"If you want to adjust Israel to yourself, you will be disappointed."

Identification and integration of Hungarian Jews in Israel

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Submitted to

Central European University

Nationalism Studies Program

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Arts

Supervisor: Professor Michael Miller

Budapest, Hungary

2013

Abstract

The goal of this thesis is to see how Hungarian Jews living in Israel identify themselves and what the level of their integration is. The Russian-speaking Jewish community is the reference group for the comparison in which the Hungarians are the focus. As a group of comparison, I picked Russian-speaking Jews because they arrived in several waves and by now make up 20% of the Israeli Jewish population. Concisely, my goal was to choose two groups that are essentially different regarding their situation in Israel. Regarding the methodology, there are 17 interviews conducted with Hungarian Jews who left in the 1990s for Israel. In order to be able to situate them within the Israeli context they will be set against the Russian-speaker immigrants who were thoroughly analyzed by other scholars thus serving as a meaningful control group. Hence, the goal is to see how the Hungarians differ from them.

The importance of this project lies in the fact that Hungarians in Israel were not studied yet. The findings concerning integration will show the success or failure of these two particular migration flows. Answering the question about the reasons for migrating, it will be clearer whether Israel is pulling the immigrants for ideological reasons or it starts resembling other receiving countries.

The results suggest that Hungarians are more advanced in their integration than the Russian-speakers but maintaining their Hungarianness also plays an important role. This manifests on the individual level as opposed to the Russians where both the community and individual level are important in maintaining Russian culture. What is striking, is that the phenomenon that instead of becoming part of the majority as Jews, they become from minority members (of a religious group in Hungary) to minority members (of an ethnicity in Israel).

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Introduction

Identity in general has been studied intensively by many scholars thus it became a highly contested notion.[1] Jewish identity, in particular, is also a widely discussed phenomenon. Jewish identity of Hungarians has been analyzed in Hungary by many researchers[2] and it is interesting to see how they identify themselves in Israel compared to the biggest migrant group of Israel. Since identity is highly intertwined with integration, the thesis deals with both the processes of identification and integration of Hungarian and Russian-speaking[3] Jewish migrants in Israel. Hungarian Jews constitute the biggest Jewish community in Central and Eastern Europe[4] and the number of those who decide to make *aliyah*[5] is rather small (e.g. 144 Hungarians made *aliyah* in 2011 and 170 in 2013[6]) and even less stay in Israel (according to estimations more than 100 go back per year[7]). It is interesting to see what factors push them away from Hungary, pull them to go to Israel and then what makes them stay there. My choice fell on the Hungarians also because there was no study done on them in Israel and I find it important to fill in this gap thus making this thesis a pioneer in the field. As a group of comparison, I picked Russian-speaking Jews because they arrived in several waves and by now make up 20% of the Israeli Jewish population. Concisely, my goal was to choose two groups that are essentially different regarding their situation in Israel.

[1] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'identity'," in *Theory and Society* 29 (February 2000), 1–47.
[2] To name a few: András Kovács, (ed.), "Jews and Jewry in Contemporary Hungary," In *JPR Report* 1 (2004). Viktor Karády, *Beyond Assimilation: Dilemmas of Jewish Identity in Contemporary Hungary* (Budapest: Collegium Budapest, 1993); Éva Kovács and Júlia Vajda. *Mutatkozás. Zsidó identitás történetek*. (Budapest: Múlt és Jövő, 2002.); Ferenc Erős. "The Construction of Jewish Identity in the 1980s," in: Yitzhak Kashti, Ferenc Erős, David Shers and David Zisenswine (eds.) *A Quest for Identity. Post-War Jewish Identities* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1996.), 51-70.
[3] The terms Russian-speakers, Russians, and post-Soviets will be used as synonyms throughout the thesis and they will refer to those immigrants who arrived from the former Soviet Union (from now: FSU).
[4] Zvi Gitelman, "Reconstructing Jewish Communities and Jewish Identities in Post-Communist East Central Europe," in *Central European University Jewish Studies Yearbook 1*, ed. András Kovács (Budapest: CEU Press, 2000), 50.
[5] Immigration of Jews from the Diaspora to Israel.
[6] The Jewish Agency for Israel, Aliyah Figures from Hungary between 1989-2012. February 7, 2013. Raw data. The Jewish Agency for Israel, Jerusalem.
[7] All my interviewees and experts referred to this widespread phenomenon (i.e. Hungarians going back to Hungary) with such numbers.

The Russian-speaking Jewish community is the reference group for the comparison in which the Hungarians are the focus. Regarding the methodology, there are 17 interviews conducted with Hungarian Jews who left in the 1990s for Israel. In order to be able to situate them within the Israeli context they will be set against the Russian-speaker immigrants who analyzed by others[8] thus serving as a meaningful control group. Hence, the goal is to see how the Hungarians differ from them.

