for forming social relationships in diverse contexts implies a more opportune structure for meeting native residents in Israel than in Germany.

4 The egocentric, subjective network of the subjects was measured with a modified version of Kahn and Antonucci's (1980) "Network Questionnaire".

In summarizing the network data, we were able to reach the following conclusions. Both groups maintain and prefer social relations with fellow immigrants and feel more connected with them than with native friends and acquaintances. The fact that the immigrants in Israel report a higher number of Russian friends than those in Germany may be the consequence of the greater density of Russian immigrants in Israel, but it may also reflect the fact that immigrants in Israel tend to live alone and therefore apply more time and effort to their friendships. This also correlates with the results that they feel a stronger emotional connection to their Russian friends than the group in Germany. Immigrants in Israel also tend to have more contact with native residents, and their opportunities to establish such relationships are more plentiful. This may suggest that they are more integrated in their new society than the immigrants in Germany. Yet the differences between the groups are not as great as their similarities. Both groups established a relatively large number of relationships with native residents in the five to six years since their immigration, but are still closer to more individuals from their country of origin, both in numbers and in intensity.

"From the Stalls to the Stage"

As noted, the network data provide information on the number of network members from the native culture as well as on different opportunities for forming such contacts. Yet it is uninformative with regard to the immigrants' subjective interests or orientation in establishing social relationships with native residents. Upon analysis of all passages from each interview in which social relationships with native residents and Russian Jews were mentioned, five types or models of orientation became apparent.[5]

In the following presentation of types, we have drawn on the renowned essay by Schütz (1944/1964), "The stranger", in which he describes the process of rapprochement by which the immigrant draws closer to the receiving society. "The cultural pattern of his home group" forms the stranger's first frame of reference for interpreting his new environment (Schütz 1964: 97). As long as the stranger interprets the cultural pattern of the new society along the lines of "thinking-as-usual"—as s/he would in his/her country of origin—s/he takes the perspective of an "uninterested observer". However, if s/he "is about to transform from an unconcerned onlooker into a would-be member of the approached group", the imagined model drawn from his/her home group is inappropriate, as it only serves in the interpretation of the members of the

5 Two interviews in the German sample did not provide adequate information to permit the identification of a type.

new society, not in interaction with them. If it is important to the stranger to establish social relations with members of the new environment, he or she must be able to clear out the "cultural pattern" and its "thinking-as-usual" to make room for a new attitude. This means the stranger is no longer content to view the new group from the perspective of his or her former home group, "who do not intend to establish a direct, social relationship with members of the foreign group" (Schütz 1964: 98), but must change his or her system of relevance. Schütz describes this transformation with visual imagery:

"Jumping from the stalls to the stage, so to speak, the former onlooker becomes a member of the cast, enters as a partner into social relations with his co-actors, and participates henceforth in the action in progress." (Schütz 1964: 97f)

Schütz assumes that the "stranger" has an interest in initiating social relations with native residents. Whoever cannot or will not make the leap onto the stage, Schütz explains in the terms of Park and Stonequist, becomes a "marginal man" and a "cultural hybrid" who belongs to neither culture (Schütz 1964: 104).

However, we do not want to reduce the question to an exclusive choice between assimilation and marginality. On the contrary, we view integration in the new society as an open process, which does not lend itself to an either-or formula. Considering the young immigrants in our research groups from the point of view of Schütz's metaphor, one could say that the majority does make the leap to the stage, but there are clearly several different types of leaps. A minority remain onlookers, although after the relatively short period of five to six years, it is impossible to say whether their observer status will be lifted at some point. The attitude of this minority can best be described as "avoidance". Because this character type is only represented in the group of immigrants in Germany, we are referring here only to the responses of the Berlin group.

