osteuropa

Migration, Identity, Politics

Trans-inter-national: Russia, Israel, Germany

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Maps

Parallel stories

The end of the Soviet Union was the beginning of a great exodus. Since the early 1990s, more than a million people have left the Soviet Union and its successor states – and have found a home in Israel. At the same time, around 2.3 million "Russian German late resettlers" and almost 250,000 people "with Jewish nationality" received permanent right to reside in Germany. Women and men, old and young, Jews, Christians and agnostics all came. Some lived in cities of millions, others in villages, some brought academic qualifications with them, others had been tractor drivers on collective farms. They all had to build new lives for themselves.

Three decades have passed since then. In the 1990s, integrating these people was as big a challenge for the destination society as for the migrants themselves. Today it's considered a success. However, new questions are being raised. Integration is no longer seen as a one-way street, as absorption into a society, but as reciprocal influencing with open outcomes. How does the self-image of people change in their new homeland? What stories do they tell of the reasons for their migration and their orientation in a new place? Is it traditional habits or the new surroundings that determine the choice of the private milieu, professional paths and political attitudes? What role does language play – as a marker of exclusion, as a driver of classification, and as a means of communication at work? What distinguishes those, who still were children when they came to Germany or Israel, from their parents? What does immigration mean to the destination society? How do these people shape the cultural life and the political culture of their new homeland? What connections do they maintain with their old homeland?

Answering these questions comparatively is the way forward. This facilitates the grasping of commonalities and differences between the destination societies and between the immigrants. In Israel, the Jewish immigrants were seen as "coming home", so too the "late resettlers" in Germany. Both groups experienced exclusion and stigmatisation. Israel granted the "home comers" citizenship immediately but offered scant social support. In Germany, only the "late resettlers" promptly became citizens; however, even the Jewish immigrants were included in the social systems. The effects of the different approaches are ambivalent. In Israel, many immigrants underwent a social decline; in Germany, the difficulties of professional reorientation were cushioned. Yet in Israel, enforced self-help and familial cohesion were the foundations of a later rise. Many Russian German "late resettlers" have successfully climbed the ladder into the middle class in Germany.

The influence of the former immigrants on politics in Germany is, contrary to what is often stated, small. It shouldn't be overestimated even in Israel, where they form a relevant group of electors. The same applies to international politics. It's a myth that Russian speakers in Israel or in Germany are supporters of a politics that is especially friendly to Russia and they influence the external relations of Jerusalem and Berlin. However, the reverse is the case, and international relations have a considerable influence on the fate of just such people, who belong to more than just one society.

The basis for so many Jews wanting to leave the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s had been created by the anti-Zionism, inseparably merged with antisemitism, of that country. The "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy under Mikhail Gorbachev led to

the abolition of travel restrictions and unleashed the wave of migration. Since then the world has fundamentally changed. Irrespective of numerous differences, Russia and Israel foster pragmatic connections. Russia is, since its intervention in the war in Syria in 2015, a new regional power in the Middle East. Israel is simultaneously the most militarily powerful and the most strongly threatened state in the region. Where Moscow and Jerusalem see advantages for themselves from coordinated actions, they work together. What binds the two states, for totally different reasons, is a view of international relations in which international law counts for little, but state power, above all military might, counts for a great deal.

This separates both states from Germany. Jerusalem and Berlin are still tied by the crimes against humanity of the Holocaust, German acknowledgment of guilt and the specific responsibility for the present deriving from this. But the clamp of history is getting fragile, and differences are growing. The two societies are drifting apart; in a Germany that is surrounded by peaceful neighbours, it's difficult for many to put themselves in the place of a society that exists in thoroughly hostile surroundings.

This volume is a selection of contributions from the OSTEUROPA volume "Migration, Identität, Politik. Trans-inter-national: Russland, Israel, Deutschland". It was produced within the framework of the first year of the Sylke-Tempel-Fellowship-Programme of the *Stiftung Deutsch-Israelisches Zukunftsforum* (DIZF) with the participation of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik* (DGAP), the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Osteuropakunde* (DGO) and the *Zentrum Liberale Moderne* (LibMod).

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Berlin, October 2020

Manfred Sapper, Volker Weichsel
Translated by Toby Harrison

Jascha Nemtsov

Reviving A Forgotten Culture

Russian-Jewish Music's Struggles in German Culture

The pianist and musicologist Jascha Nemtsov is working to stop Jewish culture from being forgotten. As a music archaeologist, he has uncovered the works of persecuted composers. He has traced the Jewish legacy in European music and familiarised listeners with the sound of the New Jewish School. As an individual and through his work, Nemtsov represents the Russian-Jewish cultural transfer. Incidentally, he also fills in gaps in the German culture of remembrance. In an autobiographical retrospective of Jewish life in the Soviet Union, Nemtsov explains why the Gulag was a major stroke of luck for his father, and why his family emigrated to Germany, of all places. He has a problem with the fact that many Germans are only interested in Jewish culture when it helps them to feel better about themselves. Never has knowledge about the New Jewish School been greater than today, although in musical life, it remains marginalised.

OSTEUROPA: *How did your parents, as Soviet Jews, survive the Holocaust? Where were they when the Wehrmacht attacked the Soviet Union on 22nd June 1941?*

Jascha Nemtsov: Paradoxically, the Gulag saved my father's life. He was studying at a defence industry college in Tula and was arrested in February 1938 and sentenced to 10 years in a prison camp for 'membership of an anti-Soviet organisation'. The charge was completely absurd; this was the time of the Great Terror. When the war began, my father was in a camp in northeast Siberia. And my mother was studying at a pedagogical college in Leningrad. She experienced the siege of Leningrad. But she was lucky too, as she was evacuated in February 1942.

OSTEUROPA: *Where did your parents come from?*

Nemtsov: From what is now Belarus. My father, who was born in 1910, came from a shtetl in the Vitebsk region. My mother came from Polotsk, close by.

OSTEUROPA: *How did your parents meet?*

Nemtsov: My father had acquaintances in Leningrad, and they knew my mother's family. They met and decided to get married during a visit in the late 1950s.

Jascha Nemtsov (1963), pianist, Professor of Musicology, History of Jewish Music, University of Music Franz Liszt Weimar, Berlin

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OSTEUROPA: *During a visit?*

Nemtsov: My father had been released by then, that happened in 1948. He was rehabilitated in the Khrushchev period.

OSTEUROPA: *How did he manage to survive his prison term?*

Nemtsov: He was lucky. He had done two years of heavy forced labour in the mine when an officer noticed him and transferred him to the mine's administration to work in the office. He made something of a 'career' there. While he was still a prisoner, he became the deputy head of a state-owned farm that used forced labour. He stayed there after his release and continued to work as a civilian until 1965. There was only one difference for him: when he was sent to Magadan to deal with something while he was a prisoner, he was only allowed to travel accompanied by an armed guard. After his release he could travel on his own.
My parents got married in 1958. My mother joined him in the Far East. They lived in various settlements there, each of which belonged to a camp complex. My elder sister and I were born in Magadan.

OSTEUROPA: *But you didn't live there for long.*

Nemtsov: No. My father was able to retire early at the age of 55. My mother had a permit allowing her to live in Leningrad. It was almost impossible to get such a propiska for Moscow or Leningrad, but if you had one, you didn't lose it if you went to Siberia voluntarily. My parents moved to Leningrad with us children.

OSTEUROPA: *When did you start to play the piano?*

Nemtsov: At the age of six. My parents wanted to send me to a special music school, but I wasn't accepted. At first, I had private lessons, and later I attended a music school run by the city. I only got in at the second attempt, but from the age of 12, I went to the special school. I passed my school-leaving exam there, and then I went to the Leningrad Conservatoire.

OSTEUROPA: *When was that?*

Nemtsov: From 1981 to 1986, the period when the gerontocracy ruled the Soviet Union, the ailing Brezhnevs, Chernenkos, and Andropovs. And then one appeared who was young, travelled around the country, and was even able to speak...

OSTEUROPA: *Gorbachev. So, you had to do your military service during perestroika?*

Nemtsov: Yes, it was pretty bizarre. I was called up in the summer of 1986. All music graduates were supposed to be assigned to a music corps. The stupid thing is that military bands don't need a piano. So, as a pianist, I was sent to a tactical missile forces brigade.

OSTEUROPA: *That must have strengthened the Soviet Union's defensive capacity!*

Nemtsov: It certainly did. I was a hopeless soldier; firstly, because I wasn't the least bit athletic, and secondly, because I had absolutely no motivation. If I was going to have to serve in the army at all, I wanted it to be in the music corps.

OSTEUROPA: *Were you afraid you would be sent to Afghanistan, where the Soviet Union had been fighting a war since 1979?*

Nemtsov: No. Jews were considered unreliable by the army leadership, so they weren't sent to Afghanistan. But I was afraid I might not survive my military service. There were deaths all the time due to negligent handling of equipment, and this happened in our training brigade too. And then there was the dedovshchina, which every new recruit suffered under.

OSTEUROPA: *Dedovshchina, the 'rule of the grandfathers'.*

Nemtsov: Yes, as a raw recruit you had no rights at all. The older recruits could do whatever they wanted with you. They could make you their slave, force you to take their shoes off or make their bed, or force you to steal things for them. You could be beaten up at any time. Anyone could receive this treatment.

OSTEUROPA: *So being Jewish didn't make any difference.*

Nemtsov: At the least, it was less important than the fact of being a raw recruit. There was a lot of violence and bullying in the army's official everyday life too. I arrived at this missile brigade base in Luga, a dump 150 km south of Leningrad. We had to fall in, and a non-commissioned officer inspected us. He went along the line taking hold of everyone by the belt, pulled, and when it gave way the NCO punched the recruit in the stomach, just like that. He stood in front of me and started to play around with my belt, and at that moment I couldn't stop myself saying, spontaneously, "Hands off!" That was taboo: I had defended myself, and I had used the familiar form in speaking to him. He was flabbergasted, ordered me out, and took me to the toilet with some other NCOs. I thought they were going to beat me up. He took out a knife and, threatening me, cut my belt off. I was finished after that. My superior officer was another NCO. He was younger than me and came from a quite different social milieu. Once he found out that I had been to the Conservatoire, he didn't miss a single opportunity to bully me. He made the sentry wake me up at night, and I had to sort dirty laundry and clean the lavatories.

OSTEUROPA: *And after the army?*

Nemtsov: I wanted to change my profession as quickly as possible, because I couldn't see any prospect of making a career in music. I wanted to learn foreign languages in the hope that it would enable me to get out of the Soviet Union.

OSTEUROPA: *When did you get the idea of emigrating?*

Nemtsov: While I was in the army. I was so disgusted by what I experienced there that I knew I had to get out. Every army mirrors its society. I didn't want to live any longer in a society that considered such an army to be the normal state of affairs.

OSTEUROPA: *Did you want to go to Israel?*

Nemtsov: No. Like almost all Soviet Jews, we wanted to go to America. At that time the social situation of immigrants in Israel was precarious. We knew that many highly qualified emigrants had to work in low-paid jobs for years or decades to make ends meet. Educated people worked as cleaners, engineers worked as salesmen. That wasn't our idea of the future. My sister was a very good mathematician and computer specialist. Literally all her Jewish colleagues had already emigrated to the US. Our plan was that my sister would find a good job and we would all be able to build our future around that.

OSTEUROPA: *But?*

Nemtsov: We had applied to emigrate in 1989. The Soviet authorities approved our application in October. But the US immigration authorities had changed their regulations on 1 October. Up until then, Soviet Jews could only apply for a visa for Israel. For decades emigrants travelled via Austria and later via Italy, as there were no direct flights between the USSR and Israel. Once you were in the transit area of Vienna airport, you could decide to go to the US. Usually the US simply accepted these people, and from the 1970s onwards hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews reached America in that way. The US now decided to discontinue this and to organise the immigration process more formally. We were unlucky: 12 days too late.

OSTEUROPA: *So what happened next?*

Nemtsov: From 1990, we tried to emigrate to Germany. Initially the consulate of the Federal Republic operated a system of drawing lots, but we had no luck. Then, in February 1991, it became possible for Soviet Jews to go to Germany as quota refugees. We were able to enter Germany in July 1992.

OSTEUROPA: *Was your family religious?*

Nemtsov: Yes and no. Both of my parents came from Orthodox families. My father had even studied for a couple of years at a yeshiva in Vilnius. His parents struggled to feed their family and sent him there when he was 13. He was devout and was even a kohen, so he was very familiar with the liturgy and the Jewish rituals. Of course, he couldn't

practise his religion in the camp. And at home, religion only played a role on Jewish holidays. My parents didn't want us children to encounter any problems as a result of religion.

OSTEUROPA: *How many of your relatives in Belarus were killed in the Shoah?*

Nemtsov: On my father's side, almost the entire family, and my mother's sister.

OSTEUROPA: *What was the role of the Shoah in the family's memory?*

Nemtsov: A major one. The Shoah and the war were very much present, as were Judaism and Israel. Israel was a 'non-state' in the Soviet Union. The press was full of attacks on Israel illustrated with antisemitic caricatures. Soviet anti-Zionism was no more than a variety of antisemitism.

OSTEUROPA: *Has your relationship to Judaism changed since you've been in Germany?*

Nemtsov: No. Unlike some Soviet Jews, who only discovered their Jewish identity after they had emigrated, I didn't become a Jew for the first time here. In the Soviet Union we had the notorious pyatyi punkt (fifth paragraph), the entry in your passport where your nationality had to be recorded. No Jew could avoid discrimination. If you wanted a library card, it would specify 'Russian', 'Tatar', or 'Jew', if that was what you were. There was everyday discrimination and no escape from it. My sister was one of the few Jews who were allowed to study at all in the Mathematics Faculty in Leningrad. There were strict quotas for Jews, depending on the subject. She wasn't permitted to study for a higher degree, even though she was a first-class student and had the necessary recommendations. After she graduated, she couldn't find a job at first, because all the positions for which she was qualified were connected with the armaments sector. And in that sector, there was an invisible barrier: 'No Jews allowed.'

OSTEUROPA: *You came to Stuttgart first...*

Nemtsov: Yes, we had decided in favour of Baden-Württemberg. We had read that it was the warmest part of Germany, and since we were from Leningrad that appealed to us. Also, it looked as though there would be good job prospects there for my sister, with her knowledge of mathematics and computers. We arrived in the reception centre for quota refugees in Esslingen and stayed there for three months. We were supposed to go to Crailsheim next, but we insisted that we wanted to live in a big city and moved to Stuttgart.

OSTEUROPA: *What were your plans?*

Nemtsov: The first thing I wanted to do was to learn German properly. Then a number of things happened that, quite accidentally, set my future course. I have the Jewish community in Stuttgart to thank for the first of these. We were still living in the Esslingen

reception centre, and the community paid for our S-Bahn tickets, if we went to the community centre on the Sabbath. So, we had free tickets for public transport, which we had to 'work off' by attending the religious service in the morning. I could spend the rest of the day doing whatever I wanted in Stuttgart. I went to the college of music and saw on the notice board that a woman was looking for a piano teacher. I had never done that in German, but I thought I would have a try. I quickly familiarised myself with the technical terms and wondered how much I should charge. Five marks an hour, perhaps? A social worker roared with laughter when I told her that. She said I should charge 50 marks. The lady who was looking for a piano teacher, a lawyer, was quite happy to pay me 50 marks. Overnight, I had a profession. I took on a number of pupils and walked all over Stuttgart giving lessons so as not to have to spend money on public transport. Then I worked for almost 10 years as a piano teacher at a music school, at a time when I didn't even have a piano of my own.

I have the lawyer to thank for the second thing that happened. In the spring of 1993, she arranged for me to give a recital in a sanatorium deep in the Black Forest. At the age of almost 30, I gave my first concert. And then she invited me to a recital by Anatol Ugorski in the Stuttgart Liederhalle, with an invitation to dinner with Ugorski afterwards. She thought that if two Russian Jews who both play the piano meet, they must immediately take a liking to each other. Needless to say, Ugorski was not the least bit interested in me. But on that evening, I met Beate Schröder-Nauenberg, who asked me if I would like to participate in a concert project with songs from Theresienstadt. In this way I began to take a close interest in the composers Hans Krása, Viktor Ullmann, Gideon Klein, and Pavel Haas, all of whom were murdered. Since then the question of forgotten and oppressed composers has been a constant preoccupation of mine. Beate Schröder-Nauenberg was a great help to me with my written German; she went through my first texts on Haas, Arthur Lourié, and others with me word by word. She also introduced me to the conductor Israel Yinon, who sadly died far too young. He gave me the idea of studying unknown Russian-Jewish composers, about whom he knew from his teacher in Israel, the Russian-Jewish composer Josef Dorfmann.

OSTEUROPA: *That was the start of your work as a musicologist, which led you to rediscover the New Jewish School. Were you able to take your PhD in Germany without any difficulty?*

Nemtsov: No, not at all. When I asked the musicologist Albrecht Riethmüller of the FU Berlin if I could write a dissertation, he told me I would have to take a basic degree in musicology first. There was no question of my doing that.

But another fortunate coincidence helped me. In 1998, I made a trip to Moscow and St. Petersburg to work in the archives. There I found some extremely valuable material relating to the Russian-Jewish composers. I looked at the scores and realised immediately that I wanted to play this wonderful music. I organised a concert with a singer in Stuttgart. Ulrich Bopp, the chair of the Robert Bosch Foundation, was in the audience. He was very enthusiastic about the repertoire and supported my application to the foundation for research funding. I then only needed to find an institution where I could carry out my research project. I was able to do that at the University of Potsdam, working under Karl E. Grözinger who also became my doctoral supervisor.

OSTEUROPA: *So, your initial interest in composers such as Joseph Achron, Aleksandr Veprik and Lazare Saminsky was as an artist, and the musicological work followed?*

Nemtsov: Yes, I was interested in them as a pianist. In 1999, I recorded the first chamber works with Tabea Zimmermann and Ingolf Turban.

Jascha Nemtsov *© Elisabeth N. Reuter*

OSTEUROPA: *Was there any interest in the New Jewish School in Germany?*

Nemtsov: Very little. I wanted to record works for solo piano as a first step. These were released later as a series of three CDs with the title 'Across Boundaries'. I had found a label, Edition Abseits, that was prepared to do this, but we needed money to finance the recordings. We contacted a foundation, and the response was that they thought it was too abstruse...

OSTEUROPA: *Why? After all, by that time the Musica Reanimata association had already rediscovered numerous composers who were oppressed, persecuted, and killed by the National Socialists.*

Nemtsov: Yes, I was even a member of Musica Reanimata. But the association had a limitation I found curious. It did not concern itself with Jewish composers from the Soviet Union who had fallen victim to Stalinism and whose music could not be played in Nazi Germany either. Musica Reanimata is only interested in composers who suffered under National Socialism. It was a bizarre situation: I could organise an evening devoted to Arthur Lourié, who was a Russian Jew, without any difficulty, but not one with works by his Jewish contemporaries from Russia. Lourié had already left the Soviet Union in the 1920s; he settled in France, and in 1940 he went to America to escape from the Germans. As a result, he counted as a victim of National Socialism, but that didn't apply to 'my' Jewish composers. That was when I began to understand that people in Germany are not interested in Jewish culture for its own sake, but only to the extent that it helps them to feel better about themselves.

OSTEUROPA: *It's not just in connection with Jewish culture that you find this way of thinking, putting things in pigeonholes. How long did it take for the literature of the Gulag, Shalamov's Kolyma Tales for example, to be read in the West and for their significance to be understood? More obstacles to reception were caused by the Cold War than people thought, and they still cast their shadows today.*

Nemtsov: That's true.

OSTEUROPA: *Since 1999, you have given hundreds of concerts, recorded dozens of CDs with piano and chamber works by Jewish composers, given interviews, and published articles, essays and books. Has the New Jewish School now arrived in musical life and in musicology?*

Nemtsov: Hardly at all. The music of the New Jewish School is marginal, and only a few music-lovers know the composers. That is unlikely to change.

OSTEUROPA: *But aren't there signs that Jewish culture is meeting a more positive response than in the past? For example, the Abraham Geiger College in Potsdam, where training for rabbis has been going on since 1999 and where you teach sacred music for synagogues, and your own chair in the History of Jewish Music, which was established in 2013 at the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt in Weimar.*

Nemtsov: I don't mean this as a criticism of Weimar, but the simple fact that that is where the chair was set up indicates otherwise. The idea was that the chair would be attached to the Berlin-Brandenburg Centre for Jewish Studies, and it was financed initially by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. But none of the universities in Berlin or Brandenburg was interested! None of them had any substantive interest in the subject, and they were not prepared to take over the funding of the chair after the initial period. In this situation Christoph Stölzl, the President of the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt, seized the opportunity and said Weimar would be delighted to have the chair.

OSTEUROPA: *If you are right when you say that Jewish composers are still marginal, what about Mieczysław Weinberg?*

Nemtsov: Weinberg was fortunate posthumously. There is a great demand for his music. For years now, people have been competing with each other to see who can perform and record his works before anyone else. Of course, that also has something to do with his biography. He suffered greatly. He was persecuted by the Germans, lost his family in the Holocaust, was persecuted under Stalinism too, and his father-in-law, the director and actor Solomon Michoels, was killed on Stalin's orders.
There is something fundamentally questionable about connecting the quality of someone's music with their status as a victim. Those are two different things, and not every persecuted composer was a genius. But this victim status is important for marketing purposes. If a composer was persecuted by the Nazis, the Germans feel responsible for him. In Weinberg's case, a number of factors came together: his oeuvre was extensive and unknown, the music is outstanding, an active publisher has been working hard to get it performed, and the culture industry is enthused by his biography. Weinberg has arrived at the centre of musical life. Gabriel Chmura was recording Weinberg symphonies even before 2000...

OSTEUROPA: *But they all fell flat...*

Nemtsov: Exactly. At that time there was no critical mass; that has only come about over the last decade. Weinberg is the exception. The composers of the New Jewish School and their works are still unknown in Germany.

OSTEUROPA: *What about in Russia?*

Nemtsov: No one talks about them there.

OSTEUROPA: *But in Israel!?*

Nemtsov: No, things are no different there. When I was doing my research in Israel, many colleagues expressed surprise at my interest in this or that composer: 'But that isn't music!' Many of them prefer to be part of the big international music scene. In their eyes, only Brahms, Beethoven and the standard repertoire count as music. All Israeli musicians who think highly of themselves pursue careers abroad. They feel hemmed in in Israel. And if you suggest that they could play Achron or Veprik for a change, they

immediately have this feeling of being constrained again. In Israel, people have a tendency to underestimate their own music. The concert programmes there are much more conventional than in Europe. Works by Israeli and Jewish composers are predominantly played abroad. This also has to do with the fact that there isn't the same level of state support for cultural life in Israel as there is in Germany.

OSTEUROPA: *Do you see yourself mainly as a pianist, or rather as a music archaeologist who finds hidden treasures, and in that way preserves the heritage of East European Jewish culture for Europe?*

Nemtsov: That's a difficult question to answer. As a pianist, I was a late starter and someone who made a lateral career move. I began my musical career at an age when some child prodigies have almost ended theirs. I perform regularly, have a great deal of experience, and have recorded almost 40 CDs since 1996. I received awards for some of them: for example, the Opus Klassik Award for the recording of Vsevolod Zaderatsky's piano works. The music of the New Jewish School made it possible for me to establish myself in musical life. I would never have got as far as I have if I had played Chopin and Schubert. But at the same time, it's a stigma. I'm only known for this repertoire...

OSTEUROPA: *That is your profile!*

Nemtsov: It's both; it can be seen positively or negatively. There are times when I would like to play something different. I have remained an outsider in the music business, even though I have a very successful career.

OSTEUROPA: *Many roads lead to Rome. One way is the direct route taken by someone like Igor Levit, who has established himself at the centre of musical life with outstanding interpretations ranging from Beethoven to Shostakovich. Or one can start from the margins. Many Jewish artists from the Soviet Union have become successful in German musical life, Gidon Kremer for example. They have all been here for decades. Does the public still see you as a 'Soviet artist' and a Russian-Jewish pianist?*

Nemtsov: Clichés are persistent. Many people think any pianist from Russia must be a representative of the Russian piano school. That is a myth. In terms of technique, I didn't learn anywhere near enough at our Conservatoire. Overall, though, the requirements we had to meet were higher and broader than what is required of students at German music academies. The strength of the training in Russia was that we learned to situate music in a broader context. Music does not only consist of notes; it is connected with many other spiritual and social fields.

OSTEUROPA: *Your subject is the history of Jewish music. When we think about the history of Christian music, we associate it with motets, masses, oratorios, and passions by Dunstable, Bach and Schütz. What is the Jewish element in Jewish music?*

Nemtsov: That's not a very helpful comparison, since being Jewish is more than a religion. It is also a nation, and to that extent Jewish music is a national musical culture. Each national musical culture consists of conventions only. Music is like language. We know that the word 'Jew' consists of three letters in English; that is just how things developed. In the same way, over the years certain melodic phrases have become established in music that appear in traditional Jewish music, and they are now experienced as typically Jewish intonations. But there is a different conception in every country of what typical Jewish music is. What was thought of as 'typically Jewish' in Eastern Europe, wasn't seen as typical at all in North Africa. But there are, nevertheless, some connecting elements in the shape of specific genres: for example, music performed in synagogues. There is no clear formula, no unambiguous motifs. There is a close connection between Jewish music and Jewish identity, and this identity is expressed in different ways. That's why I always refuse to define Jewish music. For me, it's an inclusive concept.

OSTEUROPA: *The idea of national culture tends to be looked at askance in musicology. Do colleagues react standoffishly to your field and your chair?*

Nemtsov: I did notice that at the start, it was very clear. But it has more to do with the zeitgeist than with my research field; it's a reflection of the turn away from the nation state and towards transnational integration and globalisation. The idea of the nation is interpreted as a construct, and anything national is seen as anachronistic and backward-looking.

OSTEUROPA: *But it was Jews in particular who, historically, were forced to be mobile, to adapt, and to adopt influences from different cultural spaces. In his book The Jewish Century. Yuri Slezkine, a Russian Jew who emigrated and now teaches at Berkeley, shows that Jews were mediators between town and country and between different social milieus; they were multilingual, multicultural, flexible and mobile, and in this way, they anticipated all the cosmopolitan values that characterise globalised modernity today.*

Nemtsov: That is only one aspect. At the beginning of the twentieth century, 90 per cent of all Jews spoke Yiddish. In addition to religion, their language gave the Jews the second constitutive element of a nation. When Jews emigrated from the Russian Pale of Settlement or from Galicia in the late nineteenth century, they were immediately able to communicate in Yiddish with Jews in America. Even my parents still spoke Yiddish with each other. My father had only learnt Russian at the age of 16. Religion and shared traditions and values are still important elements of Jewish culture today, but the relationship with Israel has now become absolutely essential for us Jews. Today, Jewish existence stands or falls with Israel. That was already the case in the Soviet Union. Judaism was not present, and Jewish culture was practically non-existent. But as a ten-year-old I knew that there was a state called Israel, where brave Jews lived who had defended themselves against attack by the Arab states in the Yom Kippur War. As Jews, we felt connected with that.

OSTEUROPA: *I'd like to return to the national question in musicology. Do your colleagues still look askance at your work as a music archaeologist?*

Nemtsov: That has now changed. The chair has given the subject some dignity. It has been given the state's blessing, so to speak, and found to be of value. That is important in Germany. Publications, CDs and music demonstrate that Jewish music has substance and is not a fantasy. A university chair is worth a lot in the academic world.

OSTEUROPA: *How many such chairs are there in the world?*

Nemtsov: Not many. There is one at the University of California, Los Angeles. The Hebrew University in Jerusalem has a chair in General Musicology that also covers the field. And a chair in Jewish Music Studies has recently been set up in Hannover.

OSTEUROPA: *And in Eastern Europe?*

Nemtsov: No. Nothing at all.

OSTEUROPA: *The study of Judaism is rather one-sided in Germany too. There are many chairs in the history of the German and European Jews, the history of the Holocaust, and comparative genocide studies. There are Jewish museums with a heavy emphasis on history. Rightly so, and this is all important and easy to explain. But hardly any research on contemporary Israel is being conducted in Germany. Why is that?*

Nemtsov: There simply isn't any interest. Israel, as a nation state, is at odds with the idea of 'postnational', globalised modernity. Hardly anyone in Germany really knows anything about Israel as a country, and the way it is depicted in the media sometimes has very little to do with reality. We should talk about the living Jews, not only about the dead Jews, but the past sometimes blocks our view of the present and the future.

Interview conducted by Manfred Sapper, translation by Gerard Holden, Frankfurt/Main

Liza Rozovsky

Familiar with being foreign

Russian-speaking Israelis in Berlin

They were born in the Soviet Union, emigrated as children, teenagers or young adults to Israel and have been living for many years in Berlin. Ten Russian-speaking Israelis tell us about feeling foreign in their homeland, feeling at home in a foreign land, and their relationship to Israel and Germany. They have little in common, but they do share one thing: the Russian language.

"Berlin isn't my hometown, I don't feel at home here. But I also don't feel at home in Israel. The last time I felt at home, was when I was still a child, in Yevpatoria at the beach" says Katja, 39 years old. She's sitting on the balcony of her flat in Prenzlauer Berg. Katja isn't her real name. Everyone in this essay – ten Russian-speaking Israelis who live in Berlin – has agreed to tell us about their lives either anonymously or partly anonymously. They're between 35 and 50 years old, work either freelance or as employees. They came to Israel from the Soviet Union as children, teenagers or young adults, and later decided to move on once more – to Germany. More precisely: Berlin. Berlin, they say unanimously, is not Germany.

Their life story is comparable to mine. I also came to Israel as a child, and when I was nearly forty, moved to Germany. I now live with my family in Dresden. At first, I definitely wanted to move to Berlin, now I'd rather return to Israel. But nothing's decided yet. When I discussed their lives, thoughts, and feelings with my interview partners, I tried to understand myself better. Why did they leave Israel? Are they gone forever? What do they like about their new lives and what don't they like? How do they cope with something they don't like? If they cope... Who are their friends? In their thoughts, do they carry on living in Israel? Are they interested in German politics and German society? What role does Russia or the post-Soviet sphere play for them? How do they perceive their new surroundings? What does this second emigration mean for them? And then of course the question of all questions: What about the German language? The answers of my conversation partners are a snapshot of their thoughts, their feelings and their mental state on the day we talked. The interviews were carried out during the first half of 2019. Certainly, one or another has changed their opinion on many questions since then – as is so often the case with emigrants, and, actually, as with many people.

Liza Rozovsky, Journalist at the Israeli daily newspaper Haaretz, Dresden

OSTEUROPA 2020, Migration, Identity, Politics, pp. 17–31

“He’s moderately good at Latin ...”

A large number of my interviewees don’t do too well with German. Zhenja, 47 years old, has been living for five years in Berlin, but continues to work for an Israeli company and sees no urgent necessity to learn German. “I get along fine with English”, she says. “Of course, it’s embarrassing for someone, who considers themself intelligent, to live somewhere and not speak the language. That is somehow weird and absurd. But it’s just turned out that way. I came here, I work nine hours a day, in the evenings I’m with my family – and housework doesn’t do itself.”
Boris, 46, has lived in Berlin for ten years already, his German is good enough for the news on the screens in the Ubahn. “I can read that and I’m proud of that”, he jokes. In Berlin, Boris has worked at different IT firms and has spoken English with his colleagues everywhere.
Lara, 40, is an artist, but at the moment doesn’t work in her field. She’s lived in Berlin for eight years. It’s very important for her to speak German. “In recent years, I’ve felt noticeably better”, she says. “It’s a really good feeling when I can express myself, perhaps make a joke, and win people’s confidence. That’s very important to me. I really like talking with people, and when I couldn’t do that because of the language barrier, it ruined my mood.”
Denis, 39, has lived in Berlin for five years. He works as a content manager and copy writer, mostly remotely in Russian. He’s not happy with his German. “I cope in everyday life, but it can’t stay at this level, after all I’m a thinking person and I don’t feel good, when I can’t read the paper and talk with Germans. At the age of sixteen in Israel, I didn’t understand that. I taught myself Hebrew, but before I began to study film, it was at an everyday level.”

Chameleons

For most of the Russian-speaking Israelis who live in Berlin, German is their fourth – sometimes even their fifth – language, after Russian, Hebrew, English and often Ukrainian or French as well. Living in Berlin gives them the possibility of choosing between several languages and different self-images, according to preference and situation. Dmitrij, 46 years old, came to Israel at 18, having studied in the German Department at the Foreign Languages Institute in St Petersburg. He’s had senior positions at different Russian-speaking Israeli media and gave being a political advisor a go. After 14 years in Israel, he went to Riga and from there to Moscow, where he similarly worked in the media. He’s lived in Berlin for ten years and earns his money with medical tourism. “When someone asks me who I am and where I come from, I say, that I’m one third Russian, one third Israeli, and one third – Berliner, said with reservation. I also say, I’m difficult to categorise”, says Dmitrij.

> My first name and surname place me clearly in the Russian segment. And when for some reason I don’t want to speak with Israelis, I say that I can’t speak Hebrew, I speak English. I look at the person, and if they seem to be interesting to talk to, then I speak Hebrew. An ordinary tourist, who’s going somewhere, I don’t want to (talk) to him. I act stupid. Me? An Israeli? No!

> Such a label "I'm Jewish, I'm Israeli, go on, let's hug and speak Hebrew" – I don't like that. If I want, then I can speak Hebrew. It's the same with German. If I want, I'll speak German with them, but if I don't want to, I say – sorry, let's speak English. I'm like a chameleon.

Igor follows a similar strategy. He came with his parents to Israel from Baku, when he was six years old. He grew up in Jerusalem, spent most of his adult life in Tel Aviv and speaks better Hebrew than Russian. But he sometimes finds it easier being a Russian in Berlin, for various reasons.

> Sometimes I introduce myself as Israeli, normally as Russian Israeli, sometimes just as Russian, when I don't want to hear Israel-bashing. When the people don't interest me, and I don't have the energy for conversation. For example, a Syrian kiosk owner asked me where I'm from. I answered from Russia, Moscow.
> Most of the Russian Israelis that I spoke with, don't however keep quiet about their ties with Israel. But when they do occasionally do this, then it's to be comfortable or to avoid an unnecessary quarrel.

Lara feels less a foreigner in Berlin, than she did for long years in Israel:

> Here I sense that people look at me without prejudice. The same with language – everyone speaks their own language and that is inspiring. Of course, some bourgeois suburbanites behave differently. But I feel freer with my son here than in Israel. In Israel it was different, firstly with my friends as a teenager, later as well. People in Israel still turn around when I speak Russian with my son. As if they want to say to me: "Aha, you're one of them." In Germany, that doesn't happen to me.

However, Lara admits, she tries to talk German with her son on public transport. "I don't want to stand out. Language is like a mask."

Hardened

Lara came with her parents to Israel from Ukraine at the age of twelve. She found moving to Berlin much easier than Israelis who come to Germany without any previous experience of migration: "For Israelis it's much harder, for them it's a real shock. For their whole lives they were the centre of the universe. And here they're suddenly second-class citizens", says Lara.

> I think, for them it's a genuine trauma. Their pride is wounded. They were taught: "We Israelis, we're the best. Hebrew above all! You have to speak Hebrew!" But here everyone has to speak German and even: "Who are you then? *Foreigners*. Behave yourselves how we want, not how you want." I think, we, who have come once before to a new country, have developed the ability to adapt ourselves to new situations. A certain flexibility.

Katja, who came to Israel at fourteen, also says that her first emigration experience helped with the second.

> I was sure that I could manage everything. I was amused when I saw the difficulties of other Israelis, who'd gone to a new country for the first time. "Haha! We're hardened!" That was such a feeling of pride, to have already done the hard yards. I'm still constantly proud, to be such an "old hand". Nothing is impossible for me. My only limitation is my physical strength. I can do everything, no matter what. Even if I know, that that's not always correct – the language doesn't come so easily to me, sometimes I forget something, anyway I'm 39 and no longer 14. But it's great to be able to speak four languages and I have the feeling of seeing the goal and not noticing the obstacles. I'm very grateful for that.

Vera, 49, came to Germany eleven years ago, her husband wanted to leave Israel. She's a trained social worker and works in this field in Berlin. She says, she didn't get any energy from her first emigration for her second. At 19 she came to Israel from Krasnodar. Unlike Lara and Katja, it was her own decision to leave Russia.

> I see no connection between my emigration to Israel and the one to Berlin. In Israel, I quickly found my niche. They were above all Russian, but I also had Israeli friends. After a year I already felt really good. Of course, there were a couple of negative things, but all in all I felt really good. Germany was the absolute opposite. I felt bad here from the beginning and it's stayed that way. My view of Israel is probably idealised, when I look at it as the country I want to return to. I know, that Israel today isn't *the* Israel that I left eleven years ago. Such rational thoughts don't have a big influence on me, for the feeling is completely and utterly physical. When I fly to Israel, then I just totally feel that it's my home.

Getting out of greedy capitalism

For Zhenja, just like for Vera, immigration to Israel was a conscious choice – something she passionately longed for. She had idealistic motives, not materialistic, she explains with an allusion to the so-called "Sausage-Alia".

> We had a Zionist movement in school, I didn't go for the sausage, I was too young for that. The world was my oyster, my life lay ahead of me. I went to Israel out of conviction. And everything went smoothly. I enrolled for the subject I wanted and studied. In the first years I was constantly exhilarated. Of course, my financial position was quite difficult: I did lots of jobs, but that seemed normal to me. I was a student, so you have to work from dawn to dusk.

Many years later came disappointment.

> We left for economic reasons. We'd worked like dogs, my husband and me, round the clock. We'd taken all possible extra jobs. As it happened, by the time we decided to move in together and start a family, the rents had risen like crazy, we simply couldn't keep up.

At the same time, Zhenja also gives other reasons for why she left Israel:

> When we arrived in Israel, there was still a little bit of the "old school small Israel" to be felt, the trusting connections between people, a kind of solidarity. Perhaps that was my Zionist illusions. But then these rents, that rose relentlessly . . . An anger rose up in me, although I'm no lefty, when the state, either under the leadership of Bibi [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – L.R.], or just because – behaved more and more like a corporation. The Israeli state wasn't interested in people's problems. It wasn't interested that people who worked liked dogs or served in the army couldn't afford a flat. It just behaved like a corporation, that just wants profits. That's how I feel it. A kind of greedy capitalism.

Almost all of my interviewees explained that they're financially better off in Berlin than in Israel. Only the programmers had a smaller income after moving. "It's actually a psychological question, that many don't see", says Denis.

> In Israel, it's not normal to save money and live modestly. Everything is arranged, so that you have to spend money, that's simply the culture. Even when setting prices, it can be relied on, that people don't go to another business, where perhaps it's cheaper. Everything's different in Berlin. Firstly, there's no shame in being poor here – everyone's poor here. But what does it mean here to be poor? I live in the centre [in Neukölln – L.R.]. In Tel Aviv that'd be in Florentin [a district in the south of the city, where mostly students and artists live – L.R.]. You don't need a car here, there's excellent public transport. There's insanely cheap food here. Everything is arranged so that you, no matter what you do, no matter how poor you are, always have a roof over your head and always have something to eat. There's even something similar to "Amidar" [a social housing co-operative – L.R.]. That's not completely pleasant, you're checked out, but the system functions so that you don't have to work your butt off for the basic necessities.

Lara tells a similar story:

> In Israel everyone thinks that you must be very unhappy, if you can't eat out at least once a day. That's the norm. I know many people here, who wouldn't even think about that, who simply picnic in the park, sunbathe and play badminton. The people here find the world around them so fascinating, that no one has the need to spend money going shopping to make themself feel well-balanced. When I sometimes didn't have enough money in Tel Aviv, I immediately thought: "Damn it, everything's so expensive, there are cafés everywhere and you're sitting here on a park bench like a homeless person." Here, I sit on a park bench and look at the cherry blossom. Then I'm fine with everything, I enjoy the peace, the birdsong, and nature in bloom. Here there are other values. People are less fixated by technology; it smells noticeably less of capitalism.

The Political Is Private

According to surveys, a majority of Israelis living in Berlin have left-wing views.[1] Israelis understand being left-wing as being first of all pro an end to the occupation or pro meaningful territorial concessions to the Palestinians. This attitude frequently goes with left-wing views on economic policy as well as a liberal socio-political attitude. Israeli Berlin is – as Tel Aviv is in Israel – a stronghold of feminism, veganism and the LGBT community. Many long-settled Israelis moved to Berlin principally for this reason. The Russian Israelis see it differently. Almost none of my interviewees sees themself as truly left-wing, even if they have left-wing views. Most of them engage just as little in politics in Germany as they did in Israel. Generally, when they publicly express their opinion, then it's via Facebook. For many of them, politics is predominantly private.

Olga (38) came to Israel from Kiev at the age of 12 and at 31 moved with her husband first to Slovenia, then to Berlin. When I ask her about her political views, she answers, she has none. "I haven't engaged in politics in any country, because again and again there came a new country, that didn't work. Even if I were to try it – I don't have the right to vote here in any case, it wouldn't make sense." Nevertheless, Olga's decision to leave Israel had something to with politics. "It wasn't about the specific political situation in Israel, but simply the insight that it doesn't matter who's in power – in this country you'll never live well. Nobody knows, what could rescue this country and lead it out of its dead end." She says that she doesn't like the high costs, the mess and the noise in Israel, but that's still not everything

> It all goes together. Everyone yells, because they're all so uptight, and they're all uptight because they're anxious about their lives. Everything is expensive, because everyone is fighting, and so on. The Arab-Israeli conflict is the cause of everything, and that fundamentally can't be resolved. I see no solution in my head. It can't be imagined, what can save this country. Perhaps I'd be more active politically, if I saw the light at the end of the tunnel, but I don't see it. And in Germany you can simply distance yourself from all that.

Katja tells a similar story:

> I went in 2014, when rockets were flying again. I wasn't sure, if any plane goes at all. I was very afraid of terror attacks in Israel from 1994 to 2004. After that I was numb – fatalism took over. I decided on Europe, because I absolutely wanted to experience the feeling of limitless security once. But I was surprised when I experienced criminality in Berlin. That for example a man sprayed acid in a woman's face or someone was pushed in front of a train. Once a man grabbed me on the street in broad daylight. I wasn't scared, but I didn't have a feeling of limitless security either. And then the terror attacks started here. But I know, it won't be worse for me here than in Israel. At the most, just as bad.

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[1] The Most Comprehensive Survey among Israelis in Germany Confirms the Image: Secular, Educated, and Left, in: Spitz, 4.12.2015, <http://spitzmag.de/webonly/7238>.

Amongst Foreigners At Home

Besides the financial situation, the quality of life and security, my interviewees also specified particular motivations. "I didn't want to be criticised any more for making 'Russian Art'", recounts Lara, who studied at the Israeli Bezalel Academy of Fine Arts in Jerusalem.

> It was already being said at school that I draw like a Russian, but they didn't directly criticise that there. At Bezalel they all said I would draw better than anyone, but that these weren't illustrations that I was doing there. I'd be able to draw too well to be an illustrator. And at the art faculty, they required either such a hyper-realism that didn't appeal to me, or conceptual art, well "Dalut Hahomer" ["Want of Matter" an Israeli style of art that flourished in the 1960s, 70s and 80s – L.R.] that was very boring. I haven't found, either here or there, my place, or people that understand my style and my artistic quest.

Lara hoped that in Berlin, she'd find kindred spirits or, at the least, break out of her narrow circle of colleagues, who she felt didn't understand and accept her.

> In Berlin you have the feeling that there's a place for everything. A multicultural society. Everything has its niche, nothing's being judged. The people here don't think all Russians are like so and so, in Israel there are these clichés. I like it that here no one recognises me on the street. In Tel Aviv it was impossible to hide from people's stares. All the people from my school studied at the University of Tel Aviv or at Bezalel, and then I met them all in the streets of Tel Aviv. Sometimes I met three friends within two hours. It started to bother me. I absolutely wanted to free myself from the familiar surroundings, from the reality that people already knew you and pigeonholed you. I wanted to start a new life, to present myself as I wanted, and then become this person.

The feeling of constriction in Israel oppressed many. Dmitrij gave up his post as editor-in-chief of the Israeli bureau of an international Russian-speaking TV station when he left Israel. He'd worked before in politics and for newspapers. But he'd never managed to get out of the Russian niche. "I've considered returning to Israel", he says, "but this return would be a defeat. As editor-in-chief I'd already reached the top. How am I supposed to develop further in Israel?"
Denis, who was head of the department for Russian-speaking programmes in Israeli cable TV, thinks along the same lines:

> I had the feeling that I had almost no chance to switch to the Israeli sector, once I'd worked as an expert in Russian-speaking content. Although I knew Israeli topics thoroughly. I love Israeli films; I knew exactly what goes in Israeli firms and in the economy. I didn't try to switch, because I was sure, that it wouldn't work out. It was easier to go to Berlin.

Foreign in the Homeland

Admittedly, my conversations are just samples. But it becomes apparent that those who came to Israel as children or teenagers have a weaker emotional tie to the country and are more critical of it than those who decided for themselves to emigrate to Israel. For example, Igor says:

> My family lives in Israel, my friends live there, what happens there interests me. But emotionally – totally indifferent. I don't care about Israel, just as I don't care what happens here in Berlin or in Paris. I mean, it's important to me what goes on in the world, but I've never felt a personal attachment to these places.

He has a supposition about what could lie behind that:

> When we came to Israel, I was six years old, and I was somewhat mocked because I'm Russian. I really didn't understand that, and it was embarrassing for me. I didn't want to tell my parents about it. I didn't want them to feel ashamed and feel what I felt. I've never really spoken with them about it. This experience shaped me, it led to me never seeing myself as Israeli. Probably because they said to me that I was Russian. It became clear to me that the children didn't say that just because they're kids, but because their parents saw things that way. I didn't like it, that people laughed at someone because of an accent or a place of birth and I fundamentally distanced myself from that.

Denis, who came to Israel from Ukraine at the age of 16, formulates a similar thought:

> I can never become a true Israeli, because I wasn't born there. I didn't read their children's books, I didn't read the Tanach in school, I don't know the primary sources. Every secular, intellectual Israeli knows the basics of the Tanach inside out, I will never be able to do that. I lived for 16 years in one country, 20 years in Israel, but I am and remain a migrant, although I tried hard to designate myself as Israeli.

Katja too recounts something comparable:

> When I went to *Shenkar* [Shenkar College of Engineering and Design in Ramat Gan – L.R.], for the first time, I spoke with Israelis on an equal footing. At school I was obviously an outcast, a "Russian". Then I went to the army, where there were almost no Russians. I spoke Hebrew, but it gave me no pleasure, after all it was the army. At *Technion* [Technical University in Haifa, L.R.] there was a Russian circle for me, it was only at *Shenkar* that I found Israeli friends for the first time. I was so proud, that I was suddenly one of them. I wasn't proud in the sense that I had always strived for. But always when someone put on the record "We're Foreigners Here" I thought to myself "Not me!" But the *Shenkar* days are over. And where are these friends now? We've completely lost contact. My acquaintances are predominantly Russian

> – here in Berlin and the same in Israel. Therefore, my German-speaking acquaintances are very valuable. I have a friend from work, a colleague, we sometimes go out together. It's important to me, that I'm not in the Russian ghetto here. But I haven't made Israeli friends in Berlin. Apart from a girl, that I sometimes meet up with for a tandem, to speak Hebrew. My Hebrew had started to deteriorate, that's really bad, I spoke beautiful Hebrew.

David's Chest

Lara, whose grandfather on her father's side comes from a Jewish family, but the other grandparents don't, says that she never felt completely at home in Israel. "The stronger the religion, the less tolerance and more racism there is", she says, "against national minorities that live in Israel, that means to a certain extent against me and against all others who'd like to live there and can't live there." She includes also refugees and migrants, who are driven out of the country. "There's a very undemocratic approach there: brainwashing, human rights infringements – that all goes together with religion and politics."
Lara speaks about an unpleasant episode in her professional career in Israel.

> "It was a shock", she says. "I taught at a religious college at the border between Bney Brak and Ramat Gan. At some point I was offered the chance to teach art history, and then religious students said to me, that it wasn't allowed to depict a church and that it'd make someone sick to see such a picture. It was simply disgusting to depict David naked. They complained about me and my course was cancelled . . . but I was just a teacher and hadn't reckoned with something like this. Apparently, David's naked chest had a bad effect on them. So I thought: That's enough!"

Dmitrij also observed the growing influence of religion on life in Israel, that he rejected:

> I'm sceptical about Israel for personal, professional reasons, that was the reason why I left the country. But I'm also in general sceptical about Israel and its chances of developing. There are some characteristics about Israel that particularly disturb me. Above all a certain messianism: "We're the best, the chosen." That leads in my view to an extreme right-wing religious attitude. I don't like the religious components at all. [. . .] I'm categorically in favour of the separation of religion and state and I'm sceptical because an ever-stronger dependence on messianism and religious dominance affect Israel year on year.

You can't not think about it

The Holocaust is, in the view of many of my interviewees, a part of their daily life in Berlin. In one way or another, it influences their perception of the German milieu. "When we came here, I went to a Jewish library and read all possible books about the Holocaust", says Vera:

> And then I found certain things in the German mentality, that I remind myself of the whole time. I have a very radical view of the Germans, of German society. At the start I had general problems, I saw signs everywhere. Every blonde woman, so it seemed to me, would have suited a Nazi film well. I looked at the world through this prism for quite a while. I don't have that anymore, but now I see other things. For example, it seems to me that many Germans wouldn't have their own opinion. They see the world quite black and white, without nuance. Someone is either one way or the other, you're either a vegan or you're not a vegan. What does that have to with the Jewish thing? It seems to me that they don't think for themselves.

Ilja, 42, is an archaeologist. He came to Israel at 17 as part of a youth programme. He says, that he loves this country, but left it for political reasons among others, as he's a person with left-wing views. Above all because pressure on archaeology was increasing, as it's constantly politicised in Israel. He came to Berlin four years ago as a post-doctoral researcher, as yet he hasn't considered returning. However, if someone were to offer him a post at an Israeli university, he'd go back, so he says. On the theme of the Holocaust, he says: "You can't not think about it. Every day I cycle across Potsdamer Platz, through the Brandenburg Gate and past the Reichstag. Sometimes I go past the synagogue." The fate of his family in the Soviet Union personally concerns him even more. Many of his relatives were victims of Stalinist repression. "The compromises interest me. Every day, these people had to consider what to do and how to do it. My grandmother was strictly anti-Soviet, she spent so many years in prison, that that they couldn't do anything to her anymore. In contrast, my grandfather was a chief engineer, later director, then he was also arrested."
Lara is proud of her grandfathers and grandmothers, who came to Berlin in the Second World War. She tries to tell her son about the events of those years very carefully:

> We went to Treptower Park, there's such idiotic reliefs there – planes, Ukrainians and Russians, mothers with children, the fallen – a large memorial for a Russian soldier, who rescued a German girl [the Soviet War Memorial – L.R.]. Until the reunification of Germany this site was closely guarded, the dead remains of many Russian soldiers are buried there – a mass grave. It's really lovely to go for a walk there, it's beautiful, you can ride a scooter. My son asked, what was happening in the pictures. I explained it to him, and he understood. Since then he wants to know more and more – for example something about the Gedächtniskirche – a church that was partly destroyed in the war. There are some places in Berlin that make him ask questions. I said that a very bad "king" had ruled in Berlin, who wanted to conquer the whole world, and then many people rose up and made him and his soldiers harmless. I didn't say the word "German". I said that it was a tyrant, who had very bad intentions. It was the French, the Russians, who didn't want a war and had protected their people.

Katja und Zhenja have diametrically opposed positions on the Holocaust theme. Katja recounts:

> I'm always a little ashamed when some Israelis foreground and instrumentalise the Shoah, for metal can fatigue, and then sensitivity is lost. No matter how great the feeling of guilt is, when you're always banging on about it, that provokes annoyance. This way – it's not good for us. I don't know, what the way is, because of course that must always be preserved. If that isn't done, then everything can repeat itself, in some configuration. Therefore, it's necessary. The question is, how to do it sensibly. It seems to me that the way that's now been chosen, doesn't lead to the goal.

According to Katja's impression, some people, Israelis, literally force the theme of the Holocaust. Zhenja by contrast explains:

> It's my opinion that their prosperity rests on Jewish money that they stole. That's why I don't think that they're doing me a favour, if I live here. I don't have the feeling: "Oh, poor us, and you're so great and let us live here." I don't owe them anything. I think that they should pay for what they did to us and keep on paying.

Katja, completely differently:

> I have to call to mind again and again that I receive a salary here and pay high taxes and therefore also have the right to live here. But sometimes I think, and this is also a Jewish theme, that I took someone's place here away. I'm satisfied and happy, but sometimes I think that I, when I came here, took someone's place away.

The majority of the interviewees say that they personally haven't sensed any antisemitism. But they're troubled by the extreme right-wing voices. Some were at demonstrations against antisemitism – for instance via the protest "Berlin trägt Kippa" (Berlin wears a skullcap) in early 2018. Vera has another attitude to this question:

> In general, I think all this is hypocritical. Bluntly put, I think, why go on the street and protest against someone not liking you. If you're not liked, then go. You have a country with all its faults, go and live there.

Russian World, Israeli News

Igor was in Berlin for the first time a year before his emigration – without money or passport, after he'd been robbed in Amsterdam. "I could live quite well without money or passport", he explains.

> I played ukulele on some bridge and people put quite a bit of money in my hat. I understood that you can get by here quite easily. I met interesting people, which was great, I realised that I like everything here. I slept at people's places, that I simply met on the street. Everything went pretty smoothly. Sometimes, if I had money, I'd stay at a hostel and take a bath. However, sometimes I slept in the park, too.

Igor plays several instruments and composes his own pieces. In Tel Aviv he had his own rock band. In Berlin he plunged straightaway into the rock scene and the night life. After a few years his enthusiasm nevertheless subsided:

> I noticed quite quickly that cooperation with the international groups in Berlin wasn't for me. There were French people, Americans, Canadians. Sure, I'd liked the *vibe* at the beginning, but no one cared about quality, the ambition to produce something really interesting and good was lacking. Probably I only liked it, because I wanted to like something. [. . .] Here it's quite easy to meet people but these acquaintances are often just short-lived. In Tel Aviv I had quite a big circle of acquaintances that I was used to, and I liked that. When I was trying to build up a similar circle here, I made quite a few compromises and partly made friends with people that I otherwise probably would have had nothing to do with.

These days though he still does things with people from different countries, says Igor, but his close friends are all Israelis, some of them Russian-speaking.
The majority of my discussion partners report that their closest friends and acquaintances are Russian-speaking – Russian-speaking Israelis or emigrants from Russia, Ukraine and other post-Soviet republics. Contact with Germans or with people from other countries outside of work or business relationships has an episodic character as a rule. Most in Berlin have similarly alienated themselves from long-established Israelis who immigrated here.
Denis explains:

> The friends that I often go out with, they're no Israelis, neither Russian-speaking nor Hebrew-speaking. My close friends are a raggle-taggle bunch – Jews, Germans, Russians and Ukrainians, who haven't been in Berlin for long. But the language: only Russian.

It's the same in social networks. He's more and more on the move in the Russian-speaking realm. Denis emphasises that he has contact to the Hebrew-speaking community through a good Israeli friend, and adds:

> I noticed something very interesting. I only get on easily with Russian-speaking migrants when they've already lived for some years outside Russia. I had a girlfriend in St Petersburg, and it was hard for me to get along with Russians who live in Russia. When I travelled to Thailand I was surrounded by a lot of Russians, but I didn't want anything to do with them, because we're very different. We have a common language, they wanted to communicate, because they automatically thought of me as one of them, but it didn't go well with them. In Goa too, where 90% of the tourists were from Russia, it didn't go well with them either. I can't say anything bad about them, they're normal, more or less educated people, we're just very different. I mainly have contact with migrants, they have another mentality.

Many of my interviewees reported how they had cut themselves off from the circles in Berlin where Hebrew is spoken. Lara, who up until recently was married to a native-born Israeli, says that she prefers to see her Russian-speaking friends and speaks Hebrew quite rarely.

> I worked at it before, when my son was still small, but then it was too much for me, for the people that come to events for Israelis in Berlin, these people have cars and much more money than I do, and I didn't want to see such a crowd of Israelis around me. That stressed me out. I'd rather have seen two or three families, but for that you personally have to organise that for yourself. These masses were always awful for me. If Russian was being spoken there, it would be the same. I can't stand groups that get together because of the common language or nationality. The same thing happens to me, when I see Jewish celebrations here [which are often organised by Israelis, L.R.]. That's nice and all, but it makes me sick.

Dmitrij recounts:

> I went with my children to an Israeli children's festival. Frankly, I didn't like it. I'm no friend of Israeli fraternisation and this total manishmaity [something like "kissy-kissy"-phoniness: from the Hebrew expression "ma nischma", "what's up?" – L.R.]. It drives me crazy. Roughly the same as with German narrow-mindedness, Israeli provincialism drives me berserk. It's easier for me to find educated Russian people, probably because Russian is my mother tongue.

Vera thinks that in Berlin, unlike Israel, her acquaintances live "outside of context", and therefore tend to distance from one another:

> They live in a vacuum here. If anything bothers them, it's Israel's problems. German problems, German politics and German culture don't interest them. For them, Israel is the fixed point. And those who aren't fixated on Israel also have no new context.

In fact, all of my interviewees – even those who declare that they don't follow the news intensively, also those, who have lived in Germany for a long time – admit that they keep abreast of current events principally through Israeli media, usually in Hebrew. Some reveal that they look at the most popular Israeli news site "Ynet" daily. "Actually, I read above all the news in Hebrew", says Dmitrij, who came from Israel 14 years ago and speaks excellent German, "not because I'm predominantly interested in Israel, but rather out of habit." He also regularly uses German media, above all *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. That differentiates him from other interviewees, who also get information about German issues predominantly or exclusively from Israeli sources.

Vera, who has lived in Berlin for eleven years, declares that she likes watching Israeli TV, and hasn't watched German for a long time, because it's boring. She still occasionally reads German newspapers. Olga, who like most of the others isn't interested in political events in Germany, explains:

> I think that I'm only living in Germany for the time being – simply because I've stopped believing that I'll live anywhere forever. It's unlikely that I'll return to Israel because I've never regretted leaving there. At the same time, I regard Israel as my home. When someone asks me where I come from, I say I'm Israeli.

Gefilte fish, and that's it

Some of my conversation partners go sometimes to the Jewish festivals – to Purim or Yom Kippur – in the synagogue, one even works in a Jewish community in Berlin. But none is a member of a Jewish community. Those, who from time to time have contact with it, don't feel attached to it. "There's a very precise demarcation", says Zhenja:

> We're not Russian Jews, we're Israeli Russian-speaking Jews. The difference is colossal. Firstly, they [the Russian-speaking and German Jews, L.R.] have such a provincial emotionalism but at the same time . . . They would say, for instance, that Jews are something completely special, but at the same time wouldn't know anything about Jewish life beyond forschmak and gefilte fish. That's their knowledge, tops.

Neither here nor there

"I've lived here for eleven years with the feeling that I should return to Israel, that I shouldn't live here", says Vera. But there's always something that gets in the way of returning.

> At the start, the children were small, they'd just got used to school. Now my son [who came to Berlin at the age of three – L.R.] no longer speaks Hebrew, he can, but very badly. He's 14, he goes back, he has to go to the army soon. I don't want him to go to the army, least of all in a combat unit, I don't want that at all. Not out of pacifism, but out of motherly selfishness. It seems to me absurd to live in Germany for eleven years, then to move back to Israel and there immediately go into the army. Added to that, my daughter is already studying at university. I don't want to leave her behind in Germany.

Dmitrij will also probably spend the next years in Berlin, as his ex-wife and children live there. But he doesn't rule out moving on when the children have grown up:

> I have a certain concern that Germany soon won't be one of the world's leading states. The position that the country had a hundred years ago was lost long ago. Sure, in Europe it has a sort of leading role, but in comparison with Asia or the USA, the Germans have lost their position, they no longer lead the world in technology or philosophy. Germany is becoming less important, perhaps Europe, and that entails risks.