Both Hungarians and post-Soviets come from the post-Socialist region but being part of the Soviet Union or being a satellite state makes a big difference. Jewish identity, following Barth's theory, is defined by both content and boundaries.[9] In the Soviet Union the content was being emptied and Jewishness was maintained forcibly through boundaries[10] whereas in Hungary – as everywhere else – culture becomes the most important element of Jewish identity.[11] Jewish culture defined first and foremost by tradition, a certain kind of (Jewish) behavior, customs (for example how to spend money) and mentality.[12] Regarding the content, despite the different backgrounds, I argue that Jewishness is rather similar based on Liebman's idea, but in relation to boundaries the differences are conspicuous between the two groups. It will be interesting to see whether the similarities and differences in Jewish identity remain or they are absorbed in the Israeli society.

[8] See, for example, Majid Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation in a Deeply Divided Society: The Case of the 1990s Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Israel*. (London: Brill, 2004.); Eliezer Ben-Rafael, *Building a Diaspora: Russian Jews in Israel, Germany and USA* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 24.; Noah Lewin-Epstein, Yaacov Ro'i and Paul Ritterband (eds.), *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Migration and Resettlement*, (London: Frank Cass, 1997.); Larissa Remennick. "What does integration mean? Social Insertion of Russian Immigrants in Israel," in *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 4:1 (2003): 23-49.; Zvi Gitelman, *Immigration and Identity. The Resettlement and Impact of Soviet Immigrants on Israeli Politics and Society*. (Los Angeles: Wilstein Institute of Jewish Policy Studies, 1995.)

[9] Frederik Barth (ed), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*, (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1969).

[10] Zvi Gitelman, "Jewish Identity and Secularism in Post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine," in *Religion or Ethnicity? Jewish Identities in Evolution*, ed. Zvi Gitelman (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, c2009), 243.

[11] Charles S. Liebman, "Jewish Identity in Transition: Transformation or Attenuation?" in *New Jewish Identities Contemporary Europe and Beyond*, ed. Zvi Gitelman, Barry Kosmin, and András Kovács (Budapest: CEU Press, 2003), 344-45.

[12] Ibid.

Another aspect of my examination, besides the identification process, is the integration. There are several theories about integration, one of the main is Berry's, in which he differentiates between four stages along two dimensions: voluntary, which causes either integration or marginalization, and forced, which leads to either assimilation or separatism (for graph see Appendix 1).[13] Researchers[14] do not agree on the level of integration regarding the Russian-speaker community in Israel, but the fact that they are not assimilated but rather created a distinct entity is an agreement between them. One of the main arguments is that Russians, by not giving up on their initial identity,[15] acquired hybrid identity, which is what Clifford is focusing on while analyzing diasporas.[16] The goal is to see whether the Hungarians are bicultural too or they rather assimilate; where they stand on Berry's graph, and how can we illustrate their level of integration in general. My overarching hypothesis is that Hungarians are much more integrated in the Israeli society, which comes along with a stronger Israeli identification.

In order to be able to ground the research questions and hypotheses, I will elaborate on these two frameworks. It will be followed by a short overview about the historical background of the two communities in their home countries (Hungary and the Soviet Union) and an analysis of the differences and similarities between the two. There will be also a short introduction about Israel and its immigration policy to put the two immigration flows into the Israeli context. The main part of the thesis will consist of the empirical analysis of the research material, i.e. the qualitative interviews. At the end, the conclusions will be drawn and some answers to the raised questions will be given and proposition for further research in the field will be presented.

[13] John W. Berry. "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," in *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 46:1 (1997): 5-68.
[14] See on page 32.
[15] Remennick. "What does integration mean?," 27.
[16] James Clifford, "Diasporas," in *Cultural Anthropology* 9:3 (1994): 302-338

This research is important for two reasons. First, it is a partially exploratory research in the sense that Hungarian Jews in Israel have not yet been studied. Therefore, it will give a starting point for further research and it will also contribute to the field of Jewish Studies, which has been recently strongly engaged in the Jewish identification processes. Second, Jews from both countries and areas keep making *aliyah* and the reasons for migrating, the process of identification and integration in migrants' lives play an important role in sociological research. Answering the first question, it will be clearer whether Israel is pulling the immigrants for ideological reasons or it starts resembling other receiving countries, as Shuval[17] suggests (see later). Regarding the process of identification, the most interesting part is the changes of their Jewishness and Hungarianness. The findings concerning integration will show the success or failure of these two particular migration flows.

[17] Judith T. Shuval, "Migration to Israel: The Mythology of Uniqueness." *International Migration* 36:1 (1998): 3-24.