Orientation Type: Avoidance

This type can be essentially derived from two viewpoints. The first of these is that "true" friendship only existed in the country of origin:

"Here there is less a friendship than in Riga. There I could say, he's my friend and he does everything for me and I do everything for him." (Boris, 1996)[6]

6 Interviews in Israel were conducted in Hebrew, those in Germany were conducted in German. All interviews were verbatim translated into English (together with a bilingual native English professional translator). In order to facilitate comprehension of materials, square brackets are used to indicate authors' inserts. Text omissions in interviews and indications of hesitations are marked with "...".

The notion that friendships in the USSR corresponded more to the ideal of friendship than those in the West appears to form an important part of a well-cultivated myth among Russian Jewish emigrants. Markowitz (1991) reports that the Russian Jewish subjects in her study, who emigrated to Israel and America, also maintained that friendships in Russia were more reliable and unwavering. However, the idea that friendships "there" were better than they are "here" does not necessarily entail the rejection of friendships with native residents. Among immigrants in Israel, there are also some who cling to the myth of true friendship in Russia despite the fact that they do not fall under the orientation type of "avoidance".

An attitude of avoidance with respect to friendships with native residents thus requires a further perception, based on the notion that Germans are materialistic ("Here it's more about money, it's really more about money" [than friendship]), (Lonja, 1996) or that they are unreliable:

"One could say, [if] *you have got problems with a friend and one would at least give some advice or something. And here you can't always expect help. I would never come to a German and say that I have a problem, because you're just pushed away." (Alla, 1995)*

These statements are based not on real experience, but on suspicions, which perform the double function of immunizing against potential contact with native residents *a priori*, while at the same time protecting against rejection. An especially telling example of "defensive" protection is Mark's report.

"So one says that the German doesn't need us, for example in relationships, but I think, it sounds terrible, it sounds cynical, but we don't need them either" (Mark, 1996).

In the "avoider" it is not difficult to recognize Schütz's "stranger", who is still stuck in the stalls, i.e., in the cultural patterns of his or her original society, and may possibly remain so. However, he or she is different from Schütz's "stranger" to the degree that the avoider considers the cultural patterns not from a completely neutral perspective, but from one formed by his or her judgment with respect to the society of origin. Schütz's "stranger" gives members of the new society the chance to form personal relations with him, while the avoider rejects this possibility out of hand.

Orientation Type: "Wait and See"

Like other immigrants, the "wait and see" type makes comparisons between "here" and "there". But unlike the "avoider", the immigrant with a "wait and see" attitude does not pass judgment. He or she explains the difficulties in relations with members of the new society as the expression of different mentalities—that is, individuals are perceived as bearing traits that are attributes of a particular culture, not character flaws.

Alexandra reports she has no Germans among her circle of friends. To the question put forward by the interviewer whether she regrets this fact, she replies:

"I'm not sure. It just happened that way. I mean, I didn't kick any Germans out [of the circle of friends], *and they haven't kicked me out either. It's just the way it is. Because, I don't know, maybe that's the mentality, ... I do not know why it is but ..." (Alexandra, 1996)*

Alexandra doesn't really explain what these differences in "mentality" are that she says are responsible for the fact that she maintains no friendships with native residents. Daniel, on the other hand, makes it clear that he really doesn't have anything against Israelis, but that rapprochement is hardly possible in the face of mutual misunderstandings:

"I have a lot of contacts with Israelis. I can be in the company of Israelis only and it does not disturb me really. I do not have Israelis that are very close to me. We speak different languages. I do not understand what they have to say and I guess they do not understand [me] *either ... the relations with them* [Israelis] *never reach the same depth* [compared with relations among Russians]. *They do not understand when I talk about seasons and do not know what it is* [the difference between] *day and night, they say, 'What is wrong for you in Tel Aviv? Tel Aviv is like New York.'" (Daniel, 1996)*

Even though Daniel already thinks of himself as an Israeli—"I feel Israeli, not a sabra[7], but I feel Israeli"—the difference between Russian and Israeli cultural patterns forms an impediment to establishing friendships:

Interviewer: "What bothers you in establishing friendships with Israelis?"