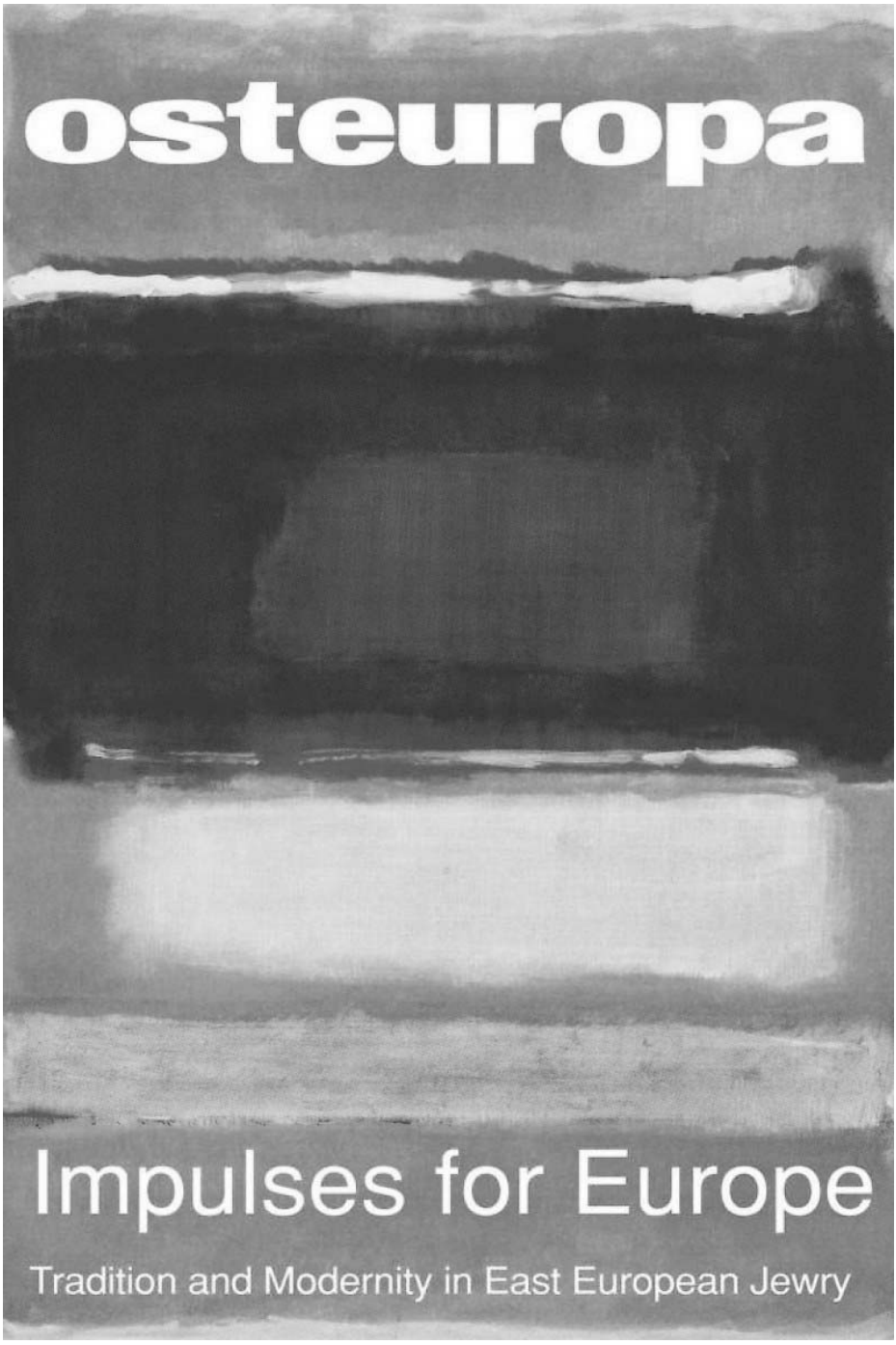
But go where? Perhaps to an Asian high-tech country. But not to Israel:

> When I come to Jerusalem, I feel that I come to Tehran. This feeling will set in in Tel Aviv too in ten years. Or it'll split into the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judea . . . and that's not the worst-case scenario for the state of Israel.

Many of the Russian Israelis who I spoke with can already get a German passport. But none of them has so far made use of this right. Katja says:

> That is an absolutely foreign country. I can get German citizenship without a problem. But then I'd have to give up the Israeli one. I would never have thought, that that would bother me – but I would feel psychologically uncomfortable doing that. It's not that I fear for my life. If tomorrow the "gas trucks" come again, that could even be in Israel, that makes no difference. Not out of fear for my life. Because of my desire to adapt, I've never thought of myself as a person of principles. But this step for some reason is difficult for me.

Translated by Toby Harrison, Berlin



Shimon Stein

“Megaphone diplomacy is not enough”

Israel, Russia and expectations of Germany

Shimon Stein, Israel’s former ambassador to Germany, states that Germans and Israelis have limited expectations of each other; and that the illiberal tendencies in Israel are part of the same erosion of the liberal order which can be observed in the West. Stein analyses the differences in interests between Israel and Russia in the Middle East and takes a pessimistic view of Moscow’s political desire to participate in the reconstruction of post-war Syria and its ability to act as a shaping power in the Middle East. He calls for more engagement from Germany and the EU. To Stein, the widespread belief that the key to peace and security in the Middle East lies in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an illusion. But, he says, the practice of occupation is eroding Israel’s soul.

OSTEUROPA: *What temperature are German-Israeli relations at?*

Shimon Stein: A normal one. In times of crisis, it rises.

OSTEUROPA: *But without big swings?*

Stein: Yes, there is a routine. No side has great expectations of the other.

OSTEUROPA: *Why?*

Stein: Because we have too many crises of trust behind us. In the 1950s, the decision to pay reparations to Israel found little support in the Federal Republic. That hurt the Israeli side. In the 1960s, German engineers helped Israel’s then-enemy Egypt develop rockets. During the Yom Kippur War, the Federal government tried to stop US arms deliveries from Germany to Israel. In the 1980s, there were conflicts over the delivery of Leopard tanks to Saudi Arabia. In the 1990s, German companies in Iraq were involved in building up the chemical industry, and thus were indirectly involved in the development of chemical weapons. All this caused great disappointment in Israel, because politicians and the public had simply expected more from Germany in real terms.

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Since the turn of the 21st century, the behaviour of the Israeli government has not met German expectations. This applies above all to the management of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The chemistry between Benjamin Netanyahu and Angela Merkel is simply not right: so, Germany's expectations of Israel are now also minimal. As for Netanyahu, he has set out in search of other friends. And he has found them. They are the Orbáns of this world.

OSTEUROPA: *Out of conviction or tactical calculation?*

Stein: Both. His political thinking has commonalities with the illiberal spirit of right-wing populists in Europe. If neither Ms Merkel nor Mr Maas, as representatives of Germany in the European Council, are taking Israel's side today, Netanyahu no longer sees that as a bad thing. After all, according to his cynical calculation, he still has a friend in Orbán, who holds a veto.

OSTEUROPA: *Does Israeli society back this course?*

Stein: Frankly, it hardly cares. Netanyahu has found a common language with Putin and Trump, and he gets support from the Kaczyńskis, the Zemans and the Bolsonaros. He says, "We have something in common: hating Muslims and refugees. That is what unites us." That he lost the old West over it — who cares? It follows the motto: "I need support and I'll look for it even in places that stink." This is also an aspect of that palpable alienation.

OSTEUROPA: *The dividing line is not between Israel and Germany, but between liberal and illiberal thinking.*

Stein: That's one way of looking at it. For decades, we have rightly understood Israel as part of the West: and this is part of a development we are seeing throughout the Western world. The liberal order is under pressure. This is why alienation can also be observed internally. Israel's liberal elite looks with concern at their country, at the erosion of democracy or the attacks on the judiciary. Anyone who criticises illiberal tendencies in Israel from the outside must expect that this criticism will quickly be labelled "antisemitism" and dismissed, because many Israelis, including our Prime Minister, are unable to distinguish between legitimate criticism and antisemitism.

OSTEUROPA: *Is the change in Israel not simply an adaptation to Middle Eastern conditions?*

Stein: Adaptation? With respect, to which country might we be adapting? To Egypt, Syria, Iraq? These are authoritarian, anti-democratic regimes. Israel is a living democracy with a lively press and a dynamic civil society. There might be this or that worrying development, but Israel is not on the brink of authoritarianism. Every day, the media exercises press freedom; and the judiciary upholds its independence and does its job. That is why Benjamin Netanyahu is now being charged with corruption under the rule of law, regardless of whether he is Prime Minister or not.

OSTEUROPA: *You have distinguished between criticism which is legitimate and that which is illegitimate, because unqualified. What would be an example of such unqualified criticism?*

Stein: Firstly, it's about setting the same bar for all countries. If the French or the Germans have a right to national self-determination and to a nation-state, then the same applies to Jews. To deny the Jews the right to consider themselves a people is illegitimate. To deny a Jewish state the right to exist is illegitimate. Criticising Israeli occupation policy is legitimate, on the other hand: just as it is legitimate to ask whether Israel regards Palestinians as second-class citizens. But anyone who demonises the state of Israel and equates it with Nazi Germany crosses the line of legitimate criticism.

OSTEUROPA: *Mr Stein, let's look at Russia. There appear to be similarities between Germany's relations with Israel and those with Russia. Both stories hold enormous significance: The Second World War, the experience of extermination, the Shoah. The trio of memory, responsibility and duty has determined relations for decades. But today it is alienation which dominates.*

Stein: I don't see a Germany-Israel-Russia triangle. Some observers tend to populate their world with geometric figures like that, which lack any basis in reality. The same was true of the German-Israeli-American triangle.

OSTEUROPA: *But what determines Germany's relationship with Russia?*

Stein: Geography determines the relationships. Neither Germany nor Europe can ignore Russia. This is every bit as true today as it was in the days of the Cold War. For historical reasons, Germany is very careful in its dealings with Russia. But Russia's annexation of Crimea and the actions in eastern Ukraine are unacceptable. Germany has taken the right course. However, there is also a romantic Russian school in Germany. Too many Russia-watchers in Germany do not actually understand Russia.

OSTEUROPA: *How do you mean?*

Stein: Egon Bahr would make a serious attempt to put himself into the shoes of the Soviet leadership in order to comprehend them. But comprehension is not the same as having empathy. And empathy has its limits. One thing is clear: Russia's foreign policy since the 19th century has involved a continuation of the same imperial policy. To this day, Russia's political elites have neither understood nor processed the loss of their empire. That's what feeds their actions in Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea and their outlook on the world.

OSTEUROPA: *Is there such a romantic school in Israel?*

Stein: Partially yes, but in Israel there's a greater variety of shades. We have over a million Russian-speaking people in Israel. One current regards Russia very critically and

coolly; another romanticises the country and is enthusiastic about Putin. And a third tendency among Russian-speaking immigrants still holds onto relics of imperial thinking. They look down on us *natives* from on high and signal: "We're culturally superior to you."

OSTEUROPA: *Is this reflected in institutions?*

Stein: These immigrants have their own Sunday schools to which they send their children in order to preserve their Russian culture. It's no accident that Putin sees the diaspora as a very important element of his foreign policy. Russian immigrants in Israel are a bridge to Russia.

OSTEUROPA: *Who are the political bearers of this romantic image of Russia? Is that Avigdor Lieberman? Or might members of* Likud *be warming to Putin's authoritarian order?*

Stein: I can't tell you that. The parties are fighting for the support of Russian-speaking Israelis. For *Likud*, the Russian-speaking minority is of great importance, because the imperially minded current within it supports the *Likud* stance on a Greater Israel... But the broader Russian diaspora also contains people with a very liberal outlook. The Russian-speaking diaspora in Israel is highly heterogeneous. This was certainly true of the first generation, but it applies much more strongly for the second.

OSTEUROPA: *How do you judge Russia's role in the war in Syria?*

Stein: Russia has returned to the Middle East through its support for the Assad regime. Russia has access to the Mediterranean via the Syrian port of Tartus. Russia benefits from the fact that the Americans are hardly involved in the region anymore. But that does not mean that Russia is gaining much. Russia is not a shaping power: it lacks the economic and political potential for that role. Putin will try to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran. He doesn't care about the Syrian population. Russia won't spend a rouble on the reconstruction of Syria. Rather, Russia expects that the West will help with reconstruction in order to be able to send refugees back. I doubt whether they will be proved correct in this assessment. Putin has been wrong before. He had hoped that Syria would provide him with a bargaining chip big enough to induce the Americans and the Europeans to reduce sanctions on him. But this gambit has not yet paid off.

OSTEUROPA: *Is Russia a potential partner for Israel?*

Stein: There is no basis for a strategic partnership between Israel and Russia. Currently, Israel and Russia are obliged to be in contact to coordinate their military operations in Syria. Let's recall the shooting down of the Russian reconnaissance aircraft by Syrian air defences in September 2018. Syrian and Russian military leaders tried to blame Israel for that. It's no coincidence that Netanyahu has been travelling to Moscow and co-ordinating with Putin since then.

Osteuropa: *What problems exist between Israel and Russia?*

Stein: Iran is a central problem. Israel and Russia take different attitudes towards Iran's military presence in Syria. It was Iranian militias, not Russian troops, doing the fighting in Syria. Here, Iran was serving Russia's interests. For Israel, Iranian militias on its own border represent an unacceptable threat. Iran is trying to expand its strategic capabilities in Syria. At the same time, it's supporting Shiite Hezbollah with money and weapons and equipping them with more accurate ballistic missiles.

OSTEUROPA: *What's Russia's stance on all this?*

Stein: Russia has no influence on Hezbollah; Russia does not interfere with the Syrian corridor, through which Iranian convoys bring arms and supplies into Lebanon. Russia is also doing nothing to counter Tehran's moves to permanently expand its military-strategic presence in Syria. On the issue of Iranian nuclear research, Russia supports the international nuclear deal with Iran and is thus in line with Germany, France, Great Britain and China. Israel and Trump's USA take the opposite position. For Israel, the situation in Syria is more urgent, because the danger of armed conflict between Israel and Iran is real. Russia could contribute to de-escalation by helping to pull the fronts apart.

OSTEUROPA: *Do you have the impression that politics and the public in Germany understand the conflict?*

Stein: Defence Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer encountered harsh criticism when she proposed setting up a security zone in northern Syria. This was unfair. Even if the idea was premature, fundamentally it was raising the question of whether Germany or the EU can still afford to do no more than merely register their concerns. Wanting nothing to do with the conflicts in Syria or the Middle East is a cheap position: Germany must do more than megaphone diplomacy. The fact that the Middle East and Europe are inseparable is banal. The watchword is: "If we do not visit the Middle East, the Middle East will visit us."

OSTEUROPA: *This is a lesson of the Arab Spring and its consequences.*

Stein: Yes, but the German public and the German political sphere are far from willing to become more involved in the Middle East. And this at a time when the Americans are pulling out of the Middle East, thereby opening doors to Russia, Iran and Turkey. These latter powers are willing to pursue their interests in the region by force. Erdoğan is the prime example.

OSTEUROPA: *Do foreign policy circles in Israel expect more engagement from Germany and the EU?*

Stein: I think so.

OSTEUROPA: *Where might this willingness come from, given all the historical baggage that Germany is carrying?*

Stein: France and Britain are quite ready to make military commitments to support their interests. This, of course, has to do with their colonial history. Among most post-heroic Europeans, there has been an erosion of willingness to make sacrifices for their own security. For many years the Federal Republic lived under the US nuclear umbrella and did not have to take care of its own safety. That's changing now. Whether that change will be matched by a change of thinking in Germany remains to be seen.

OSTEUROPA: *30 years ago, Israel was convinced that security could be achieved by political rather than military solutions.*

Stein: One can't function without the other. Security is about more than the absence of war. But peace cannot be created by military means alone.

OSTEUROPA: *Does the Israeli government still have a political solution for the Palestinian conflict which could also facilitate an understanding with the Europeans?*

Stein: Developing an understanding with Europeans is important, but not decisive. If I want to resolve the conflict, I'm not doing it for the Europeans or the Palestinians, but for me, for us, for my children and for their future. Unfortunately, in Israel, the question of a solution to the Palestinian question is not presently an issue. In the last two election campaigns, the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict played no role.

OSTEUROPA: *Why?*

Stein: Because there has been a broad consensus in Israeli society that the conflict can't be resolved at present. People do not perceive any partners on the other side. Therefore, an attempt is being made to annex the Occupied Territories in order to render the two-state solution impossible.

OSTEUROPA: *This is a fundamental point of disagreement between Israel and Germany. In Israel, the conflict no longer plays a role; but in Germany, it is centre stage.*

Stein: Yes. For decades, Germans and most other Europeans believed that the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the essential precondition for peace and development in the Middle East. Since the Arab Spring, it's become obvious that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is only one conflict among several. Solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict alone will not bring peace to the Middle East. But I'm interested in my own people. And I see that carrying out the occupation is bad for the Israeli soul. That applies to my generation, and that of my children and grandchildren.

OSTEUROPA: *This must be quite a lonely conviction to hold in Israel.*

Stein: It is a minority view, yes.

OSTEUROPA: *Mr Stein, there is a broad body of research being carried out at German universities on the history of Jews in Germany and Eastern Europe, as well as on the Holocaust. But there is a lack of university expertise on Israel.*

Stein: This is an open wound. In my capacity as ambassador, I tried to exert some influence on policy in order to address this. I didn't succeed.

OSTEUROPA: *What does it mean for German-Israeli relations that the last witnesses of the Shoah will soon die?*

Stein: We're moving out of the period of memory and into the period of history. This is an enormous challenge: how do you shape a culture of remembrance without witnesses?

OSTEUROPA: *And what does it mean for operative policy?*

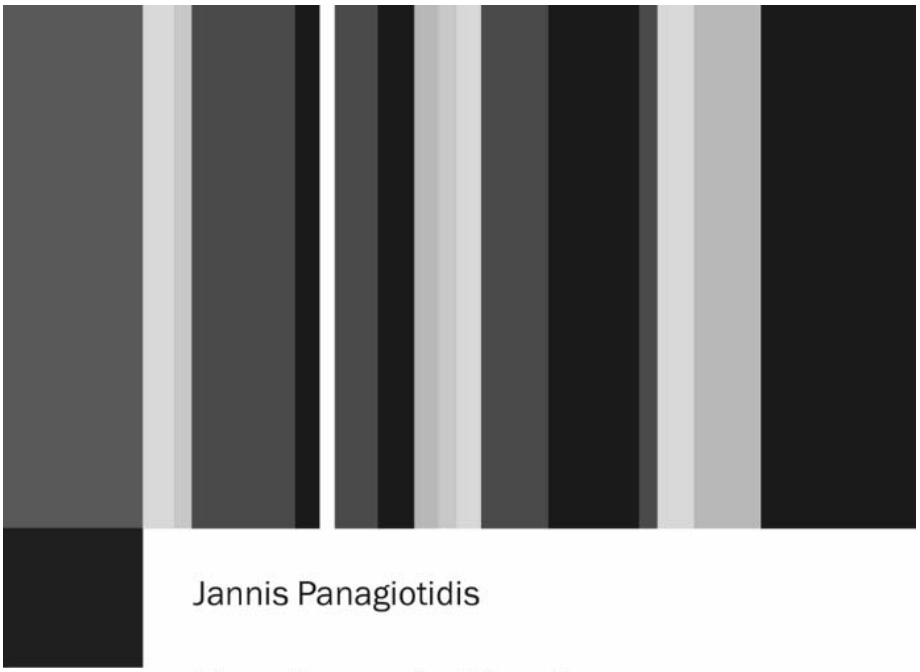
Stein: The political elites of the Federal Republic have thus far been keenly aware of the link between memory, responsibility and commitment; and have acted accordingly. It remains to be seen whether this will remain the case.

OSTEUROPA: *Are you alluding to Merkel's statement that Israel's security forms part of Germany's raison d'etre?*

Stein: You would have to ask the Chancellor what she meant when she first linked Germany's raison d'etre to Israel's security before the United Nations in 2007, and then repeated it before the Israeli Knesset in 2008. But the mere fact that she chose this expression was a most important symbol.

This conversation was conducted by Manfred Sapper and Volker Weichsel.

Translated by Edward Maltby, Sheffield



Jannis Panagiotidis

Postsowjetische Migration in Deutschland

Eine Einführung

Mit einem Vorwort
von Sergey Lagodinsky

BELTZ JUVENTA

Jannis Panagiotidis

Russian German Immigrants

Social characteristics, networks and self-image

At least 2.3 million Russian German immigrants have come to Germany from the Soviet Union and its successor states since 1987. During the 1990s, their integration was frequently called into question. After that, they almost disappeared from public awareness as a group. Many of them achieved a certain degree of prosperity through manual labour and often badly paid jobs in the service sector. A Russian German middle class has now emerged that is well integrated into the labour market. However, this is overshadowed by the attention paid to 'problem areas' with a large number of immigrants, to free churches practising strict forms of religious observance or to those individuals who have been receptive to the lure of Moscow's diaspora policies. Such a focus fails to acknowledge the heterogeneity of Russian Germans as a group today, and the difficulty in identifying them as a separate group in German society overall.

The immigration of at least 3 million ethnic German "late resettlers" (*Spätaussiedler*) from Eastern Europe since 1987 has been one of the largest migration movements in recent German history.[1] Most of these people, over 2.3 million of them, came from the Soviet Union and its successor states. Their position on arrival in the Federal Republic was a privileged one by comparison with other groups of immigrants, since they received German citizenship by virtue of their "belonging to the German people" (*deutsche Volkszugehörigkeit*) under Article 116, paragraph 1 of the German Constitution. However, after the 'Asylum Compromise' of 1992, their arrival was negotiated in public and political discussions in a broader context of immigration policy. One reason for this was the recognition that this group faced challenges similar to those encountered by other immigrants.[2] These problems, which were often exaggerated in the media, left

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1 Up until 1992, the legal designation for this group of immigrants was *Aussiedler*. Since the Law for the Settlement of War Consequences (*Kriegsfolgenbereinigungsgesetz*) entered into force in early 1993 they have been known as *Spätaussiedler*, a term that was already in unofficial use earlier. No distinction between the categories is made in this article, especially since official statistics do not distinguish between them. For more on the history of this legal category and the Federal Republic of Germany's immigration policy up to 1989, see Jannis Panagiotidis: Staat, Zivilgesellschaft und Aussiedlermigration 1950–1989, in: Jochen Oltmer (ed.): Handbuch Staat und Migration in Deutschland seit dem 17. Jahrhundert. München 2015, pp. 895–929.

2 Jannis Panagiotidis: Aussiedler. Dossier Russlanddeutsche und andere postsozialistische Migranten. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 13.7.2017.

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their mark on perceptions of the *Spätaussiedler* during the 1990s.[3] In the 2000s they largely disappeared from the public debate, and by the time the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees' Research Report No. 20 was published in 2013, at the latest, the integration of Russian German immigrants was being narrated as a success story.[4] However, this new narrative has been partly eclipsed by accusations of disloyalty and suspicions that this group as a whole has a tendency to adopt right-wing positions, suspicions that have been expressed publicly since the Crimea crisis in 2014 and the rise of the AfD (Alternative für Deutschland) as a political party.[5]

This contribution sketches the most important features of this group of immigrans' emigration, reception, and integration into German society, against the background of a perception of them that is often insufficiently differentiated. Following a short historical account of this migration movement, the social characteristics of the group are compared quantitatively with those of other statistical cohorts. This makes it possible to establish, without any sweeping ascriptions, certain social contours, which provide a picture of the situation of Russian German immigrants in German society. In its last part, the article examines networks, institutions and identities in order to establish to what extent 'the Russian Germans' actually constitute a group in German society. Linked with this, a differentiated view of different milieus and groupings is advocated. This combination of approaches makes it possible to analyse the Russian Germans as a migration group in Germany in a differentiated way, rather than making assumptions about group characteristics a priori and in an essentialist manner.[6]

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[3] See, for example, Waldemar Vogelgesang: Jugendliche Aussiedler. Zwischen Entwurzelung, Ausgrenzung und Integration. Weinheim etc. 2008.

[4] Susanne Worbs et al.: (Spät-) Aussiedler in Deutschland. Eine Analyse aktueller Daten und Forschungsergebnisse. Nürnberg 2013 [= Forschungsbericht 20 des Bundesamts für Migration und Flüchtlinge].

[5] Nikolai Klimeniouk: 'Fleißige deutsche Opfer, frustrierte russische Täter. Russlanddeutsche in den bundesdeutschen Medien.' Dossier „Russlanddeutsche" der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 11.10.2018, <www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/russlanddeutsche/276854/fleissige-deutsche-opfer-frustrierte-russische-taeter>. – Hans-Christian Petersen: Zwischen „Klein-Moskau" und der „Alternative für Russlanddeutschland". Anmerkungen zum Bild der AfD als „Partei der Russlanddeutschen" aus Sicht der historischen Stereotypenforschung. Stereotyp und Geschichte, 11.2.2018, <www.stereotyp-und-geschichte.de/zwischen-klein-moskau-und-der-alternative-fuer-russlanddeutschland>.

[6] Rogers Brubaker warns about the risks of "groupism" in the analysis of ethnic groups: Ethnicity without Groups. Cambridge, Mass. 2004. – In relation to research on the Russian Germans, see Victor Dönninghaus, Jannis Panagiotidis, Hans-Christian Petersen: Jenseits der „Volksgruppe": Neue Perspektiven auf die Russlanddeutschen zwischen Russland, Deutschland und Amerika, in: the volume edited by these authors: Jenseits der „Volksgruppe": Neue Perspektiven auf die Russlanddeutschen zwischen Russland, Deutschland und Amerika. Berlin 2018, pp. 7–27. – On the historical construction of the Russian Germans as an 'ethnic group', see Hans-Christian Petersen, Tobias Weger: Neue Begriffe, alte Eindeutigkeiten? Zur Konstruktion von „deutschen Volksgruppen" im östlichen Europa, in: Nach dem Großen Krieg 1918–1923. Jahrbuch des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa 25/2017, pp. 177–199.

A short historical account

The emigration of the Russian Germans to the Federal Republic of Germany needs to be situated in two historical contexts. Firstly, it is the long-term consequence of the collective uprooting of a population group as the result of war and deportation. After the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Soviet authorities deported the German minorities collectively from different parts of the country to the East, where they had to do forced labour in what was known as the *trudarmiya*; this happened to Germans from the Volga, the Caucasus, the Leningrad region, Moscow, and Rostov on Don during 1941 and 1942.[7] The Germans of the Western Ukraine came under German and Romanian occupation, and in 1943–44 were resettled in German-occupied Poland.[8] Most of these people were captured by the Red Army as they attempted to flee further westwards and taken by force to the Soviet Union.[9] There, like the Russian Germans who had been deported earlier, they were subject to a strict exile regime, the *komendatura*, up until 1955.[10]

After the end of the *komendatura*, the history of the Russian Germans was a very mobile one. They were not allowed to return to their old areas of settlement. For this reason, many of those who had been exiled looked for somewhere to live in the Asian part of the Soviet Union – in the Urals, Siberia and the Altai, but also and especially in the Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.[11] Russian German family histories from the post-war decades are often marked by repeated moves from place to place within the Soviet Union, along the extensive branches of family networks.[12] In some cases these networks extended as far as the Federal Republic of Germany, where several tens of thousands of people who had been resettled during the war and had managed to escape forced repatriation to Russia had settled. As a result, between 1971 and the beginning of the 1980s some 70,000 Russian Germans arrived in the Federal Republic under the arrangements that provided for the reuniting of families.[13]

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[7] Overviews can be found in: Viktor: Krieger: Kolonisten, Sowjetdeutsche, Aussiedler. Eine Geschichte der Russlanddeutschen. Bonn 2015, pp. 116–139. – György Dalos: Geschichte der Russlanddeutschen. Von Katharina der Großen bis zur Gegenwart. München 2014, pp. 172–218 – Irina Mukhina: The Germans of the Soviet Union. London & New York 2007, pp. 29–56.

[8] See the classic study by Ingeborg Fleischhauer: Das Dritte Reich und die Deutschen in der Sowjetunion. Stuttgart 1983, pp. 193–236. – On the resettlement, see also Andreas Strippel: NS-Volkstumspolitik und die Neuordnung Europas. Rassenpolitische Selektion der Einwandererzentralstelle des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD (1939–1945). Paderborn 2011, pp. 241–285.

[9] Alfred Eisfeld, Vladimir Martynenko: Filtration und operative Erfassung der ethnischen Deutschen in der Ukraine durch die Organe des Inneren und der Staatssicherheit während des Zweiten Weltkrieges und in der Nachkriegszeit, in: Nordost-Archiv, 21/2012, pp. 104–81.

[10] Mukhina, The Germans of the Soviet Union [f.n. 8], pp. 81–108.

[11] Krieger, Kolonisten [f.n. 7], p. 140.

[12] There has been hardly any systematic research on these network migrations, but they are clearly visible in the accounts given by many Russian Germans of their eventful lives. See, for example: "Jede Nation muss in ihr Land"; Erna Weber: 57, Arbeiterin, Sowjetunion, in Barbara Malchow et al. (eds.): Die fremden Deutschen. Aussiedler in: der Bundesrepublik. Reinbek 1990, pp. 104–20.

[13] Lydia Klötzel: Die Russlanddeutschen zwischen Autonomie und Auswanderung. Die Geschichte einer nationalen Minderheit vor dem Hintergrund des wechselhaften deutsch-sowjetischen/russischen Verhältnisses. Münster 1999, pp. 167–84.

When the Soviet Union relaxed its restrictive emigration regime in 1987, the emigration of the Russian Germans developed into a large-scale movement. It became a central element in the migratory upheavals that accompanied the end of the Soviet Union. This 'post-Soviet' migration is the second historical context in which the emigration of the Russian Germans needs to be situated. It was above all members of ethnic diaspora minorities, Jews and Greeks in particular, in addition to the Germans, who left the Soviet Union and its successor states, as it was possible for them to obtain citizenship in Germany, Israel, or Greece.[14] Initially most of those who emigrated were families who had been seeking permission to do so for some time, but emigration soon developed its own dynamic in the case of all these groups. Another important factor was the rapidly worsening economic situation in the final days of the Soviet Union and then in its successor states. In this situation, decisions in favour of emigration were taken by people for whom this had not been an option before and for whom, in view of the restrictive immigration policies of western states after the fall of the Iron Curtain, this would not even have been possible if they had not been able to travel using different 'ethnic tickets': as German *Spätaussiedler* or alternatively as Jewish quota refugees in Germany, as Jewish *olim* in Israel, or as *palinnoustountes* in Greece. This dynamic can be seen clearly in the immigration statistics for Germany: from 1987 up to the end of the Soviet Union in 1991, at least 450,000 people arrived in Germany. A further 1.8 million followed up to the mid-2000s, most of them from Russia and Kazakhstan. This means that the majority of Russian Germans emigrated from the USSR or the CIS states and settled in the Federal Republic within a remarkably short period of time, less than 20 years.[15] After this exodus, there were no more than 400,000 people in Russia who gave their nationality as German in the 2010 census; the figure for Kazakhstan was approximately 180,000 (in 2009).[16] In the last Soviet census of 1989, approximately two million people had given their nationality as German.[17]

We can see already from these figures that, among the total of around 2.3 million arrivals from the (former) Soviet Union in the Federal Republic, there were also people who had identified themselves earlier as belonging to other nationalities, and that their proportion grew over time.[18] This had to do with the fact that after the Stalin period, the Russian

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[14] Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger (eds.): Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective. London 2003. – Anne de Tinguy, Magdalena Hadjiisky: Repatriation of Persons Following the Political Changes in Central and Eastern Europe. Strasbourg 1997.

[15] On the statistics see Worbs et al.: (Spät-) Aussiedler in Deutschland [f.n. 5], pp. 31–33.

[16] Vserossiiskaya perepis' naseleniya 2010 g. Natsional'nyi sostav naseleniya Rossiiskoi Federatsii, <demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus_nac_10.php>. – Itogi natsional'noi perepisi naseleniya Respubliki Kasakhstan 2009 goda. Analiticheskii otchet, <www.stat.gov.kz/getImg?id=WC16200032648>, Astana 2011, p.21.

[17] Vsesoyuznaya perepis' naseleniya 1989 goda. Natsional'nyi sostav naseleniya po respublikam SSSR, <www.demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/sng_nac_89.php>.

[18] In 1993 75 per cent of the *Spätaussiedler* were 'Germans'; in 1996 the figure was only 50 per cent; in 2004 it was under 25 per cent. However, Jürgen Hensen, the former head of the Federal Administration Office (*Bundesverwaltungsamt*), points out that these changes have a good deal to do with the incentive structure provided by the language test introduced in 1996; up until 2005 only German applicants, but not their family members, had to pass this test. See Jürgen Hensen: 'Zur Geschichte der Aussiedler- und Spätaussiedleraufnahme', in: Christoph Bergner, Matthias Weber (eds.): Aussiedler- und Minderheitenpolitik in Deutschland: Bilanz und Perspektiven. München 2009, pp. 47–61, on this point p. 57.

Germans for the most part no longer constituted a clearly defined ethnic group but mostly married exogenously and increasingly spoke Russian. This was not because it was forbidden to speak German, but because there were too few educational institutions keeping the language alive and Russian was a vehicle for social advancement.[19] The fact that the Russian Germans had no kind of institutional autonomy in the post-war decades also contributed to the dissolution of collective group structures.[20] At the same time, though, due to the USSR's institutionalised nationalities structure with its entries for a person's nationality in their internal passport and civil status documents, even as group structures and knowledge of the language weakened, people's individual sense of German nationality did not completely disappear.[21]

Social characteristics: a quantitative perspective

The glance at the history of the Russian Germans provided above is necessary if we want to understand the present characteristics and social composition of this category of immigrants. Not all *Spätaussiedler* from the former Soviet Union are Russian Germans in the sense that they share a certain family descent. At the same time, no strict or meaningful distinction can be drawn between 'German' and 'non-German' immigrants, as they all arrived in Germany as part of a family unit and, in view of the Russian Germans' extensive loss of the German language, faced very similar challenges in terms of adaptation and integration. This applies even more strongly to children of these families who were born in the (former) Soviet Union. In addition, we have no statistics on the Soviet nationality categories to which individual emigrants belonged before they left. This means that when I speak in this article of 'Russian German immigrants' I am referring to all those received as *Spätaussiedler* in Germany, regardless of the affiliation they 'brought with them'.

The current size of this group cannot be determined exactly. The figure of approximately 2.3 million people recorded in the immigration statistics of the Bundesverwaltungsamt (BVA, Federal Administration Office) for persons from the (former) Soviet Union gives us an idea of the total. However, over the last 25-30 years a number of these people have died, though it is almost impossible to tell how many, some have returned to Russia or other post-Soviet states, and some have left Germany for other countries.[22] Since

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[19] Krieger, Kolonisten [f.n. 8], pp. 154–155. – Robert Kindler: Sowjetische Menschen. Russlanddeutsche zwischen Integration und Emigration, in: OSTEUROPA, 9–10/2017, pp. 138–151 – Hans-Christian Petersen: „Als ob sie kein Leben gehabt hätten". Russlanddeutsche Alltagsgeschichte zwischen Stalinismus und Perestroika. Dossier „Russlanddeutscher" der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 21.9.2018.

[20] Krieger, Kolonisten [f.n. 8], p. 155.

[21] Rogers Brubaker: Nationhood and the National Question in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Eurasia: An Institutionalist Account, in: Theory and Society 23/1, pp. 47–78.

[22] On those who have returned, see: several of the contributions to Markus Kaiser and Michael Schönhuth (eds.): Zuhause? Fremd? Migrations- und Beheimatungsstrategien zwischen Deutschland und Eurasien. Bielefeld 2015. – Anna Flack: Zugehörigkeiten von remigrierten und nicht ausgesiedelten Russlanddeutschen. Alltägliche Ernährungspraxen in Westsibirien, PhD thesis, University of Regensburg 2019. In her post-doctoral research project, Flack is investigating Russian German Mennonites who have migrated onwards from Germany to Bolivia.

Spätaussiedler status is not passed on to the next generation, the figure will decline further over the course of time. According to the most recent micro-census, in 2017 at least 3.5 million people with a background of migration from the former Soviet Union were living in the Federal Republic, of whom 2.75 million had "their own experience of migration"; that is to say, they belonged to the first generation.[23] This figure also includes, in addition to the numerically dominant Russian German immigrants, Jewish immigrants, just over 215,000 of whom arrived in Germany from the former Soviet republics between 1990 and 2017, and other former Soviet citizens who, since the opening of the Iron Curtain, have arrived in Germany for different reasons, travelling on a variety of tickets, and who continue to arrive.[24]

Although this means that we do not know the exact number of Russian German immigrants, the micro-census does provide us with information about their specific social profile. We can analyse both the characteristics they 'brought with them', in the form of educational qualifications, and the structural course of integration in the Federal Republic as measured by central indicators such as unemployment, employment structure, income structure, and receipt of transfer payments. The immigrants from Kazakhstan provide us with the approximate value here. Although not all Russian German immigrants come from Kazakhstan, almost all immigrants from Kazakhstan are Russian Germans (in the broader sense outlined above).[25]

When reference is made in the rest of this section to Russian German immigrants, the figures given therefore relate to the sample of those who emigrated from Kazakhstan. The specific characteristics of this group are then established on the basis of a comparison with the total group of all post-Soviet immigrants (Russian Germans from all former

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[23] Destatis (ed.): Fachserie 1, Reihe 2.2, Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit. Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund – Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2017. Wiesbaden 2018, Table 2I. Only those people who live in the same household as their parents are counted as belonging to the second generation. This means that there are an unknown number of people who were born in Germany in the last three decades as children of post-Soviet migrants and who have now, as adults, set up their own households.

[24] For the figures on Jewish immigrants, see Migrationsbericht der Bundesregierung 2016/2017, p. 114, <www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht- 2016-2017.pdf?_blob=publicationFile>. Up until 2005 these immigrants arrived with the status of quota refugees, and since then there has been a separate process on the basis of the Law on Residence (Aufenthaltsgesetz). The other categories of immigrants consist of those migrating for purposes of work, education or marriage, and also, increasingly, of those seeking protection (who often come from Chechnya, Ukraine and the Caucasus states). As of the end of 2018, approximately 145,000 people belonging to this last category were living in Germany, of whom 85,700 had recognised protection status <www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/ Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/Tabellen/ schutzsuchende-staatsangehoerigkeit-schutzstatus.html>.

[25] Since 1992, just over 930,000 immigrants from Kazakhstan, including their family members, have arrived in Germany. Bearing in mind that until the mid-1990s the percentage of post-Soviet immigrants who came from Kazakhstan remained at a level of between 50 and 60 per cent, we can assume a further 250,000 people who emigrated from the Kazakh SSR between 1987 and 1991 (out of a total of 455,477 immigrants from the Soviet Union in that period). On this point, see the statistics in Worbs et al., (Spät-) Aussiedler (f.n. 5), pp. 31–33. According to the micro-census, 931,000 immigrants from Kazakhstan were living in Germany in 2017 (Microzensus 2017 [f.n. 24], Table 2I). Even if we deduct those immigrants from Kazakhstan who have now died, this suggests that almost all immigrants from Kazakhstan arrived as Russian Germans or members of their families.

Soviet republics, Jewish immigrants, and others), with emigrants from Ukraine as the approximate value for the Jewish immigrants,[26] with ethnic German immigrants from all countries (in addition to Kazakhstan this means, above all, the rest of the former Soviet republics, but also Poland and Romania) and, in Germany, with the 'native' population with no migration background.[27] The comparison with the other post-Soviet immigrants relates to people who arrived in Germany over roughly the same period but with a different status, who therefore had different preconditions in respect of integration. The comparison with the other ethnic German immigrants, on the other hand, relates to people who had a similar legal status but who have, on average, been resident in Germany for longer and who received more support for their integration.[28] Clearly, both cases involve a not entirely unproblematic statistical construct which suggests that there is no ambiguity, when in fact there are also mixed and overlapping elements. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify some relevant demographic characteristics on the basis of these considerations.

Educational profile

The educational qualifications recorded in the 2017 micro-census show the first generation of Russian German immigrants to have been a cohort with a relatively low level of formal education – by comparison with the population with no migration background, but also by comparison with the post-Soviet contingent as a whole and with the group of ethnic German immigrants from all countries (Figure 1).[29] 21.8 per cent of this group have the equivalent of either a high school graduation certificate (Abitur) or a vocational diploma (Fachabitur), which is only two thirds of the percentage for the 'native' population (32.5 per cent), and for high school graduates the percentage is only half of that for 'natives'. The Russian Germans are also less well qualified than post-Soviet immigrants as a whole (32.2 per cent) and ethnic German immigrants from all countries (26.8

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[26] The micro-census does not record either Jewish religious affiliation or quota refugee status. The approximate value needs to be treated with some caution, since the proportion of quota refugees together with family members among immigrants from Ukraine is lower than the proportion of Russian German immigrants among those from Kazakhstan. Yfaat Weiss and Lena Gorelik's figures, which are based on Mark Tolt's calculations, indicate that approximately 55 per cent of Jewish immigrants came from Ukraine: see Yfaat Weiss, Lena Gorelik: Die russisch-jüdische Zuwanderung, in: Michael Brenner (ed.): Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland. Von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart. München 2012, p. 400. This would mean just over 120,000 people and, depending on the year, only between 40 and 50 per cent of immigrants from Ukraine. Even so, we can identify a general tendency on the basis of these figures.

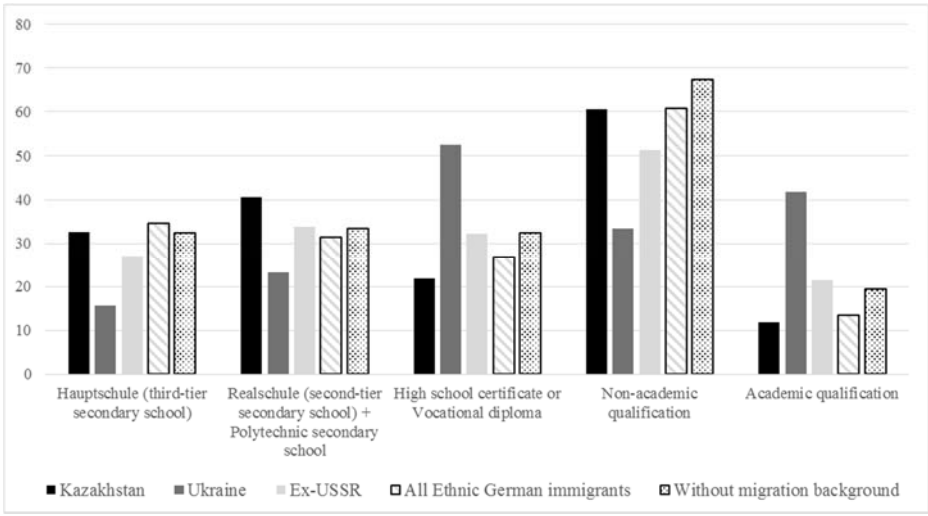
[27] The comparison is restricted to the first generation of immigrants, all of whom appear in the statistics. The second generation, as represented in the micro-census, consists primarily of young people who still live with their parents and are of very little relevance for labour market statistics.

[28] The declining support for integration in the transition from *Aussiedler* to *Spätaussiedler* immigration (see f.n. 2) is dealt with in Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels: The Decline of Privilege: The Legal Background to the Migration of Ethnic Germans, in: David Rock and Stefan Wolff (eds.): Coming home to Germany? The Integration of Ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe in the Federal Republic. New York 2002, pp. 102–118.

[29] Figures taken from Table 8I of the micro-census. Viktor Krieger speaks in this context of the "regression" of the Russian Germans as a consequence of deportation and structural disadvantage, which could be seen in a lower level of literacy and academic qualifications by comparison with the pre-war period; see Krieger, Kolonisten [f.n. 8], p. 153.

per cent). There is an even sharper contrast with immigrants from Ukraine (52.6 per cent with high school or vocational qualifications). The majority of the Russian Germans have the equivalent of a second or third-tier secondary school certificate. This corresponds with a relatively low percentage of people with a higher education degree (11.8 per cent), compared with 60.6 per cent with a non-academic qualification and 27.3 per cent without any professional qualification.

Figure 1: School and Professional Qualifications (2017)



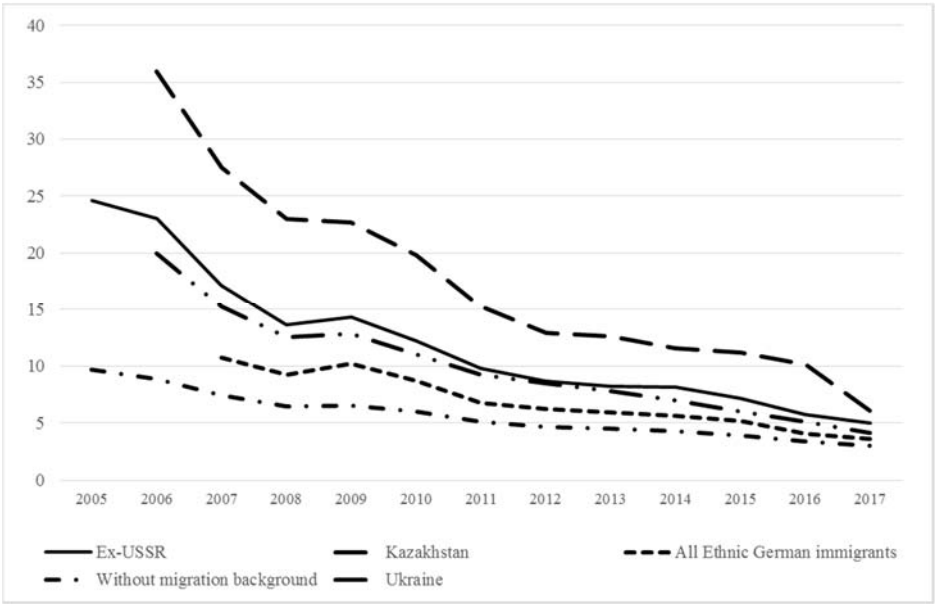
Calculated on the basis of Micro-census 2017 (tables 8I and 9I)

Unemployment and employment structure

The qualification structure summarised above was not, in the medium term, an obstacle to integration into the German labour market; indeed, the contrary was the case. Up until the mid-2000s the level of unemployment among Russian German immigrants was above average, but since then it has gone down significantly (Figure 2). It has been permanently lower than the unemployment level for post-Soviet migrants as a whole, and stood in 2017 at 4.1 per cent, only a little higher than the rate for ethnic German immigrants from all countries, a group that has done better over a long period (3.6 per cent), and the rate for the population without a migration background (3.0 per cent). This is particularly striking when the initial situation in 2006 is considered, the first year for which the micro-census records immigrants from Kazakhstan as a category: at that time, unemployment stood at 20 per cent for this group, over twice as high as for the 'native' population (8.8 per cent at that time). Although many of the better qualified immigrants experienced de-qualification because their qualifications were not recognised, the qualification structure of the group as a whole – combined with the preparedness of many of them to take jobs below their qualification level – was perfectly compatible with a labour market in which, in the course of the Agenda 2010 reforms, there was a high level of job creation but the employment was often precarious. This is especially noticeable when the Kazakhstan immigrants are compared with those from Ukraine, who are on average better qualified and where the level of unemployment was over a long period

significantly higher.[30] What can be seen particularly clearly here is how difficult it is to 'translate' the qualifications and professional capital immigrants bring with them.

Figure 2: Unemployment



Calculated on the basis of micro-census editions since 2005

The employment data for Russian German immigrants in the different sectors reveal some distinctive characteristics of this group's integration into the labour market; a differentiation into men's and women's employment is also required (Table 1). A disproportionate number of them work in the secondary sector (manufacturing industry and construction), and an especially high percentage of men are employed here. This percentage has remained at roughly the same level over the last decade. The main increase in employment has been in the tertiary sector (service industries), in which Russian German women are much more strongly represented than Russian German men – which is consistent with the German employment structure as a whole. The percentage of Russian German women working in services is close to that of women with no migration background. However, many of the jobs being done here are part-time; the percentage of exclusively part-time employment among Russian German women in relation to the total has gone down slightly in the last few years and in 2017 it was just below the level for female post-Soviet immigrants as a whole, but it remains well above the corresponding level for 'native' women.[31]

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[30] Unemployment among immigrants from Ukraine stood at over 10 per cent up until 2015. This went down to 9.9 per cent in 2016 and 6.5 per cent in 2017, in combination with a sharp increase in persons of working age in this group from 128,000 to 149,000; this development is an exception, and is unlikely to have any connection with the level of Jewish immigration, which has been very low since the mid-2000s.

[31] It is said that there is a high concentration of young Russian Germans serving in the Bundeswehr, but this is not recorded in the statistics and there has been no systematic research on the question. See, for example, the interview with the historian Sönke Neitzel in: Potsdamer Neue Nachrichten, 16.11.2016.

Table 1 Employment structure by sector (2017, figures in percentages)

	Secondary sector	Tertiary sector	Self-employed	Exclusively part-time
Kazakhstan	37.1	58.5	4.0	10.4
Men	55.4	39.7	4.1	4.1
Women	17.9	78.3	3.8	16.8
Ex-USSR	32.2	62.4	5.7	11.5
Men	49.3	45.0	6.0	5.5
Women	15.4	79.3	5.5	17.4
Ukraine	18.1	73.2	10.1	15.0
Men	32.2	66.1	10.2	11.9
Women	10.5	81.4	9.3	17.3
All Ethnic German immigrants	35.7	60.3	5.3	9.8
Men	53.8	42.0	5.9	4.6
Women	16.5	79.9	4.6	15.3
Without migration background	25.8	69.8	9.8	8.0
Men	37.1	57.8	12.4	5.7
Women	13.2	83.1	6.9	11.0

Calculated on the basis of Micro-census 2017, tables 16 and 17[32]

The low level of self-employment is noticeable; at 4.0 per cent for the Russian Germans it is much lower than for all the other comparison groups and also for people of Turkish origin (9.7 per cent) not shown in the table. However, this percentage has increased significantly over time; in 2007 only just over two per cent of the Russian Germans were self-employed, but this figure had almost doubled by 2017. The rising level of self-employment among Russian German women is particularly noteworthy: in 2007 there were hardly any self-employed women, but the proportion is now almost as high as for men.

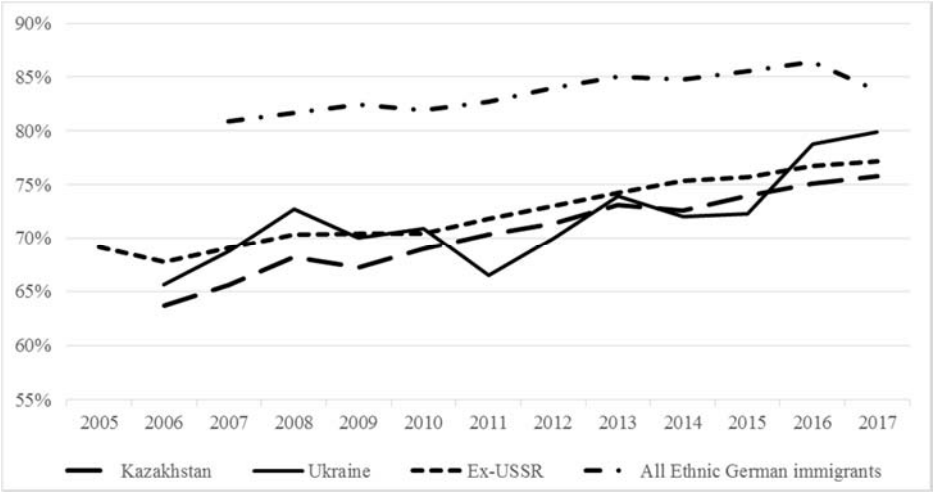
Income and transfer payments

The income structure of the Russian German immigrants is characterised by a low per capita income but a good level of household income, in each case as compared with the population without migration background. However, incomes are approaching those of the 'native' population. In 2006, the net average monthly personal income of Russian German immigrants, for both sexes, stood at just under two thirds of that of the population without migration background (€1020 as against €1602). It now stands at three quarters of that level (€1587 as against €2094). There is hardly any difference between

[32] Table 16 is the source of the breakdown by economic sectors and the percentage of self-employed persons; the reference value here is all people of working age. Table 17 is the source of the figures for those working exclusively part-time; the reference value here is only people in employment.

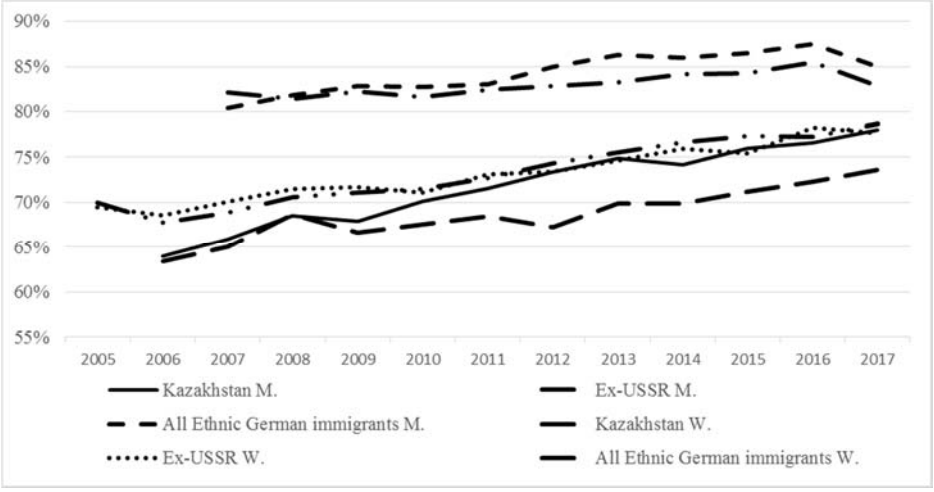
the incomes of Russian Germans and those of post-Soviet immigrants as a whole, though they are significantly lower than those of the group of ethnic German immigrants from all countries, many of whom have been settled in Germany for longer (Figure 3).[33]

Figure 3: Net personal income as percentage of income of native population



Calculated on the basis of Micro-census editions since 2005 (Table 161)

Figure 4: Personal income as a proportion of income of native population, Male/Female

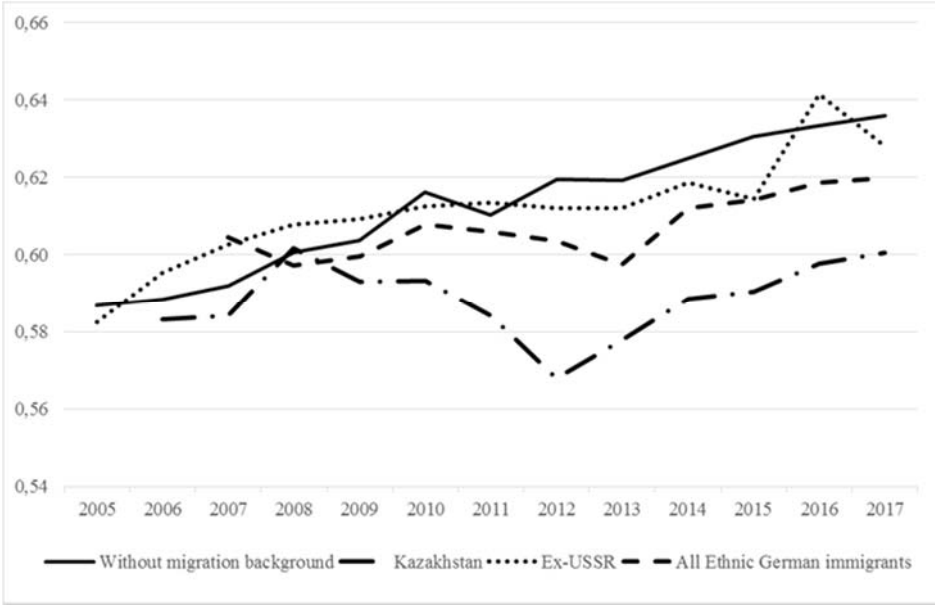


Calculated on the basis of Micro-census editions since 2005 (tables 16M and 16W)

[33] There have been considerable fluctuations in the figures for immigrants from Ukraine, which may well have to do with the changing composition of this group. Here too, though, the trend over time has been upwards.

There are significant gender-specific differences here: Russian German women are in a worse position in relation to native women than Russian German men are in relation to native men (Figure 4). The starting point was similar, but the gender gap has widened since 2009: in that year, Russian German women earned 60.8 per cent of the average income of Russian German men, which corresponded to the 'native' gender gap; in 2012 this went down to 56.8 per cent, and only in 2017 did it go back up to 60.1 per cent. This is 3.5 percentage points lower than the figure for women without migration background, and almost 3 percentage points lower than for other female post-Soviet immigrants (Figure 5). These figures are clearly a reflection of the increasing part-time employment of Russian German women in the service sector.

Figure 5: The gender gap in each group



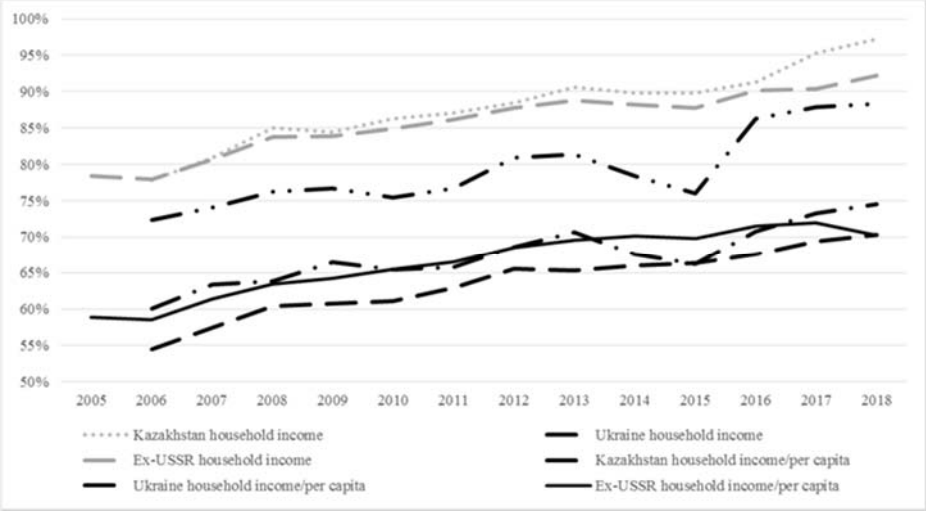
Calculated on the basis of Micro-census editions since 2005 (tables 16M and 16W)

Where total household incomes are concerned, the gap between Russian German immigrants and 'natives' is narrower and it is closing more quickly (Figure 6). In 2006, a Russian German household had at its disposal only 78 per cent of the income of a 'native' household, but this has increased steadily since then and in 2017 the figure was 95 per cent. At present, Russian German households are in a better position as far as this measurement is concerned than post-Soviet immigrants as a whole or those from Ukraine.[34] However, as Figure 6 also shows, this is not true of per capita household income, where the level is below the post-Soviet average. Nevertheless, here too there has been a degree of convergence over time with the figures for 'natives'. The discrepancy between household income at a level close to that of 'natives' and significantly lower per capita incomes is the result of the fact that Russian German households are

[34] Unfortunately, no comparison with all ethnic German immigrants is possible here as their household incomes are not recorded separately.

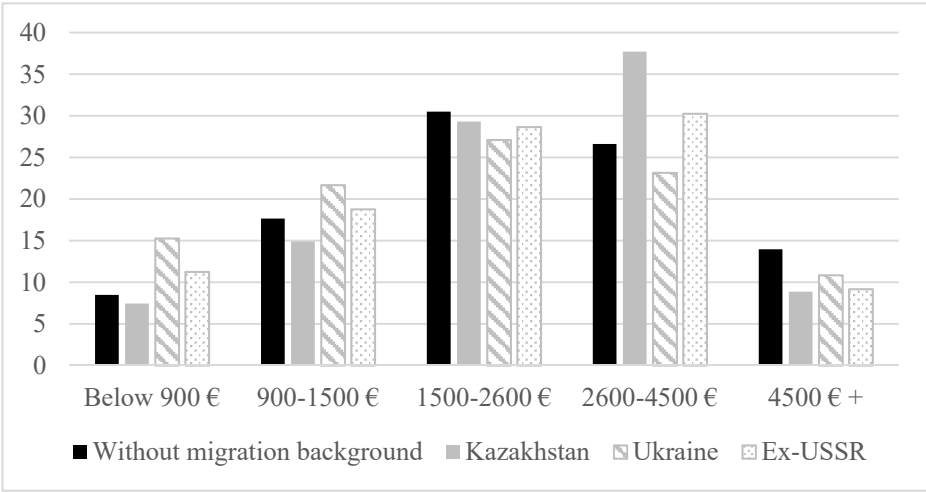
larger on average and a number of relatively low incomes are combined to make up an adequate income for the household.[35] This also explains the large number of women working exclusively in part-time jobs, which has already been mentioned; their mini-jobs alone are not enough for one person to live on, but they make an important contribution to the family budget.

Figure 6: Household income as percentage of native level



Calculated on the basis of Micro-census editions since 2005 (Table 11)

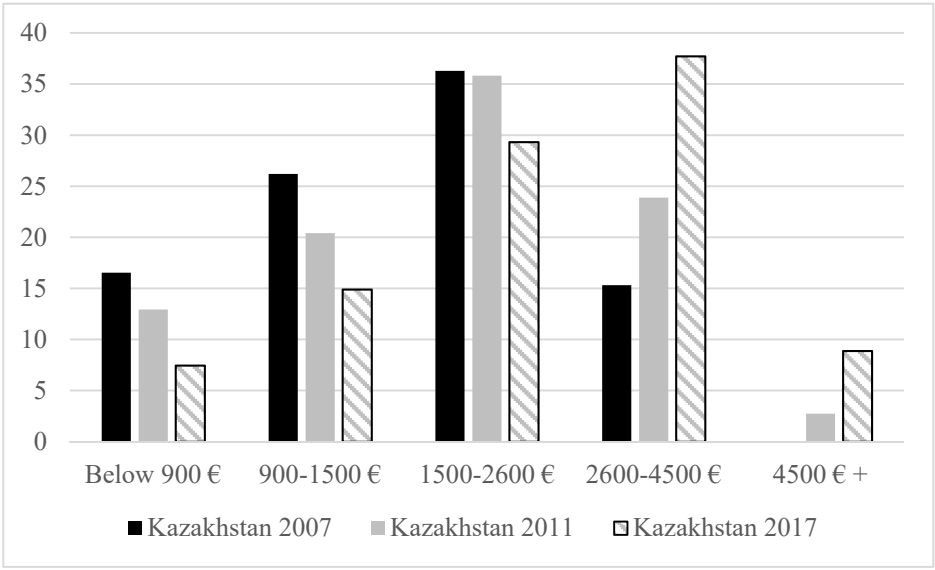
Figure 7: Distribution of household income (2017)



Calculated on the basis of Micro-census 2017 (Table 11)

[35] In 2017, Russian German households contained an average of 2.67 persons; the figure for post-Soviet households was 2.43, for Ukrainians 2.22, and for 'natives' 1.89. Russian German households had an average of 1.47 persons in employment; the figure for post-Soviet households was 1.26, for Ukrainians 1.04, and for natives only 0.99.

Figure 8: Distribution of Russian German immigrants' income in selected years



Calculated on the basis of Micro-census editions 2007, 2011, 2017 (Table 11)

Another important factor in the assessment of the Russian Germans' economic position is the distribution of household incomes across different income segments (Figure 7). The above-average proportion of Russian Germans in the second-highest segment, with incomes between €2600 and €4500, indicates that a Russian German middle class has come into existence. The proportion of people in the lowest income segment, on the other hand, is only 7.5 per cent and thus significantly lower than the level for all post-Soviet immigrants and much lower than the level for immigrants from Ukraine. This is another area in which there is clear evidence of an improvement in the situation over the last few years (Figure 8): since 2007, the proportion of Russian German households in the lowest income segment has gone down by more than half (from 16.5 per cent to 7.5 per cent), and it is now below the percentage for those without a migration background (8.5 per cent). The proportion in the next two income segments has also declined, and there have been increases in the second-highest segment (37.7 per cent of all households) and in the top segment, where 8.9 per cent of all Russian German households have now established themselves.

The final important indicator that needs to be considered is the percentage of transfer payment recipients. This correlates with unemployment, but it is also significant for other reasons and points us to the question of poverty in old age. This is increasingly important for the Russian Germans, since the generation affected by the change in the law on pension rights acquired by contributions abroad (*Fremdrentenrecht*) in the 1990s is now reaching retirement age. At that time an upper limit was placed on the number of working years outside Germany that could be taken into account; this means a significantly lower pension for people who may have worked for several decades in the Soviet Union before their emigration. Accordingly, just over two per cent of immigrants from

Kazakhstan were receiving social assistance in 2017.[36] This was significantly more than in 2007 (1.3 per cent), while over the same period the proportion of this group receiving Hartz IV unemployment benefits went down from 13.9 per cent to 5.2 per cent. A synchronic comparison shows this to be more than three times higher than the value for the native population (0.6 per cent). However, Russian Jews in Germany have already been affected by poverty in old age over a longer period and much more seriously, since they were not covered by the *Fremdrentenrecht* law. This explains why the percentage of social assistance recipients among emigrants from Ukraine has remained at a high level; in 2017 it stood at 10.7 per cent. One reason why these problems have not been dealt with as two aspects of the same issue is the political attitude of the federal government, which emphasises what it claims are categorical differences between these groups – a position that does nothing to improve the situation of the Russian German immigrants either.[37]

Russian German immigrants, considered as a statistical cohort, have, in recent years, become increasingly well integrated into the German labour market and have, as a group, achieved a certain level of prosperity by means of manual work and jobs in the service sector that are frequently not very well paid. The unemployment level and the proportion of people doing poorly paid jobs have both been significantly reduced, and the Russian German middle class is growing. However, too rosy a picture should not be painted: even though the Russian Germans' at-risk-of-poverty rate is falling, in 2017 it was still almost twice as high as that of the native population (21.2 per cent as against 11.8 per cent). For pensioners, the rate is almost four times as high (49.4 per cent as against 13.7 per cent).[38] Statistical analysis thus helps us to identify certain group characteristics of the Russian Germans, but it also reminds us that we should look in a differentiated way at the different situations of members of that group.

Group networks and group identity

If a qualitative rather than a quantitative perspective is adopted, some additional aspects become visible. These enable us to approach the question of how far 'the Russian Germans' are identifiable as a group in German society. In this context, we can consider aspects such as networks, organisations, collective memory, group consciousness and identity, and language. Here too, though, we find that there is a good deal of social heterogeneity within the large group of 'Russian German immigrants'.

The existence of horizontal networks linking Russian Germans in Germany suddenly became visible in January 2016 in the 'Lisa affair'. Simultaneously, all over Germany, thousands of people from Russian German or post-Soviet backgrounds took to the streets to protest about the alleged rape of a Russian German girl by, in different versions of the story, 'foreigners', 'refugees', 'Arabs', or 'southerners'; the protests were directed against the government's refugees policy and the alleged covering up of the case. The demonstrators were mobilised with the help of messages circulated via WhatsApp and

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[36] Micro-census 2017 [f.n. 24], Table 15.
[37] Antrag für bessere Renten jüdischer Zuwanderer abgelehnt, Jüdische Allgemeine, 21.2.2019.
[38] Micro-census 2017 [f.n. 24], Table 14.

on social media.[39] Alarmed commentators saw this as part of a Kremlin-inspired conspiracy, but the extent of the decentralised mobilisation showed, above all, the existence of a dense communication network connecting Russian German immigrants in different cities and regions – the places where demonstrations took place revealed, so to speak, a map of 'Russian German Germany'. These networks are only formalised to a limited degree, and are principally familial in nature.[40] Virtual social networks also play a crucial role: Russian-language platforms such as *Odnoklassniki* and *VKontakte* connect Russian Germans and other post-Soviet immigrants in Germany with other people who either come from the same area of the former Soviet Union or live in the same town in Germany.[41]

In addition to these informal structures, Russian German organisations and groups representing their interests have developed a stronger presence over the last few years. The *Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland* (LmDR) is considered the representative institution at the federal level. This body was originally founded in the post-war period, and it is only in recent years that, in the course of a generational change in the leadership structure, it has become an organisation of and for recent Russian German immigrants.[42] A number of other organisations and associations are active in different ways at the regional and local levels: some of these describe themselves expressly as associations of Russian Germans, some as 'integration centres' open to people from different backgrounds, and others as cultural associations more strongly oriented towards the Russian language.[43]

Another aspect of this stronger institutionalisation is state support for Russian German cultural institutions such as the Museum for Russian-German Cultural History in Detmold, which has existed as a private initiative since the 1990s but began to receive federal funding in 2016.[44] Attached to the museum, there is also a *Kulturreferat* or cultural department for Russian Germans, which is responsible for supporting associations and organisations in this field by providing federal funds.[45] In addition, a cultural centre for Germans from Russia funded by the government of Bavaria has existed since 2019 in Nuremberg.[46]

The institutionalisation of culture, and so of a collective memory, is especially important for the existence of the Russian Germans as an identifiable group. In this way identity-creating narratives of the history of the Russian Germans are, as it were, canonised and established as something that can be passed on in the long term. These narratives start with Catherine the Great's call to the Germans to come to Russia as 'colonisers' in 1763

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[39] Medina Schaubert: "Der Fall Lisa" – Entwicklungen in Berlin Hellersdorf-Marzahn, Dossier Russlanddeutsche, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 9.10.2018.

[40] Nikolai Mitrokhin: "Sluchai devochki Lizy": russkoyazychnye storonniki Putina v Germanii i nemetskii pravyi radikalizm, in: Neprikosnovennyi zapas, 3/2017, pp. 132–146.

[41] Tatjana Golova: Postsowjetische Migranten in Sozialen Netzwerken, in: Dossier Russlanddeutsche, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 26.9.2018.

[42] On the early history of the LmDR, see Ute Richter-Eberl: Ethnisch oder National? Aspekte der russlanddeutschen Emigration in Deutschland 1919–1969. Frankfurt/Main 2001.

[43] Gesine Wallem: Russlanddeutsches Verbandswesen, in: Dossier Russlanddeutsche und andere postsozialistische Migranten, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 13.7.2017.

[44] Museum für Russlanddeutsche Kulturgeschichte, <www.russlanddeutsche.de>.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Bayrisches Kulturzentrum der Deutschen aus Russland, <www.bkdr.de>.

and tell a story of their rise and fall in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, with a catastrophic break caused by the deportation of the Volga Germans in 1941 and, following that, the time of forced labour and exile; then, after the end of the *komendatura*, emigration to Germany followed as the logical though belated consequence of these events.[47] As Gabriele Rosenthal and colleagues have shown, these narratives certainly exist in the personal stories Russian Germans tell about their lives, and to some extent they eclipse the lived history that diverges from them.[48] György Dalos, in his history of the Russian Germans (which is actually a history of the Volga Germans), also writes of the identity-forming effect of the collective experience of persecution, which led to the formation of a "community sharing a common destiny" (*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*).[49]

At the same time, the passing on of identity-creating narratives to later generations is by no means something that happens self-evidently, and it is often fragmentary. Among the generation of the grandchildren of deportees, in particular, there are a wide range of different experiences and ethnically mixed family histories that cannot be fitted into any kind of homogenised group narrative.[50] The Russian Germans who were socialised in the post-war decades were also 'Soviet people' – not in the sense of an ideological orientation, but in that they were "formed by Soviet reality".[51] In Germany, on the other hand, the self-understanding of being a 'Russian German' was a collective identification strategy designed to help people deal with a state of affairs that is mentioned repeatedly: the problem of being seen 'there as the Germans and here as the Russians'.[52] The initial findings of research on the second generation suggest, however, that this label is less attractive for the children of immigrants born in Germany who have not had the double experience of being an outsider in this form. They are more likely to place themselves in the clearly nationally defined categories of 'German' or 'Russian' (sometimes exclusively, sometimes in parallel).[53] A narrative that can connect people across generations would need to be able to integrate this diverse and contradictory store of experiences, something that cannot be reduced to the wartime generation's experience of persecution in the Soviet Union.

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[47] Kindler, Sowjetische Menschen [f.n. 20]. See also Regina Römhild: Die Macht des Ethnischen: Grenzfall Russlanddeutsche. Perspektiven einer politischen Anthropologie. Frankfurt/Main 1998.

[48] Gabriele Rosenthal, Viola Stephan, Niklas Radenbach: Brüchige Zugehörigkeiten. Wie sich Familien von „Russlanddeutschen" ihre Geschichte erzählen. Frankfurt/Main 2011.

[49] Dalos, Geschichte der Russlanddeutschen [f.n. 8], p. 203. On this point see also Mukhina's study: The Germans of the Soviet Union [f.n. 8], pp. 131–152.

[50] Rosenthal et al.: Brüchige Zugehörigkeiten [f.n. 49], pp. 11–22.

[51] The research project ‚Ambivalenzen des Sowjetischen' (Ambivalences of the Soviet), which has been launched by the present author in collaboration with the Bundesinstitut für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im Östlichen Europa (Oldenburg), the Nordost-Institut (Lüneburg) and the University of Göttingen and is being funded by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture and the Volkswagen Foundation, will pursue more detailed studies of this Soviet experience and how it is being worked through in the present.

[52] Nelly Simonov: Die heimatlosen Heimkehrer: Zwei Subkulturen im Vergleich. Sozialpsychologische Aspekte der Identität von russlanddeutschen Spätaussiedlern in Deutschland und irischen Heimkehrern in Irland. Hamburg 2013.

[53] Maik Hoops: Fremdzuschreibungen natio-ethno-kultureller Zugehörigkeit und deren Einfluss auf die Identitätsbildung: Die Erfahrungen der Nachkommen russlanddeutscher AussiedlerInnen, BA thesis, University of Osnabrück 2018. – Birte Schröder: Woher kommst du? Aushandlungen der Zugehörigkeit russlanddeutscher Jugendlicher, Dossier Russlanddeutsche und andere postsozialistische Migranten, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 14.2.2018. – Schröder interprets the self-positioning of her subjects, female teenagers, as 'Russians' as a strategy designed to avoid discussions with their classmates. In fact, they see themselves as 'Germans'.

This range of different experiences, both in the Soviet Union and after emigration to Germany, is reflected in different attitudes to the Russian language and the practices that result. After the use of German declined in many families during the post-war decades, it was frequently the case after emigration that little value was attached to keeping up Russian so as not to make it more difficult to learn German correctly.[54] At the same time, Russian undoubtedly remained present in many families. A representative survey conducted in 2016 of people who had emigrated from the Soviet Union (78 per cent of them Russian Germans) reflects this heterogeneous situation: 42 per cent of respondents said they spoke Russian at home, 24 per cent spoke German, and 32 per cent spoke both languages.[55] These were almost exclusively members of the first generation of immigrants. Studies of the second generation suggest that, among young Russian Germans, knowledge of Russian tends to be fragmentary, especially when they are compared with children from Russian Jewish families where a higher value is placed on Russian as a language of culture.[56] However, the context is also important where the use of language is concerned. A slightly older study of language use among young Russian German immigrants, for example, found that 47 per cent of respondents spoke German with their parents most of the time and 53 per cent mostly spoke Russian. German was used by 80 per cent for communication between siblings, by 91 per cent in circles of friends, and by 99 per cent at university or in the workplace.[57] This means that the significance of Russian is in decline among the younger generation, but it is still an important language for intergenerational communication and is likely to remain so. There are also indications of a revival of interest in Russian among the second generation, who see the language as a resource rather than a stigma.[58]

This heterogeneous use of language is an indication of the diversity of life plans within the large group of Russian German immigrants, which depends on factors such as generation, level of education, and religiosity. These factors correspond with heterogeneous self-designs, as described for example by Svetlana Kiel.[59] Kiel distinguishes between five types. The ‘not-really-Germans’ and the ‘Germans with a stigma’ evaluate their hybrid cultural position negatively. The ‘not-really-Germans’ belong to the generation

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[54] Ludmila Isurin, Claudia Maria Riehl: Integration, Identity and Language Maintenance in Young Immigrants. Russian Germans or German Russians. Amsterdam 2017. – Katharina Dück: „Als mein Kind geboren wurde, hatte ich wieder Lust, russisch zu sprechen.“ Zu Sprachkompetenzen, Spracheinstellungen und Spracherziehung der zweiten Generation der Deutschen aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion, in: Michael C. Hermann, Rainer Öhlschläger (eds.): Hier die Russen – dort die Deutschen. Über die Integrationsprobleme russlanddeutscher Jugendlicher 250 Jahre nach dem Einladungsmanifest von Katharina II. Baden-Baden 2013, pp. 79–95.

[55] Russischsprachige Deutsche. Forschungsergebnisse, Berlin, 14.11.2016, <https://nemtsov-fund.org/de/2016/11/die-boris-nemtsov-foundation-studie-russisch-sprechende-deutsche>.

[56] Issurin, Riehl: Integration [f.n. 55], pp. 271–273.

[57] Waldemar Vogelgesang: Auf dem Weg zur Normalität – Integrationsfortschritte von jugendlichen Spätaussiedlern, in: Hermann and Öhlschläger: Hier die Russen – dort die Deutschen [f.n. 55], pp. 15–32, on this point p. 18.

[58] Dück, Sprachkompetenzen [f.n. 55]. The author has personal experience of the phenomenon of ‘Saturday schools’, where the third generation learns Russian. See also Wallem: Russlanddeutsches Verbandswesen [f.n. 44].

[59] Svetlana Kiel: Heterogene Selbstbilder. Identitätsentwürfe und -strategien bei russlanddeutschen (Spät-) Aussiedlern, in: Markus Kaiser, Michael Schönhuth (eds.): Zuhause? Fremd? Migrations- und Beheimatungsstrategien zwischen Deutschland und Eurasien. Bielefeld 2015, pp. 73–89, and Wie deutsch sind Russlanddeutsche? Eine empirische Studie zur ethnisch-kulturellen Identität in russlanddeutschen Aussiedlerfamilien. Münster 2009.

of the grandparents; they saw themselves as Germans in the Soviet Union, but now find this identity placed in question in Germany and so are forced into a negative definition of themselves. The 'Germans with a stigma' belong to non-academic milieus and see their biculturality and mixed background as a blemish. The 'Germans with Russian gloss', on the other hand, frequently have an academic background and see their biculturality as an advantage. Kiel argues that the pious Russian German immigrants organised in Baptist and Pentecostal communities see themselves as 'true Germans' and, because of their conservative values and strict religious beliefs, consider themselves 'more German' than the natives.[60] The fifth and final type identified by Kiel is the group of 'Soviet people', members of ethnically mixed families who, even after emigration, do not see any need to be exclusively German.[61]

These different kinds of self-design can lead to quite different ways of self-positioning in relation to Russian German identity or other collective identities. For example, the study carried out by the Boris Nemtsov Foundation, which has already been mentioned, identifies 18 per cent of its sample as exclusively oriented towards Germany and classifies 17 per cent as 'Russia-friendly', positions which find expression in different attitudes to questions such as migration, security and democracy.[62] 65 per cent of the respondents place themselves in between these two positions. Conspiracy theorists claim that the 'long arm of the Kremlin' is manipulating the Russian-speaking minority in Germany, but we can see that these different positions mean some Russian Germans are more receptive than others to the lure of Moscow's diaspora policies.

Spatial aspects should also be considered here. Russian Germans live in a range of different milieus, and we need to look at these more closely. Public attention is paid to, on the one hand, districts where there is a heavy concentration of Russian speakers who are Russian Germans, such as Berlin-Marzahn, which are often marked as 'problematic'.[63] Secondly, especially in some rural areas such as the Cloppenburg district, Ostwestfalen, the Eifel and the Hunsrück, followers of the strict Russian German free churches are present in larger numbers.[64] In between these two life situations, which are often presented in stereotypical terms, many Russian German immigrants live 'inconspicuously' in 'mixed' areas of towns without any clear ethnic identity or in districts with many

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[60] On this particular subgroup see also the study by Frederik Elwert: Religion als Ressource und Restriktion im Integrationsprozess. Eine Fallstudie zu Biographien freikirchlicher Russlanddeutscher. Wiesbaden 2015. – for a more general account, see Lothar Weiß (ed.): Russlanddeutsche Migration und evangelische Kirchen. Wiesbaden 2013.

[61] For a more extensive discussion of this typology and others see Jannis Panagiotidis: Identität und Ethnizität bei Bundesbürgern mit russlanddeutschem Migrationshintergrund, Dossier Russlanddeutsche, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 14.1.2019.

[62] Russischsprachige Deutsche [f.n. 56].

[63] Schaubert, Fall Lisa [f.n. 40]. On the coming into being and stigmatisation of such 'ghettos', see also René Kreichauf: Das Siedlungsverhalten von Spätaussiedler_innen in ostdeutschen Kleinstädten, in: Victor Dönninghaus, Jannis Panagiotidis, Hans-Christian Petersen (eds.): Jenseits der „Volksgruppe". Neue Perspektiven auf die Russlanddeutschen zwischen Russland, Deutschland und Amerika. Berlin 2018, pp. 155–178.

[64] For an interpretation of a Baptist community in the Eifel as a "religious parallel world", see Vogelgesang: Jugendliche Aussiedler [f.n. 4], pp. 142–152. – Kornelius Ens presents a more positive assessment of the integrative effects of Russian German: immigration churches, in: Religiosität unter Russlanddeutschen. Geschichte, religiöse Identität und Integration, Dossier Russlanddeutsche und andere postsozialistische Migranten, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 13.7.2017.

Russian Germans but which are not identified as 'problem areas'. We can assume that each of these constellations will, in the long term, lead to different developments in terms of self-identification and group reference, and that these will depend on a range of external and internal factors. The external factors include stereotypical ascriptions of foreignness as 'Russians', which can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The internal factors may include self-confidently keeping the Russian language alive or using a shared, distinctive religion as an identity resource that can foster a feeling of community based on a family history in the USSR that is receding further and further into the past. The victim identity was crucial in the shaping of the wartime generation; in the heterogeneous setting of the Federal Republic, though, a wide range of different individual developments and ways of self-positioning are possible and probable.

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Larissa Remennick

Generation 1.5 of Russian-Speaking Immigrants in Israel and in Germany

An Overview of Recent Research and a German Pilot Study

This chapter offers a comparative overview of immigrant trajectories and integration outcomes of Russian-Jewish youths (the so-called 1.5 generation) who immigrated to Israel and Germany with their families over the last 25 years. After introducing the concept of segmented assimilation, I compare Israeli and German reception contexts and policies and tap on the generic features of the 1.5 immigrant generation. Next I overview the Israeli research findings on Russian Israeli 1.5ers - their schooling, social mobility, cultural and linguistic practices, parents' role in their integration, and juxtapose them with (very limited) German data. The final section presents the initial findings of my on-going study among Russian Jewish young adults living in three German cities. The interviews with 18 men and women, mostly successful professionals or entrepreneurs, indicate that their upward social mobility was facilitated by the continuous welfare support of their families, school integration programs, and low financial barriers to higher education. Despite common occupational and social downgrading of the parental generation in both countries, the 1.5-ers in Israel had to struggle harder to overcome their inherent immigrant disadvantage vs. native peers to access good schools and professional careers.

Across the 1990s, Europe, America and Israel faced unprecedented waves of immigration from the former socialist countries in the wake of the USSR's demise and the end of the Cold War[1]. With the first generation of adult ex-Soviet immigrants approaching retirement age, all the receiving countries face the emergence of the young adults of Russian background, who came of age in Germany, Israel, or US/Canada. While the identity shifts and social integration of these 1.5 generation immigrants[2] share many

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[1] Larissa Remennick: Russian Jews on three continents: Identity, integration, and conflict. New Brunswick, NJ 2007. – Dies.: Exploring intercultural relationships: A study of Russian immigrants married to native Israelis, in: Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 5/2009, p. 719–738.

[2] A term used for immigrants who moved to a host country as older children or adolescents (between the ages of 8-10 to 18), usually with their parents and/or other family members. In most countries that hosted the 1990s immigration from the USSR/FSU, the 1.5 generation adults are now between their early 20s and late 30s. Scholars often disagree about the age bracket defining the 1.5 generation, but most assert that they form a special category of immigrant experience, different from both their parents (the 1st generation) and immigrant children born in the host country (the 2nd generation). Of course younger and older 1.5ers tackle different challenges in their

similar features across the host countries, they also reflect the country-specific political and socio-economic contexts. In this article I review the available (rather limited) research on young adults of Russian immigrant origin in Israel and in Germany and share some preliminary findings from my on-going qualitative study among Russian-Jewish 1.5ers living in three German cities. At the outset, I describe a comparative sociological perspective for understanding the experiences and prospects of young immigrants in different host societies drawing on the theoretical framework of *segmented assimilation*. Drawing on this approach, I then compare the general conditions and policies targeting immigrants in Israel and in Germany. Next I overview the key themes that have emerged in Israeli, European and American research on the 1.5 generation, illustrated by the findings from recent sociological studies of the Russian immigrant families and their children who grew up in Israel, both my own and by other Israeli sociologists. Whenever possible, I offer some comparisons with similar issues in the German context, drawing both on my current and earlier wave of research on Russian Jewish immigrants in Germany.[3] In the last sections, I present and discuss extant sociological research on Russian-speaking young adults in Germany, including the initial findings of my ongoing interview-based study. In the end I formulate some cautious conclusions and suggest future directions for expanding the comparative study of the 1.5 generation adults in different host countries.

Segmented assimilation of immigrant youth

The segmented assimilation theory was developed in the US during the 1990s in the series of large national studies of social inclusion and mobility tracks among the children of immigrants (a mix of the 1.5 and 2nd generation) who arrived with mass migration waves of the two previous decades, mainly from the poorer countries of Central/Latin America and Asia/Middle East.[4] In a nutshell, this theory taps on the *factors* and *outcomes* of social mobility achieved by the children of immigrants vis-à-vis two natural comparison groups: their own parents (1st immigrant generation) and their local, non-immigrant peers. It posits that the assimilation prospects of young immigrants are highly variable (or *segmented*), reflecting different racial/ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds of their parents, with the ensuing differential resources available for their successful resettlement and social mobility in a new country. Other migration scholars[5] added

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schooling, learning host language and relations with parents and peers, calling for a more nuanced approach to this category of immigrants. Yet, due to extant data limitations, in many social studies the 1.5 and 2nd generations are lumped together as „immigrant youth" (Haller et al., 2011).

[3] Larissa Remennick: Russian Jews on three continents [f.n. 1]. – Larissa Remennick: Intergenerational transfer in Israeli-Russian immigrant families: Parental social mobility and children's integration, in: Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 10/2012, S. 1533–1550.

[4] A. Portes, Min Zhou: The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants among post-1965 immigrant youth. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences 530/1993, pp. 74–96. – A. Portes, et al.: Segmented assimilation on the ground: The new second generation in early adulthood. Ethnic and Racial Studies 28/2005 (6)/ b: pp. 1000-1040. – A. Portes, R.G. Rumbaut: Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation. Berkeley: University of California Press.

[5] N. Foner (Hg.): Across generations: Immigrant families in America. New York 2009. – E. Ben-Rafael, M. Lyubansky, O. Glockner, u.a.: Building a diaspora: Russian Jews in Israel, Germany, and the USA. Leiden 2006. – R.W. Brubaker: The return of assimilation? Changing perspectives on immigration and its sequels in France, Germany and the United States. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 24/2001 (4): pp. 531–548.

to these personal/family variables the specifics of the local *contexts of reception*, i.e. legal provisions and state policies of immigrant integration (if any), popular attitudes towards migrants, available housing and schooling, conditions on the host labor market, etc.

Reflecting the interplay of these social forces, children of immigrants experience very different journeys in Western countries.[6] White/Caucasian immigrants, especially of middle class and professional background, are endowed with personal resources (educational, linguistic, financial, etc.) that help their children to succeed at school and close the gap with local-born peers, or even outperform them, rather quickly. By contrast, immigrants of color, when low-skilled and toiling in manual workforce, have limited personal resources, settle in poorer urban areas and cannot afford decent schooling for their children. In often dysfunctional inner-city schools, these children meet other immigrants and local minority youth who have low academic motivation and poor prospects for full matriculation and higher education As a result of these different opportunity structures, immigrant youths may experience three alternative mobility tracks: upward (typically via established educational tracks), stagnant (retaining the low occupational and social status of their parents), and downward (dropping out of high school, joining local urban underclass and shadow economy for rapid income).[7]

Moving beyond the American context, many similar factors shaping opportunities and tracks of young immigrants have been found in Europe.[8] Most European studies have looked at the 2nd generation Muslim immigrants, typically the larger communities of Turks and Moroccans in France, Germany, Netherlands and Scandinavia, whose parents came to Europe as labor migrants during the 1970s and 1980s. Through the mechanisms of residential segregation, early start of work to contribute to family income, and selective school tracking fewer minority youths can get access to high schools (lyceums in France, gymnasiums in Germany) and subsequent higher education. Even when they manage to complete university studies, minority graduates have a hard time landing quality jobs in tense labor markets of Europe. The plurality of these immigrants failed to achieve upward mobility and manifest high unemployment, feelings of exclusion from their countries' mainstream, and the ensuing political/religious radicalization.[9]

The segmented assimilation lens can be used to examine the experiences of the 1.5 and 2nd generation of the post-Soviet immigration wave in the main receiving countries. The majority of these migrant families resettled as part of *ethnic return* migration, or in-gathering of historic exiles: former Soviet Jews went to Israel[10], ethnic Germans *(Aussiedler)* to Germany, Finns to Finland, etc. Other ex-Soviets emigrated as religious/political refugees,

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[6] W. Haller, A. Portes, S.M. Lynch: Dreams fulfilled, dreams shattered: Determinants of segmented assimilation in the second generation, in: Social Forces, 3/2011, pp. 733–762.

[7] Portes, Rumbaut, Legacies [f.n. 4]. – Portes, Schauffler, Language [f.n. 4].

[8] M. Crul, H. Vermeulen: Immigration, education and the Turkish second generation in five European nations: A comparative study, in: M. Crul, H. Vermeulen (Hg.): Immigration and the transformation of Europe. Cambridge 2008, pp. 235–250. – M. Crul, et al.: The European Second Generation Compared. Does the Integration Context Matter? Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2012.

[9] Crul, Vermeulen, Immigration [f.n. 8]. – Crul, The European Second Generation Compared [f.n. 8].

[10] Prior to 1989–90, Soviet Jews could only exit the USSR with Israeli visas, but since their emigration route went through Europe, some of them "dropped out" there and eventually immigrated to the US or other Western countries. After 1990 transit camps in Europe were closed, the US administration drastically cut the refugee quotas for ex-Soviets, and the flow of émigrés was effectively redirected to Israel (Remennick, 2007).

students or labor migrants, both professional and unskilled; this is how about one million Russian immigrants resettled in North America after 1970. The total size of the global, multi-ethnic Russian-speaking diaspora that has formed over the last 30 years is estimated at 3-3.5 million and, if the 2nd generation children are counted, nearing four million.[11] The legal and political framing of immigration significantly affects the integration potential: the newcomers who are construed as co-ethnics (*jus sanguinis*) typically receive full citizenship and a warmer welcome from the locals, compared to economic migrants unrelated to the host ethnic majority and construed as aliens. In practice, the expectations of smooth social insertion of co-ethnic migrants often cause disappointment: most repatriates can barely speak the heritage language and their mindset and behavior reflect many generations of diasporic life rather than shared ethno-cultural heritage.[12]

Juxtaposing the Israeli and German contexts of reception

Although socio-economic characteristics of ex-Soviet Jewish families who moved to the two countries were rather similar (mostly educated urban professionals with one or two children), the conditions of their initial adjustment were rather different. Israel of the early 1990s was flooded by Russian immigrants (increasing its Jewish population by 20% in a few years) and could only offer them 'direct absorption' by means of a limited 'absorption basket', i.e. a lump sum of money for initial housing and expenses, plus free Hebrew classes for five months and some tax wavers. Most benefits for *Olim Hadashim* (new immigrants) expired after three years. By contrast, Germany, a large country and an economic stronghold of Europe, received just a trickle of Jewish quota refugees between 1991 and 2005, two to twelve thousand a year. As a welfare state driven by political reasons to allow the resettlement of ex-Soviet Jews under refugee status, Germany offered them generous material assistance spread over a much longer period.[13] These publicly-funded services included language courses, vocational training, housing subsidies, health care, and various child programs. On the other hand, in Germany the Jews (by contrast to *Aussiedler*) had no fast-track access to citizenship, which denied them such important rights as automatic recognition of pre-migration educational credentials and work record for pensions, as well as access to public sector jobs, including teaching.[14] In Israel, most Soviet credentials were recognized and special programs were crafted for Russian *Olim* to get licensed for regulated occupations, like medicine or dentistry. Mediocre command of the host language was a barrier to hiring in Germany but

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[11] Association Russian World (Russkii Mir). <http://russkiymir.ru/publications/>.

[12] Takeyuki Tsuda (ed.): Diasporic Homecomings: Ethnic Return Migration in Comparative Perspective. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press 2009.

[13] Y. Cohen, I. Kogan: Next year in Jerusalem . . . or in Cologne? Labor market integration of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Israel and in Germany in the 1990s, in: European Sociological Review, 23/2007, pp. 155–168. – Y. Haberfeld et al.: Differences in earnings assimilation of immigrants from the former Soviet Union to Germany and Israel During 1994–2005: The interplay between contexts of reception, observed and unobserved immigrants' attributes, in: International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 1–2/2011, pp. 6–24.

[14] B. Dietz: Aussiedler in Germany: From smooth adaptation to tough integration, in: L. Lucassen, D. Feldman, J. Oltmer, (eds.): Patterns of Integration. Migrants in Western Europe, 1880–2004/2006, pp. 116–138. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

not in Israel, if professional competence was deemed good. One can infer that the German policy implicitly favored keeping educated Jewish quota refugees on chronic welfare rather than opening its labor market for easier entry, while the opposite was true of Israeli policy.[15]

In both countries, Russian-speaking immigrant professionals faced great difficulty landing adequate jobs due to host language barrier, incompatible professional standards, and older age. Yet in Israel unemployment among Russian immigrants went down from 40% in 1990 to 10% in 1999 and is now below the national average of 6%; in Germany during the same period well over half of adult Jewish immigrants remained unemployed or switching between temporary part-time jobs as condition for their welfare entitlement.[16] This gap has a simple explanation: while in Germany educated immigrants who could not land qualified jobs lingered for years on social aid and had their rent and bills subsidized by the state, in Israel similar immigrants had to make a living by any work they could find, regardless of their diplomas. As a result, about two-thirds of Russian Israelis with college degrees downgraded to technical or service occupations, often with low hourly wages and poor pension plans.[17]

Occupational and social downgrading of the parents, with ensuing long work days and scarce presence at home, caused low parental supervision and support of their children who struggled alone to make it at school and among their new peers. In Germany, most Russian-Jewish children received more intensive parenting, including supervision of their school work, thanks to lower rates of full-time employment of their parents (who nevertheless had decent living standards thanks to welfare aid). Witnessing their parents' humiliation of chronic unemployment (in Germany) and unskilled work for low pay (in Israel), some immigrant youths were driven to excel and climb the academic ladder, also as a way to avenge their parents' losses. Others, by contrast, saw their elders as a living proof of futility of academic degrees and made pragmatic vocational choices, with a stable income in mind.[18]

The host country's policies towards immigrants have had multiple effects on the integration tracks of ex-Soviet families, which often included three generations. Thus, the scope of housing benefits made a lasting impact on the intergenerational ties. In Germany, Jewish immigrant elders are economically independent of their children because of relatively generous welfare entitlements, including housing subsidies or public housing. In Israel, public housing is scarce and real estate costs have soared over the last two decades, which compelled many elders to co-reside with their adult children and their families. Co-residence of three generations entailed both advantages (mutual help) and stresses - lack of privacy and marital conflict.[19] Children growing in these households

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[15] Y. Cohen, I. Kogan: Next year in Jerusalem… or in Cologne? [f.n. 12] – I. Kogan, M. Weißmann: Immigrants' initial steps in Germany and their later economic success, in: Advances in Life Course Research, 3/2013, pp. 185–198.

[16] Haberfeld, Differences [f.n. 12]. – I. Kogan: The price of being an outsider: Labor market flexibility and immigrants employment paths in Germany. International Journal of Comparative Sociology 52(4)/2011, pp. 264–283.

[17] A. Gorodzeisky, M. Semyonov: Two dimensions to economic incorporation: Soviet immigrants in the Israeli labor market, in: Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 7/2011, pp. 1059–1077.

[18] Larissa Remennick: Intergenerational transfer in Israeli-Russian immigrant families: Parental social mobility and children's integration, in: Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 10/2012, pp. 1533–1550.

[19] R. Katz, A. Lowenstein: Adjustment of older Soviet immigrant parents and their adult children residing in shared households: An intergenerational comparison, in: Family Relations, 1/1999, pp. 43–56.

were often raised by their grandparents because their parents worked long hours, often in low-paid or shift jobs, and could pay little attention to their children. This situation (overworked parents who are seldom at home) is rather common in many immigrant families[20] but was especially typical for the Israeli economy, where initial absorption benefits were modest, unemployment aid shrinking, and all able-bodied adults had to make a living[21] . Co-residence and/or close involvement of grandparents resulted in the transmission of Russian/Soviet cultural legacies to the 1.5 generation: many young adults of this group admit that they kept their spoken Russian thanks to their grandparents. In many Russian-Israeli families, the grandparents also fostered some Russian cultural literacy in their grandchildren: read them Russian children's books, played musical records and films from their past, in brief, served as the main agents of their Russification.[22]

By way of paradox, the reception of the Jewish immigrants by the locals was more ambivalent and conflicted in Israel than in Germany of the 1990s. The mass arrival of ex-Soviet Jews was construed by veteran Israelis as both a blessing (on a political and demographic level) and a threat to the cultural and ideological makeup of Israeli society. This ambivalence of the hosts was augmented by competition for scarce jobs, galloping housing costs and tenuous Jewish identity of the newcomers, with a large share of non-Jews.[23] These concerns were reflected in the early social surveys and negative media coverage of Russian Aliya often described as the influx of "criminals, sluts and single mothers".[24] In Germany, by contrast, the predominant tone towards Jewish quota refugees, both in personal contacts and in mass media, was respectful and supportive, with local authorities, neighbors, school principals and social workers trying to show their good intentions. New and rejuvenated Jewish communities mushroomed across Germany, along with generous state funding of Jewish life and unquestioned welfare aid to the unemployed and elderly immigrants.[25] Generally, the small Jewish immigration was much less problematized by the German public than the 10-times larger immigration of *Aussiedler* over the same period.[26] Thus, one can argue that both the economic security and social climate in which young Russian Jews were coming of age in their adopted country were more favorable in Germany than in Israel. With one important qualification: regardless of all the comforts of living in a European welfare state, Germany was hardly construed by Russian Jews as 'home', while Israel was, despite all its perils. Russian Jews are much more involved as Israeli citizens and have much denser contacts with the natives compared to their peers living in Germany.[27]

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[20] Foner, Across Generations [f.n. 5].

[21] Israeli welfare safety net has been shrinking over the last 20 years, making full-time work the only option for economic survival. Labor office can offer little help with professional employment, compelling many Israelis (especially immigrants) to take any jobs they can find, regardless of their education and former record (Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2011; Haberfeld et al., 2011).

[22] M. Niznik: Cultural practices and preferences of „Russian" youth in Israel, in: Israel Affairs, 1/2011, pp. 89–107. – Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17].

[23] Remennick, Russian Jews [f.n. 1].

[24] D. Lemish: The Whore and the Other: Israeli images of female immigrants from the former USSR, in: Gender and Society, 14/2000, pp. 333–349.

[25] J.H. Schoeps, O. Gloeckner: Fifteen years of Russian-Jewish immigration to Germany: Successes and setbacks, in: M.Y. Bodemann (ed.): The new German Jewry and the European Context: The return of the European Jewish diaspora. New York 2008.

[26] Y.M. Bodemann, O. Bagno: In the ethnic twilight: The paths of Russian Jews in Germany. In: Y.M. Bodemann, (ed.): The New German Jewry and the European Context: The Return of the European Jewish Diaspora. New York 2008, pp. 158–176. – Dietz, Aussiedler [f.n. 13].

[27] Remennick, Russian Jews [f.n. 1].

The 1.5 immigrant generation: some generic features

Children of immigrants who undergo uprooting and resettlement along with their families share many common experiences, regardless of the host country's specifics. To begin with, the decision to emigrate had been typically made by their parents and they had no say on the matter. The older they had been at the time, the more difficult it was for these children to leave behind their schools, friends, and familiar environs and re-adjust to the new school systems and peer cultures of the new countries. While migrating adults were typically aware of the difficulties awaiting them and mentally prepared for adversity hoping for subsequent improvement, their children did not share this motivation and hated the need to switch to a new language, adapt to new schools, and generally reset their whole lives from scratch. Oftentimes, these involuntary adolescent migrants rebelled and tried to get even with the parents for the trauma they inflicted on them. Such parent-children conflicts upon migration have been described, for example, in Asian and Latino families in the US and Canada[28] and in Moslem families in Western Europe.[29]

Psychologically-informed studies among ex-Soviet immigrant youth in Israel,[30] Germany[31] and Finland[32] showed that adolescence is a precarious age for migration: the challenges of social and sexual maturation, the drive for independence and separation from parents all combine and exacerbate the difficult adjustment to the new school and peer culture. Some migrant adolescents overcome this multiple challenge rather quickly, while others keep struggling for years over their identity and performance in the new context.[33] In any event, their identities oscillate between their memories of formative

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[28] K. Kwak: Adolescents and their parents: A review of intergenerational family relations for immigrant and non-immigrant families, in: Human Development, 2–3/2003, pp. 115–136. – P.V. Nguyen: Perceptions of Vietnamese fathers' acculturation levels, parenting styles, and mental health outcomes in Vietnamese American adolescent immigrants, in: Social Work, 53/2008(4), pp. 337–346.

[29] A. Oosterwegel, et al.: Parenting and adolescent development in Dutch, Turkish and Moroccam Families in the Netherlands. In: L. Hagendoorn, J. Veenman, W. Vollebergh, (eds.): Integrating Immigrants in the Netherlands. Cultural vs. Socio-Economic Integration. Aldershot, UK 2003, pp. 91–107. – Crul, Vermeulen, Immigration [f.n. 8].

[30] J. Mirsky, F. Kaushinsky: Migration and growth: Separation and individuation processes in immigrant students in Israel, in: Adolescence, 23/1989, pp. 725–740. – V. Slonim-Nevo, et al.: Ethnicity vs. migration: Two hypotheses about the psychosocial adjustment of immigrant adolescents, in: International Journal of Social Psychiatry, 1/2006, pp. 41–53. – G. Fishman, G. Mesch: Acculturation and delinquency among adolescent immigrants from the FSU. Journal of Conflict and Violence Research, 7/2005, pp. 14-40. – M. Dwairy, A. Dor: Parenting and psychological adjustment of adolescent immigrants in Israel, in: Journal of Family Psychology, 23/2009 (3), pp. 416–425.

[31] A. Steinbach: Intergenerational transmission and integration of repatriate families from the former Soviet Union to Germany. Journal of Comparative Family Studies (Special Issue: Immigrant and Ethnic Minority Families), 32/2001 (4), pp. 505–516.

[32] I. Jasinskaja-Lahti: Psychological Adaptation and Acculturation among Russian-Speaking Immigrant Adolescents in Finland. Ph.D. Thesis. Department of Sociology & Social Psychology, University of Helsinki.

[33] F. Markowitz: Cultural chance, border crossings and identity shopping: Jewish teenagers from the CIS access their future in Israel. In N. Lewin-Epstein, P. Ritterband, Y. Ro'i (eds.) Russian Jews on Three Continents. Migration and Resettlement. London, pp. 344–363. – M. Niznik: How to be an alien? [f.n. 21]. – R. A. Eisikovits: Second-generation identities: The case of transnational young women of Russian descent in Israel, in: Ethnicities 14, pp. 392–411. DOI: 10.1177/1468796813501166.

years in the homeland (and its cultural legacies at home) and a strong drive for assimilation, a wish to shed the hateful label of immigrant and get accepted by their local peers. Once they master the host language, most 1.5ers try hard to pass as natives, adopting local fashions in dress, music, leisure pastimes, etc. and often distance themselves from their immigrant parents. Many of them would re-discover and appreciate their cultural legacies when they approach their 20s and feel more confident in their newly-acquired Israeli or American identities.[34]

The integration tracks of young immigrants in receiving countries reflect their ability to access quality schooling, which in itself is a function of their parents' education, income and residential locations.[35] Most recent immigrants cannot afford private schools for their children, nor can they settle in wealthier areas with good public schools. In countries receiving mass waves of immigration, co-ethnic migrants tend to lump together in the poorer urban neighborhoods and send their kids to inner-city schools, often underfunded and struggling.[36] The teachers facing large classes full of migrant and minority students, with different backgrounds, disciplinary problems and poor/zero knowledge of the host language, are overwhelmed and 'survive' by reducing their level of instruction and expectations from the students.[37] In some countries, the state or local authorities provide resources for integration of 'second-language students' in the form of additional hours and teachers, and when immigrant children are a minority in every class these bridging resources may well solve the integration problem. The wealthier lands and cities of Germany and the best public schools in the US and Canada provide ample examples of this success.[38] But in times of mass influx of migrants into poorer countries and school districts (as was the case in Israel or in poorer areas of Berlin and other East German cities during the 1990s) this is hardly enough. The new students face a double challenge of studying new subjects (e.g. the Hebrew Bible or Israeli/German history and civics) in the new language, and many of them fall behind their local peers. Their parents cannot offer much help since they themselves have poor knowledge of the host language and curriculum, nor can they afford hiring private tutors. Most Russian-speaking students are struggling with the humanities and civics, while often excelling in math and

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[34] P. Kasinitz, et al.: The Next Generation: Russian Jewish Young Adults in Contemporary New York. New York: Russel Sage Foundation (Working Paper No 178). – Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17]. – Eisikovits, Second-generation identities [f.n. 32]. – A. Prashizky, L. Remennick: Cultural Capital in Migration: Fishka Association of Young Russian-Speaking Adults in Tel-Aviv, Israel, in: Journal of Intercultural Studies, 36/2014 (1), pp. 1–18.

[35] W. Haller, Dreams fulfilled [f.n. 6]. – D. Gevrek, et al.: Benefits of Education at the Intensive Margin: Childhood Academic Performance and Adult Outcomes among American Immigrants. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) Discussion Paper No. 8697, December 2014.

[36] Portes, Rumbaut, Legacies [f.n. 4]. – Kasinitz, The Next Generation [f.n. 33]. – Crul, Vermeulen, Immigration [f.n. 8].

[37] C. Cosentino de Cohen, et al.: Who's Left Behind? Immigrant Children in High and Low LEP Schools. Urban Institute Publications. – J. Lee: Schools brace for up to 50,000 migrant kids. The USA Today.

[38] K.U. Mayer, et al.: Germany: Institutional change and inequalities of access in higher education. In: Y. Shavit, R. Arum, & A. Gamoran (eds.): Stratification in Higher Education: A Comparative Study, pp. 240–265. Palo-Alto: Stanford University Press. – C. Leras: Do skills and behaviors in high school matter? The contribution of non-cognitive factors in explaining differences in educational attainment and earnings, in: Social Science Research, 37/2008 (3), pp. 888–902. – D. Gevrek, et al.: Benefits of Education [f.n. 34].

sciences that were traditionally a strong side of the ex-Soviet school curriculum.[39] An additional challenge comes from local peers, often hostile towards large groups of migrant pupils speaking a foreign language, serving as an ultimate 'other' and a potential object of bullying.[40]

Mobility tracks of young Russian Israelis

It is hardly surprising to find a high correlation between parental social locations and children's integration outcomes in immigrant families.[41] Parental pre-migration education and work experience, as well as their occupational mobility upon migration, influence the chances of their children to reside in a safe neighborhood, attend a good school and befriend their native peers. The parents who succeeded in joining host country's middle class typically provide much better resources to their children (including parental time and supervision) than their working class co-ethnics, overworked and underpaid. Let me remind that a serious gap existed between the pre-migration social locations of ex-Soviet immigrants and their trajectories in Israel. Most parents arrived with average to high human capital but couldn't implement it on the small and saturated Israeli labor market and experienced downward occupational and social mobility.[42] While most Russian immigrant parents aspired to high educational standards for their offspring,[43] not all families could realize these aspirations in the actual context of their resettlement in Israel. The major barriers between these youths and Israeli universities were insufficient high school grades and relatively high tuition fees combined with the need to support themselves by full-time work.[44]

Extant studies show that downward occupational mobility and poor integration of both 'Russian' generations are associated with living in Israel's geographic periphery and in ethnic enclaves. As was mentioned above, soaring housing costs have driven multiple Russian immigrants out of the major cities (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa) to the country's 'development towns' in the North and South. While apartments and even single family homes with land were more affordable there, occupational opportunities for skilled newcomers (as well as good schools for their children) were rather scarce. As a result, migrant engineers, teachers and other professionals had to settle for semi-skilled jobs in local industry or services and put their former careers on hold.[45] Those who initially settled in the major metropolitan areas, could typically afford living in poorer neighbor-

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[39] R. A. Eisikovits: Immigrant Youth Who Excel: Globalization's Uncelebrated Heroes. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

[40] Z. Ilatov, S. Shamai: Israeli students' attitudes towards children-immigrants from Russia. In: E. Leshem, J.T. Shuval (eds.): Immigration to Israel, in: Sociological Perspectives, pp. 273–286. – Niznik, How to be an alien? [f.n. 21].

[41] Kasinitz, The Next Generation [f.n. 33]. – P. Kasinitz, et al.: Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press and Russell Sage Foundation. – N. Foner, (ed.): Across Generations [f.n. 5]. – Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17].

[42] A. Gorodzeisky, M. Semyonov: Two dimensions [f.n. 16]. – Haberfeld, Differences [f.n. 12].

[43] J. Lerner, et al.: The 'ethnic script' in action: the re-grounding of Russian-Jewish immigrants in Israel, in: Ethos, 35/2007(2), pp. 168–195.

[44] Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17].

[45] Gorodzeisky, Semyonov, Two dimensions [f.n. 16].

hoods with high concentrations of 'Russians' and descendants of Mizrahi (Middle Eastern) immigrants of the 1950s.[46] To avoid overcrowded secular state schools, some parents opted for religious schools (particularly of the American-sponsored *Shuvu* system) that offered smaller classes, free textbooks and lunches, and a nicer peer environment with lower conflict and violence. This is how many Russian immigrant children started reconnecting with their Jewish roots.[47] Over time, more successful immigrant professionals in larger cities could afford moving to middle-class neighborhoods with better secular schools, setting their children on the path towards higher education.

An aggregate analysis of Israeli research allows tapping into the key factors that determined the upward social mobility of immigrant children and adolescents over the last 20 years.[48] They include: younger age at migration, being raised by two parents, having a mother with higher education, coming from a larger city in the the former Soviet Union (FSU) and living in a larger metropolitan area in Israel (various scholars attribute different weights to these factors but they surfaced repeatedly in different studies). Among psychological characteristics, having a high personal drive for learning Hebrew, expedient acculturation and becoming an Israeli came to the fore as consistent predictors of young immigrants' upward mobility.[49] Reflecting the high rates of divorce among ex-Soviets (both before and after migration), about 20% of Russian 1.5ers were raised by their mothers – alone or with the help of the grandparents. Single mothers had an especially difficult time regaining their economic foothold and providing for their children in Israel. Children of single mothers more often struggled at school, had a difficult time completing their mandatory military service, and fewer of them could afford higher education.[50] Many of them continue supporting their mothers well into adulthood (and mothers' retirement age), as their pension benefits earned in Israel are insufficient for daily living.

By now, most 1.5ers who migrated during the 1990s have already completed their education and got some occupational foothold. Three out of four have technical, vocational or academic degrees and are currently employed, however many have not realized their full potential or not found jobs commensurate with their skills. Small and saturated Israeli labor market is hard to navigate for young adults of migrant background, many of

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[46] L. Fialkova, M. N. Yelenevskaya: Ex-Soviets in Israel: From Personal Narratives to a Group Portrait. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.

[47] A similar educational trajectory typified many Russian Jewish children in New York and other major US cities. Intimidated by inner-city public schools, these secular parents placed their children in Jewish day schools that offered safe environment and generous fellowships for fresh immigrants. Later on, most parents were disappointed with the low level of academic instruction and Judaic religious indoctrination in these schools and removed their children to secular (public or private) schools (Remennick, 2007, p. 216).

[48] L. Remennick: The 1.5-generation of Russian immigrants in Israel between integration and socio-cultural retention. Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies 2003, 12(1), pp. 39–66. – Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17]. – Fishman, Mesch: Acculturation [f.n. 29]. – Eisikovits, Second-generation identities [f.n. 32].

[49] Eisikovits, Second-generation identities [f.n. 32]. – Eisikovits, Immigrant Youth Who Excel [f.n. 38]. – Eisikovits, Immigrant Youth Who Excel [f.n. 38]. – Eisikovits, Second-generation identities [f.n. 32]. – Dwairy, Dor, Parenting [f.n. 29].

[50] Annual tuition fees at Israeli universities are about USD 3,500, which is high enough for many immigrant families. Most immigrant students work part- or full time, which negatively affects their academic outcomes. Those who start academic studies soon upon migration are entitled for three years of free tuition, but struggle with the language of instruction – Hebrew.

whom still have an accent and are visibly different from their native peers. Although they are endowed with a richer local social capital (i.e. a network of local personal ties) than their parents, it is still insufficient to land lucrative jobs and promotions they may deserve. As a result, many 1.5ers with academic degrees, particularly in more competitive and creative niches, feel frustrated and may search for better employment opportunities abroad, be it FSU or the West. Despite the inevitable native tongue attrition, many of them still have a decent working knowledge of Russian and dwell on their transnational ties with co-ethnic peers in the FSU and in the West as a resource for expanding their opportunities on the global education and job market.[51]

Cultural consumption and language preferences of the 1.5ers

Immigrant youth in most countries is usually described as bilingual and bicultural[52] and young Russian Jewish immigrants in different host countries are no exception.[53] With this general trend in mind, there is paucity of in-depth studies of cultural and linguistic patterns among immigrant youth, since most reported findings refer to the adults, i.e. the parental generation. Thus, Isurin has conducted an interdisciplinary study of linguistic and cultural practices in the three main branches of the post-Soviet diaspora – US, Israel and Germany, with a closer look at the differences between ethnic Russian and Jewish immigrants.[54] However her sampling scheme did not single out immigrant children and adolescents socialized in the host countries as a special analytic category. This reflects an objective difficulty of tracing the members of the 1.5 generation due to its intermediate position between immigrants and natives and the contested definitions of the lower age-at-migration limit – at the beginning of school, puberty or even later adolescence (see Footnote 1). Typically, older 1.5ers experience a more protracted period of switching to the host language and the related cultural repertoire, while keeping stronger emotional ties with their favorite cultural icons and genres from homeland. Luckily, many forms of popular culture and media consumption are becoming increasingly globalized and hence familiar to young migrants regardless of their source countries; once they have mastered basic Hebrew, English or German they can start using Facebook, Google and YouTube as efficiently as their native peers.[55]

Extant studies show that cultural and linguistic preferences of the 1.5ers in Israel still reflect their split identity and ambivalent social locations between their Russian past and Israeli present. With longer tenure in Israel these young immigrants gradually expand their interests and media consumption to embrace more Hebrew-based and international outlets and products. Yet, most of them (especially those who migrated at older age) retain their core interest in Russian-based literature and, increasingly, electronic media. Reflecting overall generational shift from print to electronic communications, today's

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[51] L. Remennick: Transnational lifestyle among Russian Israelis: A follow-up study, in: Global Networks, 13/2013 (4), pp. 478–497.

[52] Portes, Schauffler, Language [f.n. 4]. – Haller, Dreams fulfilled [f.n. 6].

[53] Kasinitz, The Next Generation [f.n. 33]. – Niznik, How to be an alien? [f.n. 21].

[54] L. Isurin: Russian Diaspora: Culture, Identity and Language Change. New York: Walter de Gruyter.

[55] N. Elias: Russian-speaking immigrants and their media: Still together? Israel Affairs, 17/2011 (1), pp. 72–88. – M. Niznik: Cultural practices and preferences of 'Russian' youth in Israel. Israel Affairs 17/2011 (1), pp. 89–107.

young migrants read fewer books and newspapers than their parents and turn instead to TV and increasingly the Internet and social media for both information and entertainment. Ex-Soviet immigrants living in Israel have a broad choice of media content in Russian, including over 20 TV channels broadcast from the FSU (and one produced in Israel), two radio stations and multiple news and social media websites. Most of these internet resources, regardless of their domain name (ru, co.il, net or com) cater for the international Russian-speaking audience, with a specific focus on Russia/FSU, Israel, Germany, US, Canada, and other countries of the post-Soviet diaspora. Below I review the key trends in cultural expression of the Israeli Russian 1.5ers drawing on the recent sociological studies.[56] Although I am not aware of similar data collected in the German context, I assume that some findings would be rather similar.

A study by communications expert Nelly Elias zoomed on the patterns of internet use by ex-Soviet adolescents (ages 12-18) who are relatively new in Israel (six months to five years).[57] Over half of her 93 informants said that back home they mainly used traditional learning tools – books, magazines, etc., while in Israel they mostly abandoned these 'old vessels' of knowledge and switched almost entirely to broad-band internet as their main window into the world. Internet resources in Russian play a central role in these adolescents' adaptation in Israel: via Israeli websites in Russian they learn from scratch about their adopted country, its political events, cultural icons, music, youth fashions, etc. Thus Israeli Russian internet serves as an important bridging tool before these youths can access the Israeli content in Hebrew.

Another important role of FSU-based web resources is helping these youths stay in touch with their homelands and significant others left behind. Still feeling strangers in Israel and having few local friends, they surf the websites of their home towns, schools, and social clubs and feel less lonely. Many also draw on the images from their past as a source of identity and pride in their heritage, using it as an argument in a dialogue with their Israeli peers to assert that they hail from a great country and thus enhance their self-worth. Thus, Kiril (16, three years in Israel) said in the interview with Elias:

> I can find pictures of Minsk on Google, it's my homeland. I download these pictures and show them to my Israeli friends: Look where I lived! These broad, leafy prospects, nice buildings, well-dressed people…it's not what you see here, in Beer-Sheba [his Israeli town, located in the Negev desert, that he calls 'small, dirty and dull']. [58]

Thus, net communication allows newcomers to "seek and reinvent their own Russia, preserving those parts of their homeland they miss most".[59] It also provides support for immigrant adolescents by offering direct interactions with peers experiencing similar

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[56] Elias, Russian-speaking immigrants [f.n. 54]. – Niznik, Cultural practices [f.n. 54]. – Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17]. – Remennick, Transnational lifestyle [f.n. 50]. – Prashizky, Remennick, Cultural Capital [f.n. 33].

[57] Elias, Russian-speaking immigrants [f.n. 54].

[58] These quotes are from the published study by Elias & Lemish (2009). The authors have changed the names of their informants to protect their privacy.

[59] N. Elias, D. Lemish: Spinning the Web of identity: Internet's roles in immigrant adolescents' search of identity. New Media & Society 11/2009 (4), pp. 533–551.

problems. As such, it serves as a valuable resource for personal growth and empowerment during a critical period of readjustment. Another informant from this study, twenty-three year old Danny (5 years in Israel), recalled:

> I have no idea how they [the earlier waves of newcomers] survived without internet. I found my first venues to go out (clubs, discos and parties) on the net... I am from St. Petersburg and we, you know, are different from others. There are few of us here. We formed an on-line group and keep in touch with each other.

Like Danny, many older teenagers spent long hours on social websites (such as *Odnoklassniki* and *VKontakte*) chatting with their old friends or finding new ones – Russian speakers living in the FSU, Israel or western countries. Expressing a common feeling, Jenia (15, one year in Israel) exclaimed: "It's amazing that we have the Internet today. Thanks to whoever created it! I can't imagine how miserable my life would've been without it."[60]

A social linguist Marina Niznik explored the linguistic and cultural choices of 'Russian' adolescents in Israel by means of structured questionnaires and interviews.[61] She divided her informants by the age at migration, with the ensuing entry to formal schooling and the primary language of literacy: under the age of six (primary school started in Israel), 6-12 (with some Russian reading and writing skills), and older than 12 (over half of their schooling in Russian). Niznik showed a strong correlation between the age at arrival and language preferences of these youths (who were between the ages of 16 and 27 at the time of her study).[62] Among those, who arrived in Israel before starting school, 56% spoke mainly in Hebrew, 32% used both Russian and Hebrew and 12% spoke mainly in Russian; among those who became Israeli after age 12, the respective figures were 7%, 14% and 79%. The group of children arrived between the ages of 6 and 12 took an intermediate position (27%, 37% and 36%, respectively). Reading and writing skills followed the same pattern, with 57% of those who migrated to Israel after the age of 12 preferring their native Russian.

The questions about cultural consumption confirmed the preference for modern electronic media rather than "old-fashioned" cultural forms, like book reading or theatre. Among those who migrated between the age of 6 and 12 and after 12, 51% and 58%, respectively, read books mainly or only in Russian; 16% and 21% read books in both languages, and 27% and 14% read mainly or only in Hebrew. For those who read books for pleasure (about 40% of the sample, typically older at arrival) family pressure was an important factor. For example Katya (17, 9 years in Israel) from Niznik's study said:

> I don't read books really... Reading is not dynamic enough for me. I don't have time and patience for it. It upsets my parents very much. They keep telling me that you can't be a really educated person without reading books. They are trapped in their past, but I don't want to argue with them. So from time to time I pick a book from our home library, just to make them happy.

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[60] Elias, Lemish, Spinning the Web of identity [f.n. 58].
[61] Niznik, Cultural practices [f.n. 54].
[62] Niznik, Cultural practices [f.n. 54], p. 95.

Among Niznik's informants, 55% have never been at a theatre play (in any language) and those who attended plays, went with their school class or under parental pressure. The main reasons of not attending included boredom ("*there are more interesting things to do for us today*") and peer norms ("*none of my friends ever goes to the theatre, it's not cool*"). As for the music tastes of these youths, they had little to do with their daily language choices.[63] They preferred songs in English and in Russian, but many of them (39%) listened to musicians in all three languages. For the recent newcomers, listening to Russian popular music and rock was an expression of nostalgia. Tanya (18, 7 years in Israel) confessed: "Listening to Russian music brings me back to my home town in Ukraine, to my friends and childhood."
Others, like Stas (23), another informant from Niznik's sample, discovered Russian music while coming of age in Israel:

> My parents took me a few years ago to a Mashina Vremeni [a popular Russian rock group of Glasnost years] concert here in Israel. I rather resented this idea, but I didn't want to upset them. It was sort of a shock for me. I liked everything there – the music, the atmosphere…I hardly understood the words, but since then I started listening to Russian songs, mainly from the 70s-90s. I discovered a whole new world for myself.

Concluding her research, Niznik argues that cultural integration of Russian youth in Israel does not reflect a linear process. The younger their age at migration to Israel the greater their Hebrew proficiency, yet all her informants have retained some basic communication skills in Russian. Only 8% among those under age 12 at arrival could neither read nor write in Russian. Significant segments of this sample (18-40%) continued watching Russian TV and more than half listened to Russian music (along with other kinds); about 40% surf the net in both Russian and Hebrew; 18% attended only or mainly Russian clubs and discos. Hence, there is a large group of youngsters who choose to preserve their Russian cultural identity for reasons other than limited Hebrew proficiency. While often criticizing their parents for their Russian cultural interests, young immigrants did not completely sever their own ties with Russian media, music and cyberspace. Reflecting this hybrid pattern, popular Israeli-Russian musicians and bands drift towards bi-cultural and multilingual styles and audiences.[64]
The above-quoted Stas from Niznik's study evokes a rather common experience among Russian 1.5ers: regaining interest in their cultural legacies while having a solid Israeli identity and no longer understanding most Russian/Soviet historic and cultural references. Some young adults manifest motivation to reconnect to these legacies by reading, talking to their parents and grandparents about life in the FSU. Others keep this Russian tier of their selves more submerged, as a potential for situations when these cultural skills may come handy: travel to the FSU or transnational ties with co-ethnics in search of academic or career opportunities.[65] Many Russian 1.5ers underscore their difference from the native peers (also when their Hebrew is undistinguishable from theirs) and show social preference for co-ethnics. It is hardly surprising that this Russian axis of

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[63] Niznik, Cultural practices [f.n. 54], p. 101.
[64] Niznik, Cultural practices [fn. 54], p. 104.
[65] Remennick, Transnational lifestyle [f.n. 50].

their self-identity (whether activated or hidden) serves as an important radar in search of friends, dates and life partners.[66]

Other expressions of this bi-cultural path include the newly emerging social and cultural associations of young Russian Israelis, exemplified by *Fishka* club in Tel-Aviv[67]. This association, supported by both the Russian-Jewish philanthropy group Genesis and municipal authorities, presents itself as an outlet of creativity and social activism for young bilingual adults. Its many projects revolve around the topic of linguistic and cultural bridging between the Russian and Hebrew worlds: workshops on poetry writing and translating, drama productions in the two languages, celebration of Jewish holidays with a Russian flavor, and more. Other projects target fortification of inter-generational ties: young volunteers visit elderly Russian immigrants, many of whom are veterans of WWII, help them organize Victory Day celebrations on May 9, and teach them basic Hebrew and computing skills. There are also a few thriving social media networks that connect Russian Israeli 1.5ers, where they debate the challenges of their careers, parenting, self-identity, cultural hobbies, etc. All these physical and virtual activities merge between the two languages and cultural traditions, giving rise to a 'third culture' – a hybrid creation of the middle generation of Russian speakers in Israel.[68]

When collated together, these findings suggest that a large group of immigrant youth became bi-cultural or globalized rather than assimilated into the dominant Hebrew culture. They further endorse the segmented assimilation theory and also exemplify the 'limited' or 'selective' acculturation scenario - another common variation of this theory. This type of acculturation is viewed by many researchers as beneficial for the immigrants,[69] while also matching the multicultural aspirations proclaimed by many Western societies.[70] As will be shown below, the bicultural script of acculturation is also typical for young Russian Jewish immigrants in Germany.