Daniel: "I think it is the background. We have different myths. The conceptual world is a little different. All my interactions with Israelis are generally like that: we talk, everything is okay. It is interesting, but it does not move forward. They start talking about the army, it's interesting enough, but it has nothing to do with my life. And when I talk about the migration process, it has nothing to do with their life. Maybe there are no common experiences, no common interests." (Daniel, 1996)

Mark did not have German friends. To the question "Would you like to have more contacts with Germans?" he replied: "To tell you the truth, I have enough already, because, well, it's just that the relations with each person are a bit different," and, as if he had read Schütz himself, he continues:

"Well, the way everything works is different, the mentality is just different, and the things that are natural for us ... they just aren't understood here, and vice versa." (Mark, 1996)

Interviewees also gave examples of difficulties in comprehension between individuals in situations where jokes are told. Viktor reports having an acquaintanceship with a few Germans. But these acquaintanceships "don't develop into true friendships". When asked the reason for this, he responds:

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7 A Jew born in Israel.

"[It comes] *from both sides. It's not just the fault of the Germans or only my fault. But the mentalities are probably—it's a cliché, but that's how it really is—the mentalities are different."*

Interviewer: "Can you give me an example?"

Viktor: "Yes. The best example is humor, the best example that I can think of is humor. There are also many different [types of] *people but I can only speak from experience."*

Interviewer: "That means that one can't laugh about the same things".

Viktor: "One could, quite a bit. In Russian there is a lot of humor that is based on word-play. But there are things which somehow just aren't funny to Germans. I can give you an example. I've tried, well there's this joke, I tried to translate it, it isn't difficult, it's short and I told it to a German I know. He definitely liked the idea but he didn't laugh, and that's not the reaction the joke evokes". (Viktor, 1996)

In the Israeli sample, David also experienced the problem of jokes sometimes being misunderstood on both sides, although on the basis of other examples from the interviews he cannot be categorized as a "wait and see" type.

"I purposely asked to live with an Israeli guy, and I understood that it is not enough to know the language, that there are many ways in which I don't understand him and he doesn't understand me, even though we speak the same language. For instance humor, jokes. I couldn't understand the jokes he told, and when I started to tell a Russian joke in Hebrew he became tense, because he understood that he was supposed to laugh, but he couldn't, and he was uncomfortable, so he asked me not to tell him Russian jokes. It's funny, but it's a part of cross-cultural misunderstanding". (David, 1996)

The fact that jokes are mentioned as indicators of cultural misunderstanding in the context of rapprochement between emigrants and native residents points to the ambiguous condition of these relationships. When jokes are exchanged, complete foreignness is overcome; a certain degree of rapprochement has taken place. At the same time, however, in the misunderstanding of a joke, the gap between members of different cultures becomes clear. While in ordinary, everyday situations, a misunderstanding can be corrected by explanations or repetitions; explaining a joke, if it is possible at all, destroys the humor in it.

In the context of Schütz's metaphor of the stage, the "wait and see" type represents an onlooker who jumps up on the stage, but is still hesitant to overcome the gap between mentalities. Subjects often describe desiring more contact with native residents, but at the same time express uncertainty as to how a mutual understanding can be reached.

Orientation Type: Assimilation

The emigrant with an orientation toward assimilation corresponds to Schütz's "stranger" who has taken on a role in the play, or at least has made the leap to the stage. An orientation toward assimilation implies that the emigrant no

longer makes the distinction between the society of origin and the receiving society from an observer's point of view, but has adopted cultural patterns of the receiving society. This doesn't necessarily mean that one is completely divorced from the country of origin and now only recruits members of the receiving society for social relations. Nevertheless, the emigrant with an orientation toward assimilation is aware of the new rules of the game and, in contrast to the "avoider" and the "wait and see" newcomer, is able to apply them.