Extant German research on the Russian Jewish 1.5ers

The bulk of social research on Russian Jewish immigrants in Germany was conducted in the late 1990s-early 2000s and focused on the adult immigrants: their difficult entry into German labor market and mainstream society, complex relations with German Jewish communities, and more.[71] I have not encountered any publications (at least in English) that examined the experiences of Russian Jewish immigrant children and youths – singled out from other unspecified 'immigrants' – during their insertion in the German

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[66] Eisikovits, Second-generation identities [f.n. 32].

[67] Fisca, <www.fishka.org.il>.

[68] Prashizky, Remennick, Cultural Capital [f.n. 33].

[69] Brubaker, The return of assimilation? [f.n. 5]. – Dwairy, Dor, Parenting [f.n. 29]. – Eisikovits, Second-generation identities [fn. 32].

[70] M. Crul, H. Vermeulen: The second generation in Europe. International Migration Review 37/2003 (4), pp. 965–986. – Kasinitz, Inheriting the City [f.n. 40].

[71] J. Doomernik: Adaptation strategies among Soviet Jewish immigrants in Berlin, in: New Community 23/1997, pp. 59–79. – W. Jasper, B. Vogt,: Integration and self-assertion, in: O. Romberg, S. Urban-Fahr (eds.): Jews in Germany after 1945. Citizens or"Fellow Citizens"? pp. 217–227. – B. Dietz, et al.: The Jewish emigration from the Former Soviet Union to Germany. International Migration, 40/2002, pp. 30–47. – Cohen, Kogan, Next year in Jerusalem … or in Cologne? [f.n. 12]. – Remennick, Russian Jews [f.n. 1]. – Bodemann, Bagno, In the ethnic twilight [f.n. 25]. – Schoeps, Glockner, Fiveteen years [f.n. 24].

education system and peer culture. Therefore I will try to compile a partial and tentative picture of these early experiences relying on retrospective accounts by young Russian-Jewish adults collected in two recent interview-based studies.[72]

Educational challenges faced by immigrant youth

Let us look first at the specific educational tracks open to young immigrants in the two countries. The initial years of immersion in a different school system in a new language are always challenging, especially for older students. Depending on the available school and parental resources, as well as their own motivation for hard work, some immigrant youths may catch up and excel, while others fall behind and may eventually drop out of high school.[73] German school system is renowned for its complexity and a variety of local variations in different federal Lands; it is often criticized for reproducing the existing class hierarchies and limiting educational mobility of working-class and minority children.[74] The tracking (or streaming) system means that during grades five-six of middle school the teachers (along with the parents) define the subsequent study track for each pupil in line with his/her ability, test results and behavior – to *Gymnasium*, *Realschule* or *Hauptschule*. The latter two represent vocational streams with practical orientation and apprenticeship in a chosen occupation. Students leave these schools after 10th grade and do not sit for the final Abitur exams, meaning they cannot continue to study at a regular university. Students with working-class and minority background often opt for (and/or are directed to) these non-academic secondary tracks promising expedient entry to the labor market. An intermediate option for higher education for students interested in learning marketable skills in a shorter and less theoretical track is *Fachhochschule* (Colleges of Applied Sciences). Students of educated parents who belong to professional class are typically those willing to uptake a longer course of secondary and tertiary study targeting more lucrative and demanding careers in civil service, law, medicine, science, etc. In the early 2000s, only about 15-20% of all German youths graduated from Gymnasiums after 13 years of study with Abitur and another 25% graduated after 10-11 years with eligibility for *Fachhochschule*.[75]

For recent immigrants, including ex-Soviets, it is especially difficult to make informed choices about the appropriate school type, navigate the system's many streams and avoid being pigeonholed for less demanding ones. German teachers and principals may overlook true academic potential of immigrant students because of their imperfect command of German and the ensuing difficulty with humanistic disciplines and/or behavioral problems.[76] In my current interviews with Russian-Jewish 1.5ers (to be discussed below), several informants mentioned that their (and their parents') greatest fear during

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[72] A. Gromova,: Generation „Koscher Light". Urbane Räume und Praxen junger russischsprachiger Juden in Berlin. Berlin: Verlag fur Kommunication, Kultur und Social Praxis, Kultur Transcript Ser.

[73] Eisikovits, Immigrant Youth Who Excel [f.n. 38]. – Fishman, Mesch, Acculturation [f.n. 29]. – Slonim-Nevo, Ethnicity vs. Migration [f.n. 29].

[74] R. Geißler: Die Metamorphose der Arbeitertochter zum Migrantensohn. Zum Wandle der Chancenstruktur im Bildungssystem nach Schicht, Geschlecht, Ethnie und deren Verknüpfungen. In: P.A. Berger, H. Kahlert, (eds.): Institutionalisierte Ungleichheiten. Wie das Bildungswesen Chancen blockiert, pp. 71–100. Weinheim, München: Juvenat Verlag. – Mayer, Germany [f.n. 37].

[75] Geißler, Die Metamorphose [f.n. 73]. – Mayer, Germany [f.n. 37].

[76] Geißler, Die Metamorphose [f.n. 73].

middle school was to be automatically downgraded to a vocational track, rather than Gymnasium, because of the language and cultural issues they faced at school. Indeed, this happened to several informants, who later on invested much effort in complementary studies and finally got their Abitur well into their 20s and their undergraduate degree closer to age 30. Others deliberately opted for shorter secondary school tracks and continued to the *Fachhochschule* in order to get a diploma with high chances for regular employment in financial sector, industry, medicine or teaching. However, loyal to the 'ethnic script' and family tradition of mandatory higher education (Lerner et al., 2007), none of these immigrants was ready to get off the track to higher education altogether and join the ranks of the working class.[77]

In the Israeli comprehensive system, everyone goes to both secondary and high school (grades 10-12), but not all students complete it with full matriculation (*bagrut*); some may switch to technical-vocational streams without *bagrut* (15-20%) or drop out of high school altogether (about 15% during the 1990s). Their second chance for completing *bagrut* appears during their military service, as the army provides remedial classes in key disciplines. Thus, for very different reasons, but Russian immigrant youths in both countries often receive their high school diploma a few years later than their native peers, reflecting possible timeouts and supplemental studies. This late start may put them at a disadvantage on the labor market and further professional careers. During the 1990s and early 2000s, 50-60% of Russian immigrant students in Israel earned full high school diplomas that enabled them to study at a university or college, typically after two-three years of the army service. This is somewhat below the average for Israeli Jews (close to 70%) and means that young generation of Russian Israelis achieve lower rates of academic education than their parents did in the Soviet Union.[78] According to my estimates based on the published Israeli statistics, over the last 5 years about 40% of Russian 1.5ers in Israel held academic degrees (BA or higher) and another 25% had vocational or associate degrees (mechanics, electricians, medical secretaries, etc.).[79] A tangible share of these youngsters took advantage of various professional courses offered by the IDF (Israeli Army) to its soldiers and officers or completed their undergraduate degrees tuition-free before their military draft, with subsequent IDF service in their professional capacity (e.g. as engineers or programmers). Thus in Israel, the military served for many immigrants (on par with the natives) as the launch pad for their education and early careers.

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[77] Lerner, The 'ethnic script' [f.n. 42].

[78] Ministry of Education of Israel. Annual Report on the Key Indicators of the Secondary, High and Academic Education in Israel. Jerusalem: Government Publishing (Hebrew). – Y. Shavit, et al.: Israel: Diversification, expansion, and inequality in higher education. In: Y. Shavit, R. Arum, A. Gamoran, (eds.). Stratification in Higher Education: A Comparative Study, Palo-Alto: Stanford University Press, pp. 39–62.

[79] M. Crul, H. Vermeulen: The second generation in Europe. International Migration Review 37/2003 (4), pp. 965–986.

Social mobility of Jewish 1.5ers in Germany

I am not aware of comparable German data on education and labor market entry catering to this specific group of young immigrants[80] collected in representative surveys. Several collaborative German-Israeli studies compared earning assimilation among Russian Jews who immigrated to Israel and Germany, but their data refer to the generation educated in the USSR/FSU.[81] Another recently published macro-level study on ex-Soviet immigrants' occupational mobility (Kogan and Weißmann, 2013) relates to all working age individuals not differentiating between *Aussiedler* and the Jews and with no focus on younger employees.[82] Turning to local studies in smaller (or convenience-based) samples, I found the only recent sociological project exploring integration of young Russian-Jewish adults in Germany initiated by the Jewish Museum of Berlin and coordinated by Karen Körber in the fall-winter of 2013. It included an online survey with 267 self-selected respondents who filled the questionnaire on various social media sites and an ethnographic study including participant observations and 30 interviews.[83] The 1.5 generation was defined as young adults, now between the ages of 20 and 40, who immigrated with their families during the 1990s under Jewish quota regulations. About 60% were women; two thirds had two Jewish parents and the rest one Jewish parent. This project posed research questions focusing on the young immigrants' Jewish identity, participation in German Jewish organizations and their relations with the mainstream German society. Yet it also offers a general glimpse into the lives and minds of these newcomers to German Jewry whom the authors ironically call "Generation Kosher Light". They mean that the members of this generation construe their Jewishness along positive lines and openly identify as Jews (by contrast to their parents who carried their Jewishness as a burden), but implement Jewish practices selectively, picking and choosing those that suit their sensibilities and late-modern secular lifestyle.[84]

Both groups of findings point to the high rates of educational mobility among the children of Russian-Jewish immigrants of the 1990s. Given that about 70% of their parents had university degrees from the USSR/FSU and all children willing to work hard at school experienced no financial barriers to access gymnasiums, colleges and universities, the high school matriculation and university graduation rates among young adults

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[80] This is not surprising, given that Russian Jewish youths comprise a tiny minority among German school students. Some studies addressed the difficulties faced by all „children with immigrant background" (Geißler, 2005) but without singling out specific ethnic groups. In Israel, by contrast, Russian immigrants comprised a large segment in every class and school district, with resulting concern about their academic performance and integration (Eisikovits, 2008).

[81] Haberfeld, Differences [f.n. 12].

[82] Kogan, Weißmann, Immigrants' initial steps [f.n. 41].

[83] K. Körber: Everyday Realities. Contemporary Russian Jewish Life in Germany. Paper presented at the conference „Contemporary Jewish life in a global modernity: Comparative European perspectives on a changing diaspora". The Jewish Museum of Berlin, 11.12.2014. – K. Körber (forthcoming): Conflicting memories, conflicting identities. The Russian-Jewish immigration and the Image of a new German Jewry. In: Cornelia Wilhelm (Ed.): Migration Memory and Diversity in Germany after 1945. Berghahn Books. – Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71]. – A. Gromova: Jewish dating or niche-making? A topographical representation of youth culture, in: Anthropological Journal of European Cultures 23/2014 (2), pp. 11–25. DOI: 10.3167/ajec.2014.230202.

[84] Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71]. – Körber, Everyday Realities [f.n. 82].

of Russian Jewish origin should be rather high, probably exceeding the Israeli figures.[85] While Russian Jewish parents in both countries had similar educational aspirations for their offspring, the structure of educational opportunities and family context were more favorable in Germany.[86] Here these parents could spend more 'quality time' with their children (inter alia, helping them with school work) because of their high unemployment and involuntary home-ridden lifestyle. In the Israeli context, many parents were practically uninvolved in their children's education because they struggled economically and had poor command of Hebrew[87], the language of instruction at school and in college. Judging by some anecdotal evidence and my interviews with the 1.5ers in Germany, most of them opted for college majors and occupations with pragmatic stint, i.e. economics, management, computing, social work, nursing, pharmacology, teaching, engineering, and the like. These white-collar-job and stable-income oriented education tracks are also typical for young Russian Israelis, and probably for children of most other skilled immigrants whose parents had struggled to gain economic foothold.[88]
Thus, available small studies suggest that young professionals of Russian Jewish origin are successfully employed in various German organizations, mostly in the business sector but also in cultural and political foundations and non-profits.[89] When they are not satisfied with their jobs in Berlin or Munich, they first look for opportunities in other German cities, and then in other EU countries or North America. Some young professionals working in finance and management took advantage of their Russian cultural skills to find jobs in the FSU offices of German or global corporations. By and large, the young professionals in these studies were satisfied with their education and work in Germany but, like most members of this global generation, were always ready to relocate elsewhere if the right opportunity came by. In that sense, both divisions of young Russian-Jewish diaspora are endowed with diasporic mindsets and transnational economic opportunities.[90]

Initial insights from the German pilot study

My empirical work on the Russian 1.5ers in Germany began in the summer of 2014, so for now I can share some initial insights based on 18 interviews with young bilingual immigrants in Munich (4), Berlin (10) and Potsdam (4). My goal was to cast some retrospective light on the adolescent years of these newcomers to Germany back in the 1990s and early 2000s and their current economic, social and cultural locations in the German and European society. My informants were rather similar to those interviewed

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[85] Remennick, Russian Jews [f.n. 1]. – O. Glockner: Immigrated Russian Jewish Elites in Israel and Germany after 1990: Their Integration, Self-Image and Role in Community Building. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Potsdam, Germany.

[86] Lerner, The 'ethnic script' [f.n. 42].

[87] Judging by immigrants' narratives, German, although a challenge, was still a European language which some immigrants had learned at school. By contrast Hebrew was terra incognita for all but few Russian *Olim,* who had no exposure to Jewish education in the USSR/FSU. Hence in Germany the parents could be of greater help with their children's schoolwork than in Israel.

[88] Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17].

[89] Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71]. – Körber, Conflicting memories [f.n. 81].

[90] Remennick, Transnational lifestyle [f.n. 50]. – Körber, Everyday Realities [f.n. 82].

by Körber and Gromova[91]: about 60% were female, in the age range 26-37, and were of Jewish or mixed Russian-Jewish background. They immigrated to Germany with their parents between 1994 and 2002 at the age range 10 – 17 and all of them completed their schooling with Abitur in Germany. By now, all of them received undergraduate degrees and worked in a range of white-collar professions (high-tech, pharmacology, media, marketing, health care, etc.). As usual in qualitative studies, I located these informants via social networks of my Russian-speaking contacts in these German cities. All were fluent Russian-German bilinguals and were interviewed in Russian. The interviews lasted about 2 h on average, were audio-recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis.

Schooling as a venue of social mobility

I began by asking my informants about the early years of their resettlement, juxtaposing the specific migration motives and contexts of reception with my Israeli data on Russian-Jewish *Olim*. In both cases, the parents typically belonged to the intelligentsia from large Russian and Ukrainian cities and experienced severe occupational downgrading and economic hardships during the years of post-Soviet transition. Pondering directions of emigration in the mid-to late 1990s, they deemed America inaccessible, rejected Israel as too challenging (often referring to its hot climate and economic hardships of the newcomers), and opted for Germany as an attractive European country with high living standards. Some of them visited German cities before or had relatives and friends who had resettled there earlier and were impressed by new opportunities and comforts of life in Europe. After a brief stint at immigrant reception centers located in smaller towns or remote suburbs, most families moved to the larger cities, invested in learning German and actively looked for employment. Among 18 young adults in my sample, 10 said that at least one of their parents eventually landed quality jobs in line with their training and experience (most often in engineering, high-tech industry and medicine) while the rest moved in and out of temporary jobs or could not enter German labor market at all due to skill incompatibility and/or poor German proficiency, and received welfare aid for many years.

Despite facing their own occupational and social issues, most parents tried to support their adolescent children in their school immersion and self-organized in voluntary tutoring networks (particularly in math and sciences) to help their transition to the new curriculum[92]. Many informants mentioned their initial concerns of being tracked to vocational schools and their efforts to excel at least in math and sciences (less dependent on their German proficiency). The parents, many of them engineers and scientists, closely supervised their children's school work in these disciplines to help them access Gymnasiums and Abitur. The parents and co-ethnic tutors could offer less help in German-based disciplines and in relations with the teachers and principals (again, due to the language barrier), so the youths had to shoulder responsibility for these aspects of their education, as well as for the choice of friends and leisure activities. Thus, adolescents' early independence in many aspects of their lives seems to be a common experience in

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[91] Körber, Everyday Realities [f.n. 82]. – Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71].

[92] One such tutoring network existed under the auspices of the *Judisched Gemeinde* of Berlin for over 12 years, helping dozens of young immigrants excel in their studies and proceed to universities. Most of these voluntary tutors were unemployed engineers and scientists rather than school teachers.

immigrant families in Germany and in Israel. However, living standards of Russian Jewish immigrant families in Germany were typically higher, reflecting local welfare policies letting the newcomers to learn German and acquire economic foothold gradually, without struggling to survive on their own. Another important advantage of the German context was subsidized housing enabling Jewish quota migrants to settle in middle-class urban areas with reasonably good schools (e.g. Scharlottenburg and Schoneberg in Berlin) and not in segregated lower-class neighborhoods with limited schooling resources, the way it happened to many families of Russian Israelis.[93] Like their counterparts in Israel, US and elsewhere, many Jewish parents placed their children in Jewish schools and Gymnasiums deeming their academic standards higher and general atmosphere more protective and secure than that of regular public schools. Whether these schools were affiliated with local *Judisches Gemeinde*, Lauder or Chabad, tuition subsidies were typically available for recent migrants.

Importantly, the access to quality schooling and university education was higher for Russian-Jewish youths in Germany due to both immigrant integration policies in German middle schools and gymnasiums and free access to university education for all graduates with Abitur.[94] Although all my informants experienced initial difficulties learning German well enough for proper academic placement (particularly for entering gymnasiums), all of them spoke gratefully of their teachers and class mates who were willing to help the newcomers. Importantly, none of them recalled feelings of discrimination and neglect from the teachers or exclusion by their peers (many of whom where immigrants themselves, particularly in Berlin), nor the episodes of intergroup conflict (even violence) not uncommon in Israeli schools. By contrast to other minorities in Germany, these Jewish students apparently experienced German schools as vehicles of equal opportunity and social mobility in the German society.[95] This may reflect both their own effort and hard work at school appreciated by the teachers and integration policies favorably singling out Jewish immigrants as opposed to other local minorities (mostly Turks and Arabs). Some informants who moved to Germany during adolescence and were less comfortable with their German opted for the high school and university majors less dependent on the German proficiency, i.e. not in the humanities but rather in computer science, economics, medicine and technology. Thus, my findings are in agreement with the above-said conclusions by Körber and Gromova and point at pragmatic occupational choices made by young Russian Jewish adults both in Germany and in Israel.[96]

In search of ethnic and cultural identity

Young adults of the 1.5 generation are often self-reflexive as to their national, linguistic and cultural identity. Do they construe their social identity as mainly ethnic (Russian, Jewish, German), ethno-national (ex-Soviet/Russian), civic (German or European citizen), immigrant, cosmopolitan or mixed? Since most of them have acquired fluency in German, what is the place of the Russian language in their lives? Some initial answers

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93 Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17].
94 Kogan, Weißmann, Immigrants' initial steps [f.n. 41].
95 Geißler, Die Metamorphose [f.n. 73].
96 Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71]. – Körber, Everyday Realities [f.n. 82].

emerge from Gromova 's ethnographic study, as well as from my own interviews quoted below.[97] First, the identity work is still ongoing and it involves much ambivalence. The older their age at arrival in Germany, the more these 1.5ers tend to describe themselves as immigrants rather than locals.

> I'd never call myself German, that would sound false, but I can proudly call myself a Berliner, said Vlad (29, industrial designer). Berlin is a global city and everybody can find their own place in it. I feel fine being a Jew of Russian origin living in Berlin.

A few other informants referred to the cosmopolitan and multicultural makeup of Berlin and a special place it has had historically for Russian and Jewish émigrés.

> Every day I pass the house with the plaque saying in two languages "Russian Poet Marina Zvetayeva lived in this house in 1922", and this means a lot to me. There are so many Russian cultural legacies in Berlin,

mused Tamara (33, an arts teacher). Other informants (specifically in Munich, a large international center of finance and industry) asserted their European identity and the potential for global occupational mobility, saying it is unimportant for them to feel German because they are part of the larger European whole. Perhaps the stronger feelings of foreignness and non-belonging to the local narrative were expressed by the informants living in Potsdam, a smaller wealthy town near Berlin. Dima (36, IT engineer) said

> My German neighbors and coworkers view me as an Auslander [foreigner], and that's who I am, having an accent, drinking the wrong kinds of beer, and not laughing at German jokes. I guess I'll never fully belong here, but my 12 year old daughter feels fully at home in Potsdam, and this is more important to me.

In line with the earlier studies among Russian Jewish émigrés in Germany, all the informants in my study stressed that their Jewish identity was of a secular/cultural variety and that they were interested in the intellectual rather than religious aspects of Jewish heritage.[98] Although most of them had attended Jewish day schools belonging to different denominations (from Reform to Chabad) and half of my Berlin sample graduated from the city's Jewish Gymnasium, the exposure to Judaic studies and Hebrew did not foster their interest in religion nor altered their lifestyles in terms of the Jewish practices. Of the 18 informants, only five said they tried to keep kosher and eight said they liked observing some Shabbat rituals (candle lightning and Friday night family meal). None were regular synagogue members, but half of those having children of their own sent them to Jewish kindergartens.

> I prefer Jewish settings for my son because the atmosphere there is kind of softer, more familiar to them from home… It's good it they can pick up some Jewish knowledge on the way, but this isn't our main reason for this choice (Oleg, 28, programmer).

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[97] Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71].

[98] Bodeman, Bagno, In the ethnic twilight [f.n. 25]. – O. Glockner: Immigrated Russian Jewish Elites in Israel and Germany after 1990: Their Integration, Self-Image and Role in Community Building. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Potsdam, Germany.

Although some of them (seven out of 18) were connected with the local Jewish community organizations, it was mostly for the sake of services (like kindergartens and other child activities) or cultural and social events (concerts, library readings, etc.) where they could meet people like themselves.

> I am on the local community mailing list, but I never go to the religious services, I feel foreign there. I used to volunteer for their vocational service, so I still meet some old friends at their sponsored events (Tania, 32, a musician).

The informants who were children of ethnically-mixed marriages often visited their grandparents and other relatives who remained in Russia and Ukraine. Some of them spent their summer vacations in the city and country houses of their grandparents almost every year, which sustained their Russian fluency and interest in the on-going events in their former homelands. For example, Yana (30) from Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine) recalled:

> During my high school years, I loved to stay at my grandma's apartment and summer cottage: the weather was warm, the food was good and everyone in the family went out of their way to please me as a 'foreign guest'. I still have two of my best friends living there; we talk online, come to visit and generally stay in touch.

Given relative geographic proximity of the major ex-Soviet cities to Germany (a night train ride or 3-4 hours flight) the transnational networks of this kind were easily sustained.

Social networks

By contrast to Israel, few German cities have special 'Russian' venues of entertainment, so the Jewish community premises and events serve as a proxy for in-group socializing and entertaining familiar cultural genres in the mother tongue. Gromova has also found that Russian Jewish urban habitus revolves around the sites and hangouts known to the insiders (e.g. a Starbucks branch near the Jewish Community Center, art house cinemas in West Berlin, galleries showing the work of Russian artists) rather than any formal institutions.[99] Interestingly, the Russian Jewish 1.5ers maintain clear symbolic boundaries between their own urban habitat (mainly located in Scharlottenburg and other areas of West Berlin where they grew up) and cultural territories belonging to 'Others', including Russian Germans, Turks and other immigrants. She has shown the importance of these Russian Jewish niches in Berlin's urban topography as the sites of co-ethnic socializing and the search for dates and marital partners, not an easy endeavor for a small and scattered Jewish minority in a German city.[100]

My informants also confided in their difficulties with the search of proper marital partner, especially if it was important for them to have a Jewish spouse. Discussing this topic in the interviews was rather revealing about social relations between young Jewish immigrants and others segments of the German society. Given their apparent educational mobility and successful career beginnings, most of them have established instrumental relations to important German institutions (universities, workplaces, residential commu-

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[99] Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71].
[100] Gromova, Jewish dating [f.n. 81].

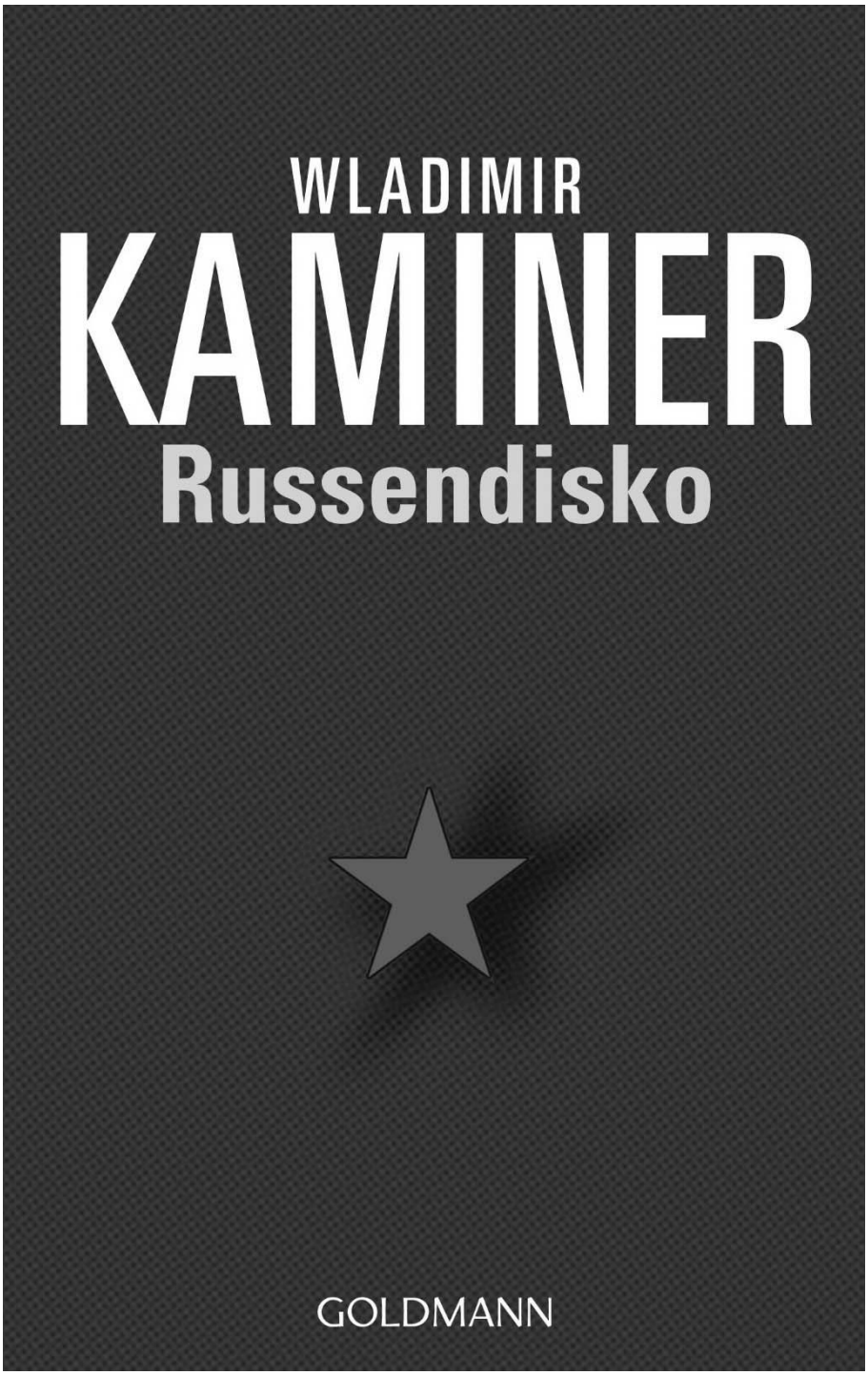
nities, etc.). But what are their social and romantic preferences in the private and informal domain? The social networks of these young adults seem to be split about 50:50 between their co-ethnics and native German peers (which is typical of this generation also in Israel, US, and elsewhere). Of 13 informants who were married or partnered in my sample, seven had Russian-Jewish partners and six were married to native Germans (non-Jews). The informants with German spouses were also typified by the circle of friends and other lifestyle markers (e.g. forms of leisure) more skewed to the German side. However, all of them spoke fluent Russian, cherished it as a personal asset and tried to pass it on to the children, at least to some extent. As expected, I found many parallels between these findings in Germany (reflecting the ambivalence between assimilation and home culture maintenance) and my earlier study among Russian *Olim* married to native Israelis.[101] As is the case in other segments of the Russian-Jewish diaspora, the grandparents served as the main agents of Russian linguistic and cultural continuity for the German-born second generation.[102]

The media and cultural consumption of my informants was largely German-based, but many of them regularly visited Russian internet sites for the news, entertainment and social forums. Their Facebook pages and smartphones were usually bilingual. Thus, many followed the events of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict (that unfolded during the months of my study) on Russian websites and blogs. Several informants mentioned that they met their current romantic partners on Russian-language dating sites. About half said that they often watched Russian movies (old and new) online, but only a few read contemporary Russian authors. Those who read fiction at all preferred books in German or English; some mentioned the books by Vladimir Kaminer – an émigré writer who gained broad popularity among German readers. Since moving to Berlin in the early 1990s, Kaminer has published several collections of stories about Russian newcomers' experience and their funny cultural encounters with the natives. Others rather disliked Kaminer's prose for its '*crude and grotesque expose of the internal matters of Russian Jewish community, making us look ridiculous in the eyes of local Germans*', in one informant's words.

Attitudes towards native Germans and Aussiedler

The latter remark refers to a sensitive set of issues relating to these young adults' attitudes towards German-Jewish relations, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust legacies. Generally, my informants seemed to be less concerned about these matters than their parents had been.[103] Most informants avoided any sweeping statements about Germans as such, stressing that they are as different as any other people, depending on their age and background. Most informants asserted that they never concealed their Jewish origins from their German peers, yet never encountered open anti-Semitism. If anything, they sometimes felt singled out and privileged as Jews (e.g. vis-à-vis other ethnic minorities at school). Starting from late adolescence, they discovered that being Jewish was actually rather 'cool'; their German fellow-students and coworkers were interested in the Jewish

[101] L. Remennick: Exploring intercultural relationships: A study of Russian immigrants married to native Israelis, in: Journal of Comparative Family Studies 40/2009 (5), pp. 719–738.
[102] Remennick, Intergenerational [f.n. 17].
[103] Remennick, Russian Jews [f.n. 1], p. 313.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heritage, applied to the Jewish Studies programs, went to Jewish and Israeli Film Festivals, etc., signaling full legitimacy of openly discussing Jewish topics. Thus, Rita (32, a graphic designer) mused:

> You won't believe this, but I actually got interested in my Jewish roots because I saw my non-Jewish German friends attracted to all kinds of Jewish places and events. My roommate at the university dorm went to a Hebrew class, some others organized the screening of Israeli films and Kleismer music festivals…This is how I first found myself going to a synagogue in Oranienburger Str. and to the Jewish Museum of Berlin.

Similar stories were told by at least every other informant in my study. Thus, somewhat paradoxically, the explicit Philo-Semitism on the part of (some) young Germans helped shape these young adults' positive Jewish self-identity, by contrast to the ambivalent or negative attitudes of their parents and grandparents towards their own Jewishness of the Soviet era. At the same time, many informants were rather concerned by close association between anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish sentiments in Europe that came to the fore in multiple street rallies during the last conflict in Gaza (summer 2014). Most of them spoke warmly about Israel, many visited the country and had friends and relatives living there, but none considered moving to Israel for good. They construed their own diasporic Jewishness as a different but fully legitimate variety of Jewish peoplehood. For example, Leon (34, business owner) said:

> It is important that Jews live in Germany, France and other Western countries and support Israel from the outside. It is unrealistic to expect that every Jew in the world would move to the Middle East.

Less is known about how the large Aussiedler (Russian German) and smaller Jewish communities relate to each other, given their common ex-Soviet roots and arrival over the same historic period. In fact, the initial contact between these two Russian-speaking populations was rather uncommon, given that they were resettled in different German Lands (the Germans mostly in the East, the Jews mostly in the West) and even in a city like Berlin tended to reside and circulate in different parts of town.[104] During the 1990s Jews and Aussiedler mostly met as consumers of Russian-language press, in Russian groceries and a few cultural events of interest for all ex-Soviets. This encounter between older immigrant generations elicited some hostility reflecting old historic grievances (e.g. Jewish commissars overseeing mass deportations of Germans from Volga region to the outlying Soviet lands during the war) and ostensible anti-Semitism of most Aussidler reflected in their news media.[105]

The younger generation of Jewish and German immigrants manifest much less mutual prejudice and interact rather neutrally, crossing paths in higher education and workplaces. My interviews indicated that the extent of social inclusion of Aussiedler (and other minority members) in the social circles of young Russian Jews depended on their perception as social and educational peers rather than ethnic origin. Thus, Sergei (30, an architect) opined:

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[104] Dietz, The Jewish emigration [f.n. 70]. – Gromova, Generation „Koscher Light" [f.n. 71].
[105] Remennick, Russian Jews [f.n. 1], p. 313.

> One of my good friends at work is Aussiedler and the other is a Serb; I also have good relations with my Turkish neighbors – he is a lawyer and she is a nurse, both are very decent people. What matters for me is that I have something in common with a person, that we are interested in the same topics and can discuss them on the same level - you know what I mean.

Like Sergei, many other informants believed that ethnic origin is irrelevant for their choice of friends, based on common interests and values. The only domain where some informants openly preferred Jews was marriage (see above).

Conclusion

To conclude, these small pilot studies map out a very interesting field of future research on the young adults of Russian origin living in Germany and their children who will form the second (or the 2.5) immigrant generation. It is an ambitious endeavor for immigration scholars wishing to extend the comparison between Russian 1.5ers living in different host societies, given paucity of extant macro-level data and challenges in locating eligible informants. At this point, I can cautiously infer that older children and adolescents who emigrated from the (post)Soviet states with their parents had, by and large, a smoother experience of adjustment and social inclusion in Germany than in Israel. In Germany, educational mobility of Russian-Jewish school and university students mostly met their parents' expectations, thanks to the continuous support of the German welfare state at all stages of the integration process and the lack of financial barriers to higher education. In Israel, occupational and social downgrading of the parents often led to educational challenge for the children who did not receive enough support, tutoring and supervision at the critical stage of their development. Economic hardships and social marginalization often barred access of these adolescents to full matriculation and college degrees, resulting in the counterintuitive fact that the 1.5 generation of Russian Israelis is less educated than their parents.

In terms of their linguistic and cultural identity, Russian-Jewish 1.5ers share many similar features in the two countries, easily navigating both cultural worlds. In Germany (as in Israel) young Russian immigrant adults still carry a lot of ambivalence as to their full belonging to the nation in the midst of which they live, although probably more Russians in Israel would call themselves Israelis than those living in Germany call themselves Germans. Highlighting the uneven outcomes of the integration process, due to both immigrants' backgrounds and opportunity structures in the host countries, brings us back to the segmented assimilation theory. This approach to the study of social mobility among immigrant youth offers a useful lens for the future comparative study of Russian immigrants in Israel and in the West. Following the leads from extant research, of particular interest are social interactions between Russian Jewish youth, the hegemonic host country's majority and other resident minorities (labor migrants and Palestinians in Israel, Moslem minorities in Germany). Another set of questions reflects on transnational orientations of these young adults, ready to take full advantage of global mobility of talent and labor in the 21 century, thus compensating for their parents' sedentary lifestyle behind the Iron Curtain of the Soviet era and occupational downgrading upon migration.

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Karen Körber

Resistant Pragmatism

Young, Russian-speaking Jews in Germany

Since the 1990s, hundreds of thousands of Jews have come to Germany. The children from then are now adults. Their integration has been achieved. They are more socio-economically successful than their parents' generation. They have German citizenship and are committed to the Federal Republic's political order. However, they don't see themselves unreservedly as Germans. This derives from experience. As migrants, they have repeatedly encountered exclusion, discrimination and antisemitism. Ascription and self-identification are in a dynamic relationship and influence their position in society.

The Jewish community in Germany has been fundamentally changed by the immigration of Russian-speaking Jews from the 1990s on. Jewish life once again displays a growing religious diversity, there are Jewish schools and kindergartens, as well as numerous Jewish organisations and societies. There are many reasons for this transformation. A glance at the demographic development figures gives a clear message. At the end of the 1980s, the Jewish communities in West Germany had barely 30,000 members, and in the GDR, 380 people belonged to one community. There are currently approximately 100,000 members of Jewish communities; to that can be added numerous immigrant Jews who haven't attached themselves to any community. The bulk of Jews living in Germany are originally from the Soviet Union and the post-Soviet states.[1] Of particular interest in the following are those who were still children when they immigrated in the 1990s. It is for them that their parents dared to take the chance of emigrating. Those children have become young adults, who were asked in a study by us, how they arrived in German immigrant society and grew up and whether they feel that they belong in Germany.[2]

At first glance, the results of the research speak clearly: almost half of the participants are economically active, a similarly high proportion are still studying, very few are

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1 On the immigration of Russian-speaking Jews and the transformation of the Jewish community in Germany: Karen Körber: Conflicting Memories, Conflicting Identities. The Russian-Jewish Immigration and the Image of a New German Jewry, in: Cornelia Wilhelm (Ed.): Migration, Memory and Diversity in Germany after 1945. Oxford/New York 2016.

2 These questions were researched in a study carried out in 2013/14 at the Jüdischen Museum Berlin (Berlin Jewish Museum) entitled „Lebenswirklichkeiten – Jüdische Gegenwart in Deutschland". 267 young Russian-speaking Jews between the ages of 20 and 40, who had immigrated as children with their families within the framework of the quota process, were questioned in an online survey. In addition, thirty interviews were carried out nationwide. Unpublished manuscript, Berlin 2014. Cited in the following as: Transcript „Lebenswirklichkeiten".

OSTEUROPA 2020, Migration, Identity, Politics, pp. 89–97

unemployed.[3] Their successful integration in the labour market may be explained by their high level of educational achievement. 95% of those questioned have graduated successfully from academic high school, 80% have a university degree. In comparison with their parents, of whom about 50% were long-term unemployed after immigration and a good two thirds worked consistently below their level of qualification, the second generation sees itself clearly as achievers.[4] This finding also seems to correspond to the assertions of the majority of those surveyed, that they feel themselves attached both to Israel and Europe. Almost all of those surveyed had the opinion „Jews nowadays are as happy to live in the USA or Europe as in Israel". Similarly, around sixty per cent agreed with the statement: „Israel is a symbolic homeland, but I wouldn't want to live there."[5] On the one hand, this feeling leads to the aspiration to build a future here, a feeling articulated as self-evident by the young adults. On the other hand, two thirds of the respondents reported being affected by discrimination and antisemitism against them as Russian-speaking Jews. Around half of them believed their background as immigrants to be crucial in this, a little over forty per cent had been confronted with antisemitism, and almost thirty percent had experienced double discrimination.[6]

Our interviews expose how young Russian-speaking Jews explore their contradictory experiences in the German immigrant community. They tell us what it's like to grow up in Germany, describe their attachments to their Russian-speaking and Jewish heritage, which mould their own social identity, but also offer cause for discrimination. Their statements prove, that the survey respondents encounter this difference between their own identification and ascription, in that they use a position for themselves, based on German citizenship, yet rejecting national affinity.

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3 Körber, Lebenswirklichkeiten [f.n. 1], p. 6.

4 Ibid., p. 29.

5 Ibid., p. 14.

6 Our study's data shows parallels to and differences from more recent surveys. These have shown that the number of antisemitic abuse and assaults has clearly increased in recent years. A decisive point was the debate around circumcision that took place in Germany in 2012, when a rabbi was reported to the police for bodily harm, after carrying out a ritual circumcision. Voices demanding the banning of circumcision grew loud. This caused outrage in the Jewish and Muslim communities in Germany. Although our survey took place shortly after, those surveyed reacted with less outrage. There was consensus that the internet is a preferred location for antisemitic comments and abuse. Andreas Zick, Andreas Hövermann, Silke Jensen, Julia Bernstein: Jüdische Perspektiven auf Antisemitismus in Deutschland. Ein Studienbericht für den Expertenrat Antisemitismus, <https://uni-bielefeld.de/ikg/daten/JuPe_Bericht_April2017.pdf>. – Zur gesetzlichen Regelung der Beschneidung: <www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2012/42042381_kw50_de_ beschneidung-210238>.

Germany, Land of Immigration

> So, I can definitely see myself starting a family here, working here and spending my life here. However, I would never say, to the question, yeah, which nationality I am, I'm German. Well, I have a German passport and I live in Germany. I stick to the German constitution and so on and so forth, but I don't feel myself these days to be in any way German.[7]

> Yes, I've got German citizenship, because it's my country and I wish to be part of it, even, for example, to be able to vote in elections. Because otherwise I wouldn't have done it at all, for I had permanent leave to remain with all rights, i.e. a work permit. As a worker in IT, I don't need German citizenship at all. I could have lived here just as well. I did it because I wanted to.[8]

> I feel at home and I'm happy, well especially now with the economic crisis, to be in Germany of all places and not somewhere else. I work here, I did my training here. I'm a German citizen, absolutely, because democracy's important to me and because I have a responsibility to the country, for sure. But from a cultural perspective of course not, because my roots aren't in Germany and I don't share this history, that the Germans have. So then you can't really say, that I'm German.[9]

These voices represent a cross-section of our interviews. Our interviewees self-evidently talk about living in Germany and building themselves a future and emphasize the meaning of German citizenship, which is understood as possibility for participation in politics, responsibility and duty to the community that they belong to. Just as clearly as they recognize themselves as German citizens, they deny their membership of the German nation. They feel Germany to be a place of safety and stability, which allows them to plan their lives, and if it comes to it, start a family, get qualified, and find a job. It's about a pragmatic acceptance of Germany, that depends on factors that are relevant to the success of the own life: the possibility to perceive individual life opportunities in a socially and economically stable situation, and the ability, in all probability, to make these happen.[10] Indeed, the perception isn't limited just to the subjective realisation of opportunities, but is linked, in the institution of citizenship, to the aspiration of participation in the democratic community, that the survey participants want to shape as citizens.
This self-placement is based on the familial experience of coming from a region where living conditions were significantly worse than in Germany. The survey group is aware that they have succeeded in social achievements that were denied their parents. The young adults, according to their perception, can now make up for their parents' migra-

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7 Lisa, Transcript, p. 17, lines 706–15.
8 Alek, Transcript, p. 15, lines 595–602.
9 Sveta, Transcript, p. 11, lines 442–47.
10 This matches the findings of the social anthropologist Dani Kranz about young Israelis in Berlin. Dani Kranz: Israelis in Berlin. Wie viele sind es und was zieht sie nach Berlin? <www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/user_upload/Israelis_in_Berlin.pdf>.

tion-related regression experience, characterised by invalidation of educational qualifications, unemployment, career disruptions and working below their qualification level. They regard their social position as considerably better than that of their parents.

Positioning

Even though our interviewees have decided to live as Jews in Germany, that doesn't change the fact they have clearly rejected the option of being „Germans". Their decision in favour of Germany goes together with the statement: „But I'm not German" or „I'm no German". This comment delineates a border and introduces a clear distinction. In accordance with the British cultural scientist Stuart Hall, the utterances of the young Jews may be understood as „positioning", as an attempt, through breaches and the particularity of their own history, to show that their own position arises from a dynamic interplay of ascription and self-identification.[11]

Experiences in the existing symbolic order of German immigrant society are shown to advantage in this self-positioning, characterised by inclusion and exclusion, differing forms of discrimination, as well as by a hierarchy of origin, which the young Jews refer to in their quest for social recognition. As Russian-speaking Jews they are categorised and discriminated against as both migrants - more precisely as Russians - and also as Jews. Our interviewees speak of these different group ascriptions and the associated forms of discrimination and stigmatisation, which as a rule don't go together and don't have the same consequences. They display corresponding experiences of being excluded by the majority, but also identify attempts to modify the symbolic boundaries of the relevant group, in that they alter the features of the group ascription and their meanings. This can happen, for example, when they keep quiet about their Russian or Jewish heritage, or vice versa, when they decisively and aggressively emphasize one of these heritages. This shows that the young adults are not passively subjected to ascription by the majority of society, but are actively carrying out work at the border, in that they try to influence and change the various social categories that affect them.

Growing Up In Germany

For our interviewees, growing up in Germany means belonging to an origin group that is characterised by the special structure of this immigration. The separate acceptance process for Jewish quota refugees - by means of which, those, who can prove Jewish heritage, are accorded entry, this also being given to their (even non-Jewish) family members - leads to migration of whole families, which can encompass up to three generations. Next to the core family the near relatives are often included, such as the uncles and aunts of the relevant immigration group.

Russian-speaking Jews learn early on that they're not alone in having a cultural position linked to their migration. Largely, they move with their families from the central arrival accommodation into districts with affordable rents or in localities with social housing,

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[11] Stuart Hall: Die Frage der kulturellen Identität, in: Stuart Hall: Ausgewählte Schriften 2. Hamburg 1994, pp. 180–222. – Richard Jenkins: Ethnicity Etcetera. Social Anthropological Points of View, in: Ethnic and Racial Studies, 19/1996, pp. 807–822.

where a large proportion of the migrant population live. In the street, at school, at university, amongst friends and family, they encounter others who similarly don't originate (only) from Germany.
In the interviews they demonstrate how their everyday life and experience of social diversity is reflected in the choice and composition of friendship groups:

> I had my girls from school, they were German-speaking girls with the most varied backgrounds: Croatian, Polish, everything was possible. And now my friends are a very, very colourful mixture. For me, that's everything about German society. So it's difficult to define, what is Germany?

> I grew up always multi-cultural. It's no different in Germany. I also have Turkish friends and Polish friends and German friends and everything mixed.[12]

These statements reflect the everyday life of an immigrant country. But this reality consists not only of experiences of diversity, but also of discrimination, social exclusion and antisemitism.
Entry into the German education system is one of the first radical experiences that the young Russian-speaking Jews undergo as part of crossing the border. Especially those who, on account of their age, have to immediately attend a next-stage school, undergo particular experiences with the „schooling" of children and teenagers with a migrant background. According to federal state, they go to Hauptschule (basic secondary school), an „integration class" or a „remedial class":

> I wouldn't say that integration functioned seamlessly, because in the wonderful German education system, it was the case that everyone, who wasn't German, had first of all to go to Hauptschule (basic secondary school), without somehow assessing what level the child was at and where they should actually be placed. And so I was then for half a year at a Hauptschule and that was, well. I was already a bit different from the others and that was really really great and really annoyed the other kids, because they couldn't understand what I was doing there and how I was much better in all subjects, without being able to speak a word of German. After half a year, a teacher helped me to switch to a Gymnasium (advanced secondary school).[13]

> At the time I was fifteen and was already going to school. Firstly, I went to a remedial group, where we learnt the language. All the kids were at that time sent to Hauptschule, which wasn't such a great idea. because people weren't informed about the school system, and Hauptschule was actually the lowest level. And if you didn't actively want to achieve anything and informed yourself, asked around, then you were just left hanging there. In my case it was different, we found things out. And I passed tenth grade and then went to the Gymnasium (advanced school).[14]

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[12] Tatjana, Transcript, p.18, lines 751–53.
[13] Dascha, Transcript, p. 2, lines 52–66.
[14] Alek, Transcript, p. 1, lines 22–33.

> The beginning was hard. I was stuck in an integration class, where the children were much younger than me and had a completely different school background from me. So, it was all so to say difficult children, who had problems in school and had migrant backgrounds. And I was there, just because I couldn't yet speak German. Exactly. Those were painful years for me. And then I took the Abitur. In Ukraine I was in a math school, that was a very good school with children from good backgrounds and here in this school I was suddenly at a level, that was perhaps appropriate to my financial level, but not my mental one, if you see what I mean.[15]

These quotations describe the recurring experience found repeatedly in a school situation after crossing the border. These are perceived as problematic and unfair by our interviewees. They share the impression in common, that they, on the basis of their lack of language skills, were sorted into a social group whose progress at school or systematic advancement is barely envisaged. When our interviewee describes that he belonged in his school perhaps from „financial level" but not from „mental", then he is referring to the features of segregation in the social sphere that played a key role in placement in the appropriate school. As a twelve-year-old boy with a migration background growing up in a low-income part of town, he, and the other migrants interviewed, met with mechanisms of institutional discrimination, with which ethnic difference is manufactured in the education system, and which become means of unequal distribution.[16] The above average quantity of educational achievement (passing the Abitur) among our interviewees, must not be allowed to cover up the fact that many of them were confronted with the realities of a school system, that did not expect any higher level of educational achievement for them.

As the interviews show, it took a high level of initiative - in part supported by parents or individual teachers - to seek a way out of the allocated educational pathway. The children and teenagers benefited from coming from households with a high level of parental education. This finding applies essentially to the group of Jewish quota refugees.[17] It's also clear in the assessment of the school situation in Germany by the immigrant families that the learning content and methods in the school system are applied according to origin community. This could be affirmed by the children with good achievement levels. Knowledge of different school systems and teaching content enables the affected families to make a comparison that isn't always favourable to the German school system. They take from this the incentive not to accept a school downgrade as a given. As a result of their educational level and knowledge of different educational

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[15] Sergey, Transcript, p. 2, lines 50-57.

[16] Mechtild Gomolla, Frank-Olaf Radtke: Institutionelle Diskriminierung. Die Herstellung ethnischer Differenz in der Schule. Wiesbaden 2002. – Aladin El-Mafalaani, Thomas Kemper: Bildungsungleichheit ist nicht gleich verteilt, <http://politeknik.de/bildungsungleichheit-ist-nicht-gleich-verteilt-zur-bildungsbenachteiligung-tuerkischer-schuelerinnen-in-deutschland-aladin-el-mafaalanithomas-kemper>.

[17] Julius. H. Schoeps u.a.: Russische Juden in Deutschland. Integration und Selbstbehauptung in einem fremden Land. Weinheim 1996, p. 90f.

systems in origin and destination countries, these immigrant families have a transnational perspective, that makes it easier for them to reject the allocated educational pathway and see to it that their child switches to a higher-level school.
Above all, these school experiences are about forms of institutional discrimination. The Russian-speaking Jews are confronted with this from time to time in their everyday life, so that their place of birth on the other side of the German border or a Russian-sounding name offers a pretext for suspicion and reduces chances for equal participation:

> It was awful, when I had to say my name. When I was looking for an apartment, it went like this on the phone: Yes, sure, let's make an appointment. Then you can view the apartment. Give me your name. And then I gave my name. Ah, no, we don't rent out to foreigners. And I went through such things a few times and it wasn't good. It wasn't to do with me being Jewish, but rather to do with me being Russian, well, with my Russian roots. And therefore, I didn't like it at all. So I have a real problem in saying that I'm a Russian. It could also be, that it has to do with these stigmatisations. Because, well, Russian, well, the word Russian doesn't always have a good image.[18]

The young woman's description corresponds to the results of more recent studies,[19] which show how migrants of different origins are structurally disadvantaged in the housing market, if, when they apply, they speak with an accent or have an alien sounding name. In her eyes, the discrimination she experienced is not just to do with her migration background, but that in Germany she's seen as a Russian. By this, she sees herself categorised as part of a minority that is not well-liked by the German public. Although she identifies herself at other points in the interview with the Russian language and culture, she takes back such an affinity when she sees the danger of being stigmatised arising from it. A discrepancy between self-image and ascription reveals itself in this defensive behaviour, which has consequences about how this young woman positions herself in the immigrant community. On the one hand she feels herself connected to a group that she shares knowledge with and has groupings in common with, but on the other hand she distances herself from this affinity, that is ascribed a low symbolic ranking in an established hierarchy of origin by the local majority of society.
In contrast to the descriptions about what forms of discrimination on the basis of migration background have been experienced, the question of antisemitic experiences caused the interviewees to reflect on a theme that for Jews has been central to their relationship to the surrounding population historically and right up to the present day; namely, their visibility as Jews.[20] While the young adults have repeatedly experienced being categorised as „migrants" or „Russians" as a result of their Russian name or ac-

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[18] Dascha, Transcript, p. 6, lines 233–244.
[19] Jan Schneider, Ruta Yemane, Martin Weinmann: Diskriminierung am Ausbildungsmarkt. Ausmaß, Ursachen und Handlungsperspektiven. Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration (SVR). Berlin 2014.
[20] Kerry Wallach: Passing Illusions. Jewish Visibility in Weimar Germany. University of Michigan 2017.

cent, their Jewish affinity is not recognizable, as long as it isn't shown by specific practices, such as choice of clothing, wearing Jewish religious symbols, ascription by name or specific social behaviours. For the young Russian interviewees, who in the main see themselves as secular Jews, this results in the use of specific strategies to deal with their Jewishness in social situations:

> In Germany it's the case that no one recognised me as such, and as well I never openly said it, well only with very good friends, but I otherwise I don't say, because I've simply had very bad experiences with it. There's really a lot of antisemitism in Germany too. You hear often enough at work, against Israel, really a lot of hate, against Jews, that crops up. Well I think, not as huge as in Ukraine, also not so openly. But here there's a lot hidden in the hatred of Israel. But it's just there, you have to be aware, you mustn't then open yourself up, not in all walks of life.[21]

Our interview partner Sveta immigrated at the age of twelve from the Ukraine, where, as a little girl, she was insulted as a Jewess and physically harassed by other children. These negative experiences also accompany her here in Germany, where she has, according to her perception, similarly encountered much antisemitism, which is expressed especially in hatred of Israel. That is in line with sociological and journalistic findings.[22] This young woman protects herself against possible attacks and abuse, by keeping her Jewish heritage to herself and only opening up in a trusted social setting. Sveta holds on to a repertoire of behaviours, attached to collective Jewish experiences that Soviet Jews also share. One of these, which many Russian-speaking Jewish families adopt, is the clear separation of private from public life. It pays them to keep their own Jewish heritage to themselves as far as possible, in order to escape antisemitic animosity in school, at work or in public life.
While Sveta sees her Jewish heritage as a private matter, whose divulgence she wants to control, in the case of Olga, this is openly visible and connoted unequivocally as religious. As a modern Orthodox Jew, she wears a head covering. Together with her family, she lives by Jewish laws and rules and is embedded in a Jewish community. Olga also describes the damaging experience of the antisemitic oriented circumcision debate as well as a recurring antisemitism related to Israel, that confronts her, when she encounters non-Jewish Germans and they address her as a Jew:

> But ... sure, of course, then when someone meets me, someone, who isn't Jewish, meets me and knows that I'm Jewish, then straightaway the question comes up: What's up with Israel? Also of course something like: What does she do in Israel? Then I always think, I don't know, what I'd do there - holiday at the most, but nothing more.[23]

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[21] Sveta, Transcript, p. 12, lines 480–86.
[22] Doron Rabinowitz, Ulrich Speck, Nathan Sznaider (Hg.): Neuer Antisemitismus? Eine globale Debatte. Frankfurt/Main 2004.
[23] Olga, Transcript, p. 21, lines 879–885.

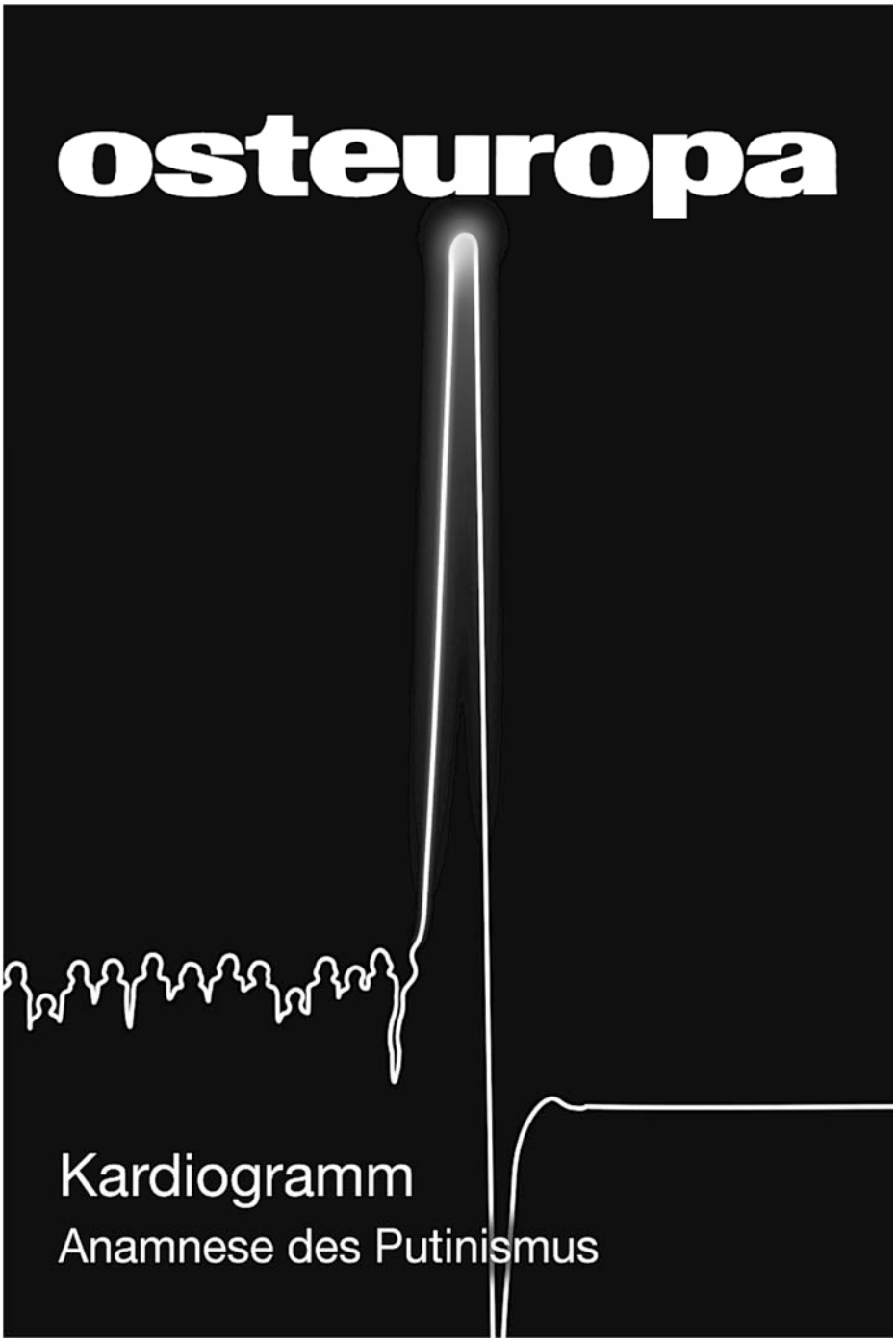
Olga doesn't just criticise an antisemitism that takes a detour via Israel. Rather she repudiates an ascription by non-Jewish Germans, according to which she is personally responsible for everything that happens in Israel and by which she as a Jew is, as it were, self-evidently declared as a citizen of the Israeli state: „Well I absolutely don't feel myself to be an Israeli." In contrast to Sveta, she insists upon making her Jewishness visible in Germany, and, is adamant about being at home with this difference, as a German citizen.

These two interview partners represent two different strategies, which they use to react to stigmatisation and antisemitism in everyday life. While Sveta sets out to hide her Jewish heritage in the public sphere and so protect herself, Olga decides upon an offensive approach, where she publicly emphasises her own identity and urges the recognition of her own group.[24]

The results of our research show that young Russian-speaking Jews undergo contradictory experiences in the German immigrant community. In contrast to their parents' generation, they are socially and economically successful and through their progress, retrospectively justify the family decision to emigrate to Germany. Successful structural integration, linked to the acquisition of citizenship, means that the young adults self-evidently claim their place in Germany. However, they differentiate emphatically between German citizenship as formal membership of a state and their affinity to different social groups. Their self-positioning points to a symbolic ordering of German majority society, which is characterised by a hierarchy of heritage and in which they, as migrants and Jews, are repeatedly exposed to discrimination and antisemitism. Both defensive and offensive strategies are visible in their statements. They reach for these when they react to the symbolic and social boundaries of their multiple affinities, in order to remain recognisable as protagonists in a dynamic interplay between ascription and self-identification. Thirty years after the start of this immigration, the Russian-speaking Jews have arrived in Germany. In the light of a societal culture where the desire for national closing-off is growing, it remains open, whether they will in future see themselves as German Jews.

Translated by Toby Harrison, Berlin

[24] Michèle Lamont, Nissim Mizrachi: Ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Responses to stigmatisation in comparative perspective, in: Ethnic and Racial Studies, 35/2012, pp. 365–381.



Cardiogram: An anamnesis of Putinism. 216 pp. <www.zeitschrift-osteuropa.de>.

Jewish population by country, 2018

Country	Total population[a]	Core Jewish population[b]	Jews per 1000 total population	Popolation with Jewish Parents[c]	Enlarged Jewish population[d]	Law of Return population[e]	source	
							Type[f]	Accuracy rating[g]
World	**7 535 797 000**	**14 606 000**	**1,94**	**17 794 400**	**20 687 800**	**23 472 400**		
Europe total	**843 474 000**	**1 358 100**	**1,61**	**1 820 000**	**2 269 500**	**2 791 100**		
France	65 040 000	453 000	6,96	530 000	600 000	700 000	C	+ [2012]
United Kingdom	66 400 000	290 000	4,37	330 000	370 000	410 000	B C	+ [2011]
Russia	146 800 000	172 000	1,17	320 000	440 000	600 000	B	0 [2010]
Germany	83 100 000	116 000	1,40	150 000	225 000	275 000	D	+ [2017]
Ukraine	42 300 000	50 000	1,18	97 000	140 000	200 000	B	0 [2001]
Hungary	9 800 000	47 400	4,84	75 000	100 000	130 000	B	0 [2011]
Netherlands	17 100 000	29 800	1,74	43 000	52 000	60 000	C	+ [2009]
Belgium	11 300 000	29 200	2,58	35 000	40 000	45 000	D	0 [2002]
Italy	60 500 000	27 500	0,45	34 000	41 000	48 000	C D	+ [2018]
Switzerland	8 500 000	18 600	2,19	22 000	25 000	28 000	B	+ [2012]
Turkey	80 900 000	15 000	0,19	19 300	21 000	23 000	C D	+ [2016]
Sweden	10 100 000	15 000	1,49	20 000	25 000	30 000	C	0 [2007]
Spain	46 600 000	11 700	0,25	15 000	18 000	20 000	D	- [2007]
Belarus	9 500 000	9500	1,00	18 000	25 000	33 000	B	+ [2009]
Romania	19 600 000	9100	0,46	13 500	17 000	20 000	B D	+ [2002]

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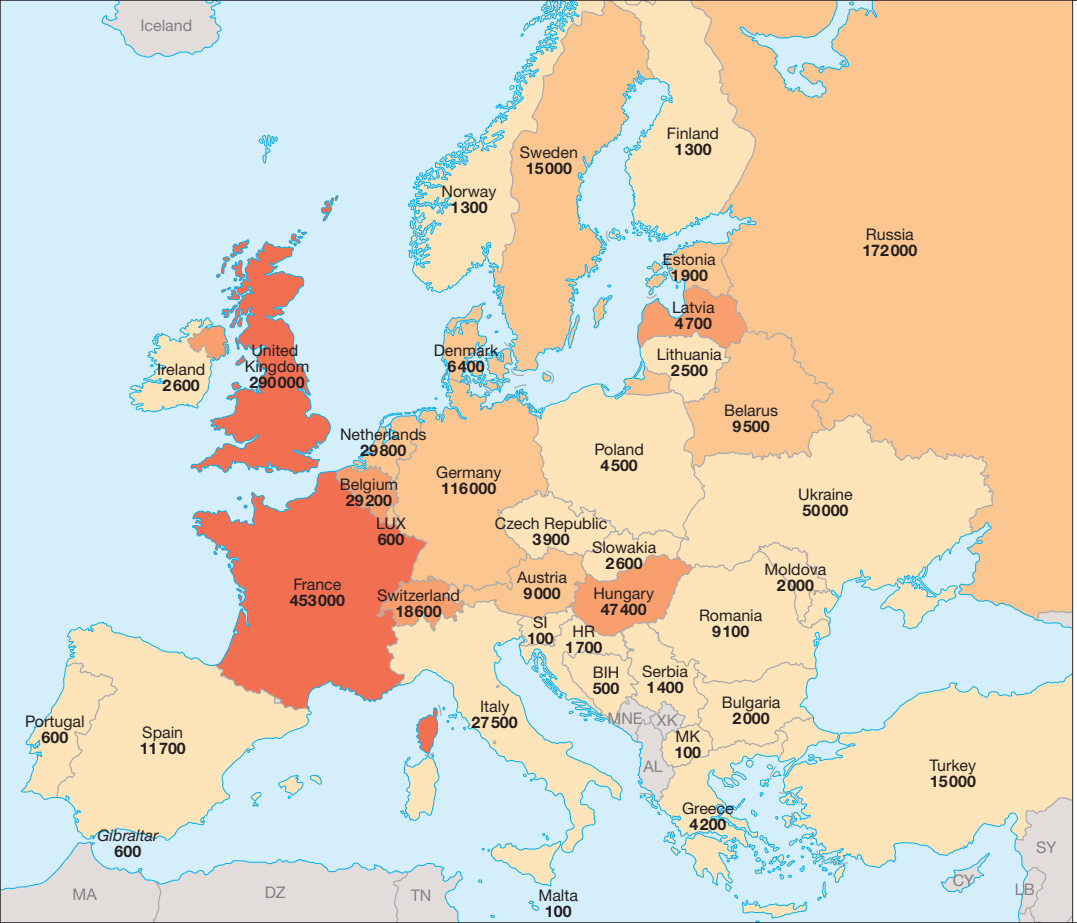
Austria	8 800 000	9000	1,02	14 000	17 000	20 000	B D	+ [2011]
Azerbaijan	9 900 000	7800	0,79	10 500	16 000	22 000	B	+ [2009]
Denmark	5 800 000	6400	1,10	7500	8500	9500	C	0 [2001]
Latvia	1 900 000	4700	2,47	8000	12 000	16 000	B A	+ [2017] [x]
Poland	38 400 000	4500	0,12	7000	10 000	13 000	B D	+ [2011] [x]
Greece	10 700 000	4200	0,39	5500	6000	7000	D	+ [2000]
Czech Republic	10 600 000	3900	0,37	5000	6500	8000	B D	0 [2011]
Slovakia	5 400 000	2600	0,48	3600	4600	6000	B	0 [2011]
Ireland	4 800 000	2600	0,54	3600	5000	7000	B	+ [2016] [x]
Lithuania	2 800 000	2500	0,89	4700	6500	10 000	B A	+ [2011]
Moldova	3 600 000	2000	0,56	5700	7500	11 000	B	+ [2014] [x]
Bulgaria	7 100 000	2000	0,28	4000	6000	7500	B D	0 [2011]
Estonia	1 300 000	1900	1,46	2600	3400	4500	B A	+ [2017]
Croatia	4 100 000	1700	0,41	2400	3000	3500	B D	0 [2001]
Georgia	3 900 000	1600	0,41	4 500	6000	8700	B	+ [2014]
Serbia	7 000 000	1400	0,20	2100	2800	3500	B	0 [2001]
Norway	5 300 000	1300	0,25	1500	2000	2500	A	+ [2010]
Finland	5 500 000	1300	0,24	1600	1900	2200	A	+ [2010]
Luxembourg	600 000	600	1,00	800	1000	1200	D	+ [2000]
Portugal	10 300 000	600	0,06	800	1000	1200	B	0 [2001]
Gibraltar	35 000	600	17,14	700	800	900	B	+ [2001]
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3 500 000	500	0,14	800	1000	1200	B	0 [2001]
Cyprus	1 200 000	100	0,08	200	300	400	E	- [2012]
Malta	400 000	100	0,25	200	300	400	E	- [2012]
Slovenia	2 100 000	100	0,05	200	300	400	B	0 [2003]
North Macedonia	2 100 000	100	0,05	200	300	400	B	0 [1996]
Armenia	3 000 000	100	0,03	300	500	700	B	+ [2011]



Jewish Population in Europe in 2018

Share of the total population *in %*

- 0.5 - 1.0
- 0.2 - 0.5
- 0.1 - 0.2
- < 0.1
- not specified

Numbers refer to core Jewish population.

Core Jewish population includes persons who see themselves as Jews out of religious conviction or who are seen as Jews by persons with whom they live and do not belong to another religion. It also covers persons who do not see themselves explicitly as Jews even though they have a Jewish parent.

Source: Encyclopedia Judaica. Detroit 2/2007 and Bermann Jewish DataBank 2018

0 500 km

Cartography: S. Dutzmann
Leipzig, 2020

osteuropa 2020

Jewish Population in Europe from 2005 to 2018

Chance *in %*

- > 20
- 5 - 20
- 0 - 5
- 0
- -5 - 0
- -20 - -5
- < -20

increase

decrease

keine Daten vorhanden

2600 | -3.7 — percent change

difference

Numbers refer to core Jewish population.

Source: Encyclopedia Judaica. Detroit 2/2007 and Bermann Jewish DataBank 2018

0 500 km

Cartography: S. Dutzmann
Leipzig, 2020

osteuropa 2020

America total	**1 005 223 000**	**6 469 800**	**6,44**	**8 965 100**	**11 178 100**	**13 407 400**		
USA	325 400	5 700 000	17,52	8 000 000	10 000 000	12 000 000	C	+ [2013]
Canada	36 700 000	390 500	10,64	450 000	550 000	700 000	B	+ [2011]
Argentina	44 300 000	180 300	4,07	270 000	330 000	350 000	C	+ [2003]
Brazil	207 900 000	93 200	0,45	120 000	150 000	180 000	B	+ [2010]
Mexico	129 200 000	40 000	0,31	45 000	50 000	65 000	B C	+ [2010]
Asia total	**4 395 100 000**	**6 583 500**	**1,5**	**6 793 700**	**7 001 500**	**7 010 600**		
Israel[h]	8 383 400	6 153 500	7,4	6 349 300	6 545 100	6 545 100	B A	++ [2018]
West Bank[i]	*2 961 900*	*404 600*	*13,7*	*408 900*	*413 200*	*413 200*	B A	*++ [2018]*
Gaza[i]	*1 840 000*	*0*	*0,00*	*0*	*0*	*0*	B A	*++ [2018]*
Israel + West Bank + Gaza[j]	*13 185 300*	*6 558 100*	*49,7*	*6 758 200*	*6 958 300*	*6 958 300*		
Total state of Israel[k]	*8 796 700*	*6 558 100*	*74,6*	*6 758 200*	*6 958 300*	*6 958 300*		
Iran	80 600 000	8500	0,11	11 000	12 000	13000	B	+ [2012]
India	1 352 600	4900	0,00	6 000	7000	8000	B	0 [2011]
Uzbekistan	32 400 000	3200	0,10	6 000	8000	10 000	B	- [1989]
China	1 394 800	2800	0,00	2 900	3300	3500	E	- [2015]
Kazakhstan	18 000 000	2700	0,15	4 800	6500	9600	B	+ [2009]
Africa total	**1 250 000 000**	**73 600**	**0,06**	**81 900**	**88 900**	**96 900**		
South Africa	56 500 000	69 000	1,22	75 000	80 000	85 000	B C	+ [2011]
Morocco	35 100 000	2150	0,06	2500	2700	2900	D	0 [2015]
Tunisia	11 500 000	1050	0,09	1200	1300	1400	D	0 [2015]
Oceania total	**42 000 000**	**121 000**	**2,88**	**133 700**	**149 800**	**166 400**		
Australia	24 500 000	113 400	4,63	125 000	140 000	155 000	B	+ [2016]
New Zealand	4 800 000	7500	1,56	8500	9500	11 000	B	+ [2006]

***Source**: Sergio DellaPergola: World Jewish Population, 2018. Berman Jewish DataBank 2019.*

***Annotations**:*

[a] Source, with minor adjustments: Population Reference Bureau (2018) and United Nations Population Division (2017). Mid-year 2017 estimates.

[b] Includes all persons who, when asked, identify themselves as Jews, or, if the respondent is a different person in the same household, are identified by him/her as Jews; and do not have another religion. Also includes persons with a Jewish parent who claim no current religious or ethnic identity

[c] Sum of core Jewish population + persons who are partly Jewish + all others not currently Jewish with a Jewish parent

[d] Sum of core Jewish population + persons reported as partly Jewish + all others not currently Jewish with a Jewish parent + all other non-Jewish household members (spouses, children, etc.)

[e] Sum of Jews + children of Jews + grandchildren of Jews + all respective spouses, regardless of Jewish identification

*[f] **A** = population census; **B** = National population register; **C** = Survey of Jewish population; **D** = Jewish community register; **E** =Estimate*

[g] ++) Base estimate derived from national census or reliable Jewish population survey; updated for 2018 on the basis of full or partial information on Jewish population movements

+) Base estimate derived from less accurate but recent (max. 20 years old) national Jewish population data; updated on the basis of partial information on Jewish population movements during the intervening period.

0) Base estimate derived from less recent sources and/or less reliable or partial coverage of country's Jewish population; updated on the basis of demographic information illustrative of regional demographic trends.

-) Base estimate essentially speculative; no reliable updating procedure.

[x]) For Ireland, Latvia, Poland and Moldova the Jewish population estimate for 2018 was not only updated but also revised in light of improved information

[h] Including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, not including the West Bank

[i] Author's revised estimates of total Palestinian population on 1/1/2018: West Bank (without East Jerusalem): 2,548,700; Gaza: 1,839,900; Total: 4,388,600. The West Bank also includes 404,600 Jews and 8,600 non-Jewish members of Jewish households, for a total of 413,200 Jews and others. The reported West Bank total of 2,961,900 includes Palestinian, Jewish and other residents

[j] Not including foreign workers and refugees

[k] Israel's total permanent (de jure) population as defined by Israel's legal system, not including foreign workers and refugees

Core Jewish population in selected countries, 2018

Figure 1: Countries with the largest core Jewish population 2018

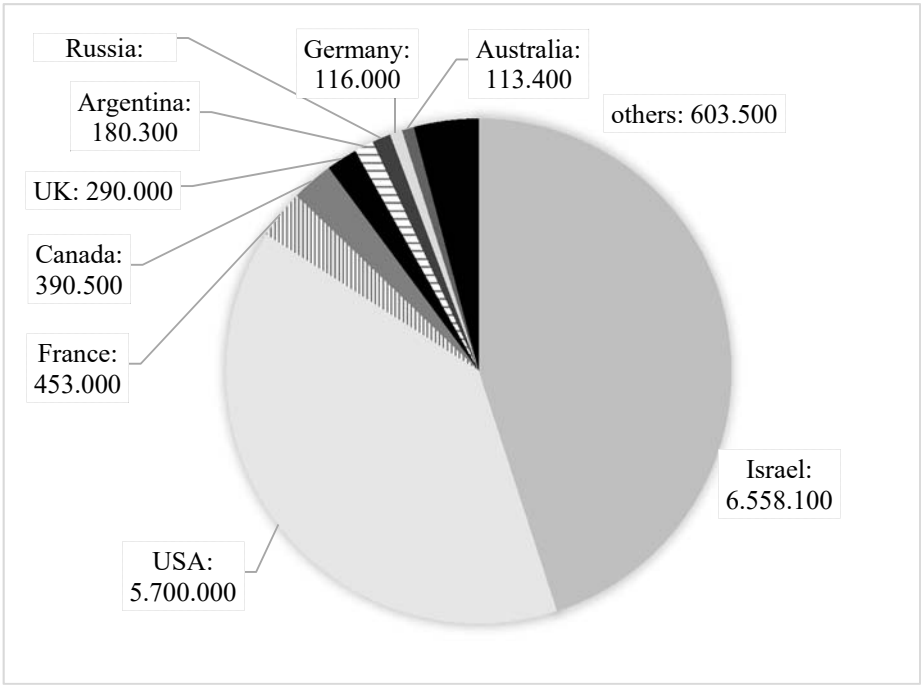


Figure 2 : Countries, where the core Jewish population in 1980 was at least 100 000

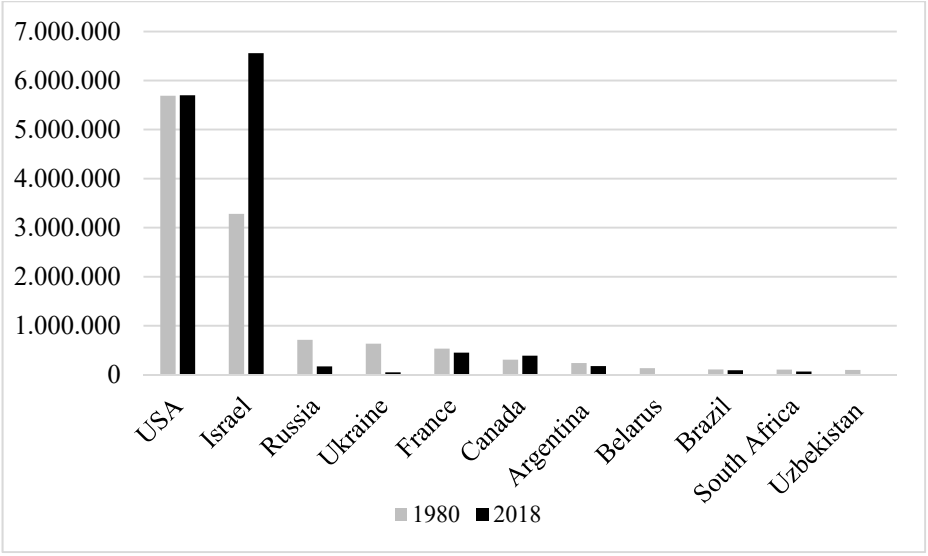


Figure 3: Countries, where the core Jewish population in 1980 was 30 000–100 000

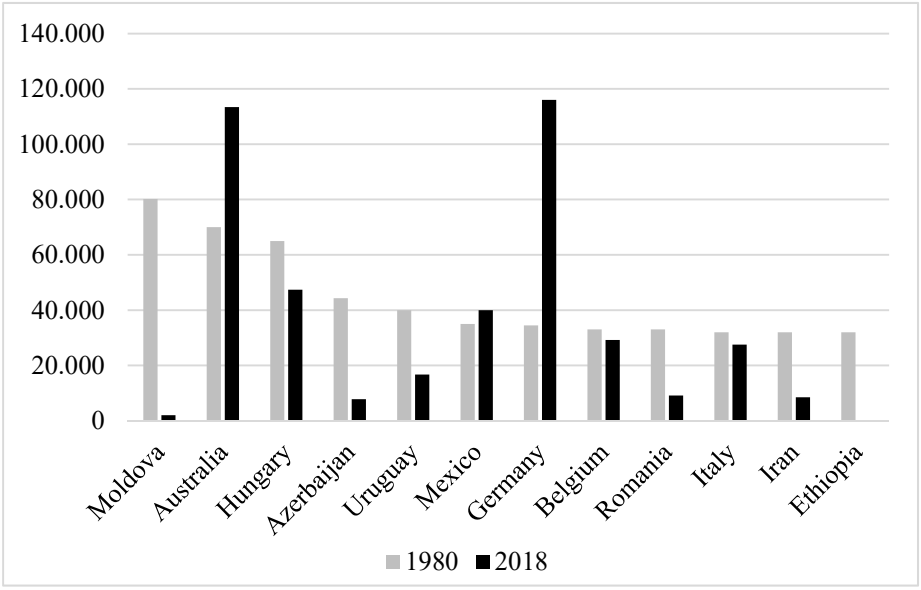


Figure 4: Metropolitan areas, where the core jewish population is 100 000 or more

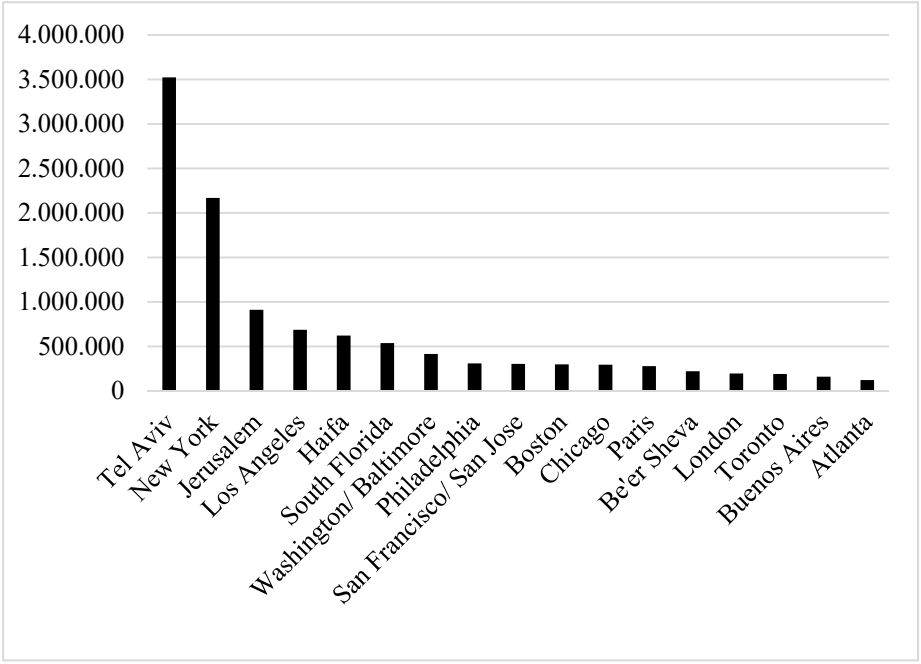


Table 1: Immigration to Israel by countries of origin in 2016 and 2017

	2016	**2017**
total*	**25 010**	**26 333**
Europe in total*	**19 842**	**20 581**
Russia	6946	7109
Ukraine	5737	7027
France	4147	3160
Belarus	632	952
UK	598	469
Turkey	233	369
Moldova	187	196
Belgium	168	119
Georgia	172	205
Italy	159	115
Germany	117	142
Azerbaijan	115	131
America in total	**4098**	**4225**
USA	2534	2568
Brazil	569	619
Canada	280	280
Argentina	248	247
Asia in total*	**551**	**617**
Uzbekistan	196	208
Kazakhstan	152	131
Afrika in total*	**409**	**432**
South Africa	213	282
Oceania in total	**109**	**140**
Australia	101	140

Source: Sergio DellaPergola: World Jewish Population, 2018. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

Including tourists, who changed their status to „immigrants". Not included are persons with temporary residency permit, citizens of Israel, who stayed abroad for a longer time and came back to Israel and citizens of Israel born abroad and enter Israel for the first time.

** including unknown countries of origin*

Europe including Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan

Alina and Jeff Bliumis: From Selfie to Groupie. New York 2015

Vladimir (Ze'ev) Khanin

The diaspora of Russian-speaking Jews

Political attitudes and political influence

Over two million Jews have emigrated from the Soviet Union and its successor states over the past 50 years. In almost all the countries where they have found a home, a majority of them vote for right-wing liberal, conservative and national-conservative parties. But their political influence is limited. It is only in particularly tight elections in the USA that their votes can tip the scales. But the situation in Israel is different. There, this group plays an important role in politics. Avigdor Lieberman's party *Yisra'el Beitenu*, whose core voter base is the Russian-speaking population of Israel, at once represents their interests and outlooks, and addresses issues that are relevant to Israeli society as a whole. That is why other parties also chase this electoral group.

Over two million Jews have emigrated from the Soviet Union and its successor states over the past 50 years. More than 300,000 left the Soviet Union before 1989, mainly in the years 1969-1979, and 1.7 million in 1989-2019. Of these people, more than one million moved to Israel. There, Russian-speaking Jews – including their children – represent 20 per cent of the Jewish population. 300,000 Jewish emigrants from the Soviet Union and its successor states moved to the United States, where they and their children and grandchildren now collectively account for between eight and ten per cent of American Jews. 225,000 of these emigrants settled in Germany, making up 80 per cent of the Jewish population there.[1]

In total, the "Russian-speaking Jewish Diaspora" now numbers three million people living in 52 countries. They are spread over four political-cultural spaces. The largest centre of Russian-speaking Jews is Israel. Between October 1969 and October 2019, 1,270,000 people from the Soviet Union and its successor states moved to Israel. Due to demographic changes and re-emigration, their number has decreased slightly to 1.1 million people in 2019. This is one fifth of the Jewish population and about 12 per cent of the total population of Israel.[2] The second centre is still the post-Soviet world, in which there live almost 900,000 people who would be considered Jews as defined by

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Vladimir (Ze'ev) Khanin (1959), Ph.D., Senior Scientist at the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration and Lecturer at Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan

1 Mark Tolts: A Half Century of Jewish Emigration from the Former Soviet Union. Paper, presented at the Symposium in Honor of Dr. Mark Tolts on His Retirement (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 27 June 2019). – This paper is based on the very broad definition used in the Israeli "Return Law", according to which "Jews" covers all children of Jews, grandchildren of Jews and their spouses – regardless of whether they self-identify as Jews. See also the tables on pages 93–96 in this volume.

2 Information from the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration as of October 2019.

OSTEUROPA 2020, Migration, Identity, Politics, pp. 107–115

Israeli immigration law. In the Anglo-Saxon world – mainly in the US and Canada, but also in Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain and South Africa – there are between 550,000 and 800,000 Russian-speaking Jews. In Germany, more than 200,000 people live in Russian-speaking Jewish households, of whom about 90,000 belong to the so-called Jewish core population.[3] The European Union is the fourth major centre of the Russian-speaking diaspora, if we count the approximately 50,000 Russian-speaking Jews in the three Baltic States in addition to those in Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Benelux countries.

Many sociologists have studied both general and specific, environmentally-determined characteristics of this group.[4] However, this group's political attitudes, electoral behaviour and, in particular, its influence on the policies of the countries in which a significant number of Russian-speaking Jews live have not been subjected to a comparative analysis.

Political attitudes

The political attitudes of Russian-speaking Jews who have emigrated reflect ideas and perceptions that they acquired in the course of their political socialisation in the former Soviet Union or its successor states, and also ones rooted in their experiences after their arrival in their new homelands. It is striking that in almost all states in which they have found a home, the majority of Russian-speaking Jews choose right-wing parties which may be more liberal, conservative or even national-conservative, depending on local circumstances.

This is evident, for example, when we compare the electoral behaviour of long-established American Jews with that of those Jews who have migrated to the USA from the Soviet Union and its successor states in recent decades. The long-established population overwhelmingly votes for the Democratic Party; and the majority of the immigrants for the Republican Party.[5] In 2012, a selection of 100 long-established American Jews would contain two and a half times more members of the Democratic Party in New York than would a similar selection of Russian-speaking Jews. On the contrary, with this latter group the converse applied to Republican Party membership. The proportion of Russian-speaking Jews who were members of this party was – as a proportion of their overall

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[3] According to the demographer Sergio Della Pergola, the Jewish core population includes "all persons who see themselves as Jews because of their religious conviction or are seen as Jews by other persons with whom they live in a household and who have no other religion. It also includes persons who do not explicitly see themselves as Jews but have a Jewish parent. "Sergio della Pergola: World Jewish Population, 2018, in: Arnold Dashefsky, Ira M. Sheskin (eds.): The American Jewish Year Book, 2018. The Annual Record of the North American Jewish Communities Since 1899. Dordrecht 2018, p. 361–452.

[4] See for example Ben-Rafael Eliezer et al.: Building a Diaspora: Russian Jews in Israel, Germany and the USA. Leiden 2006. – Larissa Remennick: Russian Jews on Three Continents: Identity, Integration, and Conflict. Livingstone, N.J. 2012. – Fran Markowitz: Retrospective and Afterological Considerations of the Contemporary Russian-Speaking Jewish Diaspora: Whence and Whither? In: Diaspora, 3/2009, pp. 336–357.

[5] Gil Troy: The Jewish Vote: Political Power and Identity in US Elections. Haifa 2016, <rudermanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Jewish-Vote-Ruderman-Program.pdf>

group – twice as high as among the long-established American Jews.[6] This trend can also be observed in attitudes towards different candidates within the two parties. In the primary elections in 2016, among Russian-speaking Jews who were members of the Democratic Party, a clear majority voted for moderate candidate Hillary Clinton and few for left candidate Bernie Sanders. In the Republican primary elections, the majority of Russian-speaking Jewish members voted for Donald Trump.[7] In Brighton Beach, the southern part of the Brooklyn Borough of New York, often called "Little Odessa" because of the high proportion of Russian-speaking Jewish immigrants, Trump received 84 per cent of the vote in the Republican Primaries.[8] This development originated with a break in the early 2000s. In 2000, Russian-speaking Jews in the United States voted in roughly equal proportions for the Republican George W. Bush Jr. and the Democrat Al Gore. Al Gore, however, had Senator Joe Lieberman at his side as a running-mate, an observant Jew, who was said to have made great efforts in aid of the freedom struggle of Soviet Jews. By the 2004 elections, the situation had changed: 78 per cent of Russian-speaking Jews voted for George W. Bush – and thereafter, between 75 and 80 per cent would vote for John McCain (2008), Mitt Romney (2012) and Donald Trump (2016), and for the Republicans in the 2018 Congress and Senate elections.[9]

There are several reasons why so many Russian-speaking Jews in the US behave differently at the ballot boxes from long-established Jews, of whom three quarters voted for the Democratic presidential candidate in the 2000s. Many Jewish immigrant families in the US mainly depend upon income from their small businesses. They therefore usually vote for the candidate who promises to reduce taxes. This is usually the Republican candidate. The Democrats' attitude towards same-sex marriage and their liberal immigration policy also provide reasons for many Russian-speaking Jews in the United States to prefer the Republicans. In particular, many voted for Trump because he was more decisive than Hillary Clinton and also as all his predecessors took the side of the Israeli government (on relocation of the embassy to Jerusalem, denunciation of the Iran agreement, and on doubts about the two-state solution).[10]

The situation in Canada and Australia is similar. In contrast to the situation in the US, however, the political preferences of Russian-speaking Jews are not opposed to those of long-established Jews. Rather, the majority of both groups vote in favour of right-wing liberal and conservative parties and their candidates, although a higher proportion of Russian speakers do so.[11]

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[6] Sėm Kliger: Meždu Amerikoj, Izrailem i Rossiej: soziokul'turnyj i političeskij portret russkogovorjaščej diaspory v N'ju-Jorke, in: Zeev Chanin: Izrail'skie diaspory: gde, kak i počemu. Moskva 2014 [= Diaspory, 1–2/2014], p. 74.

[7] Poll: Trump, Clinton Lead Among Russian American Jews. Jewish Insider, 29.3.2016.

[8] Veronika Bondarenko: Hating Putin and loving Trump – why that makes sense to some Russian Americans. Business Insider, 9.4.2017.

[9] Sam Kliger: 2012 AJC Survey of American Jewish opinion. New York 2012, <www.ajc.org/site/c.ijITI2PHKoG/b.8073029/k.B021/2012_AJC_Survey_of_American_Jewish_Opinion.htm>. — Sėm Kliger: Evro-aziatskoe nasledie i amerikanskij opyt: političeskij portret russkogovorjaščich evreev SŠA 21 veka. Eurasian Jewish Centre, 28.1.2019, <institute.eajc.org/ eajpp-10>. Among the 18–35 age group, about 50 per cent of Russian-speaking Jews voted for Hillary Clinton. If the votes of this age group are removed from the calculation, the proportion of Trump voters among Russian-speaking Jews was around 85 per cent.

[10] Kliger, Evro-aziatskoe nasledie [f.n. 9].

[11] Michael Medved: Jews, Conservatives, and Canada: North of the border, why have they gone to the right? <www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/jews-conservatives-and-canada/>. –

Israel

This general trend is also borne out in the electoral behaviour of the group of Russian-speaking Jews living in Israel, which is the largest in the world, numbering 910,000 people (as of September 2019).[12] However, the political preferences of Jews who migrated to Israel from the Soviet Union and its successor states have shifted much faster than in other countries. In the Knesset elections in 1992, a relative majority of voters from this group gave their vote to the left-wing parties *HaAvoda* (Labour) and *Meretz* (Energy). They had promised prompt solutions to the social problems faced by immigrants. However, by the time of the direct election of the Prime Minister in 1996, the situation had already changed. Now almost two-thirds of the immigrants who participated in the election voted for the *Likud* (Union) candidate, Benjamin Netanyahu.[13] This was due to the fact that their integration into Israeli society had progressed faster than it had in, for example, the US. On the one hand, many immigrants had already overcome the problems of the first years following their arrival. Highly skilled migrants in particular, whose numbers had climbed into the tens of thousands, had found work and contributed significantly to the post-industrial revolution that Israel experienced from the end of the 1990s. This was a success that the immigrants had won for themselves, and so from that time on they preferred parties that upheld ideas of free competition.

On the other hand, political integration progressed much more rapidly. The primary political left-right divide in Israel does not run between parties with different economic policy programmes, but rather between parties with different ideas on how to deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While the right advocates the principle of "peace for peace", the approach of the left is "land for peace". On this issue, immigrants from the Soviet Union and its successor states lean clearly to the right. This is decisive for their choices at the ballot box, even where they incline leftwards on matters of social policy and the relationship between state and religion. Their party preferences do not, therefore, spread across the entire political spectrum. Rather, Russian speakers tend to vote for parties who represent a right-wing programme in matters of internal and external security. On the other hand, it would be completely wrong to imagine that Russian-speaking people in Israel are patriots of the Soviet successor states from which they emigrated, or that they would back these countries' interests. The Russian-speaking immigrants who came to Israel during the "Great Aliyah" in the 1990s have long since become "Russian Israelis", rather than Russians in Israel.

Paul C. Merkley: Reversing the Poles: How the Pro-Israeli Policy of Canada's Conservative Government May Be Moving Jewish Voters from Left to Right, in: Jewish Political Studies Review, 1–2/2012. – Phillip Mendes: The Jewish Community and the 2010 Federal Elections: Melbourne Ports and Beyond, in: People and Place, 4/2010, pp. 3–12. – See also John Goldlust: "The Russians are Coming": Migration and Settlement of Soviet Jews in Australia, in: Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal, 2016, pp. 149–186.

[12] Here we refer only to members of the first generation, who were born in the Soviet Union or one of its successor states, and not the children or grandchildren of former migrants.

[13] See Viacheslav Konstantinov's contribution in this volume, pp. 101–121.

Political influence of Russian-speaking Jews

In the successor states of the Soviet Union, where the proportion of Jews is less than 0.5 per cent of the total population, Jewish voting behaviour exerts no relevant influence on election results. However, this does not mean that Jews are not represented in parliaments, in government offices, in high party posts or at the management level of state enterprises, or indeed in regional and local administrations. Volodymyr Zelensky, who has been President of Ukraine since 2019, is a Jew, as is Latvian President Egils Levits. Former Ukrainian Prime Minister Efim Zvyagilsky and Volodymyr Groysman, as well as former Prime Minister of Russia Mikhail Fradkov, are also Jews.

In Germany, Austria and Canada, immigration from the successor states of the Soviet Union has significantly changed Jewish communities, but they have no influence on overall government policy. At first glance, Russian-speaking immigrant Jews in the USA would seem to have a better chance of obtaining political weight. In the 2000 presidential elections, the Republican candidate George W. Bush won thanks to a majority of 500 votes in the state of Florida – one of the centres of Russian-speaking Jewish immigration. In 2016, Donald Trump won thanks to a slim majority in Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, where numerous Russian-speaking Jews also settled.

More starkly, the elections to the Senate in 2018, as well as several gubernatorial elections in that same year, showed that in certain constellations, immigrants from the former Soviet Union can be the key deciding factor. In Florida, Rick Scott beat Democratic incumbent Bill Nelson with a margin of only 10,000 votes in the Republican Senate elections. A very large majority of Russian-speaking voters in Florida – the majority of whom are Jews – voted for Scott. In the gubernatorial election, the Republican Ron DeSantis won; with eight million votes cast, he led the defeated Democratic candidate Andrew William by a mere 30,000 votes. It would be fair to say that the "Russian" votes were decisive in this election, too.

But all of these cases are conditioned by the same specific factor: that the votes from all other voters are neck and neck. Neither in Europe nor in the US do politicians from the Russian-speaking Jewish community play a major role in election campaigns. One of the few exceptions was the election of Alec Brook-Krasny, who was a member of the New York State Assembly from 2005-2015 and who enjoyed the support of various immigrant groups at the polls.

The situation in Israel is quite different. There, the demographic weight of immigrants from the Soviet Union and its successor states is much greater. This group also has its own political elite, which formulates its own political programme and has significantly influenced the political landscape in Israel since the 1990s. Even in Israel, however, the influence of Russian-speaking immigrants is primarily the result of the balance of forces between the other parties. Immigrants were only able to acquire political weight so swiftly because there was a stalemate between the "left" and the "right" camps in the 1990s. In this situation, an immigrant group making up 13–17 per cent of the electorate could easily tip the scales.[14]

As early as the 1992 elections, immigrants were decisive in choosing more than 12 of the 120 deputies sent to the Knesset. According to polls, 60 per cent of immigrants voted

[14] Vladimir (Ze'ev) Chanin: Tretij Izrail. russkojazyčnaja obščina i političeskie processy v evrejskom gosudarstve v načale 21-go veva. Moskva 2014.

for the Labour Party – and only a quarter for right-wing parties and ten per cent for a special-interest party – meaning that they played a major role in *HaAvoda's* victory.[15] In 1996, the votes of immigrants were key to the election of 16-17 deputies, and from the end of the 1990s to the present day over 20-21 Knesset seats are determined by immigrant votes. Russian-speaking voters were decisive for Benjamin Netanyahu's victory in 1996, for his defeat at the hands of Ehud Barak in 1999, and in particular for his crushing defeat against the nationalist candidate Ariel Sharon in 2001. Sharon's *Likud* was able to double the size of its Knesset delegation. But by 2006, Russian-speakers' disappointment with Sharon saw him suffer a defeat. Immigrants were no longer voting for *HaAvoda*, as in 1992, but for *Naš dom Izrail* – Yisra'el Beitenu (*Israel Our Home*) founded by Avigdor Lieberman. Nine of the eleven seats won by Lieberman's "Russian party with an Israeli accent" were taken thanks to voters from immigrant milieux.

This disproved the thesis that the electoral behaviour of immigrants would converge with that of the long-established population a decade and a half after large-scale immigration began. In fact, the opposite was the case. In 2009, *Yisra'el Beitenu* won as many as 15 seats, ten of which could be attributed to immigrant voters. Lieberman's party became the main coalition partner of Netanyahu's *Likud*. However, as the large wave of immigration declined towards the late 1990s and the number of first-generation immigrants slowly fell, the number of Knesset seats whose fates were mathematically determined by immigrant votes declined from 20–21 to 17–18 by the mid-2010s and further to 15-16 in recent years. Likewise, in the past decade Lieberman has failed to attract as large a proportion of the votes cast by immigrants as in 2009. More and more parties tried to appeal to "Russian voters" and accordingly, formerly Russian-speaking voters became increasingly prepared to lend their votes to other parties than those which addressed them directly as Russian-speakers. In the 2013 elections, *Yisra'el Beitenu* and *Likud*, who were joined in an electoral alliance, lost between a quarter and a third of the votes cast by immigrants compared to the previous elections. These went to two new protest parties – the right-wing and religious party *HaBayit HaYehudi* (Jewish Home) and the left-centrist secular party *Yesh Atid* (There is a Future), which acted as a representative of the "neglected middle class".

The expectation that the dissolution of the alliance between *Likud* and *Yisra'el Beitenu* would strengthen both parties turned out to be false. However, a survey at the start of the election campaign in 2015 found that 20–25 per cent of immigrants from the Soviet Union and its successor states stated that they intended to vote for *Likud* and 35-40 per cent for *Yisra'el Beitenu*. Low voter turnout and a fall in the total number of first-generation immigrants entitled to vote reduced this group's influence. This affected *Yisrael Beitenu* most of all. Lieberman's party was only able to win six seats – and four years later, in April 2019, only five.

This seems to support those observers who spoke of an "end to Russian politics" in Israel: an end which had first been proclaimed a decade and a half prior.[16] Above all, this indicates that a generational change is under way and that the number of immigrants

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[15] Tamar Horowit: The Influence of Soviet Political Culture on Immigrant Votes in Israel: The Elections of 1992, in: Eli Leshem, Judith Shuval (eds.): Immigration to Israel: Sociological Prospective. New Brunswick, London 2001, pp. 253–272, here p. 256.

[16] The "Russian" vote is disintegrating. The Times of Israel, 12.2.2015. — Where did Israeli-Russian vote go? Al-Monitor, April 8, 2019.

who came to Israel in adulthood is getting smaller, while that the proportion of those who were socialised or even born in Israel is growing. The question is whether this generation continues to see itself as part of a group of Russian-speaking voters and votes accordingly.[17]

In the April 2019 elections, "Russian" voters were scarcely addressed as a group, and the numbers of immigrants standing on promising lists was as low as in the mid-1990s. This seemed to confirm the view that we had reached the "end of the Russian road". Ariel Bulstein, who advises Benjamin Netanyahu on "Russian-speaking voters", said:

> For the first time in the last three decades, the parties have shown no interest in this segment. We had already become accustomed to the fact that no Russian accent was to be heard among politicians from the ranks of HaAvoda and Meretz. But many were surprised that Benny Gantz with his centre-left alliance, and the two leaders of the New Right, Naftali Bennett and Ayelet Shaked, failed to put immigrants from the former Soviet Union on their lists, while they found room for much smaller groups of immigrants [Ethiopians, French — V.Kh.].[18]

A closer look shows, however, that the assumption that Russian-speaking immigrants would dissolve as a constituent group is still wrong. In a 2017 survey among members of this group, almost a third of respondents said their group was faced with "a great number" of specific problems in Israel. Another 45 per cent expressed the opinion that their group had "a series" of specific problems. Forty per cent said that there was a "glass ceiling" for Russian-speaking people. Almost 70 per cent opined that it was "quite important" that their group be politically represented in the Knesset. Representatives of all age groups expressed this view in approximately equal proportions. Those immigrants who had arrived in Israel more recently were more likely to express such views.

Particularly striking was that the proportion of those who said there should be a special-interest party of and for Russian-speaking voters was three times higher in this March 2017 survey than in the corresponding surveys in 2014 and 2015. Moreover, the proportion of respondents who called for a "Russian party with a comprehensive programme" rose to 50 per cent. In addition to this change in opinion, the absolute-terms decline in votes from the Russian-speaking group was arrested by a new wave of immigration after 2014. Much evidence suggests that some while after their arrival in Israel, these immigrants, as well as the immigrants of the 1990s, will lend their vote to the party that most clearly positions itself as the voice of Russian-speaking people in Israel: Avigdor Lieberman's *Yisra'el Beitenu*.

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[17] Viacheslav Konstantinov, Reut Itzkovitch-Malka: Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and Israeli Politics: at a Crossroads, in Michal Shamir, Gideon Rahat (Ed.): The Elections in Israel 2015. London 2017, pp. 124–145.

[18] Ariel Bulstein: Russian vote still counts. Israel Hayom, August 3, 2019.

Table 1: "What type of party do Russian speakers in Israel need?" (percentages)

		2004	3/2009	5/2009	2011*	2013	2014	2015	2017
A "Russian party"	purely about "our" interests	51	5	5	31.4	7	4	6	12.7
	"with an Israeli accent"		25	25		21	18	16	22.5
A party for all Israelis but with a "strong Russian wing"		33	41	37	43.5	39	38	33	27.4
There's no need for a special lobby		12	25	28	25.2	27	36	35	25.9
Don't know/not sure		4	4	5	–	5	4	9	11.6
Total number questioned		640	1012	1006	870	1013	1004	1004	915

** In 2011, the question put was: "Does 'Russian Israel' need its own party?" Possible answers were: "Definitely"; "I think so, yes"; "I don't think so, no/No".*
The 2004 and 2009 surveys were carried out by the Mugatim Institute, the surveys between 2011–17 by Public Opinion Research Israel

Yisra'el Beitenu did precisely this, with a vengeance, after the elections to the Knesset in April 2019. Five times in previous years, Lieberman had agreed to form coalitions with *Likud* which would include religious parties. In the summer of 2019, however, Lieberman refused to take this step even after lengthy negotiations. The main reason was a divergence of views regarding the relationship between the state and religious groups. Lieberman demanded, as a condition of any coalition agreement, that a bill from the previous session, drafted by the Ministry of Defence under his leadership, be adopted. The bill stipulated that, like all other citizens of Israel, members of ultra-religious groups, the so-called Haredim, would be obliged to perform military service without exception. This was flatly rejected by the sectional parties of ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazi Jews, the *Yahadut HaTorah HaMeuhedet*, as well as the party of the ultra-Orthodox Sephardic Jews who migrated to Israel from the Levant and the Maghreb, the social-populist *Shas*. Both insisted that students of religious schools, the Yeshivot, should remain automatically exempt from military service – which would in effect mean a comprehensive exemption, since most young Haredim leave Yeshivot only after they have exceeded the maximum age for military service.
Likud's calculation was obvious. Taken together, the Haredi sectional parties and the electoral front of religious-Zionist right-wing parties – in which the tone was set by representatives of the so-called national ultra-religious camp, who were in solidarity with the Haredim – had four times as many deputies as Lieberman's *Yisra'el Beitenu*.

Therefore, it should have been possible to exert pressure on Lieberman, not least by means of a media campaign. But this calculation was not borne out in practice.

Yisra'el Beitenu went into the campaign under the slogan "Military service for all". This slogan was one part of the "Equal Duties and Tax Burden for All" programme that has become Lieberman's trademark. He held firm, and caused the coalition talks to collapse. Given the balance of forces, just five seats would had been enough to force new elections. Depending on one's attitude to Lieberman, the Israeli public saw in this move proof either of his stubbornness or of steadfastness.

Behind the conflict over the question of military service for Haredim, which at first glance might seem insignificant, there are a number of differing positions on the question of the relationship between state and religion. These cover marriage and divorce, the question of who is a Jew, the rights of various religious movements to oversee conversions to Judaism, and how to regulate the provision of public services on the Sabbath. The essence of the disagreement centres around whether the state of Israel should be a Jewish state in the religious sense or a Jewish state in the ethno-national sense.

The first polls published after the start of the election campaign showed a strong increase for *Yisra'el Beitenu*, and not only among Russian-speaking voters. The party could expect up to twelve seats. Lieberman had succeeded in addressing a central issue for the Jewish part of Israeli society in such a way that Russian speakers, who only a short while before had been denied any influence, were once again seen as a relevant group by Israeli society. *Yisra'el Beitenu* not only defended a particular position in that political debate, but also made another topic the subject of a nationwide discussion: the question of breaking the monopoly on decision-making which the most conservative part of the religious establishment claimed for itself in relation to certain matters which affect all of Israeli society. This was how the struggle for Russian-speaking votes in the summer of 2019 once again became one of the crucial themes of the Israeli election campaign.

The gain for *Yisra'el Beitenu*, an increase of three percentage points — from four to seven per cent — was lower than the election campaign had seemed to promise. But this was mainly due to the fact that the electoral alliance *Kahol Lavan* (Blue and White) led by Benny Gantz, copied Lieberman's demands and thus attracted votes. Nevertheless, *Yisra'el Beitenu* received 310,000 votes – only twenty per cent less than in the record year 2009, when 395,000 people voted for the party. However, due to demographic developments and voter turnout, winning a seat in 2019 took one and a half times as many votes as it had in 2009, so *Yisra'el Beitenu* only took eight seats – narrowly missing out on a ninth – as opposed to the 15 they won in 2009. Nevertheless, *Yisra'el Beitenu* is back on the Israeli political stage – a party with a programme for all of Israel, but whose core voters, for historical reasons, hail from Israel's Russian-speaking minority.

Translated by Edward Maltby, Sheffield


osteuropa
Salto mortale
Politik und Kunst im neuen Osteuropa

Micha Brumlik

Loss of Homeland, Belonging, Responsibility

Motifs of post-migrant Jewish literature

Today, Jewish culture is one voice among many in Germany's immigrant society. At the same time, it is still marked by the memory of the Shoah. Thus, it combines Germany's National Socialist past with its cosmopolitan present. This is reflected in literary works by authors such as Katya Petrovskaya, Lena Gorelik, Olga Grjasnowa, Oleg Yurev and Dmitry Kapitelman. On the one hand, as immigrants from the Soviet Union and its successor states, their shared socio-cultural background is very different from that of the Jewish community in post-war Germany. On the other hand, in their post-migrant writing, they process similar experiences in very different ways. Generational affiliation and gender roles play an important role here.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the diverse Jewish community of the Federal Republic faces the challenge of contributing to shaping the Republic's newly pluralistic self-image. And they are doing so with an eye on the principally religious sources of Judaism, while also reinterpreting those sources. The Jewish community is maintaining an emotional relationship with the State of Israel. Although the collective trauma of the Shoah weakens from generation to generation, uncertainty still surrounds their self-conception, not least in the light of a lack of ethnic ties to German society. Today, a Jewish culture is being formed which defies precise description because the post-Soviet Jewish immigrants have only just begun to articulate their highly unique experience. The ironic and feverish city prose of cult Berlin author Vladimir Kaminer, born in Moscow in 1967, could perhaps teach us more about contemporary Judaism than about the post-modern pop scene in reunited Berlin.

If the story so far is anything to go by, Jewish culture will continue to be characterised by the ever-painful memory of the irretrievable losses of the Shoah. On the other hand, it will find articulation between the many voices of the very different ethnic and religious groups that make up Germany's immigrant society**.** In this way, Jewish culture could uniquely combine the culpable National Socialist prehistory of the Federal Republic with a hopefully liberal, cosmopolitan future, albeit not a future without its own conflicts.

Models for this linkage are set in the works of the writers Katya Petrovskaya, born in Kiev in 1970, Olga Grjasnowa from Baku, born in 1984 and Lena Gorelik, born in Leningrad in 1981.

Micha Brumlik (1947), Dr. phil., Professor Emeritus in Education Sciences at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, lives in Berlin

Works by Micha Brumlik published in Osteuropa: Vom Obskurantismus zur Heiligkeit. "Ostjüdisches" Denken bei Buber, Heschel, Levinas, in: OE, 8–10/2008, p. 97–110. – Fernstenliebe. Tschetschenien, Tolstoj und die Weltgesellschaft, in: OE, 7/2006, p. 3–16.

OSTEUROPA 2020, Migration, Identity, Politics, pp. 117–130

The writer and journalist Katya Petrovskaya has lived in Berlin since 1999. In 2013 she received the prestigious Ingeborg-Bachmann Prize. Her 2014 book *Maybe Esther* is a literary search for traces, an adventure in memory that leads the author across the twisted fabric of a Jewish-Polish-Russian-Austrian family finding itself in both the "Age of Extremes" (Eric Hobsbawm) and the "Bloodlands" (Timothy Snyder), i.e. in that territory of Ukraine, Belarus and Poland – countries tormented, occupied and destroyed by Hitler and Stalin.[1] Petrovskaya's book is both a description of a historical experience and a reflection on what it can mean to experience history:

> When Lida, my mother's older sister, passed away, I came to understand the meaning of the word history. My longing was fully developed, I was ready to submit myself to the windmills of memory, and then she died... All I had were fragments of memory, notes of dubious value, and documents in distant archives. Instead of asking questions at the right time, I had choked on the word history. Had Lida's death brought me to adulthood? I was at the mercy of history.[2]

Can history be handed down? Can the twentieth century's history of terror be conveyed? In a historical museum, Petrovskaya and her little daughter stand in front of a plaque with the Nuremberg laws when the daughter asks, "Where are we on this chart, Mama?" – "I was," Petrovskaya,

> frightened by her directness, and to protect her from being frightened, I hastened to reassure her that we were not on it at all, we would have been in Kiev by that point or already evacuated, and by the way we weren't even born yet, this chart has nothing to do with us ...[3]

The dilemmas thrown up by the urgently necessary project of a pan-European history of the 20th century have never been so vivid, so intensely experienced, and yet as intellectually responsible as in Petrovskaya's book *Maybe Esther*.

Other important authors from post-Soviet Jewish immigration include: Natasha Vodin, who, although not Jewish, was born in 1945 as the daughter of Soviet forced labourers in a DP camp in Fürth; Leningrad native Oleg Yurev (1959-2018); his wife Olga Martynova, born in Krasnoyarsk in 1962; historian and publicist Dmitry Belkin (born 1971 in Dnipropetrovsk) and Dmitry Kapitelman, who was born in Kiev in 1986 and came to Germany at the age of eight.

Two questions have to be discussed: firstly, how do the authors deal with the cultural differences between Russia, Ukraine and Germany? And what is their attitude towards what could be called their Judaism?

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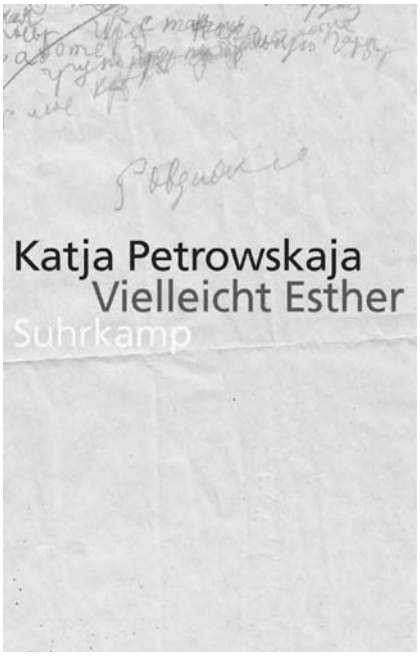
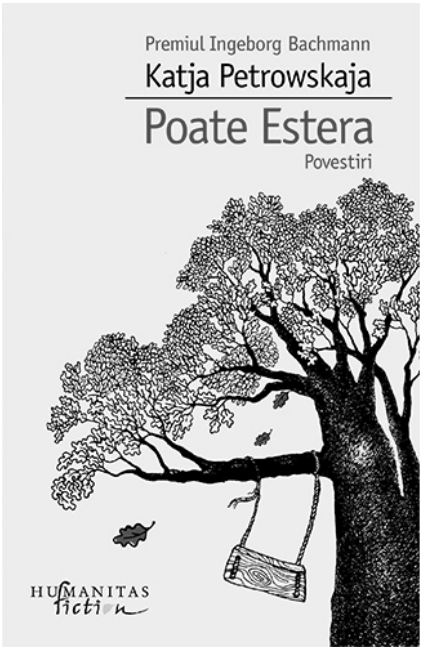
1 Eric Hobsbawm: Das Zeitalter der Extreme. Weltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Munich 1995. – Timothy Snyder: Bloodlands. Europa zwischen Hitler und Stalin. Munich 2011.

2 Katya Petrovskaya: Maybe Esther. Berlin 2014, p. 30.

3 Ibid., p. 45.


Katja Petrowskaja
Vielleicht Esther
Suhrkamp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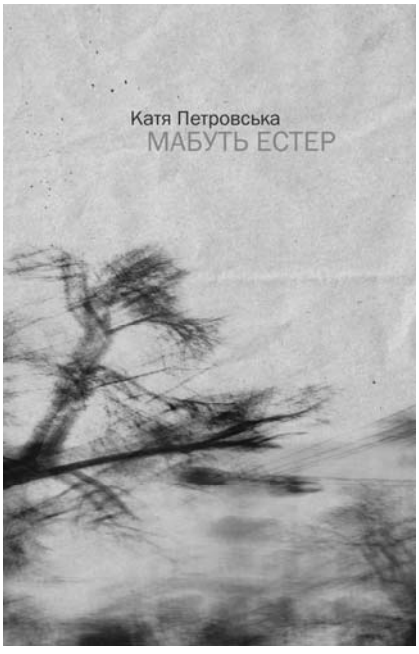
Катя Петровська
МАБУТЬ ЕСТЕР


ΒΡΑΒΕΙΟ
Ingeborg Bachmann
2013
ΚΑΤΙΑ ΠΕΤΡΟΦΣΚΑΓΙΑ
Νομίζω την έλεγαν
Έστερ
ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΗ
Καρίνα Λάμψα · Παυλίνα Δηράνη
ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ ΚΑΠΟΝ

In Olga Martynova's diary novel *Sogar Papageien überleben uns* (Even Parrots Survive Us), which she wrote in German and published in 2010, Judaism plays virtually no role – apart from some socio-historical excursions and accounts of a visit by a probably US-American Jewish man. The American, John, reports on his visit to the Jewish cemetery in Frankfurt am Main, which has a wall with nameplates:

> Small oblongs on the wall, as if the shrunken cemetery floor had turned vertical. I couldn't find my great uncle. Probably, my mother says, because he emigrated to Holland and was deported from Holland. [4]

In the same year, Oleg Yuriev published a volume of prose poems entitled *Von Orten. Ein Poem.* The first poem in "Gesang Eins" (Canto One) is called "Kurpfalz. Weinberge im Schnee. Eine Katze geht hinüber". (Kurpfalz. Vineyards in the snow. A cat crosses over). It contains the following lines: "Naked vineyards in the snow. It is not clear what is being grown here. Judging by the layout of a concentration camp: Barbed wire."[5]
The poem *Von Orten* (Of Places), with its six cantos, essentially consists of rather melancholic prose poems, and it seems as if "Kurpfalz. Vineyards in the snow" is the only one of these poems that in some way recalls Jewish fate and Jewish self-image.
A poem in "Canto Four" is dedicated to a poet, Leonid Aronson, who was born on 24 March 1939 in Leningrad and died on 13 October 1970. Several times the poem stresses that it is not yet autumn, but all the same... In a review, Kerstin Holm, Russian cultural correspondent for FAZ, characterised Aronson's poetry in the following terms:

> Aronson's finely honed, yet gently flowing lyricism speaks of the Petersburg cult of beauty and its rarefied educational culture, but it is also imbued with a Russian sense of solitude and Russian poverty.[6]

Yuriev's Cantos obviously reflect this - but with one difference: that this poet consciously shoulders the fate of emigration, of exile, even. This is made clear not least by the fact that the people of Frankfurt seem alien to him:

> But for now, the Serbo-Croats, Indo-Pakistanis and Afro-Caribbeans/ Have no time for European old maids in rounded and triangular hats/ Of diverse colours. They all stand on fire ladders and cut from the/ Plane trees the long standing nails that sprouted up in the summer from their /stubs. Using a pull-start chainsaw, V-sss-rrrr! Your glasses full of smoke. [7]

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4 Olga Martynova: Sogar Papageien überleben uns. Graz 2010, p. 74.
5 Oleg Jurjew: Von Orten. Ein Poem. Frankfurt am Main, Weimar 2010, p. 5.
6 Kerstin Holm: Auf Musentour ins Unendliche. FAZ, 24.4.2009.
7 Oleg Jurjew, Von Orten [f.n. 5], p. 30.


btb
Olga Martynova
Sogar
Papageien
überleben uns
Roman

If one were to dare to reduce these poems, with all their prose-fixed melancholy, to a common denominator, it would be this: the lyrical self sees itself foreign and lost, and inevitably and unavoidably in a country that has murdered millions of its own kind. At the same time, it retains its attachment to a memory, which everywhere and at all times reminds it of its native land, language and landscape.

In Yuriev's novel *Halbinsel Judatin* (Judatin Peninsula) published in 1999, the narrator has developed these motifs into different forms. Previous publications include the novel *Der Frankfurter Stier* (The Frankfurt Bull) (1996), the play *Kleiner Pogrom im Bahnhofsbuffet* (Little Pogrom in the Station Buffet) (1984) and the *Leningrad Geschichten* (Leningrad Stories) (1994).

The novel *Halbinsel Judatin*, written in Russian, deals with two forms of displaced Judaism – an assimilatory denial and what is known as "crypto-Judaism": the Judaism of those who converted to Judaism in the 18th century[8] and concealed their identity under pressure of persecution. The novel unpacks these forms of living through the story of two adolescents who, lying sick in bed, cannot avoid listening to the conversations of family members from different generations, and feverishly soaking up what they hear. These scenes take place in the Brezhnev era, in the twilight of the Soviet Union. One of the feverish teenagers angrily remembers his father, who left the family behind to marry a Gentile and emigrate to Israel. Transgenerationally mediated fear creates one "first-person narrator": "Or the drunks from the settlement surround the packing house to make a pogrom against Permanent, Lilka and me from all sides." [9] The scenes from this fever dream are frequently obscene and deal extensively with all manner of successful and unsuccessful forms of urination and defecation.

Germany, of all places

Alongside literary attempts to confront the fate of Soviet Jews as Jews, there soon emerged an objectivising or ironising attempt to grapple with migration to... Germany, of all places!

The exhibition "Ausgerechnet Deutschland" (Germany, of all places), curated by Dmitry Belkin, which opened in the Frankfurt Jewish Museum in March 2010, showed the German public that a new Jewish community had emerged in the reunited Germany. Belkin's fascinating portrayal of the achievements of immigrants from the former Soviet Union in terms of their movement, their integration, and their building-up, as well as the political and intellectual reactions of those receiving them, caused the German public to look at Judaism differently.

As a historian, Belkin did not confine himself to this subject. With his second exhibition, "Create your people! Axel Springer and the Jews" (Jewish Museum, Frankfurt am Main, opening: March 2012) he addressed one of the most sensitive and controversial issues in the relationship between the Jewish community and the West German public:

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[8] Yuriev probably refers here to the group of so-called Subbotniki, a religious community first mentioned in the late 18th century and banned in the middle of the 19th century. See the online Jewishencyclopedia article by Herman Rosenthal and S. Hurwitz: <www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14094-subbotniki>.

[9] Oleg Yuriev: Die Halbinsel Judatin. Berlin 1999, p. 47.

Axel Springer and his press organs were, on the one hand, avowedly pro-Jewish – including their attitude to the State of Israel – but on the other hand they were so populist, in the worst sense of the word, that they crossed the line into open demagogy, including incitement against the West German student movement, in a way that is hardly comprehensible today. Curator Dmitry Belkin was able to succeed in creating a museographically excellent presentation of this delicate subject precisely because the context had no influence on either his generation or his origins. Belkin's own historical distance permitted an understanding and fair treatment of both sides: Springer and his press, and the 1968 protest movement. Visitors to the exhibition were drawn into a process of learning about German history.