This is how Tamara, for example, reflected on the different ways of relating to friends in Russia and in Israel. She places herself in the context of the changes that she herself initiated in the new society. In Russia, her friendships took priority over all other activities, such as study or work. In the new society, the situation is reversed. For Tamara, this is not a cause for complaint. Rather, she realizes that what was right for the old society is no longer appropriate for life in the new one. Concerning her old friends in Russia, she said:

"There are things that they do not understand, also my interpersonal relations; when I was there I suddenly realized that I demand from them a very different hospitality than I give here to friends who come to visit me. When I am there [in Russia], *I demand all the free time of my friends and expect them to be committed to me and to be with me and to go with me to theaters and clubs and bars, just name it. And when my friends come here what is important for me is my study and work and only if there is some time left I am willing to devote it to them, and this also only when I finished what I have to do urgently..."*

"...for instance, in Russia, if one day you do not talk on the phone with your friends it is a disaster and there is meeting together, everything together, and together, and together. Here it is something else, I know that with my very, very best friends [sometimes] *I do not talk even a month and if something happens I know I will not be alone..." (Tamara, 1996)*

The differences that Tamara mentions between her friendships "here" and "there" are presented at the same time as differences between the systems of the USSR and Israel. "There they treat work and study as if it is not real life ... and here it is exactly the opposite." The capitalist-oriented Israel reflects the businesslike friendships—"what can you do for me and what can I do for you"—and the consumer society—"let's go have a picnic and have fun." In the USSR, by contrast, the reciprocal exchange of material and immaterial goods forms a central aspect of Russian friendship, as Markowitz (1991) also states, which is not shifted to the context of "business", but rather is conceived as an obligation of friendship which one follows, as it were, selflessly.[8]

8 It is interesting to note that for some immigrants both in Israel and in Germany, "true" friendship in Russia is also associated with the former socialist system. They recognize that in the current situation in Russia, the formation of friendships is also subject to market-economy conditions.

While Tamara's orientation toward assimilation appears as a quasi-natural process which she recognizes happening, rather than actively creates it herself, Emma on the other hand represents the classic version of assimilation in that she distances herself from fellow immigrants and turns toward Germans. Emma came to Berlin with her parents with the intention of studying. Her parents, whose life in Riga was going quite well, came as chaperons, so to speak, for their daughter. Originally, Emma was friends with a circle of Jewish emigrants who all moved to Berlin—parents and their young children—at the same time. She is the only woman in our subject group of interviewees from Berlin who has an intimate relationship with a German friend.

"Before [shortly after emigrating] *I used to be in these groups* [of immigrants from Riga]. *I never thought ... I never could have imagined for a second in the beginning that I would be together with a German. And not really because he's a German. I couldn't have imagined being together with an American either. I mean he would just have to be a Russian! You have to be able to understand each other. You have to be, ah, able to tell each other everything, what you think and all. Well, it's all right. Now. But before, I was only only with Ru—Je—Jewish Russians or Russian Jews—or something like that—and we went places together, and I had a Jewish boyfriend too. Well, but that has changed and now they don't really take my boyfriend seriously. Although, he's ... well, I didn't ... I don't really have problems because he's likeable. You just have to say that about him. He's just a very interesting man and a handsome man. They have to admit that but they don't accept him anyway. No real friendship is possible there. Only good relations are possible. And that's why ... it doesn't really bother me. I'd much rather give up this Russian circle than my boyfriend." (Emma, 1995)*

The rejection of the old friends from Riga serves as a pretext for Emma's continued contact because of her definitive goal to integrate into the new society:

"Well, I think it's more important to really try to fit into the society, which, it seems to me, most people don't do here." (Emma, 1995)

Tamara structures her social relations in terms of the forms that are usual in the new society, but she does not distance herself from members of her society of origin. Unlike Tamara, Emma criticizes other Russian Jewish emigrants, who "don't want to speak German" and "work out their prejudices". She does not see any reason to establish a friendship with people "only because they're Russian". Thus, in order to assimilate with the Germans she has to distance herself from her former friends.