Presumably, the question of the peculiarities of post-migrant literature of – in Belkin's phrase – German Jewry 2.0 is also a generational question. The answer depends not least on when and at what age these authors came to the "reunited" Germany. In order to get close to this immigrant experience, a detailed look at an "ego-document" is unavoidable, especially one which accurately reflects the basic experience of a large part of those authors. In *Lieber Mischa ...* first published in 2011, Lena Gorelik, who has just become a mother, attempts to come to terms with questions of Jewish existence. It contains the following passage:

> So, I am one of the 200,000 quota refugees who migrated here. I grew up in Russia, where Judaism was not a religion, but an ethnicity that was recorded in your passport, in the space which read "Russian" for all the "normal" people.[10]

At this point it is worth remembering that according to Jewish tradition and teaching, a person is Jewish if either their mother was Jewish or if they formally converted to Judaism according to strict rabbinical rules. But in the Soviet Union things didn't work like that. There, a Jew was defined as a person with a Jewish father – a fact which meant that after the fall of the Soviet Union, and upon the arrival of quota refugees into Jewish communities in Germany or upon migration into Israel, the maternal line of descent had to be confirmed by a Rabbi. A special rule was drawn up for Soviet Jews coming to Israel: in these cases, Rabbinically non-Jewish persons could avail themselves of the Israeli Law of Return. That was a remarkable exception.

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[10] Lena Gorelik: Dear Mischa ... who you almost called Schlomo Adolf Grinblum Glück, I am so sorry that I could not spare you this: You are a Jew ... Munich 2011, p. 5 [unpaginated].


Lieber Mischa
... DER DU FAST SCHLOMO ADOLF GRINBLUM GEHEISSEN HÄTTEST, ES TUT MIR SO LEID, DASS ICH DIR DAS NICHT ERSPAREN KONNTE.
Du bist ein Idiot.
List
LENA GORELIK

"There" – that is, in the Soviet Union or in Russia – Lena Gorelik continues,

> Jew was a curse word. It didn't bother me; I liked to use it too. Until I was about seven years old and my parents heard me. Then I came to Germany. At first, being Jewish in Germany seemed difficult, because exotic. Being exotic can be exhausting. Being Jewish and Russian at the same time – the victim from the Second World War and the enemy from the Cold War in one – was like a double punishment (or a double blessing).[11]

But even more so, to be a Soviet Jew meant at the same time not to be a victim or a descendant of the victims of German National Socialism, but also to be a victor or a descendant of the victors over National Socialism, which gave the Soviet Jews immigrated to Germany a completely different, untraumatised self-confidence. So, it is no coincidence that in Jewish communities in Germany, alongside the celebration of the foundation of Israel, a second non-religious day of remembrance is observed on 9 May: the day the countries of the former USSR commemorate Germany's 1945 surrender. And so, in German Jewish communities on 9 May, one can see aged veterans proudly wearing their Soviet medals.

Gorelik describes the not-always-conflict-free encounter between "German" and "Russian" Jews in the Jewish communities of Germany in *Lieber Mischa* in the passage below:

> It was only in Germany that I learned that Judaism is a religion, in the religious lessons of the Jewish community, which I attended once a week in the afternoon. I learned the traditions that my grandmother remembered only dimly, and the prayers. I would now go regularly to the Jewish community, where the so-called "German" Jews stared at the so-called "Russians" in amazement, that is, in amazement at us who knew almost nothing about Judaism and did not understand Hebrew. More than one of them sneered at us. Oy vey.[12]

Gorelik points to an important fact, if only indirectly: the Jewish community which arose after the war, especially in the Federal Republic, has nothing to do with the "classical" pre-war Jewry. From its beginnings as a collection of a few German-Jewish survivors and, most of all, Polish-Jewish survivors of the extermination camps scattered in the Western Zones, the traditions of this community – if it had traditions at all – ran from those of Orthodox to assimilated Polish Jewry, all of it cut off from secular education due to the war's destruction of educational careers; and its language, often enough, even in Germany, was Yiddish. It was the children of this generation who created the first original wave of culture, which should no longer be regarded as generically German, but as the culture of the Jews of the Federal Republic. The "Russians" – if they wanted to become members of Jewish communities in the first place – had to be integrated into this culture. Gorelik also speaks of how this happened, and how it could happen, in *Lieber Mischa*:

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[11] Ibid., p. 19.
[12] Ibid.

> The Russians turned their noses up at the arrogance of the longer-settled parishioners. Double oy vey. We children quickly learned German and soon wore the right clothes, the money for which we made through tutoring and babysitting [. . .]. Soon I went to the Jewish community because my friends were there; religion was naturally thrown in, a two-for-one offer. It annoyed me when my parents spoke of their difficulties in integrating, of feeling unwelcome: it made them sound overwhelmed to me. Only at a distance of many years did I feel proud that they had carried on regardless.[13]

Other authors of this generation, born in the 1980s and later, describe similar experiences, all of which are characterised by a massive change in the understanding of the self and one's own identity. This is also evident in the life stories of Dmitry Belkin and Dmitry Kapitelman. Belkin published his life story in 2016 under the title *Germanija. Wie ich in Deutschland jüdisch und erwachsen wurde.* (How I grew Jewish and grew up in Germany.) Having been interested in leaving Ukraine since 1991, the "Father-Jew" Belkin wanted to become a Christian for universalist, internationalist reasons and was baptised:

> Being connected to Russian culture (which, by the way, I still am today), I thought my religion must be Russian Orthodox Christianity.[14]

As a student in Tübingen, Belkin – now married to the non-Jewish Lyudmila – abandoned his plans to return to Ukraine and revolutionise it. His main existential theme after the birth of his son was now the question of religion, which he finally answered by having himself circumcised and becoming a Jew.
Another story of rediscovering Jewish tradition – admittedly one more closely linked to the State of Israel and Zionism – is told by Dmitrij Kapitelman, who came to Leipzig in 1994, initially to a home for asylum seekers, where he was threatened by neo-Nazis and soon developed a Jewish consciousness stronger than his father's. After publishing pseudonymously in *taz* for a while, he was "discovered" by a literary agent, whereupon he published the book *My Invisible Father's Smile* in 2016, which appears to retell a "true story" from the author's life.

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[13] Gorelik, Dear Mischa [f.n. 9], p. 19 et seq.
[14] Dmitrij Belkin: Germanija. Wie ich in Deutschland jüdisch und erwachsen wurde. Frankfurt/Main 2016, p. 67.


DMITRIJ
KAPITELMAN
Das Lächeln meines unsichtbaren Vaters
HANSER BERLIN

His growing interest in all things Jewish led him to confront his father with this rather closely-guarded part of his personal self-conception – to the point where he urged his father, who wanted nothing to do with any of this, to make a trip with him to Israel. Kapitelman outlines the reason and goal of the journey as follows:

> In Leipzig, I am determined to confront my father with my concerns. I want a moment of truth between father and son, a conversation about who we are, why we are, and how we want to be who we are in the future. [15]

As a result of this conversation, and despite the father's misgivings, a plan emerged to travel together to Israel: a country that the father dislikes in every respect, both because of its Zionist character and because of the many Arabs there – made all the more odious because the son also wants to travel to the territories occupied by Israel. These discussions are framed by arguments about Dmitry's friends from Arab families. As part of the preparations for this trip, the father tells his son an episode from the life of Dmitry's grandfather – an event that highlights, as starkly as little else, the dilemma, indeed the trauma, of Soviet Jews:

> My father had a very special book. It was called *My First Journey to Israel*. It had a very fine leather cover. My father bought the book in 1961 and treasured it. In the front, Moscow and Jerusalem were shown on a map. They were connected by a dashed line on which an Aeroflot plane was moving towards Israel. You know, Dima, my father became a very anxious man after the war. If someone told a political joke in his presence, he immediately moved on. Don't hear anything, don't get any trouble. When Stalin's goons came to the block to pick people up, he hid the book and put out all the lights in his flat.[16]

This narrative, in turn, provokes the son to remark: "Oh, my dear, invisibly shattered dad."[17]

Finally – and this part takes up the greater portion of the novel – both journeys to Israel and the Occupied Territories actually take place: the audience is drawn on through vivid, picturesque landscapes and cities, intertwined with stimulating conversations. In a bus, on a trip to the Occupied Territories, in front of a checkpoint, the question of identity acquires a burning urgency in a conversation with the passenger in the next seat. A fellow passenger asks the narrator whether his mother was Jewish. Anticipating his own negative answer and the judgement of his fellow travellers that he is therefore "no Jew", the first-person narrator relates a "telegram from an inner court" – and this expresses, more drastically than in any other treatment, a central motif in virtually all the literary output of these post-migrant writers:

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[15] Dmitry Kapitelman: My Invisible Father's Smile. Munich 2016, p. 33.
[16] Ibid., p. 51.
[17] Ibid.

> False Jew Dmitry K., you are called to the courtroom immediately. A review process will be opened against you. Please be sure to appear in court with an appropriate level of dejection. [18]

At the end of the journey, which turns out to take him not only to the curious lands of Israel and the Occupied Territories, but above all into and through the writer's own identity, the father, who didn't like the Middle East at first, returns to Germany as a determined Zionist, while his son sees himself anew as a human being who has now consciously and voluntarily become a German citizen. Dmitrij Kapitelman concludes his book with a confession that could not have been read by "German Jews" in post-war Germany since the times of the Weimar Republic:

> The journey with my father showed me that affiliations are interchangeable - but not the people you share them with. My family and friends live in Germany. As do the beasts that threaten them [here Kapitelman refers to the neo-Nazi thugs he saw in Leipzig, M.B.]. And so, I have my share of responsibility for Germany. Whether I want or not. Even Papa is shaping Germany. If he wants one day to be able wear his kippa in the shop in peace, then today he has to get along with his new Syrian customers. Maybe he should put the kippa on right now. [19]

"Perhaps" – with this sentence Dmitrij Kapitelman's book ends – "we should both learn the open and responsible smile of the German Jew."[20]

Conclusion: Generation and Gender

The newer, the most recent literary criticism asks with good reason whether men and women – even if they come from the same socio-cultural background and have very similar ways of life – process their experiences following the same pattern – a question which, in the context of Kapitelman's life history, is posed most forcefully by the literary work of Olga Grjasnowa.

She came to Germany with her parents at the age of eleven. In 2012 she caused a stir with her debut novel *All Russians Love Birch Trees.* Like Kapitelman's book, this is also about a trip to Israel in which the narrator is caught up in the traumatic experience of the Azerbaijani civil war. Moreover, she is absorbed in reflections on the difficulties of Jewish life in Germany after the Holocaust. In her work, Grjasnowa, married to a Syrian, concerns herself even more closely with flight and homelessness, not exclusively of Jews. This is how Grjasnowa's first-person narrator comments on the topic of belonging:

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[18] Ibid., p. 251.
[19] Ibid., p. 287.
[20] Ibid.

> On the other hand, when I talked with my mother on the phone, sometimes I was hit by a longing for a home, even if I didn't know where that was. What I desired was a familiar place. In general, I didn't think too highly of familiar places. To me, the term homeland always implied pogrom. What I longed for were familiar people. Except that one of them was dead and the others I couldn't stand anymore. Because they were alive.[21]

In fact, Grjasnowa's narrative is much more influenced by conflicting relationships than is Kapitelman's tale, which, in terms of his relationship with his father, is much more concerned with his own self-image, his own identity.

If one attempted to study the post-migrant literature of former Soviet citizens who in any way regard themselves as being Jewish, be it from a scientific or even sociological standpoint, it would be above all the categories of generation and gender that shape different experiences, and different concepts of experience.

Thus, Jewish author Oleg Yuriev and his wife, the non-Jew Olga Martynova, struggle much more with Soviet-Jewish history in the narrow sense, than do the younger authors mentioned here. On the other hand, the younger ones – Gorelik, Grjasnowa, Kapitelman and Belkin – deal with departure, loss of homeland, arrival and the search for a new self-image.

In terms of literary form in the narrower sense, this literature ranges from the classic novel form to rather unornamented autobiographical texts to Gorelik's sarcastic-humorous forms and Olga Martynova's delicate lyricism. If one wanted to compare male and female outlooks, or older and younger generations, from the perspective of literary quality, a parallel reading of Yuriev's *Halbinsel Judatin* and Grjasnowa's *All Russians Love Birch Trees* would have much to recommend it. These two novels, each so different, provide a perfect illustration of the range to be found within the post-migrant literature of Jews from the former Soviet Union.

Translated by Edward Maltby, Sheffield

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[21] Olga Grjasnowa: All Russians Love Birch Trees. Munich 2012, p. 202.

Lidia Averbukh, Margarete Klein

Realpolitik and Selective Cooperation

Russian-Israeli Relations amid the War in Syria

Russia and Israel share important elements in their strategic cultures. Both are staunch adherents of realpolitik and cooperate only when their interests align. Each perceives itself as a "besieged fortress" in which security policy is paramount and power primarily means military strength. Social and economic ties, though growing, are of secondary importance for Russian-Israeli relations. But the limits of their convergence are clearly visible in the unpredictable dynamics of the Syrian conflict and their differing views about the role that Iran and the US should play in the region.

As Russia and Israel have moved closer in recent years, high-level meetings have taken place with increasing frequency. One ceremonial highlight was Benjamin Netanyahu's participation in the Moscow Victory Day Parade on 9th May 2018. The Israeli Prime Minister was the only Western state leader in attendance. Another was Vladimir Putin's prime speaking slot at the event commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz at Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust museum.

One important reason for the rapprochement between the states was the mutual wish to avoid direct military confrontation in the Syrian theatre. Another is the existence of social ties linking the countries and a mutual interest in economic cooperation.

Israel's military and political representatives have endeavoured to cultivate good relations with Moscow in the hope that Russia will give greater consideration to Israeli security interests. The future of those relations will depend on the kind of association that Russia forges with Israel's adversary Iran after the end of the Syrian war and whether Russia can and wants to contribute to Israeli security. Until then, the relationship between Russia and Israel will be attenuated and volatile, friendly rhetoric and symbolic gestures aside. For Moscow, the relationship with Israel is part of Russia's multi-vector foreign policy in the Middle East.

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When Russia became the successor state of the Soviet Union in December 1991, it inherited its strained relationship with Israel. Although in 1948 the Soviet Union had become one of the first countries to recognize Israel as a sovereign state, the relationship quickly cooled in the wake of the East-West conflict. The young state of Israel took its cue from the United States, and Moscow expanded its relations with neighbouring Arab countries. In 1967, after the Six Day War, the Soviet leadership severed diplomatic relations with Israel; it resumed them only in October 1991, shortly before the USSR's dissolution. In the 1990s, Israel and Russia began to strengthen their social, economic and political ties.[1] After Russia intervened in the Syrian war in September 2015, Russian-Israeli relations entered a new phase dominated by security and order in the Middle East. The social ties and economic interests that long formed the basis of their relationship have now faded into the background.

The primacy of realpolitik

Russia and Israel share important strategic elements. Both take a decidedly interest-based approach, finding it easier to cooperate selectively when it is mutually beneficial than to rely on common values and norms. Each state sees itself as a "besieged fortress" in which security policy is paramount and power primarily means military strength.[2] Because they share these basic assumptions, each accepts the core interests of the other. As long as the national interests of the one do not conflict with the security of the other, each refrains from criticising the other's actions. And when they do make their criticism known, they usually forgo sanctions and other forms of escalation.

Another factor in the basic understanding between Russia and Israel is the shared perception that Islamist terrorism poses an existential threat. During the Second Intifada (2000–2005), Israel's then Prime Minister Ariel Sharon did not criticise the human rights violations by Russia's armed forces in the Second Chechen War (1999–2009). Indeed, Sharon accepted Moscow's equation of Chechen separatism with terrorism and drew parallels with the actions of Palestinian insurgents in Israel.[3] The volatile security situation in Israel was also why Benjamin Netanyahu looked the other way when Russia intervened in Syria despite the high number of civilian casualties it produced, and repeatedly framed Russia's actions as part of the fight against Islamist terrorism. Given the condemnation that Russia received from the US and the EU for its forays into Chechnya and Syria, it is hardly surprising that Moscow regarded Israel's stance as a political win. Moreover, it lent credence to Moscow's portrayal of itself as a leader in the global war

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1 See Tatyana Karasova: Russian-Israeli Relations, Past, Present, and Future: A View from Moscow, in: Zvi Magen, Vitaly Naumkin (Hg.): Russia and Israel in the Changing Middle East. Conference Proceedings. Jaffee 2013, S. 51–56. — Micky Aharonson: Relations between Israel and the USSR/Russia, in: The Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security, 1.5.2018, <https://jiss.org.il/en/aharonson-relations-israel-ussr-russia/>.

2 Rafal Kopec: The Determinants of the Israeli Strategic Culture, in: Review of Nationalities, 6/2016, S. 135–146. Vladimir Putin, in a programmatic essay, explained that strong armed forces were an "indispensable condition ... for our partners to heed our country's arguments." Vladimir Putin: Being Strong: National Security Guarantees for Russia. Russia Today, 19.2.2012, <www.rt.com/politics/official-word/strong-putin-military-russia-711>.

3 See Mark N. Katz: Putin's Pro-Israel Policy, in: Middle East Quarterly, Winter 2005, S. 51–59, <www.meforum.org/articles/2005/putin-s-pro-israel-policy>.

on terror.[4] Moscow has since exploited its rapport with Israel to undercut the view inside Russia that it is isolated from the Western community.[5] For example, in August 2018, Israel did Moscow a favour by sending soldiers from the Ground Forces to participate in the Russian-organised International Army Games as NATO forces boycotted the event.

Russia has emphasised Israel's dissenting position ever since the West imposed sanctions on Russia for annexing Crimea, sending troops into eastern Ukraine and downing Malaysia Airlines Flight 17.[6] Tellingly, Israel refused to participate in the economic restrictions. Even more important in terms of its symbolic value was Netanyahu's decision to wear the ribbon of Saint George while attending the 2018 Victory Day parade in Moscow.[7] The ribbon not only commemorates the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War, but is also a symbol of pro-Russian separatists in the Crimea and the Donbass, which is why Ukraine forbids its display.[8] Israel's willingness to recognize Russia's sphere of interests in the post-Soviet space – even when involving violations of international law and acts of aggression against sovereign states – springs from the hope of reaching agreement with Russia on vital security issues in its own neighbourhood.

It seems to have paid off. Since 2000, Moscow has tended to give greater consideration to Israeli interests. Russia continues to criticise Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, but has softened its tone. More importantly, Moscow has ceased showing the Palestinian leadership signs of support. Even amid calls from Russia's Communist Party (CPRF) for a renewed partnership with Arab forces,[9] President Putin has refused to jeopardise friendly relations with the region's strongest military power by taking sides in the Middle East conflict.[10] Since its involvement in the Syrian civil war,

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4 See Pavel Baev: From Chechnya to Syria: The Evolution of Russia's Counter-Terrorism Policy, Paris, Notes d'ifri, Russie. Nei.Visions, 107/2018, <www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/ files/baev_counter_terrorist_policy_2018.pdf>. At a security conference in Moscow in April 2018, Russia presented itself as a trailblazer in the fight against international terrorism. <http://eng.mil.ru/en/mcis/index.htm>.

5 See Hana Levi Julian: IDF Teams Participating in 2018 International Army Games in Russia. Jewish Press, 31.7.2018, <www.jewishpress.com/news/global/russia/idf-teams-participating-in-2018-international-army-games-in-russia/2018/07/31/>.

6 Moscow Grateful to Israel for Non-Participation in Anti-Russian Sanctions. Sputnik, 1.9.2017, <https://sputniknews.com/world/201709011056999937-israel-russia-ambassador-sanctions/>.

7 See Pavel Felgenhauer: As Tensions Flare in the Middle East, Israel's Netanyahu Flies to Moscow, in: Eurasia Daily Monitor, 10.5.2018, <https://jamestown.org/program/as-tensions-flare-in-the-middle-east-israels-netanyahu-flies-to-moscow/>.

8 See Vera Demmel: Das Georgsband. Ruhmesorden, Erinnerungszeichen, Pro-Kreml-Symbol, in: OSTEUROPA, 3/2016, S. 19–31.

9 The CPRF, whose thinking remains shaped by the East-West conflict, regards Israel primarily as an ally of the US and, in keeping with the Soviet Union's pro-Arab policy, believes that Russia should side with the Palestinians and the Arab states.

10 It appears that some Russian military leaders and diplomats are critical of Putin's pro-Israel position. In May 2018, journalists with close ties to high-ranking military circles reported that officials were dismayed by Israel's decision to launch its largest air raid on Syria one day after Netanyahu attended the Victory Day parade in Moscow, calling the move "cowardly and deceitful". See Pavel Fel'gengauėr: Pobeda general'skogo narrativa. Novaja Gazeta, 25.9.2018, <www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2018/09/25/77946-pobeda-generalskogo-narrativa>. – Natal'ja Makeeva: Licemerno, lukavo, lživo: ėksperty otreagirovali na udar po sirijskomu „pancirju", 11.5.2018, <https://riafan.ru/1055949-licemerno-lukavo-lzhivo-eksperty-otreagirovali-na-udar-izrailya-po-siriiskomu-panciryu>.

Moscow has been particularly intent on seeming impartial, drawing on its past ties to the Palestinians and its improved relations with Israel to position itself as a mediator in the conflict. Therefore, while Israel pushed for partial annexation of the occupied West Bank in 2020, Russia offered to facilitate mediation by the Middle East Quartet.[11]
This political strategy coincides with the pragmatic realpolitik that Moscow has pursued generally in the Middle East.

Social ties

In 2005, Putin became the first Russian president to visit Israel. During his trip, he emphasised the historical and cultural bonds between their peoples. But while social ties have indeed played a large role in the countries' alignment since the restoration of diplomatic relations, they have not been without ambivalence and their ability to serve as a stable pillar in the bilateral relationship has proven limited.
After taking office, Putin portrayed himself as a guardian of the Jewish minority in Russia and Europe. The point was to signal that he had taken up the Soviet Union's fight against fascism,[12] as his subsequent visits to Holocaust memorials and meetings with Russian Jewish veterans of the Second World War made clear. The importance of the narrative of Russia being the defeater of fascism is shown in the recent changes to its constitution. In 2012, the largest Jewish museum in the world opened in Moscow. Later, as Muslim refugees poured into the EU and antisemitism grew, Putin proposed that Europe's Jews move to Russia.[13] On the 25th anniversary of the re-establishment of diplomatic ties between Russia and Israel, the countries' leaders stressed the importance of the Jewish minority for Russian history and culture.[14] Occasionally, the Kremlin exploited its concern for Europe's Jews to peddle propaganda. For instance, during the 2013–2014 Euromaidan demonstrations in Kiev, Russia's politicians and media accused the protestors on the Maidan of antisemitism.[15] While several protest groups showed serious antisemitic undertones, the decisive election victory on 21st April 2019 of Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, a Russian-speaking Jew, demonstrates the baselessness of the allegation of significant antisemitism amongst the broad population. Although antisemitism is widespread in Russia, Russians have favourable attitudes towards Israel. In a 2019 survey from the Levada-Center, 75 per cent of respondents had

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[11] Top Russian diplomat reaffirms Russia's willingness to help Middle East settlement, <https://tass.com/politics/1158619>.

[12] See Putin i Rivlin obsudili otnošenija Rossii i Izrailja. Vesti, 16.3.2016, <www.vestifinance.ru/articles/68664>.

[13] See Putin calls on European Jews to take Refuge in Russia. The Jerusalem Post, 20.1.2016, <www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Putin-calls-on-European-Jews-to-take-refuge-in-Russia-442175>. Siehe dazu Sekunde 51 <www.youtube.com/watch?v=4q3SG0V_dbE>.

[14] Joint Declaration of President of Russian Federation V. Putin and Prime Minister of the State of Israel B. Netanyahu on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of Bilateral Diplomatic Relations, <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/Documents/Israel-Russian%20Declaration.pdf>.

[15] See Aaron Rhodes: Putins zynisches Spiel mit den Juden in der Ukraine. Zeit-Online, 8.4.2014, <www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2014-04/antisemitismus-juden-ukraine-russland-putin>. – Ukrainian MPs want to make Nazi collaborator Bandera a national hero again. Russia Today, 6.12.2018, <www.rt.com/news/445698-bandera-nazi-collaborator-hero/>.

a good or very good opinion of Israel. By contrast, 50 per cent had similar feelings about the EU; in the case of the US, it was only 42 per cent.[16] Antisemitism in Western Europe is often associated with sharp criticisms of Israel and calls for boycotts, but not so in Russia. Two factors account for the disparity. On the one hand is Israel's reputation as a strong military and economic power, which Russia's state media and political leaders frequently tout. On the other is the growing number of private connections and informal exchanges between the societies. Israel has become a popular destination for Russian holidaymakers and medical tourists because of the visa-free regime between the countries, the large proportion of Israelis who speak Russian, and the decreasing popularity of traditional vacation spots in Turkey and Egypt. In 2017, 331,500 Russian tourists visited Israel, up by 26 per cent over the previous year. In 2018, the number was 303,200.[17] Among the visitors are many religious pilgrims, whose number began to increase after Israel's 2008 decision to return Sergei´s Courtyard, a part of the Russian Compound in Jerusalem, to the Moscow Patriarch.

Another factor underpinning the ties between the countries is the immigration of Russian Jews to Israel. 15 per cent of Israel's total population and 25 per cent of its Jewish population have roots in the Russian Empire, the USSR or in one of the Soviet successor states. Not surprisingly, the immigration of so many Russian Jews has shaped Israel both culturally and politically. All Israeli prime ministers were either born in, or had at least one parent born in, the Russian Empire.

Table: Prime ministers of Israel, 1948–2019

Prime minister (Term of office)	**Date of birth**	**Place of birth**	**Birth name/ Family background**
David Ben-Gurion (May 1948 – Jan. 1954; Nov. 1955 – Jun. 1963)	16 Oct. 1886	Płonsk, Kingdom of Poland / Russian Empire (now Poland)	David Grün
Moshe Sharett (Jan. 1954 – Nov. 1955)	15 Oct. 1894	Kherson, Ukraine / Russian Empire (now Ukraine)	Moshe Chertok
Levi Eshkol (Jun. 1963 – Feb. 1969)	25 Oct. 1895	Oratov, Ukraine / Russian Empire (now Orativ, Ukraine)	Levi Shkolnik
Yigal Allon (Feb. 1969 – Mar. 1969)	10 Oct. 1918	Kfar Tabor, Galilee/ Palestine (now Israel)	Yigal Pajkovich; Father: Rojven Josef Pajkovich, from Grodno, Russian Empire (now Hrodna, Belarus); immigrated to Palestine in 1882
Golda Meir (Mar. 1969 – Jun. 1974)	3 May 1898	Kiev, Ukraine, Russian Empire	Golda Mabovich

[16] See Otnošenie k stranam. Levada-Centr, 10.9.2019, <www.levada.ru/2019/09/10/otnoshenie-k-stranam-4/>.

[17] See Izrail'skij turizm 2017, 2018 – itogi goda, <http://mfa.gov.il/MFARUS/IsraelExperience/Tourism/Pages/Israel-Tourism-Summary-2017.aspx>. – <https://mfa.gov.il/MFARUS/IsraelExperience/Tourism/Pages/Summary-of-2018-Tourism-Year.aspx>.

Yitzhak Rabin (Jun. 1974 – Jun. 1977; Jul. 1992 – Nov. 1995)	1 Mar. 1922	Jerusalem, British Palestine (now Israel)	Father: Nehemiah Rabin, born Nehemiah Rubicov, from Siderovichi, Russian Empire, now Sydorovychi, Ukraine); Mother from Mogilev, Russian Empire (now Mahilyow, Belarus)
Menachem Begin (Jun. 1977 – Oct. 1983)	16 Aug. 1913	Brest-Litovsk, Russian Empire	Mieczysław Biegun
Yitzhak Shamir (Oct. 1983 – Sep. 1984)	15 Oct. 1915	Ruzhany, Grodno Governorate, Russian Empire	Yitzhak Yezernitsky
Shimon Peres (Sept. 1984 – Oct. 1986; Nov. 1995 – Jun. 1996)	2 Aug. 1923	Vishnyeva, Poland (now Vishneva, Belarus)	Szymon Perski
Benjamin Netanyahu (Jun. 1996 – Jul. 1999; Mar. 2009 –)	21 Oct. 1949	Tel Aviv, Israel	Father: Benzion Netanjahu, born Benzion Mileikowski, from Warsaw, Kingdom of Poland, Russian Empire; immigrated with his parents to Palestine in 1920
Ehud Barak (Jul. 1999 – Mar. 2001)	12 Feb. 1942	Mischmar haScharon, British Palestine (now Israel)	Ehud Brog; Father: Izrael Brog, from Panevezhys, Russian Empire (now Lithuania); Mother: Esther, from Warsaw
Ariel Sharon (Mar. 2001 – Apr. 2006)	26 Feb. 1928	Kfar Malal, British Palestine (now Israel)	Ariel Scheinerman; Father: Shmuel Shejnerman from Brest-Litovsk, Russian Empire (now Belarus); Mother from Mogilev, Russian Empire (now Mahilyow, Belarus)
Ehud Olmert (Jan. 2006 – Mar. 2009)	30 Sep. 1945	Binjamina, British Palestine (now Israel)	Father: Mordechai Olmert, from Buguruslan, Orenburg Oblast, Russian Empire

But the chief reason for the strengthening social ties in recent years is the immigration of around one million Jews from the Soviet Union and Russia beginning in the late 1980s. Socialized in the USSR or the young Russian Federation, most remain economically and residentially segregated from the rest of the Israeli population despite possessing good professional qualifications and, despite being Israeli citizens, they are still referred to as "Russians" by other Israelis. They are the people whom Putin means when he speaks of "our compatriots"[18] with "our mentality".[19] The situation is different for the immigrants who have come to Israel for political or economic reasons since the annexation of Crimea in 2014. For many of them, especially the well-educated and the young, Israel is a temporary stopping place on the way to the West. Others have sought

[18] See Putin: Rossija obespokoena sud'boj sootečestvennikov v Izraile. Vesti, 3.11.2003, <www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=36357&tid=18168>.

[19] See Vladimir Putin i Bin'jamin Netan'jachu posetili Bol'šoj teatr. RT, 7.6.2016, <https://russian. rt.com/article/306542-vladimir-putin-i-binyamin-netanyahu-posetili-bolshoi>.

dual citizenship because the situation in Russia has become too uncertain. Holders of Israeli passports have visa-free entry to 104 countries; those with Russian passports can enter only 81 without visas.[20] Moreover, naturalised Israeli citizens receive tax breaks for several years. And Israeli authorities expedite passport processing for certain – wealthy – individuals such as the oligarch Roman Abramovich, who unlike other applicants, became a citizen without having to demonstrate residency.[21]

Russia's promotion of ethnic Russians abroad – a policy zealously pursued for several years – has led to expressions of concern in Israeli media that Moscow could instrumentalise Israel's Russian-speaking population for its own political purposes.[22] Though Russia has successfully employed the strategy in several post-Soviet states, the probability of it happening in Israel is fairly low. It is true that the 15 per cent of Israel's electorate that is made up of Russian immigrants – representing around 18 of the 120 seats in the Knesset – is enough to be decisive when forming government coalitions, given Israel's fragmented party system.[23] The three Knesset elections in 2019 and 2020 were proof that politicians cannot afford to ignore issues important to the "Russian street", such as the separation of religion and state. Furthermore, Russian-speaking voters are still willing to vote for the client party Israel Our Home (Yisrael Beiteinu) even though it has been declared dead. For all that, the strong Israeli identity among Russian speakers and their heterogeneity – they come from various former republics of the Soviet Union and its successor states, in addition to Russia – speaks against the possibility of their being instrumentalised by Moscow. Of course, in a society of cohorts defined by national descent and voting behaviour, the fact that they all hail from the Soviet Union makes them a group in their own right. Nevertheless, they regard themselves primarily as Israeli citizens.

Evidence of this can be found in the low turnout in Russian elections among Russian Jews with dual citizenship. For example, only eight per cent of the 50,000 Israelis eligible to vote took part in Russia's presidential election on 18th March 2018.[24] Russian-speaking Israelis hold very diverse views on Russia's political leadership, ranging from approval to rejection. The negative attitudes stem from two sources. One is the memory of the Soviet Union, which for decades prevented the Jewish minority from practising religion or emigrating. The other is the large number of Russian-speaking Jews who came from Ukraine or one of the other successor states of the USSR. The last wave of immigration, triggered by Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014, increased the heterogeneity of Israel's Russian-speakers. Though many watch Russian-language media, the news outlets in Israel are pluralistic and do not necessarily telegraph the views of the Kremlin.

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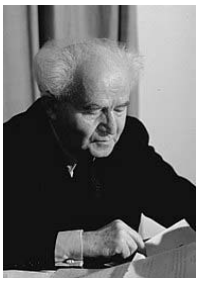
[20] See Global Passport Power Rank 2019, <www.passportindex.org/byRank.php>.

[21] See Roman Abramovich granted Israeli citizenship. The Guardian, 28.5.2018, <www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/28/roman-abramovich-granted-israeli-citizenship-tel-aviv-chelsea>.

[22] Eran Etzion: Israeli-Russian Relations: Respect and Suspect. Middle East Institute, 3.8.2016, <www.mei.edu/content/article/israeli-russian-relations-respect-and-suspect>.
Far more likely is Russian interference by hacking, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/russia-supplied-iran-with-advanced-phone-hacking-tech-report-says/>.

[23] Vladimir (Zeèv) Chanin: Problema reformy političeskoj sistemy izrailja v svete predposylok i itogov vyborov v knesset XX sozyva. Moskva 2016, <http://book.iimes.su/wp-content/uploads/ main/285Khanin2016.pdf>, S. 97ff.

[24] Itogi vyborov prezidenta RF v Izraile. Okončatel'nye dannye, 19.3.2018, <http://newsru.co.il/israel/19mar2018/pr_ru_il_112.html>.


David Ben-Gurion

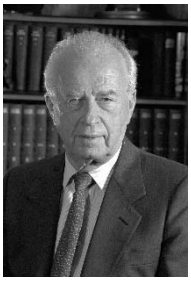

Moshe Sharett


David Ben-Gurion

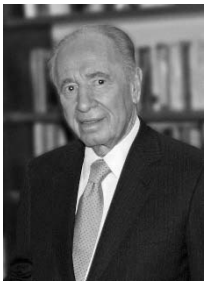

Levi Eshkol


Yigal Allon

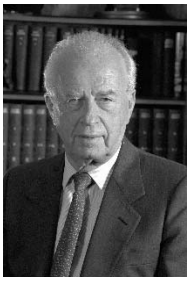

Golda Meir


Yitzhak Rabin


Menachem Begin


Shimon Peres


Yitzhak Shamir


Yitzhak Rabin


Benjamin Netanyahu


Ehud Barak


Ariel Sharon


Ehud Olmert


Benjamin Netanyahu

It bears stressing, however, that while social ties have helped leaders in Russia and Israel further their rapprochement, they are not its main cause. Indeed, Israel seems to have exhausted its ability to score points at home by emphasising its good relations with the Kremlin. Netanyahu's decision to meet with Putin ahead of the 2019 Knesset elections was a source of vexation among Russian speakers in Israel.[25] Moreover, Putin's statement at the meeting that he would continue to cooperate with Israel's future leaders, whoever they may be, was not exactly a ringing endorsement of Netanyahu.[26]
In Russia, social factors have generally played little role in determining foreign policy. Moscow's invocations of shared history and culture have been mostly cosmetic and served to establish its historical narrative. Whatever the strength of the social ties between Russia and Israel, they have not been substantial enough to shape the countries' political relations.

Economic interests

After restoring diplomatic relations in October of 1991, Israel and the Soviet Union (and soon after Russia) began to lay the groundwork for economic cooperation. The first step was to resume trade and knowledge transfer. To that end, the countries signed framework agreements in 1994 on trade and on scientific and technological cooperation. Since then, the countries have strengthened their cooperation with agreements on joint space research (2011), nuclear energy (2013) and nanotechnology (2016). In addition, Israel has been working to sign a free-trade deal with the Eurasian Economic Union since 2016, but, in contrast with Ukraine, agreement has yet to be reached.[27]
Since the early 90s, trade between the countries has grown significantly, reaching $2.5 billion in 2017 – $800 million more than Russia's trade volume with Iran – and $2.7 billion in 2018.[28] Nevertheless, as a percentage of Russia's total foreign trade, Israel makes up only 0.4 per cent, significantly below the 18 per cent of Turkey, its most important Middle Eastern trading partner.[29]
Most of Russia's exports to Israel are raw materials in the form of oil (40 per cent) and precious metals (30 per cent). Its top imports are agricultural products (36 per cent), machinery (29 per cent) and chemical products (23 per cent). Israel benefits from Russia's counter-tariffs on EU agricultural products,[30] but the only trade areas likely to have strategic importance in the long run for the two countries are energy and technology. After the discovery of the Leviathan gas field off the coast of Israel in 2010, Gazprom

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[25] See <www.svoboda.org/a/30083389.html>.
[26] <www.gazeta.ru/politics/2019/09/12_a_12645745.shtml>.
[27] Following Putin's talks with Netanyahu in Sochi on 12 September 2019, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov explained that both sides wanted to accelerate the free-trade negotiations between the Eurasian Economic Union and Israel in order to eliminate tariff restrictions. In January 2019, Israel and Ukraine signed a free-trade agreement after 15 years of talks. See Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's press statement following talks between President of Russia Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanjahu. mid.ru, 12.9.2019.
[28] See Torgovlja meždu Rossiej i Izrailem v 2018 g., <http://russian-trade.com/reports-and-reviews/2019-02/torgovlya-mezhdu-rossiey-i-izrailem-v-2018-g/>.
[29] Russia's trade with Turkey in 2017 totaled $20.9 billion. See <http://russian-trade.com/reports-and-reviews/2019-02/torgovlya-mezhdu-rossiey-i-izrailem-v-2018-g/>.
[30] Ibid.

lobbied hard for exploration rights in the hope of securing a share of the Israeli energy market and influencing the EU's efforts in the Eastern Mediterranean region to diversify its natural gas supply.[31] But in December 2018, Israel, Cyprus, Greece and Italy dashed Russia's hopes by deciding to build the EastMed pipeline. Scheduled for completion in 2025, the pipeline will transport natural gas from the Leviathan and Tamar fields via Cyprus and Greece to Europe, reducing the EU's dependence on Russia, particularly in the southeast.[32]

Besides trade, Moscow sees in Israel a partner that can help modernise Russia's high-tech industry. Not only is it home to many innovative start-ups and research institutes, it is also one of the few developed countries that has not joined the international sanctions against Russia. Israeli companies and research institutes entered into cooperation agreements in 2012 with Rusnano[33] – Russia's state-run innovation development institution – and in 2016 with the Skolkovo Innovation Center.[34] In 2018, the Russian company Yandex obtained permission from the Israeli Ministry of Transportation to test its self-driving cars on Israeli roads.[35] For the partnership projects with the Russian state to succeed, however, more support is needed from the private sector. In 2017, direct investment totalled $570 million in Israel and $480 million in Russia. That same year, by comparison, the United States and the EU invested $2.6 billion and $6.2 billion in Israel, respectively.[36]

For all their efforts to increase trade and forge partnerships, Russia and Israel remain competitors on the global arms market. Moscow, in keeping with past tradition, supplies Arab countries and Iran, while Israel has turned its attention to post-Soviet countries – Azerbaijan in particular. Collaboration on weapons technology is rare. For a time, Israel produced drones for the Russian armed forces, but it discontinued the programme after Russia annexed Crimea and armed conflict broke out in the Donbass region of Ukraine. In sensitive areas of security policy, the latitude for cooperation continues to be very limited – all the more so given Israel's intensive security partnership with the US.

Although Russia and Israel have improved trade relations, the economic foundations for further expansion of trade are not particularly robust. Once the remaining potential for development is exhausted, Israel could help Russia modernise its tech sector. But Russia's structural deficits – its weak innovation, its lack of legal security, its strong dependence on quasi state actors – and Israel's security concerns regarding energy and arms are likely to be an insurmountable hurdle.

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[31] <www.forbes.com/sites/arielcohen/2019/02/19/israels-leviathan-energy-prize-where-will-the-gas-go/#3bb9e858194b>.

[32] See Georgiy Kuhalvevshvili: Israel Wants to Knock Russia Out and Export Gas to Europe, 3.12.2018, <https://112.international/article/israel-wants-to-knock-russia-out-and-export-gas-to-europe-34741.html>.

[33] See Company Overview of Rusnano Israel Ltd: <www.bloomberg.com/research/stocks/private/snapshot.asp?privcapId=171010522>.

[34] See Shura Collinson: Skolkovo signs agreement with Israel's own "startup village", 11.11.2016, <https://sk.ru/news/b/articles/archive/2016/11/11/skolkovo-signs-agreement-with-israel_1920_s-own-_1c20_startup-village_1d20_.aspx>.

[35] <https://yandex.com/blog/yacompany-com/self-driving-israel>.

[36] See OECD International Direct Investment Statistics 2018, p. 148.

The Syrian war – a stress test

When Russia began air strikes on targets in Syria in September 2015, its relationship with Israel entered a new phase, along with its Near East policy. Since then, Russia's dealings with Israel have become thornier and have required greater attention. The conflict in Syria and the regional security concerns it has generated provided a stress test for Russian-Israeli relations. Early on, both sides saw a growing need for open communication and reliable assurances to avoid unintended military clashes. In the autumn of 2015, they established a "de-conflicting mechanism", in which the armed forces from each country agreed to inform each other of their military activities in advance, so as to prevent collateral damage.[37] The de-conflicting mechanism was accompanied by regular talks between President Putin and Prime Minister Netanyahu and between their ministers of defence and heads of intelligence.

As part of the de-conflicting agreement, Israel carries out air strikes on Hezbollah and pro-Iranian militia positions without Russian interference. Moscow accepted the arrangement because of Israel's assurances that it would combat pro-Iranian forces, not the Assad regime. Unlike the relationship between Russia and Turkey, which was hit by a deep crisis after the Turkish Air Force shot down a Russian fighter jet in November 2015, Russian-Israeli relations remained mostly stable during the first years of the war in Syria. However, the de-conflicting strategy came under pressure after Assad and his allies retook large parts of the country and Israel's perception of the threat to its national security changed. The Netanyahu government worried that Tehran would establish a permanent military presence in Syria – either in the form of military bases, secret military facilities, or increasing numbers of Iranian and pro-Iranian soldiers in the Syrian army.[38] To hold back pro-Iranian units in Syria, Israel stepped up its air raids. In February 2018, after a drone attack on Israeli territory believed to have been launched by pro-Iranian forces and the downing of an Israeli fighter by the Syrian Air Force, Israel bombed the Tiyas Military Airbase, a key installation for Russia's military operations.[39] Then, in September 2018, a Russian reconnaissance aircraft (Il-20) with 15 crew members on board was shot down by Syrian air defences, after Israeli fighter jets carried out strikes on targets in Syria. Russia's Ministry of Defence accused the Israeli armed forces of failing to inform Russia and deliberately using the Il-20 as cover for the attack.[40] Together, the two incidents – the bombing of the Tiyas airbase and the downing of the Il-20 – precipitated a crisis in Russian-Israeli relations. Russia's Ministry of Defence "retaliated" by equipping the Syrian army with S-300 anti-aircraft systems.[41]

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[37] See Maria Tsvetkova: Israel, Russia to Coordinate Military Action on Syria: Netanyahu. Reuters, 21.9.2015, <www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-russia-israel/israel-russia-to-coordinate- military-action-on-syria-netanyahu-idUSKCN0RL10K20150921>.

[38] See Udi Dekel, Carmit Valensi: The Iranian Threat in Syria. As Bad as It Seems? INSS Insight, 23.8.2017, <www.inss.org.il/publication/iranian-threat-syria-bad-seems/>.

[39] See Gil Murciano: Preventing a Spillover of the Iran-Israel Conflict in Syria. SWP Comment, 27/2018.

[40] See Pogibšie pri krušenii Jl-20 predstavleny k nagraždeniju ordenami Mužestva, Interfaks, 25.9.2018, <www.interfax.ru/russia/630585?utm_source=topmain>.

[41] In 2010 Russia and Syria reached an agreement on the delivery of S-300 missile systems. But Moscow later decided to delay the delivery out of consideration for Israel. See Šojgu preduprežaet izrail'skogo ministerstva o vozmožnom otvete Rossii v svjazi s gibel'ju Il-20, <www.militarynews.ru/story.asp?rid=0&nid=490996>. – Alexandr Šarkovskij: Smožet li

Though the number of units Russia gave to the Syrian army is not known and their strategic value is unclear, the step was symbolically significant: it marked a reversal in Moscow's policy of accommodating Israel's core interests and withholding shipments of modern weapons technology, anti-aircraft missiles in particular.
Despite similar incidents in 2020[42], both sides continue to take the realpolitik view that it is better to pursue national interests in Syria through selective cooperation than through confrontation. Moscow's chief objective is to secure its own military position in Syria. In the event of escalation, the Israeli armed forces could make the situation for Russia very difficult. In turn, Israel does not view the Russian armed forces in Syria – unlike the Iranian and pro-Iranian forces there – as a threat to its national security. Rather, Netanyahu believes that Russia is the power most capable of limiting Iran's influence in Syria.[43]

The Iran factor

Israeli strategy in Syria assumes that, as the survival of Assad's regime becomes certain, the rivalry between Russia and Iran will grow, each vying for economic, political and military influence in the region. Tehran has already undertaken long-term economic and infrastructural activities in Syria and has forged strong relationships with local elites and security forces.[44] Moreover, Iran is keen on establishing a permanent military presence in Syria, either in the form of bases or the deployment of pro-Iranian forces. Russia, for its part, believes that it is the only external power that Damascus sees fit to have a permanent military presence in Syria. Its objectives are to maintain its position in Syria after the war ends, secure economic advantages in the areas of energy and construction and raise its regional and international standing. To those ends, it has reached out to the wealthy Sunni Gulf countries, all of whom want to see Iran contained in Syria.[45]

Rossija sozdat' nadežnuju sistemu PRO v Sirii. Nezavisimaja Gazeta, 3.10.2018, <www.ng.ru/armies/2018-10-03/2_7324_syria.html>. – Roger McDermott: Moscow's S-300 Bluff in Syria, in: Eurasia Daily Monitor, 10.10.2018, <https://jamestown.org/program/ moscows-s-300-double-bluff-in-syria/>.

[42] In February 2020, Israel's air forces attacked Syrian targets. When Syrian air defence responded, a plane with 172 passengers came under fire from it. The Russian ambassador to Syria, Alexander Yefimov, condemned Israeli strikes by calling them "provocative and very dangerous". Toi Staff: Russian envoy: Israeli strikes in Syria "increase possibility of conflict", Times of Israel, 10.02.2020, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/russian-envoy-israeli-strikes-in-syria-increase-possibility-of-conflict/>.

[43] See Udi Dekel, Carmit Valensi: Russia and Iran: Is the Syrian Honeymoon Over? INSS Insight, 27.5.2019, <www.inss.org.il/publication/russia-iran-syrian-honeymoon/>.

[44] While Russian leadership regards the presence of pro-Iranian military forces in Syria as necessary for the war effort, it rejects Tehran's long-term military presence. At a meeting with Assad on 17 May 2018, Putin stated that all foreign forces "should withdraw from Syria after the political process begins," with the exception of Russia, which is in Syria at the behest of its government. Moscow is correspondingly critical of Tehran's plans to build a military base near Russia's in Hmeimim. See Putin says foreign forces need to leave Syria. Tass, 3.10.2018, <https://tass.com/politics/1024196>. – Igor' Subbotin: Iran možet potesnit' bazy RF v Sirii, Nezavisimaja Gazeta, 26.5.2019, <www.ng.ru/world/2019-05-26/1_7582_syria.html>.

[45] See Pavel K. Baev: Russian Intrigues in the Middle East, Eurasia Daily Monitor, 3.6.2019. – Marco Carnelos: Russia's Next Move in the Middle East: Improving Relations with GCC, 21.3.2019, <valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/russia-s-next-move-in-the-middle-east/?sphrase_id=719518>.

Despite the underlying tensions, Moscow still is reliant on Tehran in the Syrian conflict. Russia's military presence consists primarily in its air forces; its deployment of ground forces, special operations units and military police staffed mostly by Muslim Chechens is very measured. While Russia makes use of private military companies – like "Vagner" – for ground operations, it can´t secure complete control of them and prevent mercenaries from Russian-dominated PMCs developing semi-autonomous activities in Syria.[46] Given the tattered state of the Syrian army, Assad has had to rely on pro-Iranian ground troops to maintain stability. Any weakening of Tehran-backed army factions includes the risk that Russia might have to expand its own military operations, which Putin is loath to do because sending many more regular armed forces to Syria is unpopular at home. In a national Russian survey from April 2019, 55 per cent of respondents said that they supported the cessation of their country's military operations in Syria – six per cent more than in April 2017.[47]

In these circumstances, Moscow can neither seek a drastic weakening of Iran in Syria nor compel it. Russia has striven to limit Iranian influence, however. For example, in April 2019, it seems that Moscow initiated personnel changes at the top echelons of Syrian security and military services. Pro-Russian leaders were promoted – Salim Harba became the new chief of staff – while pro-Iranian commanders were side-lined. In addition, Moscow is said to have ordered the detention of pro-Iranian activists in Syria, and used its own military police to make some of the arrests.[48]

In 2018, Moscow announced the establishment of a buffer zone along the Israeli border, reserved exclusively for the Syrian army and Russian forces.[49] However, its half-hearted implementation of the zone was proof that Moscow´s and Israel´s interests overlap only to a certain degree. While Russia is keen to limit Iranian influence in Syria, it does not share Israel's desire to substantially weaken Tehran´s position in Syria and the Middle East. Moscow is not only reliant on Tehran with regard to the military situation on the ground, but also needs to find a compromise with Iran concerning the political future in Syria. Therefore, Russia regularly meets with Iran and Turkey in order to coordinate their Syria policy and avoid underlying tensions escalating. Russia's own expectation of its role in the Middle East is that it becomes the region's main "go-to power" and this requires the ability to maintain good relations with all parties, especially those in conflict.[50] To become such a power, Russia needs leverage over the other

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[46] See Kimberly Marten: The Puzzle of Russian Behavior in Deir Al-Zour, War on the Rock, 5.07.2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/07/the-puzzle-of-russian-behavior-in-deir-al-zour/>; Margarete Klein, Private military companies – a growing instrument in Russia´s foreign and security toolbox, Hybrid CoE Strategic Analysis 17, June 2019, <https://www.hybrid-coe.fi/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Strategic-Analysis-3_2019.pdf>

[47] See Sobytija v Sirii, Levada-Centr, 6.5.2019, <www.levada.ru/2019/05/06/sobytiya-v-sirii/>.

[48] See Assad appoints pro-Russian general as Chief of Staff, 17.4.2019, <https://en.zamanalwsl.net/ news/article/43300/>. – Dekel, Russia and Iran [f.n. 41].

[49] See Russia offers to keep pro-Iran forces 100 kilometers from Israeli border, RFE/RL, 24.7.2018, <www.rferl.org/a/russia-offers-keep-pro-iranian-forces-100-kilometers-israeli-border-netanyahu-lavrov-putin/29386096.html>.

[50] Andrei Kortunov: Russia: the Powerbroker in the Middle East? In: Russia in Global Affairs, 23.11.2018, <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/book/Russia-the-Power-Broker-in-the-Middle-East-19850>. A "go-to power" describes a power that can exert its own influence in a conflict while negotiating with the key actors. Because of the central position of the "go-to power", the other parties take into account its interests. By the same token, the "go-to power" can induce parties with conflicting interests – like those of Russia, Iran and Turkey – to enter into dialogue.

participants. The logic of realpolitik makes it unlikely that Russia will fundamentally realign its Israel policy. In contrast, it will strive to balance its complicated relations with Iran and Israel and avoid any situation that would force it to choose between them.

The limits of selective cooperation

The improving relations between Russia and Israel since the beginning of the new century have not been the result of a stable strategic partnership based on mutual trust and shared objectives. Rather, the countries have made a pragmatic decision to cooperate selectively, i.e. when it is in their interests. The forces driving that decision have been the Russian desire to return to the Middle East as a great power and the necessity to manage both sides´ engagement in the Syrian war. The social and economic ties linking the countries, by contrast, have played little role so far.

The limits of the countries' friendly rapport are clearly visible in the unpredictable dynamics of the Syrian conflict and their differing views about the role that Iran and the US should play in the region. If Moscow caters substantially to Israel's security demands by sustainably restraining pro-Iranian forces in Syria, Russian-Israeli relations are likely to become more stable. Such an accommodation might also be an opportunity to ease tensions somewhat between Russia and the US. Under Netanyahu, Israel has encouraged Moscow and Washington to reach an understanding with regard to Syria and Iran. At the end of June 2019, national security advisers from Israel, the United States and Russia met in Jerusalem. Though no one expected that the parties would reach an agreement on containing Iranian influence in Syria, it was considered a symbolic victory for Russia that the meeting took place at all, for it marked one of the few occasions that Washington has agreed to direct talks with Moscow. The meeting was particularly important given the mounting tensions between Russia and the US in arms control, disarmament and other areas where the countries have cooperated in the past.

However, as the war in Syria is likely to come to an end, the question for Russian-Israeli relations is whether they will revert to their previous level and decrease in intensity. Theoretically, economic relations have the potential to deepen. However, there are serious obstacles to this: in addition to the underdeveloped economic infrastructure in Russia and its low investment potential, there are the negative effects of the corona crisis in both countries.

At least social ties seem to be immune to sudden breakdown. They also form a sturdy pillar, which, due to personal and historical connections, is unlikely to be affected by changes in security cooperation. Nevertheless, the most important factor is the political style of both leaders. As long as Putin and Netanyahu continue to direct their countries, the primacy of realpolitik will be decisive for their relationship, even if individual areas of cooperation change.

The X Syndrome and Antisemitism

Tamara Or on German-Israeli Relations

German-Israeli relations suffer from an X syndrome. For a while, the societies and their governments were moving ever closer. Several years ago, they began to grow apart. One reason is the tying of Germany's historical responsibility to a promise of security for Israel, which has led to false expectations. Another problem is the German idea of Israel, whose distortions have helped make it possible for the far-right, antisemitic AfD to brand itself as a pro-Israeli and pro-Jewish bulwark again antisemitism. A sober look at Germany and Israel shows that they have many interests in common and are already pursuing them together today. The challenge is to think of the relations globally and live them locally. This requires the integration of groups – Russian-speaking Jews in particular – who, though they are becoming increasingly important in both societies, scarcely play a role in German-Israeli relations.

OSTEUROPA: *Frau Or, how are German-Israeli relations?*

Tamara Or: They suffer from an X syndrome. For many years and for a variety of reasons, Germany and Israel were converging. But the opposing forces have been growing ever stronger. Consider the year 2015. On the one hand, celebrations for the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany marked a moment of great closeness. On the other hand, 2015 was the year in which it became apparent how different their positions on key issues had become. The Federal Republic of Germany welcomed the nuclear deal with Iran, which Russia played a large role in brokering. In Israel, people saw the deal as an enormous threat to national security.

OSTEUROPA: *In 2008, the chancellor made a speech to the Knesset in which she said that the security of Israel is part of Germany's national interest.*

Or: Here, both elements that make up the heart of German-Israeli relations come together – and at the same time divide Israel and Germany: the memory of the Shoah and the historical lessons that can be learned from it. For the German state, the Shoah is inextricably tied to Germany's awareness of its historical responsibility. Likewise, the Shoah is the reason that the state of Israel has, since it was founded, endeavoured to guarantee security for all Jews. The framework of German-Israeli relations links Germany's historical responsibility to Israel's demand for security. This can be seen in the chancellor's statement that Israel's security is in Germany's national interest. The connection between security

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and historical responsibility is the actual basis, the foundational narrative of German-Israeli relations, which by extension are at their core relations *ex negativo*, a joining of two state narratives produced by genocide.

OSTEUROPA: *Germany says that it has a "special" relationship with Israel – as it does with France and Poland. What makes that relationship "special"?*

Or: What makes the relationship special is not only the tying of security to historical responsibility or to the dimension of crimes against humanity committed in the Shoah. Above all else, it consists in the fact that German-Israeli relations were declared to be a "German-Israeli friendship". The peculiarity of this friendship is that it is not and has never been a friendship. The idea of a German-Israeli friendship is a one-sided demand on a relationship. It is a one-sided political declaration of intent on the part of Germany, but it does not describe – and has never described – a bilateral relationship.

OSTEUROPA: *What does this mean concretely?*

Or: In simple terms, personal friendship describes a relationship that rests on mutual affection, sympathy and trust. As a political category, friendship describes a bond that goes beyond mutual benefit. It is an achievement without discernible self-interest that rests on the basic assumption of shared values. The "German-Israeli friendship" is grounded not in mutual friendship but in a one-side declaration of friendship on the part of Germany. It is based not on sympathy and trust but on genocide and responsibility. To put it bluntly, Germany's declaration of friendship ties its historical responsibility to a promise of security for Israel, which means that Germany guarantees the security of Israel independently of Germany's national interests. It is therefore only logical that Israel, specifically the Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, expects its friend to stand up for the security interests of Israel and share Israel's view on how to achieve its security. At this point, all that will come of it is a "we agree to disagree". There is agreement that Germany should be committed to the security of Israel, but there is disagreement about what that means.

OSTEUROPA: *These are relations between states . . .*

Or: Yes, but the simultaneity of the non-simultaneous and the mutual divergence, the X syndrome, also exist at the societal level. On the one hand, Germany is Israel's third-largest trading partner. More than half of companies listed on the DAX have investments in Israel. More Hebrew literature been translated into German than any other language. Hebrew is a language of multi-lingual Berlin. Every year, more than 7,000 young people participate in German-Israeli exchanges. There are nearly 100 twin city arrangements with Israel. Our foundation has funded over 120 bilateral projects across a variety of areas.

OSTEUROPA: *In Germany, public perceptions of German-Israeli relations are less positive.*

Or: That's correct. These facts aren't yet part of public consciousness. Here too, there is a duality of past and present: on the one hand, perpetrators and victims commemorate the Shoah together; on the other, the idea of Israel today is dominated by the conflict with the Palestinians, where Israel is portrayed as the guilty party. No matter how serious the newspaper is – if there are deaths in Israel from a terrorist attack and deaths in the Gaza Strip from Israeli fire, it will print pictures from the Gaza Strip. Israel does not appear as the state of victims, but as the state of perpetrators.

OSTEUROPA: *What are the consequences?*

Or: The younger generation in Germany sees very few points of contact with Israel. This is reflected in the demographics of participation in specific activities. If you look at those who take part in Israel Day, which is celebrated in May in many cities across Germany, you see people mostly born before 1960. By contrast, the face of the BDS movement in Germany – which calls for the political and economic isolation of Israel to pressure it to withdraw from the West Bank, among other demands – is young and often female.

OSTEUROPA: *And what of demographic changes in Israel?*

Or: In Israel, too, the groups that have shaped relations with Germany over the past decades are disappearing. Those who have campaigned strongly for German-Israeli relations are the Jews who (or whose parents) fled to Israel from Europe, and most of them are secular and have university educations. By contrast, the population groups that are currently growing in Israel – Bedouins and the ultra-Orthodox – have barely involved themselves in German-Israeli activities and remain much more sceptical about them.

OSTEUROPA: *That's probably not surprising . . .*

Or: No. What is surprising is that the Russian-speaking immigrants in both countries have scarcely been present in German-Israeli relations, even though they are well educated and secular. They make up a large part of Israeli society and the majority of members in Jewish communities in Germany.

OSTEUROPA: *In Israel, many immigrants from the Soviet Union and their successor states support the Yisrael Beiteinu party, which takes a hard line in the conflicts with the Palestinians and the neighbouring Arab states. What about the Jewish immigrants to Germany from Russia and Ukraine? Do they tend to support the party with the most radical positions on immigration, asylum and Islam?*

Or: There is no data on voting behaviour. But 90 per cent of members of the Jewish communities in Germany emigrated from the successor states of the Soviet Union after 1990. And the umbrella organization for Germany's 105 Jewish communities, the Central Council of Jews in Germany, has taken a clear public stance on the AfD, rejecting any attempt to portray the party as harmless. The President of the Central Council, Joseph Schuster, has said that the AfD shares the blame for the growing antisemitism in

Germany. The former president of the Central Council, Charlotte Knobloch, has openly criticised the party as well. These positions send a very important political message, which I regard as a call to resist rationalising or trivialising viewpoints that endorse hatred.

OSTEUROPA: *Regardless of membership numbers, are the Jewish communities representative of those who immigrated from the successor states of the Soviet Union? Aren't they more secular?*

Or: Most definitely. And they brought with them their understanding of what a Jewish community is. According to one idea, a Jewish community is a community of faith. But Jewish communities in Eastern Europe stopped being that in the 19th century. A Jewish community is a place where all Jews meet – both those for whom the Jewish community is a religious institution and those for whom it is not. Today, Jewish communities in Germany have Shabbat circles as well as chess clubs and sports groups. They are places of religious, cultural and social diversity. And, of course, they contain a wide range of different political beliefs.

OSTEUROPA: *How do they see antisemitism?*

Or: All Jewish groups are greatly concerned by the growth of antisemitism. The vast majority of antisemitic crimes are committed by right-wing extremists. This does not mean that no antisemitism exists among Muslims. Unfortunately, antisemitism is still very widespread in many Arab countries. Acknowledging this is important, because downplaying antisemitism among Muslims strengthens those who claim to be the only ones who care about it.
This is a claim made by the AfD. Unfortunately, it is also made by the *Jüdische Rundschau*, a monthly newspaper founded in 2014 that has similar content to the Russian-language *Evropejskaja Panorama*. The paper focuses mainly on antisemitism among Muslims and less on that among right-wing extremists, though the latter is far more common in Germany. This also ignores the fact that many Muslim groups in Germany have recognised the problem. More and more civil society initiatives are being initiated by young Muslims working to reduce antisemitism in their communities. The boundaries do not run between Jews and Muslims, but between supporters and opponents of an open society.

OSTEUROPA: *So contrary to what the AfD claims, the Jews in the AfD do not represent a major movement among Jews in Germany, particularly those with Russian roots?*

Or: That's right. The group is very small, comprising a maximum of two dozen people. But they have an important function for the party, which uses them as tokens to claim that it couldn't possibly be antisemitic. Whenever someone from the AfD says something obviously antisemitic, it's portrayed as an isolated event, with no significance. The party supplies and denies antisemitism in its own ranks while using it as an instrument to mobilise against Muslims and present itself as the lone bulwark against antisemitism. And all of this also serves a political function: as the AfD would have it, antisemitism is an imported ideology that has nothing to do with Germans today. To make this claim sound credible, the AfD needs Jewish members.

OSTEUROPA: *What is the AfD's actual relationship with Jews?*

Or: The AfD is a right-wing extremist party. It seeks to normalise radical ideas. This can be shown systematically, from its ideology and members to the people and groups who closely associate with the party. Antisemitism constitutes the core of every far-right ideology. In most cases, right-wing ideology today is antisemitic not in a religious or racist sense but in a political one. The entire ideology is based on the idea that "the elite" has betrayed "the people" – and we, the AfD, are "the people". The concept of "the elite" may seem vague, but it is clearly defined. "The elite" refers to a small group of "enemies of the people" who want to destroy "the real people" by replacing them with foreigners. Leading AfD politicians such as Alexander Gauland, the recently appointed honorary chairman, and Tino Chrupalla, the party's new national spokesperson, have been spreading this far-right myth, warning of an *Umvolkung*, a Nazi term for ethnic re-engineering. The term "elite" is a generic placeholder into which "Jews" can be inserted at will. For example, Hans-Thomas Tillschneider, an AfD MP in Saxony-Anhalt, has openly stated that the Central Council of Jews in Germany plays a central role in this supposed replacement. It is no coincidence that more than half of AfD voters surveyed in a recent poll agreed with antisemitic statements. Among the general population, the number was significantly lower, around 25 per cent. The success of the AfD is not only a threat to minorities in Germany, but also to society as a whole. The fundamental beliefs of many AfD leaders are incompatible with the liberal democratic order.

OSTEUROPA: *And what about individuals and far-right groups?*

Or: The AfD denies working with Pegida, the Identitarian movement or other right-wing extremist groups. Officially, it has distanced itself from them – part of a new tactic that right-wing extremists internally refer to as *Selbstverharmlosung*, literally "rendering oneself harmless". The reality is that in 2015, two years after its founding, the AfD lurched further right, and, since its change of leadership in 2017, the party has been openly nationalistic. Then, in 2019, it declared itself "the new centre", without disassociating itself from anyone or renouncing any positions. Rather, following the new tactic, the AfD has simply asserted that its far-right views are "normal". And it's worked. One-third of Germans say that the AfD is a "normal party" either because they ignore its extreme right-wing and antisemitic positions, or because they already consider them normal.

The truth is that the AfD is part of a right-wing extremist network. They all attend the same conferences and demonstrations: Björn Höcke, the AfD parliamentary group leader in Thuringia's state parliament; Hans Thomas Tillschneider, the AfD state representative in Saxony-Anhalt; Lutz Bachmann, the chairman of Pegida; Götz Kubitschek, the co-founder of the Institute for State Policy and the managing director of the right-wing publishing house Antaios; Jürgen Elsässer, the editor-in-chief of *Compact* magazine; and many others. For all its tactical distancing rhetoric and party resolutions, there's no denying that the AfD maintains close-knit networks with right-wing extremists.

OSTEUROPA: *What about the AfD's relationship with Israel?*

Or: The AfD presents itself as decidedly pro-Israel. The pro-Israeli and pro-Jewish rhetoric mainly serves to conceal right-wing extremist attitudes and to spread anti-Muslim resentment. By projecting its own antisemitism onto migrants, the AfD can – depending on the particular situation or audience – either use antisemitism to garner approval or mount an apparent defence of Jews against antisemitic Muslims to rebuff criticism. We can gladly do without this kind of disingenuous support when forging constructive German-Israeli relations in the future.

OSTEUROPA: *What would constructive relations look like?*

Or: The X syndrome, the growing divergence between the countries, is not an inevitability. The relations can be reshaped for long-term stability. But this presupposes honesty and a clear understanding that Germany and Israel have a connection that does not rest solely or primarily on Germany's sense of historical responsibility. The Shoah should and will always be part of German-Israeli relations, but it is not a sufficient framework to bring the relationship into the future.

At our foundation, we are currently discussing how to make the UN sustainable development goals the basis of German-Israeli cooperation projects. We want to establish a global perspective at the heart of our projects. The fact is that Germany and Israel are already working together in many different arenas for the simple reason that it benefits them both. The countries already have a completely normal, interest-based relationship. It is this normality, rather than some "special friendship", that points the way to future relations.

The interview was conducted by Manfred Sapper and Volker Weichsel.

Translated by Dominic Bonfiglio, Berlin

Lev Gudkov, Natalia Zorkaya

Familiar Foreigners: Images of Germany and Israel in Russia

Germany and Israel have received millions of Russian-speaking immigrants who retain their ties to their original homeland. However, this has no impact on the collective perception of Germany and Israel in Russia. The Russian view of Germany is formed from two experiences: the traumas arising from the Second World War and the perception of the Federal Republic as a model of a well-run country that guarantees prosperity and freedom. The image of Israel is tied in with the notion of a utopia made real: a Jewish state that embodies the idea of an "organic unity of the nation". Israel is seen as a modern, dynamic country which cultivates efforts to achieve freedom and social justice, rationalism and a belief in progress. The antisemitic, anti-Zionist stereotypes of the Soviet period have almost disappeared.

Russia has changed radically in the last ten years. In the sphere of foreign policy, the country has shifted from a demonstrative rapprochement with the West to a policy of confrontation that includes military blackmail. Domestically, the regime has largely achieved its goal of discrediting the opposition and its demand that human rights, democracy and the rule of law should be respected. The wave of patriotic euphoria that followed the annexation of the Crimea and the outbreak of the 'hybrid' war in the Donbas in the spring of 2014 showed that Putin and his regime were now more fully accepted by the population than had been the case before. At first glance, the Kremlin seems to have been successful in its efforts to maintain control over a population that has at times made its dissatisfaction clear. A conservative, militarist and nation-statist ideology is being imposed on the population, and religious traditionalism is being taught in schools. But how deep are the roots of this shift? Is this ideology establishing itself in people's collective consciousness, and is it shaping an identity for which relations with the West

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Natalia Zorkaya, Senior researcher, Levada-Center. Recent article in OSTEUROPA: Ressource des Autoritarismus. Diffuse Homophobie in Igor' Kons Lesart, in: OE, 10/2013, S. 68–70.
Jointly authored articles by Lev Gudkov and Natalia Zorkaya: Erstickt und erwürgt. Russlands Protestbewegung. Eine Antwort, in: OE, 1–2/2019, S. 47–51. – Instrumentalisieren, Klittern, Verdrängen. Russlands unerwünschtes Revolutionsjubiläum, in: OE, 6–8/2017, S. 19–42.

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play an important symbolic role? The events of 2019 showed that the effects of mobilisation through foreign policy were wearing off, even if the consequences will remain perceptible for years to come. The balance sheet of what has been achieved by aggressive, anti-Western and nationalist propaganda is mixed at best. While anti-Western sentiments continue to exist on the surface of societal discourse, an important element of collective identity remains untouched by this. The idea of the West as a utopia or an orientation for Russia remains, not only in the minds of the progressive part of Russia's population.

We can illustrate this by looking at the attitudes of citizens of Russia to Germany and Israel. These two countries have a special significance for Russia's history, a significance that can hardly be overstated. 7.5 – 8 million people emigrated from the Soviet Union and its successor states between 1987 and 2017.[1] Israel, Germany and the United States were the main destinations of this emigration.

Emigration is always determined by two sets of factors: the attraction exerted by the destination and the considerations that lead someone to reject the homeland. We do not address the push factors in this article. What we want to investigate are the images of Germany and Israel in Russia's collective consciousness, which are also the factors that explain the attraction exerted by these countries. Our study is based on data from polls conducted by the Levada-Center over a long period on the relevant issues.[2]

Emigration from the USSR was at its height between 1987 and 1992; five million people left the country in this period. After this the numbers declined rapidly, but they rose again with the annexation of the Crimea, the worsening of the economic situation, and the intensification of repression. Up until now every crisis in Russia, whether political or socio-economic, has led to an increase in emigration.[3]

There have been three waves of post-Soviet emigration. The first of these, which could be called an 'ethnic' wave, saw Jews, Germans, Greeks, and members of other national minorities leave Russia. The main motive here was family unification. This wave has almost come to an end, as nearly all of those who fall into this category have now emigrated. The emigration of the Russian Germans to their 'historic homeland', for example, met with the approval of the population.[4] The second, 'economic' wave was a reaction to the collapse of the Soviet planned economy and its consequences, which included mass unemployment, delays in paying wages, hyperinflation, loss of savings, and a catastrophic decline in the standard of living. People lost not only their jobs but also their status. Professional de-qualification was followed by the loss of social recognition, and anomie and depression were widespread. The logical consequence was that large numbers of scientists, engineers and computer programmers left the country after the disintegration of the Soviet military-industrial complex, where the best qualified of them had

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1 The initial legal regulations that made it easier to leave the USSR were passed in 1987. In 1991 a law on leaving and entering the country was passed which, in effect, lifted the Iron Curtain and made free movement possible.

2 The data from these polls can be found in the Levada-Center publications entitled Monitoring obshchestvennogo mneniya, which appeared from 2004 onwards as Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya, in the annual reports Obshchestvennoe mnenie, and on the Center's website at <www.levada.ru>.

3 Lev Gudkov, Boris Dubin, Natalya Zorkaya: Ot'ezd iz Rossii kak sotsial'nyi diagnoz i zhiznennaya perspektiva: prichiny, namereniya, deistviya. Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya, 4/2011, pp. 46–80.

4 In August 1990, 42 per cent of respondents said they thought the emigrants would have better lives in Germany; only 12 per cent thought things would be worse for them than in Russia, and the largest proportion, 46 per cent, had no opinion on the matter because they knew too little about the history of the Russian Germans or were not interested in the subject.

worked, had left them without any possibility of earning a living. This wave of emigration reached its peak between 1994 and 1999, after which it fell away. When economic growth began in 2003, as a result of initial market-economic reforms and higher prices for oil and raw materials on the world market, there was a further sharp reduction in the number of people "leaving the country to take up permanent residence abroad", as it was termed in bureaucratic jargon. The period of 'stability' under Putin began.

The third wave of emigration started in 2011-12. It was triggered by Vladimir Putin's return to the position of president, the intensification of repression by the regime, and the dwindling of the Russian middle class's hopes that the country would be democratised or modernised.[5] The emigrants of the first two waves had mainly been seeking to improve their material situation and consumption options, but those who emigrated now came from a quite different background. They were successful people by any standard of measurement: they had social standing and a high standard of living, and owned property and capital – not necessarily very much by European or North American standards, but enough for a comfortable life in Russia. They also had acquaintances and contacts in the countries to which they emigrated. But this was not the only significant respect in which these people differed from those who had emigrated during the Soviet period. At that time the emigrants had left a closed society, but the third wave consisted of people who had already been abroad and had experience of business or university education there. The main factor pushing them to leave was a kind of civilisational incompatibility between their attitudes and the authoritarian police state in Russia, although other grounds for emigration were frequently given: more variety of consumption opportunities, business interests, economic and political instability in Russia, the lack of protection against arbitrary state actions, the possibility of better medical treatment, or the desire to ensure a better future for their children and to spare teenage sons service in the Russian army. It is hard to estimate the loss of intellectual, cultural and moral capital caused by the emigration of these groups of the population.[6] However, there are indirect indications such as the growing social apathy of a large proportion of Russian society, which has lost its most active and engaged members, and people's increasing preparedness to employ passivity and adaptation to the authoritarian state as a survival strategy.

Emigration to Israel reached its highest level in 1990, and for Germany this point was reached in 1994. Over a period of three decades between 1987 and 2017, Germany received approximately 3 million emigrants from the Soviet Union and its successor states, of whom between 1.5 and 2.2 million (the estimates vary) came from Russia and most of the rest from Ukraine and Kazakhstan; in the same period Israel received approximately 1.3 million people from these countries.[7] After the disintegration of the USSR the number of emigrants stabilised, but in this period they went to a wider range of destinations. Some emigrants moved on to a different country, but we have no reliable

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[5] On this point, see Davonschwimmende Felle. Autokratie und Aufbruch in Russland. OSTEUROPA, 1/2012, and Auge auf! Aufbruch und Regression in Russland. OSTEUROPA, 6–8/2012.

[6] Ol'ga Vorob'eva, Aleksandr Grebenyuk: Ėmigratsiya iz Rossii v kontse XX – nachale XXI veka. Analiticheskii doklad. Moscow 2016. – Irina Dezhina: „Utechka umov" iz Rossii: mify i real'nost", <www.demoscope.ru/weekly/2002/059/analit02.php> – Zhanna Zaionchkovskaya: Trudovaya ėmigratsiya rossiiskich uchenykh, in: Naselenie i obshchestvo. Informatsionnyi biulleten' Tsentra demografii i ėkologii cheloveka, 73/2003, <www.demoscope.ru/acrobat/ps73.pdf>.

[7] Mikhail Denisenko: Ėmigratsyja iz byvshego SSSR za poslednyuyu chetvert' veka. Nauchnyi seminar fonda „Liberal'naya missiya", 24.4.2019, <www.liberal.ru/articles/7357>. Other countries received significantly fewer emigrants from the former USSR: for example, Italy approximately 0.5 million, Canada approximately 250,000, Poland just over 300,000.

figures here. Some moved from Israel to Germany, the USA, the UK, or Finland, but overall the main destinations remained the same.

Any quantitative statement we might make about the scale of the post-Soviet emigration from Russia is bound to be imprecise. Only an approximate orientation can be provided. The department of the Ministry of the Interior responsible for migration only keeps a record of people who apply to give up their Russian citizenship.[8] Mikhail Denisenko has provided a more precise figure by reconstructing emigration from Russia on the basis of statistics from the receiving countries.[9] But even Denisenko's calculations are incomplete, as he himself admits the countries concerned have very different ways of recording migrants and different laws on how foreigners can become citizens. In addition, a considerable number of people live 'in two countries': they remain citizens of the Russian Federation but live permanently abroad and work or study there. Many of them have a limited residence permit at first, but then decide to remain in the country after completing their education or period of practical training, after the end of their employment contract, or after getting married. At any rate, there is no 'return home' worth mentioning.

Regular polls conducted by the Levada-Center show that, in relatively quiet years, the proportion of people considering emigration is, on average, between 11 and 13 per cent, and at times of crisis (2000, 2011–13, 2016), it rises to between 20 and 22 per cent. These figures can also be seen as an indication of a crisis situation in the country. In May 2019 this value stood at 16 per cent (table 1). However, the percentage of those who are actually prepared to emigrate is much lower (table 2).

The percentage of those who would like to emigrate is significantly higher among young people. In September 2018, against the background of a rapid growth of dissatisfaction and in an atmosphere of protest, 53 per cent said they wanted to leave Russia forever, out of a total of 3000 people aged between 16 and 30 polled.[10] Of course, this is only an inclination and not yet a concrete decision to emigrate, but the inclination can be read as an indication that people do not see any future in Russia and have lost their faith that the country will move in a positive direction. In this study, the intentionality of collective ideas is important: people believe that a 'normal life' is possible in Western countries but have no hope of this in post-totalitarian Russia.

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[8] According to data provided by the Migration Service of the Russian Federation, the number of people who migrated to countries outside the CIS was in 2012 2.5 times higher, in 2013 3.5 times higher, and in 2014 4.7 times higher, than in 2009. In absolute numbers, this represents an increase from 10,940 to 51,151 people; see Vorob'eva, Grebenyuk: Ėmigratsiya iz Rossii [f.n. 7], p. 12, tab. 2.

[9] Denisenko, Ėmigratsiya iz byvshego SSSR [f.n. 8].

[10] A poll conducted in March 2017 among students (n = 6060) showed a high level of preparedness to emigrate (at least for a time). Respondents were asked: "What would you do if you had the opportunity to go to another country and settle down there?" 44 per cent of the students replied that they would "go away for a longer period in order to earn money, learn the language, or work there for a time, but would very likely return to Russia". 26 per cent said they would "go away forever". 18 per cent said they would remain in Russia, and the rest either didn't know or had never thought about it. In 1991, a poll among young people (with the answers formulated differently) found that 32 per cent of them would like to study abroad (57 per cent said no) and 51 per cent would like to work abroad (39 per cent said no); n = 760.

Table 1: Would you like to emigrate permanently? (Percentage of respondents)

Year of poll	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**	**N =**
1990	11	69	19	1708
1991	18	69	13	2805
1992	15	66	19	1566
1993	15	72	13	1651
1994	11	78	11	1800
1995	12	77	11	2000
1999	16	77	7	2550
2000	21	75	4	2000
2009	13	80	7	1600
2010	13	80	7	1600
2011	22	73	5	800
2012	20	72	8	800
2013	22	69	9	800
2014	11	83	6	800
2015	16	79	5	800
2016	20	75	5	800
2017	14	79	7	1600
2019	16	82	2	1600

Table 2: How close are you at the moment to taking a decision to leave the country and settle abroad permanently? (in per cent)

	1992	**2009**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
I'm getting hold of the forms	0.1	0.5	0.5	<1	0.2	<1	0.7	<1	<1
I have taken a firm decision	0.2	0.6	2	3	0.9	3	0.9	<1	2
I'm thinking about it	3	3	6	5	5	5	4	7	7
I think about it sometimes, but at the moment I'm not ready	18	19	21	17	17	13	16	16	16
I have never thought about it	79	78	69	74	77	79	78	73	74
N =	1650	1600	800	800	800	800	800	800	1600

The Image of Germany

Over the past 30 years, the image of Germany in Russia and that country's relationship with Germany have been determined by two dominant elements: on the one hand the idea of Germany as one of the most developed countries in the world and a model of European modernisation, and on the other the collective trauma caused by World War II. During the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth, Germany exerted an enormous influence on Russian culture and society. It was the source of knowledge, technologies and practices adopted in numerous fields of social, political and cultural life, from education and science via literature and philosophy to industry and the army. Germany was a model for Russia's modernisation. After World War II, the USA took over this function.[11] Up until this point, the image of Germany reflected the wide gap between Russia and the countries of Europe, and for this very reason it generated a tension in Russian culture which prompted self-reflection and a search for a national identity. This consciousness, which was fundamentally ambivalent, can be seen on the one hand in zealous imitation of Western technology and, on the other, in the struggle against "grovelling before the West", bourgeois ideology, and foreign morality. This issue found expression in all kinds of ways, ranging from Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin's ironic 'Conversation between the boy with trousers and the boy without trousers'[12] to the figure of the all-powerful foreigner, the devil Woland in the shape of a German professor, in Mikhail Bulgakov's novel *Master i Margarita*. In every case, the ideal image of another country served as the screen onto which one's own negative or positive characteristics could be projected and formulated for the first time. This formation of a national identity *ex negativo* is typical of societies with a strong inferiority complex.

The second dominant element in Russia's image of Germany combined traumatic experiences in the form of the death and suffering of relations, hardship and destruction, and the humiliating defeats of the first years of the war, with pride in the victory not only over Hitler and National Socialism but also over the country that had formerly appeared as the most advanced civilising and cultural power. Victory thus placed Russia on the same level as Europe – at least in a moral and symbolic sense, even if not in terms of prosperity and quality of life.

Polls conducted by the Levada-Center on diverse aspects of relations between Russia and Germany on questions such as fears, projections and expectations, the image of the Germans, and perspectives for cooperation make it possible to examine these ambivalences in the collective consciousness more closely.

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[11] The citizens of Russia thought of the USA as the epitome of modernity and democracy up until 2014. At that time, Germany was in second place. Respondents considered the USA's domestic politics to be different from that of other Western states: equality before the law, a high standard of living, concern for people's welfare on the part of the state, freedom, and a state that did not interfere in citizens' private lives, did not impose any ideology or morality on them, and did not try to regulate their behaviour. As a consequence of the 'Crimea syndrome' and of anti-American propaganda in Russia, the focus of such ideas shifted from America (Russians had also, to a lesser degree, held similar views about Germany) and they were transferred to the neutral Scandinavian countries. On the complex image of America in Russia, see Lev Gudkov: Antiamerikanismus in Putins Russland. Schichten, Spezifika, Funktionen, in: OSTEUROPA, 4/2015, pp. 73–97.

[12] Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin: Za rubezhem, in: Sobranie sochineii v 10 tomakh, Vol. 7. Moscow 1988.

When the citizens of Russia are asked what ideas they associate with Germany and the Germans, the answers they give are extremely stable. Little or nothing has changed over a period of decades.[13] One reason for this is that these associations have nothing to do with concrete knowledge of Germany or about the real relations between the USSR and the Federal Republic or between Russia and Germany. Rather, the image of Germany and the projection of this image onto 'the Germans' arises from the self-image of the Russians, from their problematic relationship with themselves and with others.[14] The complexes of a country that followed the path of catch-up modernisation affect both the elements that are put together to produce the image of the other and the reception and interpretation of the latest information. Of course, propaganda, the media and the actions of politicians play an extremely important role here, but in the final analysis these factors too are always oriented to the image of the other or others that functions as the fixed point for comparisons and as the focus for evaluating and interpreting interstate relations in the present. The crucial point is that Putin's propaganda creates no new meanings and no new ideas; all it does is take up old stereotypes and ideas from the time of the Cold War and place them in the context of the present day (table 3).

In the eyes of the citizens of Russia, it is not a political system or a legal order that provides the criteria by which a country's level of development, modernity or 'greatness' can be judged, but exclusively indicators of prosperity. Although these are vague and indeterminate, they play an important role in comparisons between countries. It is not freedom, the protection of individual rights or the quality of the legal system that are considered to be the criteria for trust in politicians and collective satisfaction, but how well the people live and their consumption possibilities. Germany's material prosperity is what makes it one of the most attractive countries in the world for Russian public opinion.

Ideas about the Federal Republic's democratic system are incorporated into the image, but they are not decisive. For example, in response to the question "Which country could be a democratic model for Russia?" over half of the respondents either were unable to give an answer (49 per cent) or said there was no such country (six per cent). The others chose Germany (11 per cent), the USA (eight per cent), Sweden (four per cent), Switzerland or France (each three per cent), the UK, Finland, Canada or Norway (each two per cent), or China (also two per cent; poll conducted in March 2010, n = 1800). Young people's views are more positive. In 2007, 45 per cent of them said they considered Germany a "fully democratic country", 23 per cent said it was "on the whole democratic, but with some authoritarian characteristics", and only eight per cent thought Germany was authoritarian.

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[13] Lev Gudkov: Das Bild der Deutschen im kollektiven Bewusstsein der Russen von heute, in: Ernst-Jörg Studnitz, Birgit Klein (eds): 10. Potsdamer Begegnungen. Deutsche und russische Spiegelbilder. Was halten, was erwarten wir voneinander? Berlin 2008, pp. 26–37.

[14] This also applies to other European countries, for example the Scandinavian states. The positive ideas Russian citizens associate with these countries arise from deficits in their own self-image. These countries have retained their function as models in the current situation of tense relations with the West.

Table 3:
A: What occurs to you spontaneously in connection with 'Germany'?
B: What are the main things you associate with the idea of 'the Germans' or 'Germany'?

	A		B	
	August 2003	**November 2011**	**June 2005**	**May 2015**
The Great Patriotic War	26	38	28	46
Fascism, National Socialism, Hitler, Gestapo	10	10	20	17
Order, meticulousness, discipline, punctuality, pedantry, hard-working, reliability, rationality, a sense of the practical	15	12	19	21
European development, a Western country, the West, a strong country, a civilised country, a developed economy	7	7	7	16
Occupation, suffering, death of relatives, hardship, concentration camps	1	3	3	9
Friendly country, ally, reliable partner	2	6	2	1
Makes of cars (Mercedes, BMW, Audi, others)	4	6	1	15
Cleanliness, tidiness, well-looked-after	3	4	1	3
A rich, prosperous country, high standard of living, rich people, security	11	4	1	7
Beer, sausages	4	4	1	5
German craftsmanship, technology	2	3	1	8
Friends, acquaintances, relations in Germany	0.2	3	1	2
Cultural achievements, a nation of culture, significant traditions, philosophy, literature, music, the Dresden Old Masters Gallery, museums, churches, monasteries, cultural monuments, the zoo etc.	5	4	2	6
Democracy, the rule of law, obeying the law	1	2	-	4
A good, beautiful, 'normal' country, autobahns	3	2	1	2
Cruelty, hostility, other negative associations	1	4	5	4
Friendliness, decency, other positive qualities	1	2	1	1
Berlin, the Berlin Wall, Bavaria, other German Länder	1	2	1	6
Victory, May 9, Victory parade	1	1	1	4
Holocaust, genocide, extermination of the Jews	0	0	0	1
Other associations (sport, the German language, World War I, football, Otto von Stierlitz, emigration)	6	7	7	12
Nothing/no response, Don't know.	7	14	5	7

Figures in percentages, N = 1600. Replies to open questions have been coded and recorded in a slightly generalised form. Respondents could give more than one answer.[15]

[15] Among the additional comments made were memories and experiences from the past ("They killed my father, my relatives were carried off to Germany") and typical statements relating to the present: "They used to be our enemies, but not anymore"; "I don't feel any hatred or desire for

In terms of substance, the perception of Germany remains unchanged whatever methods are used in surveys. In a poll conducted in August 2009 (n = 1600), respondents were asked to select, from a list of 28 positive and negative judgements about Germany, those with which they were most fully in agreement. The main responses were as follows[16]:

Which of these assessments of Germany do you agree with?

- everything is clean and well-looked-after (61 per cent)
- diligent and hard-working people (43 per cent)
- plays an important role in world politics (35 per cent)
- a well-developed national pride (34 per cent)
- significant cultural traditions (33 per cent)
- a stable democracy (30 per cent)
- they place a lot of emphasis on protecting nature and the environment (28 per cent)
- a reliable partner (24 per cent)
- good conditions for doing business (24 per cent)
- beautiful, impressive landscapes (23 per cent)
- outstanding sportsmen and women (17 per cent)
- a liberal-minded country (16 per cent)
- religion is very important (13 per cent)
- hospitable people (12 per cent)

No more than a negligible number of people agreed with the negative statements – on average, between two and three per cent. There were two exceptions: eight per cent agreed that "The secret services exert a major influence" and four per cent agreed that "This country poses a threat".

In a poll conducted over a number of years that asked Russians to identify the most important Germans, respondents named approximately 100 German politicians, composers and artists, military figures, industrialists and scientists, but only 14 of these people were named by more than two per cent of the respondents (Table 4). All other names, including people from the spheres of politics, history, science and literature (including the Brothers Grimm, Richard Wagner, Joseph Goebbels, Thomas Mann, Erich Maria Remarque, Richard Strauß, Franz Schubert, Albert Einstein, Clara Zetkin, Ernst Thälmann and Erich Honecker) were mentioned less often or only once. It is noticeable that only three contemporary politicians are among those named – Angela Merkel, Helmut Kohl, and Gerhard Schröder.[17] In general, the overwhelming majority of the Germans named

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revenge"; "No hostility"; "Gorbachev withdrew the troops". There are also positive comments: "They are great people [the Germans], they have achieved a lot, done everything right".

[16] Only statements with which over 10 per cent of the respondents agreed are listed. These data are taken from a German-Russian research project; the poll was conducted in Germany and Russia using an identical questionnaire drawn up by the Institut für Demoskopie in Allensbach.

[17] Angela Merkel has been among the people most frequently mentioned in the category of 'Women of the Year', who our respondents are asked to name after the end of every year. In 2015 she came first, beating pop singers, Russian politicians, and other women who are well known in public life. See Levada-tsentr: Obshchestvennoe mnenie 2015. Ezhegodnik, Moscow 2015, 10, Tab. 1.5. Up until the domestic change of course after the mass protests against Putin in the winter of 2011–12, Russians had an extremely positive attitude to Merkel as a representative of German politics. In 2010, 60 per cent of the respondents gave her good marks in most respects. Only 12 per cent viewed her negatively, and 28 per cent either didn't know or had no opinion. After 2014, under the influence of anti-Western propaganda, the citizens of

lived before the twentieth century, that is to say, they are representatives of world culture and as such part of the subject matter taught in schools, so that all Russians who have graduated from secondary school know about them. But it is only a thin stratum of educated people who have even this low level of knowledge; the majority of Russia's population is effectively cut off from the modern West European world.

Table 4: Name three great Germans

	June 2005	August 2008	May 2015
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	31	18	18
Adolf Hitler	31	17	17
Johann Sebastian Bach	12	8	12
Angela Merkel	–	4	11
Karl Marx	14	6	10
Ludwig van Beethoven	7	5	8
Friedrich Engels	7	3	5
Friedrich Schiller	8	5	4
Immanuel Kant	4	4	4
Otto von Bismarck	4	2	4
Friedrich Nietzsche	2	2	4
Michael Schumacher	1	1	4
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	3	3	3
Heinrich Heine	4	3	3
Helmut Kohl	4	3	2
Richard Wagner	1	1	2
Gerhard Schröder	5	2	1
Other Germans	5	5	5
Don't know/no response	19	44	32

Figures are percentages of respondents. The sequence in which names are listed corresponds to the ranking in 2015. In 2008 the poll was conducted with a more open formulation of the question, and respondents could mention more than three names.

This is unsurprising given that the media are the most important source for the Russian population's image of Germany, especially the central television channels controlled by the Kremlin. 80 per cent of respondents say that television is their most important source of information, 28 per cent say "newspapers", 15-17 per cent say "books and magazines", 15 per cent say "radio" and 12 per cent say "the internet". No more than three per cent refer to "travel guides and travel literature", though this source undoubtedly offers a more differentiated picture of reality than the media. However, the basis for collective ideas about Germany is laid down in secondary schools and universities (14 per cent say this). Only five per cent of respondents mentioned a trip they had made themselves as a source of information for their image of Germany.

Russia evaluated Merkel much less positively: in August 2016, the question "What is your attitude to the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel?" received the following responses: 14 per cent "very positive" or "fairly positive", and 69 per cent "fairly negative" or "very negative".

57 per cent of respondents found reporting on Germany to be fairly positive, even in the official media, up until 2014, and only eight per cent found it to be negative (in August 2008, 23 per cent thought reporting varied or was contradictory and 11 per cent had no opinion).

Even when polls use different methods or the questions are slightly differently formulated, there is no change in findings about the image of Germany and the Germans. This is not a question of 'objective characteristics' of the country and its people, but has more to do with the reproduction of old cultural stereotypes, that is to say of mirror-images, projections, and the negative transference or supplementing of self-images. On the one hand, the emphasis is on 'German qualities' such as discipline, cultivation, hard work, rationality, consistency, friendliness, a sense of the practical and business sense. On the other hand, there is a dominant striving to reduce the distance between 'them and us': the Germans are said to be "normal people", "just like us". This is connected with a number of negative attitudes that continue to exist and are expressed in formulations such as "the memory of the Holocaust", "the extermination of the Jews", "burdensome memories" [of war, occupation, the deaths of relatives, hunger, deprivation, (LG, NZ)], "former enemies", "fear of war", and "Aryans, racial superiority".

The dynamic of the images depends, above all, on changes in the Russians' collective identity and the periodic internal tensions and revaluations connected with this. This is another reason why there is a certain asymmetry in Russian citizens' relationship with the Germans: when asked in 2008 "Do the Russians like the Germans?", 44 per cent of respondents said "yes" (27 per cent said "no", and 29 per cent did not respond or had no opinion on this question). When asked the projective question "Do the Germans like the Russians?" 34 per cent did not respond, 39 per cent said "no", and only 27 per cent said "yes". By 2015, the attitude to the Germans had become more negative (only one third said the Russians "like" the Germans, and 35 per cent said that they "do not particularly like" them), and the percentage of those who responded to the projective question by saying that the Germans "do not particularly like" the Russians had risen from 39 to 46 per cent.

Attitudes to Germany, 1990–2018

We can distinguish three phases in Russian citizens' attitudes to the Germans: (1) the period of radical changes, from perestroika to the disintegration of the USSR and the reunification of Germany (1989–1991); (2) the long phase in which Germany was perceived in a distant but positive way in Russia (1991–2008); after Putin's speech in Munich in February 2007, Russian policy changed slowly but surely and, with every year that passed, became more anti-liberal and anti-Western; (3) in the third phase relations with Germany deteriorated after the annexation of the Crimea and the imposition of Western sanctions on Russia. European politicians' criticisms of the Kremlin leadership because of its foreign policy and violations of human rights gave rise to a flood of aggressive accusations directed at the West (which was said to be russophobic and hostile) and led to the self-isolation of Russia.

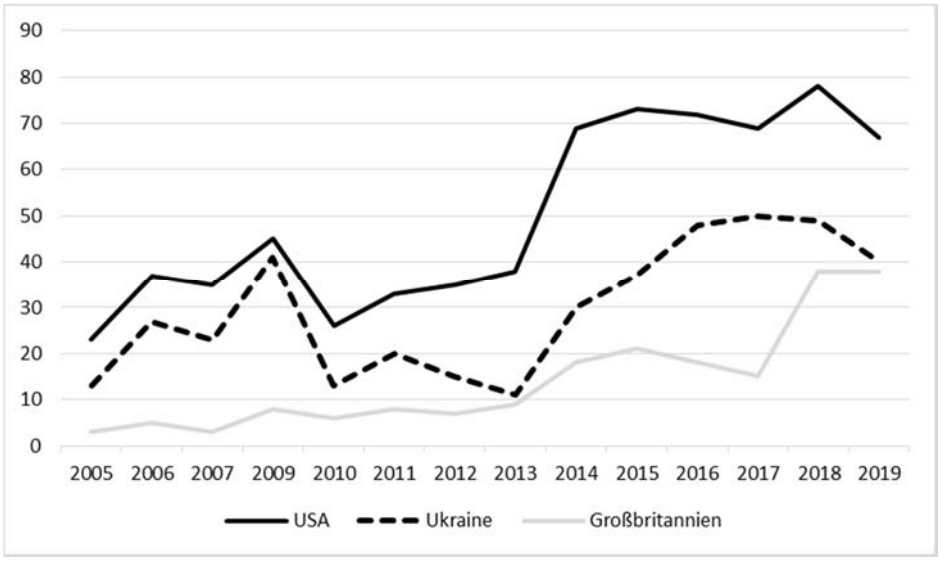
Table 5: In general terms, how would you describe your attitude to Germany?

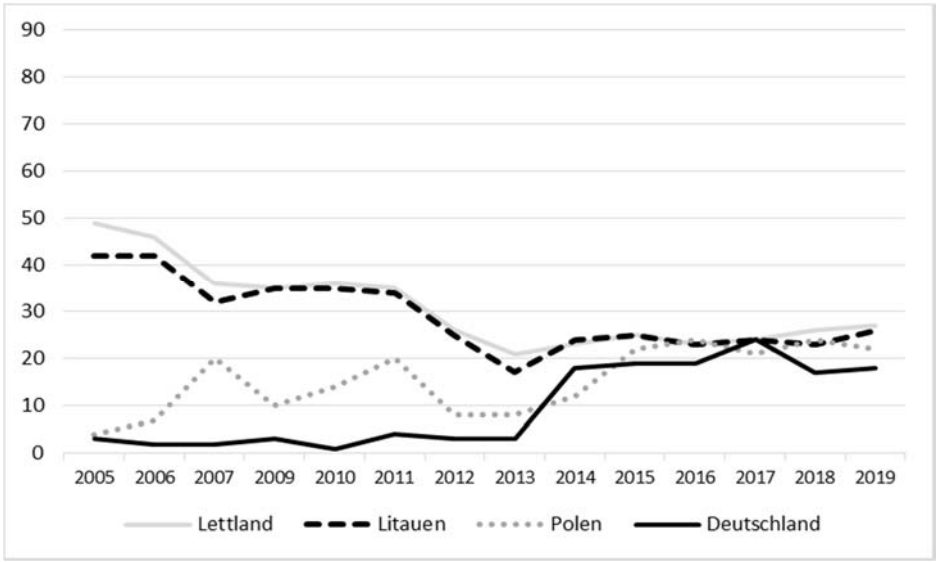
	Aug. 1991	**Aug. 1992**	**Apr. 1993**	**Mar. 1997**	**Dec. 1998**	**June 2000**	**Oct. 2004**	**May 2008**	**Dec. 2010**	**Feb. 2011**	**July 2015**	**Nov. 2016**	**May 2018**	**June 2018**	**Aug. 2019**
Very good	18	19	24	13	26	12	15	7	17	13	8	6	13	8	8
Fairly good	53	53	48	59	57	51	68	67	59	71	65	51	52	46	53
Fairly bad	8	5	5	14	14	6	10	12	7	7	14	23	13	19	18
Very bad	3	2	1	4	1	3	2	2	3	0	3	5	4	8	7
Don't know	18	21	22	10	2	19	5	12	14	9	10	15	19	19	14
Total+	71	72	72	72	83	63	73	74	76	84	73	57	65	54	61
Total–	11	7	6	18	15	9	12	14	10	7	17	18	17	27	21
N =	945	1000	1650	1630	1800	1800	1600	1600	4600	800	1600	5000	1000	5000	1600

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the unification of Germany and the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces from East Germany, which began in 1990, triggered criticism of Gorbachev from conservative Soviet circles. Approximately 25 per cent of the population shared fears that his policy could lead to a renaissance of fascism, to the dominance of Germany over other states, and finally to the calling into question of post-war borders in Europe. However, this rhetoric and the attempt by supporters of the Communist Party to maintain the socialist camp and other spheres of influence faded away rapidly. Gorbachev's peaceful foreign policy course was supported by an absolute majority of the Soviet population, especially after the withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989. There was no serious opposition to the plans for German unification, even though this issue was repeatedly used as an opportunity to accuse Gorbachev of treachery. The prospect of peace in Europe and hopes that the democratic states would help the USSR to overcome stagnation, isolation, and economic decline soon won through against the positions of more conservative forces. In mid-1990, 60-65 per cent of respondents supported the planned unification of Germany and 19-20 per cent opposed it. Unification was thought to be a "just cause", and its concrete implementation was also seen positively by the majority – 48 per cent were in favour, 15 per cent were opposed, and the remainder had no opinion on the matter. In 2009, 63 per cent of the population of the Russian Federation still thought the changes that had taken place at that time had been positive – 11 per cent saw them in a negative light, and 26 per cent had no opinion or were indifferent.
This attitude to Germany remained stable up to 2014. In 2015, the proportion of respondents who welcomed the unification of Germany sank to 47 per cent while 14 per cent, roughly the same percentage as in 2009, rejected it. Many people, 38 per cent of respondents, were simply no longer interested in the events of the past and expressed no opinion.

However, the "patriotic mobilisation" that followed the annexation of the Crimea led to a growth in anti-Western sentiments which also had an effect on the relationship with Germany: it moved into the group of countries considered "hostile".

Figures 1 and 2: Name five states you consider most hostile to Russia





Figures represent the percentage of respondents who mentioned each state. The data were collected in May of each year, with the exceptions of 2007 (August) and 2009 (March)

Before 2014, no more than between two and four per cent of respondents had ever considered Germany a "hostile country". After the imposition of sanctions and under the influence of the greatly intensified anti-European rhetoric of official Russian propaganda, Germany was described as a country with a hostile attitude by over 10 per cent of respondents for the first time since the disintegration of the USSR.[18] The Baltic states and Georgia, which were pressing for membership of the European Union and NATO, were initially at the top of the list; after this, the USA and Ukraine took over, and later the UK (especially after the Skripal case) and Poland caught up.[19]

There was also a major shift in the assessment of relations between Russia and Germany in this period. In 2008-9, despite the tensions caused by Russia's war with Georgia and Western states' criticisms on this score, these relations were still considered "friendly", "neighbourly" or "relaxed" by an absolute majority of respondents (82–85 per cent, see Table 6). After the annexation of Crimea in 2014, though, 56 per cent described these relations as "cool", "tense", or even "hostile"; in August 2019 this had gone back down to 39 per cent. It is apparent that, against the background of a decline in the standard of living, economic stagnation, and pessimism about the future, the population of Russia has had enough of permanent confrontation.

Table 6: In general terms, how would you describe current relations between Russia and Germany?

	May 2008	**Aug. 2008**	**Nov. 2009**	**May 2015**	**Oct. 2015**	**Aug. 2019**
Friendly	9	8	9	3	3	7
Good, neighbourly	26	28	24	5	7	7
Normal, relaxed	50	46	49	39	30	39
Cool	7	10	10	33	38	27
Tense	1	2	2	12	15	11
Hostile	0.3	1	1	2	3	1
Don't know	7	5	5	6	4	6

The Levada-Center's investigations reveal an interesting ambivalence in Russia's collective consciousness in relation to other states. As part of the West, Germany belongs today to Russia's opponents, along with the USA, the UK, Japan and other countries; considered on its own, however, it has retained for the majority of the population all the characteristics of a country with positive associations and, even if it is not an ally or friend, it can at least be considered a partner with which, as far as possible, good relations should be fostered on a permanent basis.

[18] A total of 30 countries were mentioned, but most of them by no more than 3-10 per cent of respondents; see Obshchestvennoe mnenie 2018. Ezhegodnik. Moscow 2019, 149, Tab. 25.6.

[19] Belarus and Kazakhstan were mentioned most frequently as friendly states. After the annexation of the Crimea, China joined the top group and Kazakhstan dropped down to third place; see ibid., 148, Tab. 25.5.

In the eyes of Russian public opinion since 2014,[20] the anti-Western rhetoric and propaganda have caused Germany to lose some of its status as a "great power", which many had accorded it in the past, but the country has not been turned into an "enemy" for the majority of the population. Official propaganda, and consequently the population of Russia, apportions the main blame for the confrontation to the USA, which is allegedly "manipulating" Europe and forcing the European states to follow an anti-Russian policy. Interest in what is happening in Germany was never very great, and today only a very small number of educated people follow events there (three to five per cent). Overall, however, the image of Germany does not follow the zigzag course of the changing political situation, nor is it dependent on the immediate pragmatic or practical interests of the population of Russia. Rather, it has a symbolic function: Germany stands for the idea of Europe and for modernisation, and in this respect, it also embodies an idealised conception of a possible development for Russia itself. Russia's citizens have no doubt about Germany's leading role in Europe; they see it as an exemplary democratic country, one that is at the forefront of technological progress and does not resort to authoritarian methods in order to subjugate other countries. For this reason, and despite the Kremlin's propaganda and hostile rhetoric, Germany retains a significant part of its attractiveness in the eyes of Russian society.

The Image of Israel

The image of Israel in Russia is very different from the image of Germany. It is based on quite different values and associations. Above all, it is tied in with the notion of a utopia made real: the Zionist project, a Jewish state that embodies the idea of an "organic unity of the nation". From the Russian perspective, Israel is not only a small, modern, and dynamic country surrounded by traditionalist Arab states, but also a society that preserves and cultivates the different traditions of European culture – the emancipatory nationalism of the Enlightenment, the striving for freedom and social justice, rationalism and a belief in progress.

This is particularly striking considering that Israel, unlike many 'old-new' nation-states in East-Central and Southeast Europe such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Estonia, Serbia, Macedonia, and Croatia, was not able to build on either a statehood that had already existed in the modern period or a continuous history of settlement. The foundation of the Zionist dream was the history of a people without a state who had been persecuted for centuries. Israel exists thanks to the courage and the unwavering work and confidence of those who accomplished their goal: in the middle of the desert, under the most difficult climatic and geographical conditions imaginable, surrounded by hostile neighbours whose declared political goal was the destruction of Israel, they built up their own state. They built a state for their own people as the only, or last possible, refuge for the Jewish people, after the Shoah and the almost complete extermination of the East European Jews.

In the Russian collective consciousness, Israel's success in turning the dream of Zion into reality is bound to give rise to a comparison with the total failure of the communist

[20] In a poll conducted in 2008, 42 per cent of respondents described Germany as a great power; in August 2015 this had fallen to 32 per cent.

utopia. This often fails to appreciate that there was also a strong element of socialist inspiration in Zionism and in the early waves of emigration to Palestine. In general, over a long period, hardly anyone in the Soviet Union knew much about Israel's history, politics or culture; the only people who were better informed were those involved in the semi-legal Jewish subculture of the 1970s and 80s. Things only began to change with perestroika. Jewish public life had practically ceased to exist after the liquidation in 1930 of the Communist Party's Jewish Section, which had been set up in 1918, and the campaign against "cosmopolitanism" under Stalin, but it now began to flourish again. Numerous cultural and educational institutions were set up, and books by Soviet Jewish authors such as the Muscovite Asar Ėppel' (1935–2012) and the Lithuanians Icchokas Meras (1934–2014) and Grigorii Kanovich (b. 1929), both of whom were concerned with the disappearing traces of the shtetl in Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine, were published. There were also translations of Israeli literature into Russian. However, the main factor that was decisive for Russia's relationship with Israel today was the development of Israeli society, especially in view of the Russian intelligentsia's tendency to romanticise. This perspective is eager to see Israel as a community sharing a common destiny, a warm sphere of solidarity in which people are connected with one another not just by mutual sympathy but by a close relationship of trust and loyalty. There can be no doubt that this too is a projection: the idealised image of state and society as a conflict-free zone functions as a psychological compensation for Russia's own historical failures. These include not only the traumas caused by the failure to build the communist paradise but also the failure of Russia's democratic reforms.

Imaginary and Real Antisemitism

The Levada-Center began to collect data on attitudes to Israel for the first time in the framework of a survey on antisemitism in the Soviet Union launched in 1990. The background to this was the fear that a new wave of aggressive xenophobia and ethnic unrest could be on the way. At that time, it seemed almost inevitable that the tottering empire, growing national self-confidence on the Soviet peripheries, and conservative counter-reactions in the Russian population would lead to such a development. But the first studies, carried out in 1990 and 1992, and the surveys that followed from 1997 onwards, showed that this fear was unfounded. It had fed on the experience of Soviet state antisemitism and on a side effect of the unfamiliar situation of freedom of opinion and the press: all of a sudden, previously suppressed societal and political currents came to the surface, and these included more or less marginal antisemitic, fascist, and nationalist views and groups. Aleksandr Borkashov's *Russian National Unity* (Russkoe natsional'noe edinstvo, RNE) and the *Pamyat'* organisation were among the largest of these. However, none of these movements gained any significant degree of popular support. In the first free elections to the Supreme Soviet in 1989 and in the following elections to the State Duma, all the radical Russian nationalists put together received less than 0.5 per cent of the votes.[21]

[21] The strengthening of Russian ethno-nationalism, which started in the late Brezhnev period, was a consequence of the decline of socialist ideology. Unlike the emancipatory national move-

In the Soviet Union, Jews were exposed to state antisemitism and everyday discrimination over a period of decades; Jewish identity was equated in many ways with weakness and humiliating adaptation. After the end of the Soviet Union there was a fundamental change in this image: contrary to expectations, everyday and spontaneous antisemitism seemed to have weakened with the end of the state policy of antisemitism. Discrimination against Jews, which had earlier been part of day-to-day normality, gradually went out of fashion.[22]

Today, Jews are weakly marked, if at all, as a societal group in the population of Russia. The negative stereotypes that dominated earlier are being supplemented, or even invalidated, by recognition of the Jews as a group enjoying a high social status and great intellectual, cultural and moral capital. In this respect, developments in Russia are very different from what we can currently observe in Western Europe, especially in France. In Russia, antisemitism seems currently to be in a kind of latent state or to have been pushed to the edge of collective consciousness. Public expressions of antisemitism are increasingly socially stigmatised; they are seen more and more as the typical behaviour of marginalised social strata. The growing xenophobia in Russian society is directed above all against Muslim immigrants from Central Asia and the South Caucasus.[23]

The image of Israel has also changed. From the 1960s onwards Moscow supported Israel's Arab opponents in the Middle East, but despite many years of Soviet propaganda, anti-Israeli attitudes are rare in contemporary Russia. It is only the political forces known as the systemic opposition, such as the Communist Party (KPRF) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), that continue to speak of Israel in extremely hostile terms. In broader public opinion, by way of contrast, a perception of Israel as a strong state both in military terms and in science and technology has become established, and this has contributed to the weakening of traditional antisemitism. In the long run, the citizens of Russia had no option but to recognise the success of the Jews in the very fields in which the Russians themselves had failed.

Two aspects that have traditionally been highly valued in Russia play a particularly important role for the relationship with Israel today. The first of these is social security, which – it is generally believed – Israel provides for its citizens. This includes a functioning pension system and medical care that is available to all, on the basis of a strong,

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ments in Poland and the Baltic states, which were shaped by civil society, this variety of nationalism manifested itself as disappointment with the political leadership and as a kind of negative of state paternalism. Up until the second Chechnya war, it was not an autonomous source of collective aggression that unfolded independently of mobilisation from above.

[22] Lev Gudkov, Aleksej Levinson: Attitudes Toward Jews in the Soviet Union: Public Opinion in Ten Republics, in: Working Papers on Contemporary Antisemitism. New York 1993. — Lev Gudkov, Aleksej Levinson: Attitudes Toward Jews in the Commonwealth of Independent States, idem. – Lev Gudkov: Parameters of Antisemitism: Attitudes toward Jews in Russia, 1990–1997, in: Sociological research 4/1999, pp. 72–96. — Lev Gudkov: Antisemitizm v postsovetskoi Rossii, in: Neterpimost' v Rossii: staryе i novye fobii. Moscow 1999, pp. 44–98.

[23] Lev Gudkov, Natalia Zorkaya, Ekaterina Kochergina, Evgenia Lezina: Antisemitizm v strukture massovoi ksenofobii v Rossii: negativnaya identichnost' i potentsial mobilizatsii, in: Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya, 1–2/2016, pp. 140–197. – Lev Gudkov, Karina Pipia: Parametry ksenofobii, rasizma i antisemitizma v sovremennoi Rossii, in: Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya 3–4/2018,33–64 — Lev Gudkov, Natalia Zorkaya, Ekaterina Kochergina and Evgenia Lezina: Antisemitizm v Rossii: mneniya evreiskogo naseleniya, Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya, 3–4/2018, pp. 65–109.

technologically advanced economy and democratic state institutions. This image is disseminated via informal, personal channels, rather than in the mass media. In view of the cuts in social services, reform of the pension system, the concurrent decline in the purchasing power of pensions, and the desolate state of the medical infrastructure in Russia (hospital closures and a shortage of doctors), reports people hear from relatives who have emigrated or their own observations during visits to Israel mean that that country appears in an even more favourable light.

The second aspect is the impression of strength: Israel successfully defends its territory and citizens against terrorist attacks; its army is highly efficient and held in high regard by the population; Israeli society is very resilient, has a strong sense of responsibility, and is extremely cohesive. Strength has traditionally been respected in Russia. The successes of Israeli society impress Russians. In polls there are often positive mentions of, in particular, the secret services and the army; the army, in the situation of permanent conflict with the Palestinians and the neighbouring Arab states, is seen to be protecting the Jewish population against terrorist and military attacks.

Table 7: What do you think of Israel?

	1997	**2015**
Israel is . . .		
... the homeland of the Jews.	24	34
... an aggressive nationalist state.	5	3
... where Christianity came into being.	12	11
... where the holy places of the world religions are situated.	12	17
... a country where more and more Jewish acquaintances who have emigrated live.	9	4
... a country with a dynamically growing economy.	9	6
... a country that defends its state independence.	7	6
... in a constant state of war and terror.	7	4
... a country with democratic government.	5	2
... a good place to go on holiday.	5	8
... a country with one of the strongest domestic and foreign secret services.	3	2
Don’t know	3	6
N =	1500	1600

Table 8: What is the first thing that occurs to you when you think about Israel?

	May 2008	**April 2011**
Jews, the Jewish people, their special qualities	49	45
History, stories from the Bible, where Christianity came into being	19	34
Tensions in the Middle East, the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians	19	20
A highly developed European country, democracy	8	14
Emigrants from Russia and other post-Soviet countries	–	14
The Jewish faith, Jewish culture, religion, tradition, holidays	12	11
A strong state, victories in numerous wars	6	11
A highly developed economy	8	10
Zionism, the foundation of the Jewish state	7	4
The Zionist world conspiracy	3	3
Other	6	6
Don't know/No response	16	12

Israeli society's solidarity with the country's army is particularly appreciated. In Russia, too, support for the army and trust in its strike power has increased as a result of the militant foreign policy rhetoric of the last few years, but the old image of an institution that is hermetically sealed off from society and characterised by forms of harassment such as *dedovshchina*, in which older recruits bully younger ones, and also by social and ethnic discrimination, is still very much present. The strata of the population who are economically and socially better situated use all possible means to try and ensure that their sons are not called up for military service. The Israeli army makes an attractive contrast to this.

The majority of Russian citizens have a positive attitude to Israel (2003: 65 per cent, 2008: 56 per cent, 2011: 70 per cent, and 2019: 75 per cent). The overwhelming majority of people polled in recent years say that in the most recent past their attitude to the Jewish state has become more positive (9 out of 10, as against 1 out of 10 who say it has become more negative). Most respondents say that their attitude to Israel is relaxed, and that this has not changed ("just like with other countries"), but in fact this amounts to a significant improvement by comparison with the Soviet era, when Israel was seen as one of the Soviet Union's five most important potential opponents.[24] No longer ago than the early 1990s, respondents expressed more sympathy for the Palestinians than for the Israelis.

[24] Boris Grushin: Chetyre zhizni Rossii v zerkale obshchestvennogo mneniya. Ocherki massovogo soznaniya vremen Khrushcheva, Brezhneva, Gorbacheva i El'tsina v 4 tomach. Zhizn' vtoraya: Ėpocha Brezhneva. Moscow 2006, 812, Tab. 27.

Table 9: How would you describe your general attitude to Israel at present?

	Aug. 2003	**Mar. 2006**	**May 2008**	**Nov. 2011**	**Aug. 2012**	**Nov. 2014**	**Jan. 2015**	**Jan. 2016**	**Jan. 2017**	**Jan. 2018**	**Feb. 2019**
Very good	7	3	4	7	6	5	6	5	5	5	11
Fairly good	58	43	52	63	56	55	52	55	52	54	64
Fairly bad	13	24	20	13	16	16	13	11	17	13	6
Very bad	4	7	4	2	3	5	4	3	3	4	2
Don't know/No response	19	22	20	16	20	19	24	26	23	25	15
N =	1600	1600	1600	800	1600	1600	800	1600	1600	1600	1600

Approximately 15-20 per cent of respondents have expressed a negative attitude to Israel in recent years; this figure was significantly higher in 2006 and 2008 (Table 9). It is hard to say whether these fluctuations represent reactions to current events, such as the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and Israel's military operation in Gaza in 2008, or have more to do with the Kremlin's information policy at different times, which if need be resorts once again to anti-Zionist or antisemitic tropes from Soviet times. What is likely to be important for both the official position and positive attitudes among the population is the fact that Israel presents no kind of military threat to Russia, as the Kremlin's propaganda claims in the most lurid way to be the case for the USA and NATO, and that after the annexation of the Crimea and the war in Donbas, the Israeli government did not join the general criticism of Putin's policy.[25]

The majority of respondents assess relations between the two countries as thoroughly positive. The positive evaluations ("friendly" or "good, neighbourly relations") rose between 2008 and 2019 from 19 to 28 per cent (Table 10). Over the whole period in which polls have been conducted, the proportion of positive evaluations has been much higher than that of negative ones; only a tiny percentage of respondents speak of hostile relations. At present, the total of positive plus neutral ("normal, relaxed relations") responses comes to 72 per cent. Nevertheless, public opinion does not see Israel as an ally or partner of the Kremlin in the Middle East. Over the last five years, on average only four per cent of respondents have included Israel among the countries seen as friendly to Russia; three per cent have included Israel among those who are "negative or hostile" towards Russia.[26]

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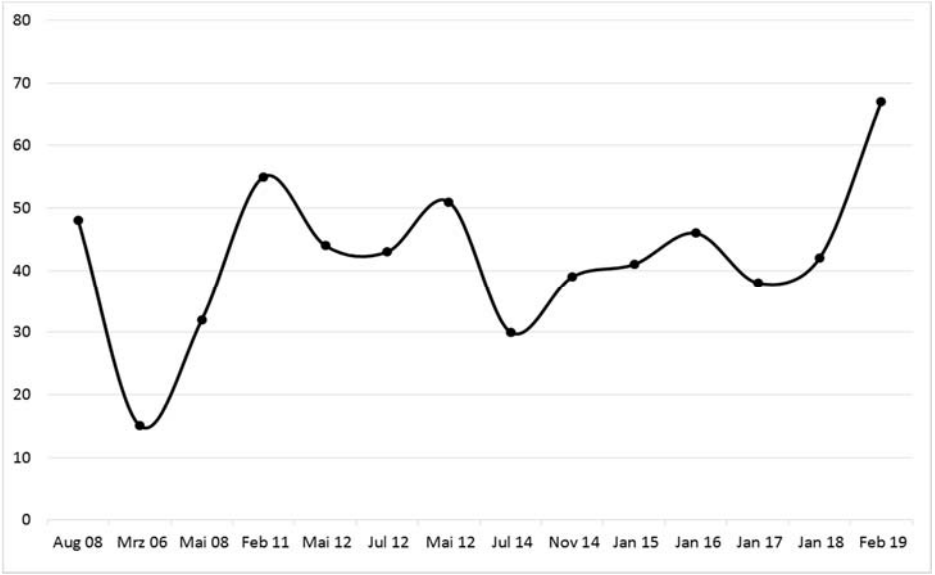
[25] See Averbukh & Klein in this vol.

[26] Russia's increasing international self-isolation over recent years is reflected in the general polls asking which countries are friendly or hostile: the number of "friends" is declining, and the number of "enemies" is increasing. However, most investigations of individual countries indicate a thoroughly positive relationship, and this is true of European states as well as Israel.

Figure 3: What is your general attitude to Israel?



N = 1600

Table 10: How would you evaluate current relations between Russia and Israel?

	May 2008	**April 2011**	**February 2019**
Friendly	5	8	14
Good, neighbourly	14	13	14
Normal, relaxed	48	54	44
Cool	15	10	14
Tense	4	2	2
Hostile	1	1	1
Don't know	14	12	10
Some positive and some negative assessments	3.4	5.7	4.2

There has been a particularly noticeable improvement in the view of the relationship with Israel taken by the socially active, educated, and well-informed strata of the population. As time passes, the opinions and ideas of these groups come to influence broader public opinion. So, sympathy for Israel is more pronounced in Moscow than in the rest of the country. Moscow also has the highest percentage of Jews in its population, and there are therefore close personal contacts with emigrants from Russia who live in Israel. In total, 27-29 per cent of respondents have relations or friends who have migrated to Israel; five per cent have close friends or relatives who want to emigrate there in the near future.

Mobility, which is much more marked in Moscow than in the rest of the country, is both a cause and a consequence of the positive shift in the image of Israel in Russia: trips to Israel help to combat negative stereotypes, and as stereotypes lose their force people are

more likely to travel to the country on holiday or to visit friends or relations. Consequently, mistrust and suspicion of Israel are predominantly expressed by older, less well-educated people living in the traditionally more conservative and less mobile peripheral areas, where the Soviet way of life and the ideological clichés associated with it are slower to disappear. 16-20 per cent of the respondents belong to this group.

A further explanation for the stable and constantly improving attitudes is the fact that public perception of Israel is to a considerable extent depoliticised; reports in the media are usually formulated neutrally. The average citizen of Russia sees Israel today as a prosperous, modern state without any acute internal conflicts, as a country where medicine, technology and the economy are of high quality and one that guarantees its citizens a standard of living in keeping with this, as an attractive holiday destination, and as a country that is the cradle of the three monotheistic religions. For the quantitatively small but influential academic milieu in Russia, it is in particular the quality of education, science and culture in Israel that is important, and the Orthodox believers and active churchgoers among the respondents see the country as a destination for pilgrimages and holidays (14 per cent of respondents associate Israel with concepts such as "holy places", "historical sites", "cradle of the religions", and "the Promised Land"). Associations with the Jewish faith and with Jewish traditions, laws and everyday culture are also part of this non-political sphere.

At the same time, Israel is not seen as part of the conflict that, since the annexation of the Crimea and the beginning of the war in Donbas in 2014, has been going on between the Putin regime and the West and has had a very negative effect on the attitudes of large parts of the population of Russia to Ukraine, the USA, and the European countries. While attitudes to the EU, which had previously been largely positive, became predominantly negative after 2014, attitudes to Israel have not been affected by this. It is particularly noticeable that very few respondents (eight per cent) take a negative view of Israel. It is clear that the de-politicisation of news reports about Israel has led, in the end, to a situation in which the Soviet legacy of antisemitic and anti-Zionist attitudes is no longer a significant force, even if it has not been completely overcome.

Moreover, most people have very little information about Israel. In general, interest in the real but 'foreign' lives of other people is limited in Russian society, and this applies to interest in other countries too. In the media, and so also in public consciousness, little attention is paid to current events in Israel; at most there is some coverage of the relationship between Jews and Arabs, which is so full of conflict. Even the war in Syria has not changed this. As far as current political events are concerned, less attention is paid to Israel than to the USA, EU states, or Japan. When asked in 2019 what interested or might interest them about Israel, 22 per cent of respondents were unable to answer the question. In 2016, responses to this question on areas outside the political sphere related mainly to medicine and the health service[27] (28 per cent), tourism and pilgrimages (24-25 per cent), culture (music, literature and film, 22 per cent), and – to a much lesser degree – the economy, science, and technology.