Ilana represents a third variant of an orientation toward assimilation. Like Emma, Ilana came to Berlin with her family, her parents' friends, and their children, with whom she has been friends since childhood. The friendships continued in Berlin.

"And the others, they think how great our clique is and ... I don't think so. I have to be honest with myself. But that is ... I don't want to talk badly about other people, maybe it's their way of life now and how they think about immigration. I don't know what they're

thinking but ... I don't like it, this way ... and that's most important, they are not honest any more, as they were there." (Ilana, 1996)

Ilana does not describe different forms of friendships in the original and receiving societies, as Tamara does, but rather maintains that the process of emigration itself has altered the friendships. The old friends have changed in the new society: they are no longer available at a moment's notice; they are no longer "honest", meaning they no longer demonstrate unrestrained openness as in Riga. In other words, in order to free oneself from the old friends, some justification is needed. Emma points to her friends' rejection of her German partner, and Ilana refers to her friends' loss of openness. However, a few minutes later in the interview, she criticizes the model of behavior in Riga and praises the German way of life.

"This way of living I like better than ours. Because ours is always ... when you drink a vodka together, then you think, that is the best friend and you try to pull everything out of him and to shake everything out of yourself. That's not for me." (Ilana, 1996)

In contrast to Tamara, who explains the difference between the forms of friendships as a difference in systems, not in terms of the advantages or disadvantages of individuals, Ilana argues on the basis of vague perceptions and aversions. Because she does not recognize that the model of Russian friendship is useful "there" but not "here", as does Tamara, she is left with little choice but to renounce the form of old friendships—although her renunciation is hardly consistent. She now accuses the old friends of exactly what she claimed to miss beforehand: openness and the outpouring of the soul. On the one hand, Ilana is still strongly tied to her old friends: "We are now not so many here and we've got to stick together, whether we want to or not." On the other hand, she perceives emigrant culture as an impediment to entering and succeeding in German society:

"We are trapped here and we can't get out of this circle. So we're at one level and we can't get any higher. By higher, I mean into German circles." (Ilana, 1996)

The cases above show how the orientation toward assimilation is marked by a higher degree of complexity than the "avoidance" and "wait and see" orientations. Whereas emigrants who avoid assimilation are satisfied with the notion that friendships are only possible among themselves, and those with a wait-and-see attitude wait for possible changes to come, immigrants with an orientation toward assimilation perform a balancing act between the trusted cultural patterns and the new group which is seen as being more attractive or more useful. This balancing act does not always succeed, as the three examples have shown. Only Tamara is able to take on a new model without discarding the old one.

The Jewish Religious Orientation

Schütz did not conceive of the stranger's rapprochement with the new society as a series of phases. Nevertheless, the types of orientation that we have examined here—"avoidance", "wait and see", and "assimilation"—could be interpreted as stages in an ongoing process. But it is clear that not every immigrant will undergo every phase. The following two types of orientation, however, do not conform to Schütz's notion because the differences in cultural patterns in the original and receiving societies no longer play a role, whether as obstacles to be overcome or as attractive challenges.

The first of these types, which we have termed here a Jewish religious orientation, points to the fact that neither Schütz's research nor research on migration in general recognizes that all societies are culturally heterogeneous. In every society there are various cultures and milieus, which can be so different from one another that members of diverse milieus are more foreign to one another than members of similar milieus in different societies. A concrete example of this is religious Jews who live in different parts of the world but are more similar and better able to understand one another than are religious and secular Jews within one society. For emigrants of a Jewish religious orientation, the cultural differences between the original and receiving societies are not decisive factors. Such individuals choose their friends according to the criteria of affiliation with Judaism, where affiliation in this case is indicated by piety, concern for Jewish issues, or a bond with Jewish tradition. Emigrants like Sara who personify this type do not avoid relations with native residents or with other Russian Jews. However, these relations are not considered very important.