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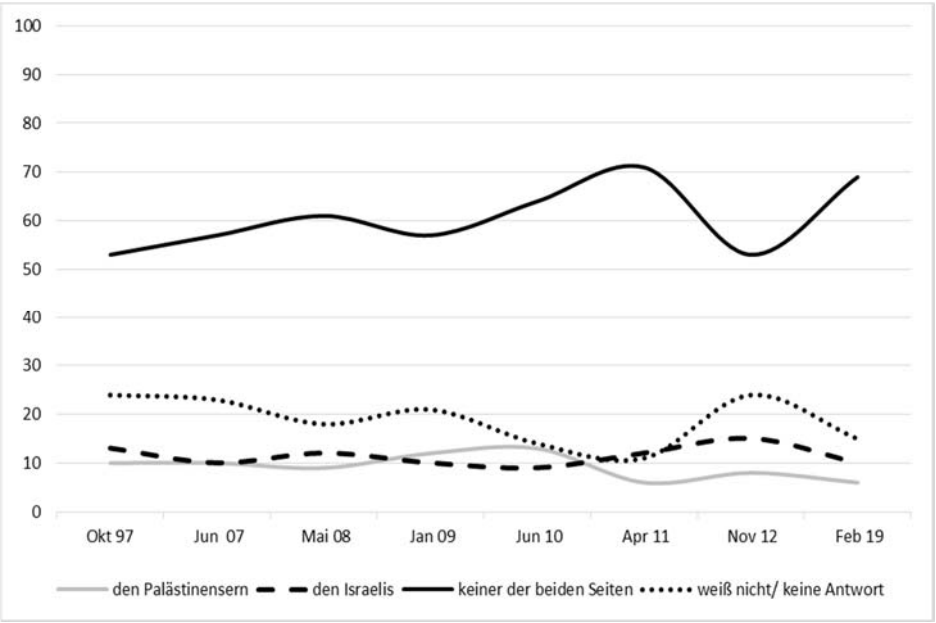
[27] High earners in Russia, in particular, are well informed about treatment available abroad, as they want to know what options they have in case of serious illness; among Western countries Germany, the USA and Israel have the best reputations in this regard, among the general population as well.

Where the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is concerned, the majority of Russian citizens (82 per cent) distance themselves equally from both sides. 10 per cent of respondents sympathise with Israel and six per cent with the Palestinians. In 2011, 36 per cent were unable to answer the question of who originally started the conflict and who bears most responsibility for it (Table 11). The overwhelming majority (75 per cent in February 2019) do not follow ongoing developments in this conflict at present. This too is less a specific phenomenon applying to Israel and more an expression of general indifference to world affairs, including politics in their own country.[28] In relation to Israel, this indifference is expressed in the fact that the majority of the respondents "have no sympathy for either side" in the conflict.

Figure 4: Which side do you sympathise with in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians?



N = 1600

16 per cent of respondents take the view that Israel is defending itself against Palestinian terrorists. Younger and better qualified people, in particular, express this view; among Muscovites, a relative majority of 40 per cent of respondents share this opinion. The percentage of those who do not respond to this question is at its lowest among Muscovites. 13 per cent take the view that Israel is the aggressor in relations with the Palestinians (this opinion is more widespread in the provinces, and this too is likely to be a relic

[28] In polls conducted in 2018–19, a fifth of all citizens of Russia said they had "absolutely no interest" in politics and 63 per cent said they took a limited, passive interest in political events. 18 per cent have a pronounced and engaged attitude to politics. Less than one per cent of citizens are active in political parties or organisations.

of Soviet anti-Zionist policy). However, in terms of numbers, there is no great difference between these two groups, and there are fluctuations in response to current events (terrorist attacks or Israeli military operations). One example of this was the incident that took place in 2010, when Israeli naval commandos boarded ships belonging to the Gaza flotilla. Overall, though, over the past decade the ratio between pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian positions has remained the same (Table 11). This suggests that, in structural terms, not much is changing in respect of channels of information or the sources that are considered reliable.

Table 11: Some people say that at the moment Israel is defending itself against Palestinian terrorists, and others say that Israel is the aggressor. Which of these views do you agree with?

	April 2002	**April 2004**	**April 2011**
Israel is defending itself against terrorists.	22	26	16
Israel is the aggressor.	19	21	13
Both views are correct.	25	22	35
Don't know/No response	34	31	36
Ratio of pro-Israeli to pro-Palestinian positions (responses 1 and 2)	*1.2*	*1.2*	*1.2*

N = 1600

Table 12: What should Russia's position be in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians?

	July 2006	**August 2006**	**January 2009**	**April 2011**
Support the Palestinians	4	4	4	1
Support Israel	5	4	6	7
Do everything possible to bring about a peaceful solution	48	47	38	44
Keep out, not get involved in the conflict	28	35	35	39
Don't know/No response	14	10	17	9

N = 1600

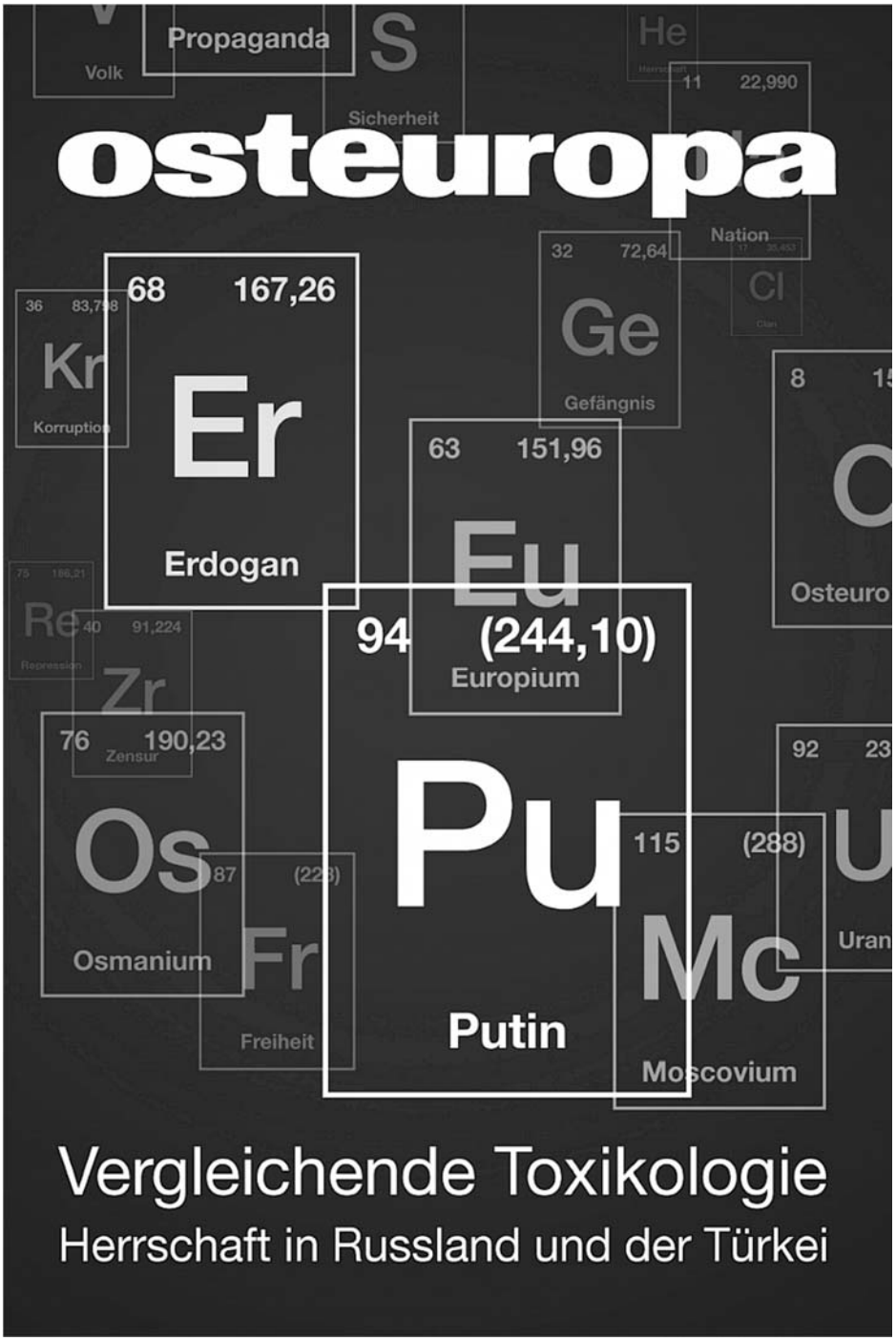
In 2019, a relative majority (37 per cent) of respondents said they thought Israel had an unconditional right of self-defence, but here too the proportion of people who were unable to give a response was high – 24 per cent. However, it is significant that only eight per cent of respondents say that Israel does not have this right, and here too most of these people belong to the group identified above, in which Soviet anti-Zionist stereotypes have remained most persistent. All other respondents, approximately one third of them, say that Israel does have a right of self-defence, but only on condition that no danger arises for Russia if it is exercised, with or without agreement on Israeli military operations with Russian troops in the region.

Conclusion

In the collective consciousness of the population of Russia, Germany and Israel appear as diffuse, unstable embodiments of two possible lines of development for Russia itself. One vector is a universalistic one, at the end of which would be not only the completion of modernisation but a democratic Russia. This Russia would have left behind the authoritarian, patrimonial and totalitarian phases of its past and arrived at the utopia of a 'European', 'Western' country with functioning institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, civic freedoms, and morally autonomous individuals who are independent of the state. The other vector is statist and ethno-national, and is connected with the romantic idea of the organic unity of a people who share a community based on destiny, culture and descent. This image is a product of Russia's failure as a nation of citizens and its inability to shake off its imperial past, the ideology of a country with a special path, its feelings of inferiority or superiority in relation to other countries, its militarism, and its tradition of disregard for the individual.

The findings of opinion polls are only able to provide crude indications of such configurations of collective consciousness. Nevertheless, they do enable us to identify the ideas that shape a society as a whole. The images of Germany and Israel that are widely present in Russia are also products of the slow disintegration of a totalitarian system and symptoms of that system's ideological legacy, which was demolished more or less rapidly. In the current situation, in which the regime in power is doing its best to rehabilitate this totalitarian past and, to some degree, to revive it, it is only logical that some parts of society have lost their hope that fundamental changes will take place in their own country and should look abroad for the possibility of happiness.

Translated by Gerald Holden, Frankfurt/Main



Authoritarian rule in Russia and Turkey: Comparing toxic regimes.

Steffen Hagemann

Reserved Friends

Germany and Israel

German-Israeli relations are inseparably linked to the memory of the Holocaust. Nonetheless, it has been possible over the course of several decades to build a relationship that both sides consider a friend-ship. It is based on common values as well as the democratic order of both states and embraces a readiness to demonstrate political solidarity with the partner. However, the substance and scope of this solidarity are unclear. Most recently, the distance between Israel and Germany has been growing. The causes are political differences, varying interests, and conflicting values. Conflicts persist over the two-state solution, settlement construction, the Iranian nuclear program, as well as the illiberal tendencies on display under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

It is a truism that relations between Germany and Israel are special. Both states make reference to the Shoah in the way they see themselves and also their bilateral relations are inseparably linked to the memory of the Holocaust. When Germany and Israel established diplomatic relations in 1965, their rapprochement may have been thoroughly motivated by both states' national interests, but the moral and emotional dimension was present from the start. Despite recurring crises, relations between Germany and Israel have developed in such a positive manner that politicians on both sides speak of a close friendship. At the same time, relations were never free of conflict, although such disputes were mostly negotiated behind closed doors. Today, the conflicts are increasing once again. They are even partly waged in public – be it symbolically, when, for example, forthcoming government consultations are postponed, or be it through critical statements.[1] In the meantime, these disputes affect every dimension of this relationship – from historical responsibility to the bond of common values and interests – as well as the question what kind of obligations in fact arise from the friendship between Germany and Israel. Furthermore, public opinion polling shows a growing distance between the German population and Israel, a development that stands in contrast to the German elite's avowals of responsibility for Israel. Increasing alienation and reserve can be observed, which has moved journalist Lea Frehse to characterise Germany and Israel as "cold friends".[2]

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1 Christoph Schult: Eroding Friendship. German Israeli Relations take a turn for the worse. Spiegel-online, 28 April 2017.

2 Lea Frehse: Kalte Freunde. Das deutsch-isaraelische Verhältnis ist nur noch an der Oberfläche intakt. Was jetzt hilft: Offener Streit. Die Zeit, 4 October 2018.

OSTEUROPA 2020, Migration, Identity, Politics, pp. 177–194

Terms such as "special relations" and "friendship" are regularly drawn on to describe German-Israeli relations. But what do these words mean? Do they merely represent empty phrases for use in speeches on festive occasions? Or is the talk of friendship accompanied by norms of appropriate behaviour that shape the actions of both states? And are the crises of recent years evidence of a reappraisal of relations?

Germany and Israel: Friendship Based on the Past

The foundation of German-Israeli relations is historical remembrance: even if in the most dissimilar ways, memory of the destruction of the European Jews belongs to the central elements of national identity construction in Germany and in Israel. Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, noted early on that Germany had a moral obligation to make reparation payments to the Jewish people. In the name of the Federal Republic of Germany, Adenauer concluded the 1952 Luxembourg Agreement, by which the Federal Republic agreed to provide Israel more than DM 3.45 billion in compensation.[3] With this agreement, the Federal Republic also wanted to secure international recognition. To regain its reputation, it had to declare a break with National Socialism, stress the democratic new start, and assume responsibility for the Holocaust. Relations with Israel played a central role for the international status of the Federal Republic.[4] To this day, Israeli politicians recall Germany's historical guilt and moral responsibility. However, in the same breath, they reaffirm that the "new Germany" has developed into a reliable friend of Israel.[5] As Israeli President Shimon Peres explained in the Bundestag, the German parliament, in 2010:

> Unique ties developed between Germany and Israel.
> The friendship that was established did not develop at the expense of forsaking the memory of the Holocaust, but from the memory of the dark hours of the past. In view of the joint and decisive decision to look ahead – towards the horizon of optimistic hope. Tikkun Olam – putting the world aright... We believed, and continue to believe, that the new Germany will be doing whatever needs to be done to ensure that the Jewish state will never again have to fight for its survival alone.[6]

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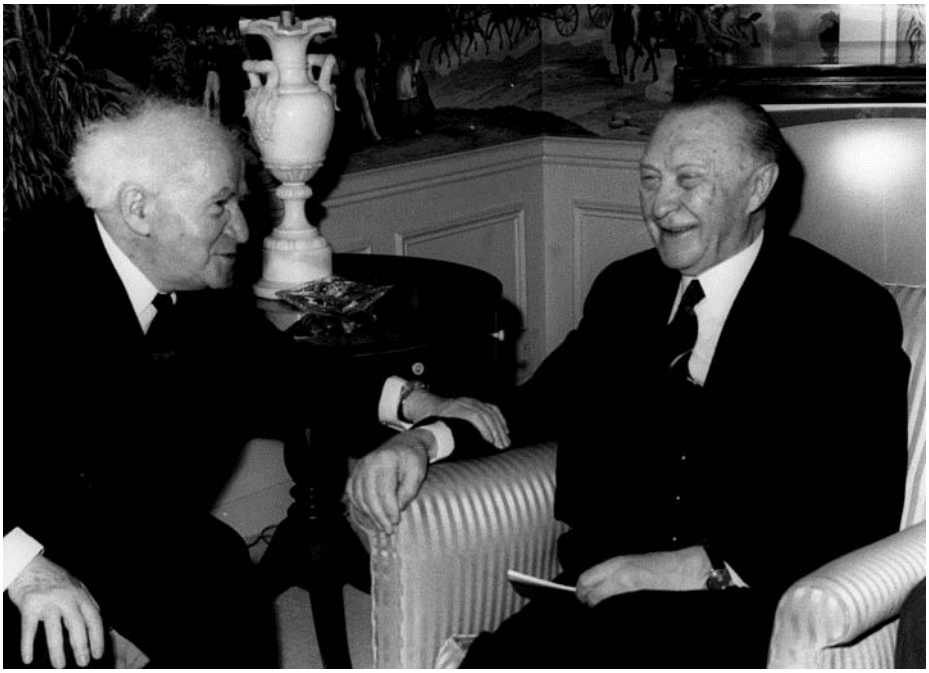
[3] Markus Weingardt: Deutsche Israelpolitik, Etappen und Kontinuitäten, in: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 25/2005, pp. 22–31.

[4] Kai Oppermann, Mischa Hansel: The Ontological Security of Special Relationships: The Case of Germany and Israel. Paper presented at the CEEISA-ISA Joint International Conference. Ljublijana, June 2016.

[5] Shimon Peres, Address by President Peres at the German Bundestag, 27 January 2010, <www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2010/Pages/Address_President_Peres_German_Bundestag_27-Jan-2010.aspx>.

[6] Ibid.

Signing of the German-Israeli Reparations Agreement in Luxembourg, 10 September 1952. Federal Press Office. *© Federal Government*



Ben Gurion and Konrad Adenauer in New York, 1960. *© B. Wundshammer*

Accordingly, German officials respond with gratitude to Israeli expressions of friendship. As German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said in remarks before the United Nations:

> The fact that Israel sees us as a reliable partner today is by no means to be taken for granted and fills us with profound gratitude.[7]

Israel, too, had, and has to this day, substantial interests in good relations with Germany. Initially, in the 1950s, the material needs of the fledgling state stood in the foreground. Israel could make good use of the German reparation payments to build state infrastructure and integrate immigrants. At present, political support for Israel as a Jewish state has become more important. With no internationally and regionally recognised borders, Israel's territorial claims, internal order and sometimes even its existence is challenged by critics and opponents. For Israel's self-understanding, reference to the past is of central importance. After the Holocaust, Israel was supposed to become a safe harbour for Jewish life with a Jewish majority of inhabitants.[8] In the light of its historical experience, Israeli governments urged Germany to recognise Israel explicitly as a Jewish state.[9] This only happened in the 2009 coalition agreement between the Christian Democrats – the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) together with the Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU) – and the Free Democratic Party (FDP).[10] The 2018 Bundestag resolution introduced by the CDU/CSU, FDP, and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel affirmed support for Israel as a "Jewish and democratic state."[11]

For political scientists Kai Oppermann and Mischa Hansel, Israeli-German relations have therefore a reciprocal dynamic, which serves the identity needs of each party respectively. However, in their view, a central asymmetry based on a moral distinction between perpetrators and victims underlies this relationship and becomes evident in conflict situations.[12] In these instances, Israeli politicians have repeatedly accused German officials of failing to meet the moral obligations derived from responsibility for the past.[13] This asymmetric dynamic is further strengthened, according to Oppermann and Hansel, because Germany is more dependent on recognition of its "new identity" through Israel than the other way around.[14]

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[7] Joschka Fischer, UN General Assembly, Twenty-eighth special session, official record. A/S-28/PV.1, <undocs.org/en/A/S-28/PV.1>, pp. 18–19.

[8] The justification of Israel as a secure place of refuge for persecuted Jews and a religiously founded motivation of return to the "Holy Land" stands in contrast to the interpretation by which Zionism is supposedly a colonial movement.

[9] "Embracing Israel Costs Merkel Clout". International Herald Tribune, 21 January 2010.

[10] CDU/CSU/FDP, Wachstum, Bildung, Zusammenhalt. Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und FDP. Berlin 2009, p. 121.

[11] Fraktionen CDU/CSU, SPD und FDP: 70 Jahre Gründung des Staates Israel – In historischer Verantwortung unsere zukunftsgerichtete Freundschaft festigen. Bundestagsdrucksache 19/1823, 2018, <http://dipbt.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/018/1901823.pdf>.

[12] Oppermann, Hansel, The Ontological Security [f.n. 4].

[13] Felix Berenskoetter: Germany and Israel: Is It Friendship? LSE Ideas, 10 October 2012, <blogs.lse.ac.uk/ideas/2012/10/germany-and-israel-is-it-friendship/>.

[14] Oppermann, Hansel, The Ontological Security [f.n. 4], p. 20.

Friendship: Solidarity with Israel

To this day, Angela Merkel's speech before the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, on 18th March 2008 remains a key benchmark in German-Israeli relations. At the time, Merkel described the foundation of the relationship with Israel and the ensuing consequences for German policy thus:

> Every German Government and every German Chancellor before me has shouldered Germany's special historical responsibility for Israel's security. This historical responsibility is part of my country's raison d'être. For me, as German Chancellor, therefore, Israel's security will never be open to negotiation ... Yes, our relations are special, indeed unique – marked by enduring responsibility for the past, shared values, mutual trust, abiding solidarity for one another and shared confidence ... In this spirit, Germany will never forsake Israel but will remain a true friend and partner.[15]

Alongside avowals of historical responsibility, Merkel invoked the fact that both countries shared values and were connected by common challenges. "Special relations" imply a special obligation to the friend: solidarity with Israel is considered a norm of appropriate behaviour. Solidarity can ensue at short notice and unilaterally; however, it can also be applied over the long term and represent a reciprocal relationship of solidarity in the form of solidarity of connection. This relationship of solidarity is characterised by three traits.

Firstly, there is a special bond between the actors. Solidarity of connection features strong community reference and stresses "feelings of social and emotional closeness, favour, solicitousness, and group identity."[16] In the case of German-Israeli relations, this means, alongside pointing to the past, that it is precisely the reference to common values that solidifies the bond between Germany and Israel. By way of example, the 2018 resolution introduced by Alliance 90/The Greens and The Left – "70 Years of the State of Israel" – points to Israel's democratic character:

> That Israel has created its democratic structures based on the rule of law in a region of the world whose states are otherwise ruled by authoritarian, autocratic, and dictatorial regimes that were, and are, mostly hostile to Israel is a historic accomplishment.[17]

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[15] Speech by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel to the Knesset in Jerusalem, 18 March 2008, <www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/doc/speech_merkel_2008_eng.pdf>.

[16] Steffen Mau: Europäische Solidarität: Erkundung eines schwierigen Geländes, in: Sebastian Harnisch, Hanns W. Maull, Siegfried Schieder, (eds.): Solidarität und internationale Gemeinschaftsbildung. Beiträge zur Soziologie der internationalen Beziehungen. Frankfurt/Main, New York, pp. 63–87, p. 71.

[17] Bundestagsfraktionen Bündnis 90/Die Grünen und Die Linke: 70 Jahre Staat Israel, Bundestagsdrucksache 19/1850, 2018, p. 1.

The CDU/CSU, SPD, and FDP stress in their motion that Israel is the only security partner in the region "that lives European values."[18] Thus Israel is considered a "part of Europe." Democracy as a commonality strengthens the feeling of closeness.
Secondly, this form of solidarity is accompanied by assurances of support. Bonds can rest on common interests or can also be understood as a moral obligation. Thus, Angela Merkel in her 2008 speech before the Knesset pointed above all to the threat against Israel in order to justify empathy and support:

> While we speak here today, thousands of people are living in fear and dread of missile attacks and acts of terror by Hamas.[19]

A decade later, the parliamentary groups of the CDU/CSU, SPD, and FDP highlighted in their motion for a resolution "70 Years of the State of Israel" the danger to Israel posed by Iran:

> Hereby, a special eye is kept on the aggressive rhetoric and the destabilising effect of Iran, which still calls into question Israel's right to exist.[20]

Calls for solidarity with the democratic State of Israel and support arise from the perceived threat to Israel. However, neither this characterisation of Israel and regional developments, nor the question of how solidarity is to be expressed and how far it extends are without controversy.
Thirdly, the relational character of solidarity points to the fact that solidarity is reciprocal. Relationships based on solidarity require reciprocal consideration of the partner's interests and positions. This presupposes regular communication and accessibility for the partner and their concerns. However, reciprocity does not mean that a specific form of compensation is to be expected in direct response to an act of solidarity, but that this can be postponed, if it is grounded in common values and interests. Siegfried Schieder speaks of a "minimal potential reciprocity ... whereby solidarity's obligation of compensation can also take on forms of recognition."[21] In her speech before the Knesset, Angela Merkel stressed "solidarity for one another" and thus the expectation that Israel would adequately consider German interests and positions as well.

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[18] Bundestagsdrucksache 19/1823 [f.n. 11], p. 1.
[19] Speech by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel to the Knesset in Jerusalem, 18 March 2008 [f.n. 15].
[20] Bundestagsdrucksache 19/1823 [f.n. 11], p. 2.
[21] Siegfried Schieder: Zur Theorie der Solidarität und internationalen Gemeinschaft, in: Sebastian Harnisch, Hanns W. Maull, Siegfried Schieder (eds.): Solidarität und internationale Gemeinschaftsbildung. Beiträge zur Soziologie der internationalen Beziehungen. Frankfurt/Main, New York 2009, pp. 11–59, pp. 18–19.

Current Fields of Conflict in Relations

On the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, former Israeli Ambassador to Germany Shimon Stein and historian Moshe Zimmermann, writing in the weekly *Die Zeit*, lamented a "gulf between the grand words about Israel's right to exist, the alleged strategic partnership on the one hand and concrete Israel policy on the other."[22] Stein and Zimmermann do not stand alone in their diagnosis. Growing disappointment and alienation are recognisable on both sides. It is seen in several concrete fields of conflict.

Insufficient Reciprocity: Conflicts over Settlement Construction

In the Federal Republic, there exists a consensus across party lines that Germany supports the two-state solution for the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This, it is believed, conforms with international law and is most likely to fulfil the right of self-determination. The current government advocates the founding of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. For the Federal Government, the founding of a Palestinian state and support for Israel are two sides of the same coin – even if the Israeli government disputes this at times. The Bundestag held in its resolution of 24 April 2018:

> At the same time, the German Bundestag remains convinced that lasting security for Israel can be guaranteed in the long term only within the framework of a two-state solution.[23]

Engagement on behalf of the two-state resolution is justified by concern for Israel's security. Only such a resolution, it is thought, can guarantee Israel's character as a Jewish and democratic state.

German criticism of settlement construction in the occupied territories derives from this position: The expansion and growing number of settlers complicate and prevent the founding of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state. As a result, the two-state resolution becomes increasingly unlikely. The Federal Government may consciously avoid making one party to the conflict responsible for the collapse of numerous peace negotiations, but it expects both sides to refrain from destroying the possibility of a future resolution of the conflict. That means Germany expects Israel to suspend expansion of the settlements and create no additional facts on the ground in the occupied territories. This expectation is regularly disappointed: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejects the political goal of a two-state resolution. His avowals in favour of this model in his 2009 speech at the Bar-Ilan University turned out to be a foreign policy manoeuvre long refuted by reality. In the meantime, Netanyahu openly expresses his rejection of a Palestinian state. The leadership of his party has long declared its support for the annexation of the occupied territories.[24] According to data from the organisation Peace Now, the number of settlers in the West Bank has grown from 311,000 in 2010 to 427,800 in 2018.[25]

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[22] Shimon Stein, Moshe Zimmermann: Deutsch-israelische Beziehungen: Mehr Kritik wagen. Die Zeit, 9.5.2018.

[23] Bundestagsdrucksache 19/1823 [f.n. 11], p. 2.

[24] Victor Kattan: Annexing the West Bank: Why We Must Take Netanyahu's Pre-election Stunt Seriously, Haaretz, 7.42019.

[25] PeaceNow, <peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/population>.

This development has led again and again to conflicts between the Israeli government and the Federal Government. The German side sees its expectation of reciprocity disappointed, especially as Germany had explicitly championed Israeli positions. One example is Germany's position on whether Palestine should be accepted as a full member of the United Nations. Angela Merkel had rejected this Palestinian notion in September 2011 and supported Israel in preventing a corresponding Security Council resolution. Immediately thereafter, the Israeli government approved 1,000 new housing units in Jerusalem and thus snubbed the Federal Government. Angela Merkel had expected confidence-building measures from Israel, not an expansion of Israeli settlements.[26] The diplomatic crisis may have played a role in Germany abstaining during a December 2012 vote in the UN General Assembly on the question of recognising Palestine as an observer nation and thus enhancing its status. The Israeli government had expected Germany to vote no.[27] The Israeli prime minister showed himself accordingly disappointed. Merkel made an effort to keep the conflict from escalating. After a meeting with Netanyahu a short time later, the chancellor explained: "We've agreed that we're not in agreement. That does not prevent us from concurring in questions, such as security, for example."[28]

Even publicly, Merkel has increasingly levelled criticism at Israeli settlement policy. When the Israeli government in January 2014 announced new construction measures, Angela Merkel, speaking prior to the German-Israeli government consultations, called the settlements a "decisive obstacle to the peace process."[29] Netanyahu rejected this assessment. For him, the Palestinians bear responsibility for the collapse of peace negotiations. Germany's assessment of settlement construction, in his view, fails to consider the conflict's root causes. A clear sign of the growing frustration on the German side was the postponement of government consultations in February 2018. That was a reaction to the Knesset's passing of the "The Judea and Samaria Settlement Regulation Law," which legalised illegal settlement outposts that had been established on private Palestinian land. The German Foreign Office had condemned this law openly: "Trust in the engagement of the Israeli government on behalf of a two-state-solution has been fundamentally shaken."[30] The 2018 government consultations explicitly omitted the topic of settlements. But settlement construction remains a permanent point of conflict. The German side has yet to draw concrete political consequences. Integration in the European Union allows Germany to take a more critical position on Israel and settlement construction. Jan Busse reasons correctly:

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[26] Israel and Germany in Unprecedented Diplomatic Crisis Over Jerusalem Construction, Haaretz, 2.10.2011, <www.haaretz.com/1.5185183>.

[27] Jan Busse: Germany and the Israeli occupation: the interplay of international commitments and domestic dynamics, in: Global Affairs, 4/2018, pp. 77–88.

[28] Merkel After Netanyahu Meet: We've Agreed to Disagree on Settlement Construction. Haaretz, 6.12.2012, <www.haaretz.com/.premium-on-e-1-pm-merkel-agree-to-disagree-1.5269524>.

[29] Ralf Neukirch: Significant Escalation. Tensions Flare in German-Israeli Relations. Spiegel-Online, 18 February 2014, <www.spiegel.de/international/germany/relations-between-germany-and-israel-at-all-time-low-formerkel-a-954118.html>.

[30] Germany's Merkel Cancels Summit with Israel in Wake of Palestinian Land-grab Law. Haaretz, 13.2.2017.

> Europeanization and legalization serve as strategic foreign policy instruments that enable Germany to take harder stance vis-à-vis Israel and at the same time maintain its obligations to Israel.[31]

The distinction between the internationally recognised territory of Israel and the territories occupied in 1967 represents the basis for the EU's differentiation policy. This was explicitly adopted by the European Council in 2012. According to this policy, agreements with Israel apply solely to the territory that lay within its borders prior to the Six-Day War. Thus, a statement from December 2012 said:

> ... all agreements between the State of Israel and the European Union must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967.[32]

By EU law, products from Israeli settlements may not be labelled as Israeli products. Instead, their origin from settlements must be clearly recognisable for consumers. Germany not only went along with these decisions; it played an essential role in their formulation. The differentiation policy has by all means received international support and was explicitly included in UN Security Resolution 2334. Here, Germany's argument is based on compliance with European law and consumer protection so as to distance itself from calls for a boycott as well. In addition, the EU is not fully implementing the differentiation policy. The decision on product labelling has been largely de-politicised and is not considered an instrument for persuading Israel to end its settlement activity. The Israeli government was thus able to respond with "quiet compliance" and continue its settlement policy.[33]

The current plan by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to unilaterally annex parts of the occupied West Bank has the potential to further escalate the conflict. German foreign minister Heiko Maas even flew to Israel despite the COVID19 restrictions in order to express his concern that such a decision might damage the friendship between Germany and Israel. At the same time, he refrained from threatening concrete measures or even sanctions. The Israeli government reacted rather unperturbed and even prevented Maas from visiting the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah, giving flimsy reasons.

Israel's Security and the Iranian Nuclear Program

The conflict over Iran's nuclear programme is by contrast a conflict in which Israel expects support and solidarity from Germany in the face of a threat that is perceived as existential. Prime Minister Netanyahu has always rejected the nuclear agreement with Iran (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA) as a danger to Israel's security. Instead, he pursues a confrontational policy toward Iran.[34] The Israeli government criticises not only certain details of the accord, such as its lack of verification measures and

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[31] Busse: Germany [f.n. 27], p. 79.

[32] Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process, Brussels 2012, <www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/134140.pdf>, p. 2.

[33] Why there's no chance Europe will solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Haaretz, 25.1.2018.

[34] Marc Lynch: Belligerent Minimalism, The Trump Administration and the Middle East, in: The Washington Quarterly, 4/2016, pp. 127–144, p. 131.

the limited duration of Iranian assurances, but is, above all, concerned about the region's changing balance of power. The government warns of Iran's policy of expansion and the military build-up of Iranian allies, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, both of which pose a direct threat to Israel. For Germany and the EU, however, the nuclear agreement was one of their greatest foreign policy successes. Within a multilateral format (the five permanent Security Council members plus Germany), the Europeans had succeeded in reaching a negotiated solution and in preventing a military strike, which Israel repeatedly kept in play as well. From the German point of view, focus on the question of nuclear weapons and the double strategy of sanctions and offers of negotiations produced a successful result. After all, it had been able to achieve the central goal: preventing a nuclear armed Iran and strengthening the global non-proliferation regime for nuclear weapons.

A new situation emerged after the withdrawal of the United States from the multilateral nuclear agreement in May 2018. US President Donald Trump is not only calling for a re-negotiation of the nuclear agreement, he is promising to counter Iran's activities in the region and to prevent Iran's military build-up. Trump is thus returning to an approach that links the question of the nuclear programme to other contentious issues such as the development of Iranian rocket systems or Tehran's support for terrorist groups in the region. The re-establishment of the sanction regime and the threat of secondary sanctions against all states that continue to trade with Iran is aimed at exercising maximal pressure on the Iranian regime.[35] Israel supports the US strategy. Prime Minister Netanyahu demands that the Europeans, especially Germany, join this strategy and impose sanctions against Iran. After Iran announced in early July 2019 that it would enrich uranium beyond the limit allowed within the framework of the nuclear agreement, Netanyahu explained:

> This is not a small step... This is a very dangerous step, and I am urging my friends, the leaders of France, Britain, Germany... Where are you? ... I'm asking you... take the steps that you promised. Enact the sanctions.[36]

Heiko Maas, the German foreign minister, defended the agreement as successful:

> Precisely because we distrust Iran, we want to maintain the agreement; therefore, it makes sense. For at the moment it remains at any rate the safest way to keep Iran from building nuclear weapons. Therefore, the world is more secure with this agreement than without it.[37]

Maintaining the agreement lies in Germany's interest:

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[35] Steffen Hagemann: Rückzug oder Neuordnung? Die USA und die Nahostpolitik in der Ära Trump, in: Lukas Herr et al. (eds.): Weltmacht im Abseits. Amerikanische Außenpolitik in der Ära Trump. Baden-Baden 2019, pp. 245–278.

[36] Gil Yaron: Der Tag, vor dem Israel seit Jahren warnte. Die Welt, 7.7.2019.

[37] Heiko Maas: Iran-Atomabkommen verteidigen. Kriegsgefahr abwenden. Rede in der Aktuellen Stunde des Deutschen Bundestages. Berlin, 15.5.2019, <www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/newsroom/maas-bundestag-iran-atomabkommen/2218510>.

> This would be – this is not only the position of the German Federal Government but the entire European Union – a major setback in the struggle against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, there is threat of a conflagration in the entire region with serious consequences for the security of our allies, but above all else for our security here in Europe.[38]

Federal Chancellor Merkel also committed herself to the nuclear agreement at a press conference with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. She said that she shares with Israel the perception that the presence of Iranian troops close to the Israel-Syrian border in the Golan Heights represents a threat, and that she supports the basic goal of preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. "Where we don't always concur is the way to reach this goal. Therefore, the discussion will continue."[39] Like Foreign Minister Maas, the chancellor refused the Israeli request.

This conflict masks fundamental differences concerning perceived threats and concepts of international order. For Prime Minister Netanyahu, Iran is ruled by a totalitarian and ideological regime, whose central foreign policy goal is Israel's destruction. Iran, in his view, represents an existential threat for Israel. According to this characterisation of Iran, diplomatic attempts to integrate and resolve conflict are pointless; even strategies of deterrence are ultimately useless and cannot address the existential threat.[40] In order to illustrate the extent of the threat, Netanyahu drew analogies to the threat posed by National Socialism and to the Shoah.

> Just as the Nazis aspired to crush civilization and to establish a "master race" to replace it in controlling the world while annihilating the Jewish people, so too does Iran strive to gain control over the region, from which it would spread further, with the explicit intent of obliterating the Jewish state.[41]

Finally, Netanyahu compared the situation in the Middle East with Europe before the Second World War and warned the Europeans of historical mistakes:

> [It] reminds me of the European appeasement of the 1930s. Then, too, there were those who stuck their head in the sand and did not see the approaching danger.[42]

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Raphael Ahren: In Jerusalem, Merkel say Palestinians must accept Israel as a Jewish state. Times of Israel, 4.10.2018, <www.timesofisrael.com/in-jerusalem-merkel-says-palestinians-must-accept-israel-as-jewish-state/>.

[40] Barak Ravid: Netanyahu to Obama: Iran Framework Threatens Israel's Existence. Haaretz, 3.4.2015. In Israel, there are also dissenting views against the characterisation of Iran as an irrational actor and existential threat, for example, on the part of former Prime Minister Ehud Barak and the former Mossad Director Ephraim Halevy.

[41] Holocaust-Gedenktag in Israel: Netanjahu vergleicht Iran mit Nationalsozialisten. Der Tagesspiegel, 16.4.2015, <mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Iran/Nuclear/Pages/Excerpt-PM-Netanyahu-on-Holocaust-Remembrance-Day-15-Apr-2015.aspx>.

[42] Netanyahu: EU response on Iran reminiscent of appeasement of Nazis. Ynetnews, 15.7.2019, <www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5550828,00.html>.

Germany's policy toward Iran and its support for the nuclear agreement have caused disappointment. Avi Dichter, former director of Israel's domestic intelligence service and chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs Committee, accused Germany of downplaying the danger posed by Iran: "Germany and the EU are closing their eyes to the Iranian threat."[43] In Dichter's view, Germany and the EU are assessing Iran less according to its internal constitution than according to its military abilities. Germany stresses the possibility that Iran, with the appropriate incentives, can be kept from expanding its military capabilities, conventional and nuclear. The strategy of integration and deterrence, it is said, promises success.[44] The Iran conflict exposes clear differences between Israel and Germany as to how to guarantee Israel's security.

In addition, there are conflicts over the legitimacy of international norms and the future of a multilateral, rules-based order. As the Federal Republic has traditionally understood itself as a civilian power, strengthening international organisations, multilateral cooperation, and the legitimacy of international law are essential to how Germans perceive their foreign policy identity.

Israel's perspective of international policy is significantly shaped by its security policy environment: military superiority and strength belong to the basic principles of Israeli security doctrine. Moreover, a broad scepticism about the effectiveness and credibility of international organisations holds sway. Most recently, Israel withdrew from UNESCO, because it, in Israel's view, pursues an anti-Israeli agenda. Instead of multilateral formats, Israel is banking on bilateral contacts throughout the world and is exploiting growing global divisions in doing so. Autocrats such as Russia or Azerbaijan as well as populist politicians such as Trump, Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, and Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines number among the new alliance partners.[45] In Europe, Netanyahu seeks proximity to illiberal governments, especially those in Poland and Hungary, so as to weaken the political pressure from Western Europe.

The differences between Germany and Israel over the international order are not new: disputes over adherence to international law, for example, in the military confrontation with Hamas or in the question of whether settlement construction is illegal, lead regularly to conflicts. Since Donald Trump took office as president of the United States, these have become more pronounced. The transfer of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and the March 2019 recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which have been occupied since 1967, have led to clear objections from Germany. Not only do they violate international law and the UN Charter, they also have regional consequences.[46] The fear is that recognition of the annexation of the Golan Heights represents a precedent for the West Bank and thus undermines a two-state resolution. The Israeli side, by contrast, has welcomed the steps taken by Trump and called on the Europeans to do the same – a clear indication of the gulf that has opened up between Israel and Germany in the meantime. The current plans to annex parts of the

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[43] Schult, Eroding Friendship [f.n. 1].

[44] Maas: Iran-Atomabkommen verteidigen [f.n. 38].

[45] Rina Bassist: Netanyahu forsakes multilateralism in favor of bilateral alliances. Al-Monitor, 22.1.2019, <www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/01/israel-chad-european-union-unesco-benjamin-netanyahu-trump.html>.

[46] Trump's Golan proclamation gathers international condemnation. Deutsche Welle, 26.3.2019.

West Bank have further intensified the conflict. Germany has stated that unilateral annexation would clearly constitute a violation of international law and a threat to the rules-based international order and will not be recognised by the German government.

Shared Values? Eroding Bond

However, common values are being called into question not only at the level of the international order. Above all, since 2015, right-wing, nationalist, and religious forces in Israeli politics have come to represent illiberal positions and have passed restrictive laws that tarnish Israel's image as the only democracy in the Middle East. This includes the July 2016 "NGO Transparency Law," which imposes various obligations on non-government organisations that receive more than half of their funding from foreign public sources. Even if the law does not impose limits on freedom of expression and freedom of association, it is primarily directed against human rights organisations and anti-occupation initiatives.[47] The European Commission criticised the law as a danger to Israeli democracy. The Israeli opposition shares this criticism as well.[48] Since the work of German political foundations and their partners was also affected by this law, it led to a common, non-partisan criticism of the Israeli government. The passage of the law was accompanied by a campaign that aimed to stigmatise the NGOs affected and to discredit their legitimacy.[49] It came to a row during the visit of Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel in April 2017 when Netanyahu cancelled a meeting with Gabriel because the German visitor wanted to meet with the NGOs Breaking the Silence and B'Tselem. Gabriel linked his decision not to cancel his meeting with the NGOs to clear criticism of Netanyahu:

> The Israeli prime minister wanted to force me to cancel a meeting with respectable Israeli citizens, because they criticize his policies against Palestinians. It is not only our point of view that Israel is violating international law with its settlement policy and is blocking the peace process. The policies of the Netanyahu government are highly disputed in Israel, too. Therefore, it is only natural for me to listen to his critics.[50]

After the row, Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Gabriel tried to the smooth the waters, stressing Germany's friendship with Israel, but at the same time pointed to the importance of freedom of expression and pluralism.[51]
Since then, the Knesset has passed further laws that weaken democracy in Israel. This includes the July 2018 nation-state law, which establishes the Jewish character of the Israeli state. The law, which enjoys constitutional status, fails to describe Israel as a

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[47] This also has to do with the fact that right-wing and other organisations close to the settlement movement that receive primarily private donations do not fall under the rules.
[48] Israel passes law to force NGOs to reveal foreign funding. The Guardian, 12.7.2016.
[49] Muriel Asseburg: "Shrinking spaces" in Israel, SWP-Aktuell 61/2017. Available in English as SWP Comments 36/2017 at <www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/israel-shrinking-spaces/>.
[50] Merkel wants to talk high-tech in Israel, but Iran and Palestinians may dampen mood. Haaretz, 3.10.2018, <www.haaretz.com/misc/article-print-page/.premium-merkel-wants-to-talk-high-tech-in-israel-but-iran-and-palestinians-may-lower-mood-1.6529099>.
[51] Amid tensions with Netanyahu, German president lauds Israeli democracy, but says critics aren't 'traitors'. Haaretz, 8.5.2017.

democratic state in the same breath and to enshrine the principle of equality of all citizens. Critics accuse the Israeli government of changing the balance between the Jewish and democratic character of the state. Angela Merkel expressed concern for the rights of Israel's non-Jewish minority.[52]

Moreover, in recent years the government headed by Netanyahu has weakened norms of liberal democracy, the rule of law, and democratic institutions. Especially the Supreme Court, which represents the separation of powers, as well as the procedures and norms of the rule of law, has come under attack. Netanyahu refused to tolerate criticism from Germany and saw in it "interference in internal affairs."[53] The Israeli government expressed its irritation with "cheap moralism"[54] on the part of the Germans and pointed to the growing strength of the right-wing party Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD), wherein the Israeli side did not see a development that could endanger German democracy. All of these developments represent a danger to a central element in Israeli-German relations: the recognition of the other state as a liberal democracy based on common values.

Area of conflict 1: The Golan Heights, view from Jordan.

[52] In Jerusalem, Merkel say Palestinians must accept Israel as a Jewish state. Times of Israel, 4.10.2018.
[53] Michael Thumann: Fremde Freunde. Die Zeit, 26.4.2017.
[54] Frehse, Kalte Freunde [f.n. 2].

Area of conflict 2: The town Har Choma, southeast of Jerusalem, established by Israel starting in 1997.

Area of conflict 3: Yuli Novak, spokeswoman for Breaking the Silence, in Hebron in 2015, accompanied by two settlers, who are protesting her presence.

Dwindling Sympathy for Israel

This growing distance to Israel is also seen in German public opinion. For years, sympathy for Israel has been declining among the German population. This has not been accompanied by increasing sympathy for the Palestinians. Israel enjoyed the highest favourability ratings during the wars of 1967 and 1973. Those days have passed. Instead, the German public has revealed itself to be increasingly reserved toward Palestinians *and* Israelis. This reservation has to do with the growing perception that this conflict is unsolvable, and that it is becoming increasingly unclear as to who is actually to blame for it.[55] This also has to do with the fact that German public opinion does not share the Federal Government's commitment to special relations and solidarity with Israel. A study by the Bertelsmann Foundation in 2015 came to the conclusion that a majority of the German population (61 per cent) avowed a special responsibility for Israel, but does not equate this with unconditional solidarity. Instead, drawing on the lessons of the past, Germans felt human rights and minorities should be universally protected. Moreover, a majority of the German population takes a sceptical view of the use of military force in international politics.[56]

Most of those polled in Germany expected concessions from Israel in its conflict with the Palestinians. In a Forsa poll from April 2017, only 17 per cent of those polled were of the opinion that Germany should exercise restraint in condemning Israeli settlement policy. Moreover, a majority spoke out in favour of German recognition of an independent Palestinian state.[57] Political elites on both sides are thoroughly aware of the discrepancy between German public opinion and the German state's foreign policy line. Avi Dichter thus reported on a meeting with Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, during which Gabriel explained:

> It was growing increasingly difficult for the political elite to defend justified Israeli interests because the German population was growing increasingly critical of Israel.[58]

Summary: Conflict instead of Consensus

Behind the avowals of a special relationship and friendship, clear differences are recognisable. They relate to the Israel-Palestinian conflict and the Iran conflict, different positions on normative aspects of international politics, the legitimacy of international law, or the importance of multilateralism, which presupposes the recognition of binding rules for all. In the light of this, as well as the illiberal tendencies on display in Israel, the

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[55] Steffen Hagemann: Der Nahostkonflikt im Spiegel der Einstellungsforschung, in: Mirko Niehoff (ed.): Nahostkonflikt kontrovers. Schwalbach/Ts. 2016, pp. 27–40.

[56] Steffen Hagemann, Roby Nathanson: Deutschland und Israel heute. Verbindende Vergangenheit, trennende Gegenwart. Gütersloh 2015.

[57] Kritik an Israel darf sein. Stern, 3.5.2017, <www.stern.de/politik/deutschland/stern-umfrage--kritik-an-israel-darf-sein-7435842.html>.

[58] Schult: Eroding Friendship [f.n. 1].

German conviction that Israel and Germany share the same values is eroding. This development is reflected in the growing distance of the German public to Israel. Admittedly, conflicts have always belonged to German-Israeli relations. Under Netanyahu, criticism of Israel has grown considerably. Since the Israeli government barely adheres to the two-state solution and disregards international law, numerous observers are demanding a clearer position on the part of Germany. Only in this way, the thinking goes, is political pressure to be exerted on Israel.[59] However, the specific character of German-Israeli relations and the past of Germany's body politic set clear limits: criticism will be expressed in friendship. Linking political or material support to conditions or exerting political pressure remains the exception. Even if the memory of the Holocaust is changing due to distance in time and generational shifts, reference to the past remains essential for German policy. Thus, Foreign Minister Heiko Maas is once again invoking historic responsibility more strongly than his predecessor, for instance, to justify Germany's support for Israel in its voting in the United Nations.

The debate over a Bundestag resolution directed at the initiative BDS (Boycott, Divestments, and Sanctions) has indicated that the discourse regarding Israel is polarising within Germany. With the motion "Resolutely counter the BDS movement – fight antisemitism", the Bundestag on 17th May 2019, condemned the BDS movement's call to boycott Israel, Israeli goods and services, together with Israeli artists, academics and scientists, and athletes as well. The motion states that the "patterns of argument and methods of the BDS movement ... are antisemitic".[60] The Bundestag resolution passed with a large majority, but it was preceded by a heated discussion that showed how closely the debate over Israel and the Middle East conflict is linked to the politics of the past. The majority of the Bundestag invoked Germany's historical experience, compared the "Don't buy" stickers of the BDS movement with the Nazi slogan "Don't buy from Jews!" and designated the BDS as antisemitic.

The decision sparked criticism inside and outside of parliament, either due to the sweeping stigmatisation of the BDS movement in Europe and Palestine, neglecting different historical experiences and contexts, or due to the omitted distinction between Israel and the occupied territories. Reactions from Israel were highly conflicting: the Israeli government welcomed the Bundestag resolution and called for far-reaching consequences. At the same time, the decision provoked criticism from within the opposition and civil society. The allegation of antisemitism, it was said, was being instrumentalised, in order to prevent legitimate criticism of Israeli occupation policy.

The German-Israeli relationship will remain strained in the future as well. It is a relationship determined by the past and the present, by interests and solidarity. The fields of conflict show that there are different interpretations of what solidarity means in both countries and how far it has to go. If German responsibility for Israel is not to consist only of empty words, these conflicts have to be discussed openly.

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More on the topic of this volume in the German edition: www.zeitschrift-osteuropa.de

Abstracts

Migration, Identity, Politics

Trans-inter-national: Russia, Israel, Germany

Abstracts of texts not included in the English edition
German edition: <www.zeitschrift-osteuropa.de/hefte/2019/9-11/>

Viacheslav Konstantinov
Voting (in) Israel
The political voice of post-Soviet immigrants

Since the early 1990s, one million people have emigrated to Israel from the Soviet Union and its successor states. When majorities are slim, their votes have a major influence over the outcome of elections. Over the past 30 years, a third of them have voted for an immigrant party; in particular, in the last 15 years, for Yisrael Beitenu led by Avigdor Liebermann. These voters are of above-average age, with lower levels of education and lower incomes compared to immigrants to Israel overall, and live away from the centre of the country. A further third voted for moderate right-wing parties, particularly Likud. There is almost no support for religious parties. Within this group, the level of popularity of the left-wing parties has decreased more markedly than among the population overall.

Volker Beck
Against the unequal treatment of the returnees
Late resettlers and Jewish immigrants and the pension and citizenship legislation

Since 1990, Germany has accepted around 2.5 million late resettlers and 200,000 Jews from the states of the former Soviet Union. The Russian-Germans were regarded as “Volksdeutsche”, or ethnic Germans, who as such had suffered from the aftermath of the war. Jews were accepted in line with the Quota Refugee Law. The reason given for doing so was the discrimination and persecution to which all members of this group were perceived to be subjected. This different legal basis meant that this group enjoyed unequal treatment, which is particularly reflected in the pension legislation. There is no justification for this. This is not just a socio-political measure to alleviate the widespread poverty among the elderly in the Jewish community, but is far more a historical and identity policy corrective. Between 1941 and 1945, 2.9 million Soviet Jews were murdered by Germans, and all survivors of the Shoah have therefore suffered from the aftermath of the war. Not only that: the culture of the Ashkenazy Jews and the Yiddish language spoken by them until well into the 20th century are an inherent part of the German cultural community.

Aleksandr Iličevskij
“Literature is my homeland”
Alexander Ilichevsky on living, reading and writing in Israel and elsewhere

The writer Alexander Illichevsky was born in Baku and grew up near Moscow, before moving to the US and returning to Russia. He has lived in Israel since 2013. During the day, he speaks Hebrew; in the evening, he writes in Russian. His books are published in Russia, and some are available in translation in Germany and France, such as the encyclopaedic contemporary novel “Der Perser” (“The Persian”). His work has not been translated into Hebrew, and only a few people read his books in Israel. It was a light-hearted attitude to life and a poem by Brodsky that turned the former physicist into a writer. Today, he earns his living as a radiologist. Another square root will have to appear in the sky before he switches to Hebrew.

Sergii Gurbych
Old and new homelands
The literary treatment of migration from the (post-)Soviet space to Germany and Israel

A series of writers who have come to Israel or Germany from the Soviet Union and its successor states are processing their experiences of migration in their novels. Some write in Russian, others in Hebrew or German. A shift to German means enlarging their readership, while switching to Hebrew tends to narrow it. A lot depends on the age at which the authors left their old homeland. Those who came to Germany or Israel as adults usually remain part of a Russian-speaking culture, while those who came as children often have a hybrid sense of identity that is usually connected to specific places. This is reflected in their literature.

Alexis Hofmeister
Girl guides, poets and #RusRaelis
Brief articles on Israel as an eastern European event

Israel’s political culture is dominated by ideas, practices and values that were already introduced by the first Jewish immigrants from the Russian Empire, as well as from Poland and Romania in the inter-war years. Snapshots from the past and present show that this legacy and these influences still have an impact today.

Rebecca Hahn
Belief and belonging
First-person narration of a young Russian German Woman

Among the Russian Germans who have arrived in Germany since the 1990s, there are also Mennonites. They have an intense common life. Religion and a strong sense of community are at the same time resources and restrictions for integration. For members of the second generation, the values and expectations of the community can become a source of tension when they collide with worldly norms and ideals. In each case, the issue is identity and belonging to a group.

Darja Klingenberg
Notably unnoteworthy
Female Russian-speaking migrants in Germany

Female Russian-speaking migrants, who moved to Germany 30 years ago as late immigrants, Jewish quota refugees and education and labour migrants, are viewed as an unproblematic minority. Among the general public, attitudes towards these minorities are not without their contradictions. Occasionally, they are described as being over-adjusted, materialistic and reactionary. The way in which Russian-language migration is presented has changed over time. Initially, it was regarded as an exception; then, the problems of integration became the focus of attention. Today, it is the model integration of these people that is the main topic of interest.

Jonna Rock
Together alone
Communication and interaction between russian-speaking Jews, Russian Germans and Russians in Berlin

Three Russophone groups live in Germany: Russian-speaking Jews, Russian Germans and Russians. They arrived to the Federal Republic from Russia and other former Soviet states for a number of different reasons, and their legal status also differs. Yet how strong is the contact between Russian-speaking Jews, Russian Germans and Russians – within the respective groups and between the members of the three groups? This explorative study based on qualitative interviews illustrates with reference to this particular case that while a common language may be a binding factor, the social and cultural differences mean that there is little intercommunication, even when the groups are geographically close.

Yuri Nesterko, Heide Glaesmer
Affiliation and religiosity
Psychological wellbeing among Jewish migrants

Between 1989 and 2006, over 1.6 million people with Jewish roots migrated from the USSR and its successor states. Most of them moved to Israel, while Germany accepted over 205,000 Jewish immigrants. The political, socio-economic and ethno-cultural conditions differ in the two host countries. Differences can also be observed with regard to the cultural and ethnic affiliation and religiosity of the Jewish migrants. Despite this, the extent to which affiliation and religiosity affect the psychological wellbeing of these people cannot be empirically proven. Specific migration-related factors such as the degree of integration or the level of discrimination experienced have a direct influence on their psychological wellbeing.

Lidia Averbukh, Margarete Klein
Power politics and selective cooperation
Russia, Israel and the war in Syria

Russia and Israel share important elements with regard to their strategic culture. They pursue a decidedly interest-based realpolitik and can pragmatically cooperate in certain areas when their interests are compatible. Both regard themselves as a "fortress under siege", both are oriented to the primacy of security policy, and both pursue a concept of power that is based on military might. The increased social and economic ties between Russia and Israel are of lesser importance for the rapprochement of the two states. However, the limits of this proximity are evident. They lie in the unpredictable dynamic of the war in Syria and in the conflicting positions of the two countries regarding the role that Iran and the US should play in the region.

Joshua Krasna
Moscow on the Mediterranean
Relations between Russia and Israel

Between 1967 and 1991, there were no diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel. Today, Russia and Israel take a pragmatic approach. Both sides are aware of the limits of cooperation. Some political interests are compatible, although the level of economic exchange is low. Moscow and Jerusalem share no common values. Yet strategist dialogue has gained a new level of importance since Russia intervened in the Syrian war in 2015 and supported the Assad regime together with Iran. Today, Russia plays a decisive role in deciding on the post-war order in Syria. Its policies have consequences for the position of Iran, developments in the Middle East and thus also for the security of Israel.

Joanna Dyduch
The Visegrád states and Israel
Dimensions and functions of a special relationship

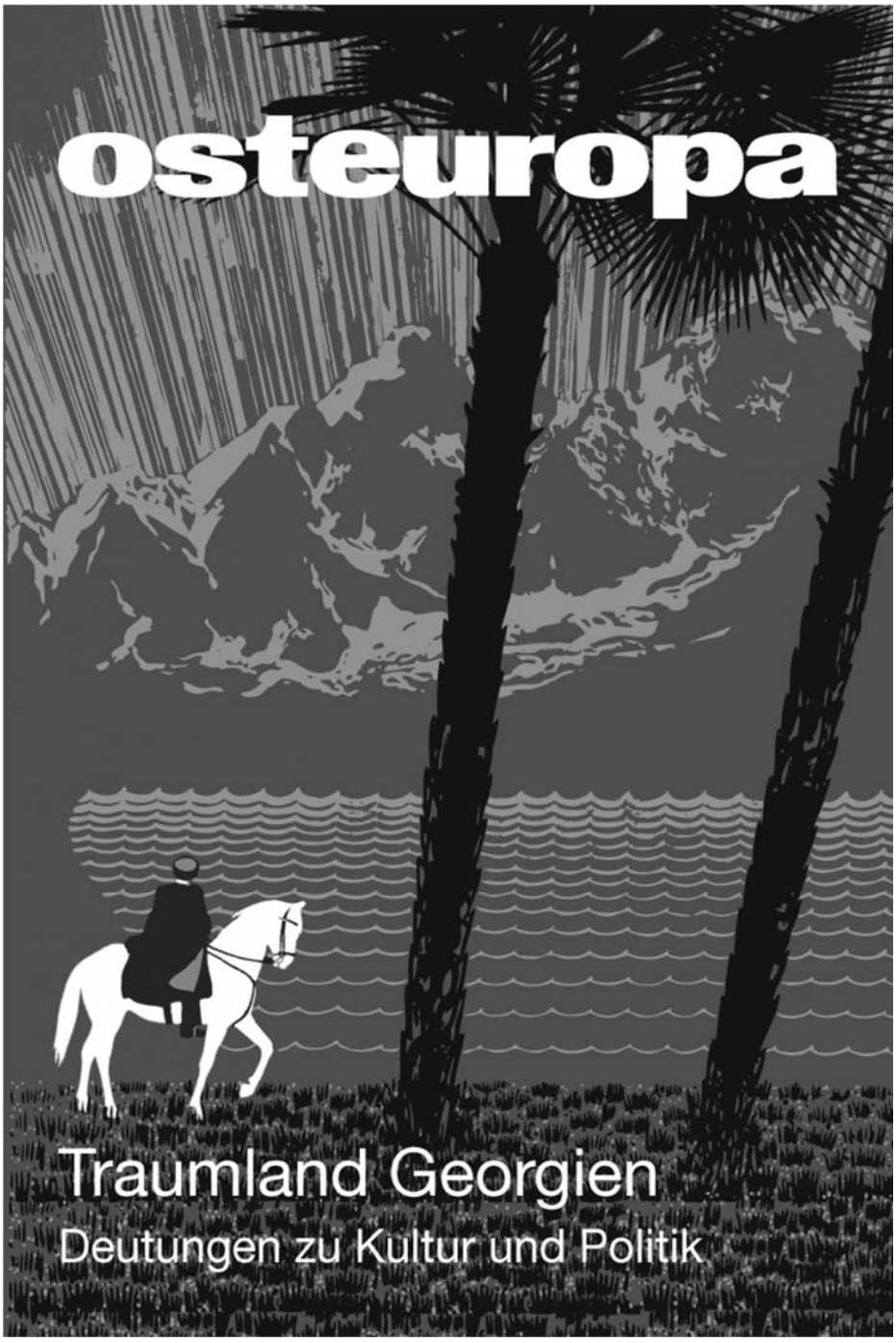
The Visegrád states – Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia – place great value on their separate policy towards Israel. Here, there are more than just economic interests at stake. The Israel policy of the four states also reflects the fact that they place particular importance on a nation state that is sovereign with regard to both domestic and foreign policy. Thus, their policy towards Israel is at the same time symbolic European policy and a part of the anything but uniform Israel policy of the EU. This applies in particular to Hungary and Poland, where the governments in power are also closest to Netanyahu's government in Israel both politically and in terms of their worldview. Poland, like Israel, also places great importance on its relations with the US. At the same time, the history policy in Warsaw is a source of conflict with Jerusalem, with its emphasis on Polish heroes and victims.

Johannes Becke, Simon Weiß
Limits of the prohibition on annexation
The Golan, Crimea and international law

International law prohibits the annexation of the territory of one state by another. However, the list of cases of illegal state expansion is long, and includes Israel's annexation of the Golan and Russia's annexation of Crimea. While the occupation of the Golan Heights was a defensive act committed as a result of war, the same does not apply to the annexation of Crimea. The governments in Jerusalem and Moscow are prepared to bear the political, economic and moral costs of international criticism. They have the support of their own population. The international community tries to convince Russia and Israel, to restore the status quo ante. The prospects of success, however, are limited, even though there are historical examples of states withdrawing from territories that they have annexed.

Anders Persson
Staying on course
The EU and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict

Despite very rapid changes in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and throughout the Middle East, the EU continues to support a two-state solution. During the 1970s, the member states of the European Community jointly developed this approach as a pioneering concept for a just peace in the Middle East. Today, the EU's Middle East policy is on the verge of becoming irrelevant. Furthermore, the member states are finding it increasingly difficult to agree on a common position. However, those that criticise the continued adherence to the two-state solution offer no alternative concepts for peace in the Middle East. The EU would therefore be wise, with its new concept of resilience, not throw what is regarded as being the right approach overboard.



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