Sara's parents were Communists by conviction. At the age of 16, she turned toward religion and began to abide by the dietary laws; which was not always easy. She became very active in the Jewish community, which was often dangerous for students.

"And I decided, after I turned 16, I limited myself, [I spent] *all my free-time, only with the Jewish community ... and my entire circle of friends, all at once, were just from the* [Jewish] *community, and we had a very strong feeling of belonging which is absolutely not the case here in the* [Jewish] *community."* (Sara, 1995)

Like those who actively avoid social relations with native residents, Sara praises friendship "there" in contrast to friendships "here". However, Sara is referring only to friendships within the Jewish community. Friendships outside the Jewish community, whether in her country of origin or in Berlin, are not mentioned.

The young people whom Sara meets in the Jewish community in Berlin do not live up to her expectations. They are superficial and are only concerned with money and consumer goods. Nevertheless, she has found some,

who "somehow reach my intellectual level", although these acquaintances cannot be compared with her past relationships. Although the new acquaintances are hard pressed to live up to Sara's expectations, she is still oriented "here" solely toward members of the Jewish community, just as she was "there". In her country of origin, to pursue a Jewish lifestyle was a conscious act of opposition against the regime, and this was also a unifying factor for young Jews. In Berlin, personal relationships with members of the Jewish community should serve as a bulwark against the danger of assimilation. From Sara's perspective this danger exists because being a Jew in Berlin is less dangerous, and therefore it is easier to give up one's Jewish identity.

As we can observe, the Jewish religious orientation in Germany defines itself differently than in Israel, inasmuch as in Israel, the criteria of religious piety are narrower, limited to orthodoxy. Ilana, for example, chooses to develop personal relations mainly with Israelis chosen according to religious criteria:

"I am not very closed in my Judaism and I understand very well the secular newcomers from Russia. The fact that they are secular is not a reason for me not to be with them and be their friend. We have a lot in common, but with the secular Israeli I have no relation, because I have not had the chance to meet them, because all my life here is in a religious environment." (Ilana, 1996)

Regardless of whether the Jewish religious orientation is defined as more or less devout, in any case it offers inner stability and external support, even though it clearly places *a priori* limits on the circle from which friendships can develop. Because this limit is chosen freely, however, it does not appear to be a hindrance.

The Personal Orientation

A personal orientation is similar to the Jewish religious orientation in that cultural differences—in the sense of differences in mentality—are not considered important in the initiation of inter-ethnic relations. These two orientations are opposites in other ways, however. Immigrants with a Jewish religious orientation limit themselves to a narrow spectrum of possible relationships, while immigrants with a personal orientation are open to many kinds of relations. Those with a personal orientation note differences between "here" and "there" in the ways of relating to others, no less than immigrants with a wait-and-see attitude do, for example. But they do not orient themselves according to generic criteria of cultural similarity. They are guided rather by individuals' shared characteristics: "We are, we all are similar by the fact that we're different. That's what we have in common."

In this sentence Karel was able to formulate the leitmotif of a personal orientation. This type also finds no place in Schütz's work, apparently because it is

always assumed that differences in culture and mentality play the major role in the initiation of personal relations between immigrants and native residents. As the following example shows, this is not necessarily the case. Karel reports that because of the Israeli-Arab conflict, it was unthinkable for him in the Ukraine to be friends with a Palestinian. In Germany, he has met Palestinians and reports that they are

"really normal people. We are good friends. And from that point on, I believe in choosing my friends based not on belonging to a particular group, but just on whether or not I like the person." (Karel, 1995)

Larissa has "German, Russian and also Jewish friends". In response to the question about whether she perceives differences in the way personal relationships are formed in Russia and Germany, she replies: "No, absolutely not." To a follow-up question by the interviewer, who apparently could not believe that Larissa does not see any differences between "there" and "here", she says:

"I mean—to the point—it's clear that people have different mentalities but that plays, that's merely interesting to me. It's not so important. That doesn't mean that I, in this way, that they are a little different, that they maybe have another religion or something, I don't know, a different mentality. Really, that attracts me." (Larissa, 1995)

Alfred, from the Israeli group of subjects, also rejects the interviewer's assumption of meaningful cultural similarities and differences. Alfred speaks of a Beduin friend:

"I met him by chance. He is a very good friend. I wish all the Israelis and Russians will be like him, and I also have Arab friends that I met at the preparatory program at the university and at the dormitories."

Interviewer: "Do you feel that these friends are similar to you culturally more than the Israelis?"

Alfred: "No, I talk only about my friends and good friends without any consideration of their race and nationality ... I have German friends, good friends; as I said before, I do not generalize about people."

When he arrived in Israel, Alfred lived first in a Kibbutz. The uniqueness of this lifestyle did not bother him. For him, individuals count; some are nice and others less so:

"They were different from me, but not to an extent that prevented me from accepting them and them from accepting me." (Alfred, 1996)

Waiting in Germany—Assimilating in Israel

If we now look at the distribution of orientations in our groups of interviewees, it becomes clear that the immigrants in Israel are much more interested in initiating social relations with native residents than immigrants in Germany.

The "avoidance" type does not appear at all in the Israel group. In the German group however, 18% (N=8) consider social relations with native residents undesirable. The "wait and see" orientation shows up strongly in both groups. Among immigrants in Germany, 43% (N=19) have difficulties overcoming "differences in mentality" which they perceive as an obstacle, with 36.8% (N=14) of the Israel sample reporting similar difficulties. The largest difference between the two groups appeared in the "assimilation" type, which described 42.1% (N= 16) of immigrants in Israel and 15.9% (N=7) of immigrants in Germany. The Jewish religious orientation is represented with low percentages in both groups: 6.8% (N=3) among those who went to Germany and 10.5% (N=4) among those who went to Israel. The personal orientation can be found more often in the German sample (15.9%, N=7) than in the Israeli sample (10.5%, N=4).

Because subjects were assigned to orientation types regardless of whether or not they actually maintained personal relations with native residents, we now turn to the correlation between orientation and actual relations—i.e. relations which were explicitly named in the subject's description of their network. Much as we had expected, the majority of the avoiders and those with a "wait and see" attitude did not maintain social relations with native residents. Nevertheless, there was a minority in every group who identified native residents in their network, even among the avoiders. It was also not surprising that almost all immigrants who were categorized as "assimilation" types had native friends or acquaintances, with only three exceptions. As expected, the personal-orientation types maintained contacts with native residents, as did those with a Jewish religious orientation, with one exception.

Our initial question was: Does social integration occur differently in the new society depending on whether the person emigrates as a Russian Jew to Israel or Germany? The answer is that, on the level of actual social relations, there is only slightly more integration among the Israeli group. But this difference is much more marked when the orientation toward social relations is considered.

This difference in orientation between the two immigrant groups can be explained in connection with Schütz's concepts of the "stranger" and the "homecomer" (Schütz 1944, 1945). Russian Jews who go to Israel are welcomed, at least according to official ideology, as "homecomers". For the Russian Jews themselves, however, this "return" is often alienating. This is explained by the disappointment of a homecoming in which things and people

do not turn out to be as expected. At the same time, and in spite of the alienation, there is a feeling of affiliation, which is based on the notion of a home for all Jews. So while immigrants in Israel experience a more alienated or alienating return, the majority of immigrants in Germany remain simply estranged.[9] In Schütz's terminology, it is clear that the immigrants in Israel are more inclined to enter into social relations with their fellow actors as partners, and to participate in the action in progress, than those who went to Germany.

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9 Regarding the question: "In which way is your relationship to Germany and Germans influenced by an understanding of the Holocaust?" see Schütze 1997.