1. Theoretical background, research questions and hypotheses

1.1. Identity

Identity is a fluid and constantly changing phenomenon with multiple dimensions. The debate about this topic is heated and developed, and it will not be covered. The aim is to focus on those theories that are going to be useful for the research. Therefore, mainly those theories will be mentioned that are related to ethnic identity. Prior to that, there is a need for clarification of the term that will be used throughout the discussion. The modern concept of identity was first mentioned by William James who distinguishes between three components: the social, the material and the mental[18] implying a rather static form whereas identification – although in the analyses highly intertwined with identity[19] – is defined by Freud as a sense of belongingness to the given group.[20] In this thesis the term identification is more appropriate because identity refers to a fixed concept as opposed to identification, which expresses the ongoing process, the changing nature of it.

Ethnic identities and ethnic-based organizations are both strengthened and weakened due to globalization.[21] Ethnic groups possess objective elements, subjective feelings and behavioral factors, as is suggested by several scholars, and there is agreement that these various elements are simultaneously present in ethnic formation.[22] Ethnicity is widely studied; therefore, only those theories will be presented that are the most relevant for the thesis. As the social psychological-anthropological approach of identity fits the most, the main reference point is Barth, who argues that ethnic group identities can be defined by both content and boundaries.[23] This concept is very important especially in the case of the Russian-speaking

[18] William James, *The principles of psychology. Volume 1.* (New York: Holt, 1890), 293. Cited by Shlomit Levy, "Trends in Jewish Identity in Israeli Society: Effects of the Former Soviet Union Immigration," in *Cont Jewry* 29 (2009): 154.
[19] Simon N. Herman, *Jewish Identity: A Social Psychological Perspective*. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989).
[20] Cited by Levy, "Trends in Jewish Identity," 153-168.
[21] Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation,"* 1.
[22] Ibid.,14-16.
[23] Barth (ed), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries.*

Jews who differ from other diaspora Jews mostly in terms of boundaries, such as: whom they regard as Jews and where they draw the line between Jews and non-Jews.[24] Jenkins developed this thought further by drawing our attention to the importance of the interplay between the two processes (self-identification and categorization by others) by saying that "socialization *is* categorization," which influences the individual's identification.[25] This, not surprisingly, coincides with Tajfel's Social Identity Theory, according to which an individual's identity is mainly influenced by his or her membership in one or more groups.[26] Taking into account Brubaker's criticism about "groupism"[27] the term group is used as a "category of analysis", not as a "category of practice."[28] In practice, such a group does not exist constantly, it is rather an "imagined community" that the members feel they belong to. Following these theories the research questions regarding identification are the following:

- Whom do the examined groups consider being the out-group(s) and in-group(s)?
- How do they identify themselves? And how does the self-identification differ from the manifestations of identity?
- How do these differ between the examined groups in the homeland?
- Do these differences disappear in Israel? And why?

Concerning ethnic identity (Hungarianness and Russianness), my hypothesis is that Hungarians are more likely to associate with Israelis than Russians who might feel closer to their co-ethnics. Regarding the influence of the country of residence versus country of origin,

[24] See, for example, Zvi Gitelman, "Thinking about Being Jewish in Russia and Ukraine," in *Jewish Life after the USSR* ed. Zvi Gitelman, Musya Glants and Marshall I. Goldman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 49-60.
[25] Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations*, (London: Sage, 1997), 166.
[26] Henri Tajfel, "Social Categorization, Social Identity and Social Comparison," in Henri Tajfel, *Human groups and social categories*. (Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1981), 254-267.
[27] Rogers Brubaker, Mara Loveman, and Peter Stamatov. "Ethnicity as Cognition," in *Theory and Society* 33:1 (2004): 31-64.
[28] Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'," 2.

I argue, accordingly, that Israel and Israeliness have a bigger impact on the Hungarians than Hungary, whereas Russians are more under the post-Soviet influence than under Israeli.

1.2. Jewish identity

Jews, whether or not they are regarded as a nation, belong together and this notion plays an important, if only a symbolic role, on both the individual and group level. Ben-Rafael partially supports this idea by giving a positive answer to his own question whether Jews are still *"the carriers of a single identity."*[29] Despite the differences, he writes, *"there is a transnational allegiance to the notion of the Jewish people."*[30] Having here the word transnational predicts the idea that Jews live in a transnational form but I will get back to this later. Following the train of thoughts about the definition of Jewishness, there is a widely accepted agreement that Jewish identity is undergoing a process of secularization.[31] Regarding the case of Israel, the question is more ambiguous. Therefore, I will start with the analysis of diaspora Jews. The question is whether the secular Jewish identity here is persistent, changes its meaning or rather on the way to die out. Gitelman, for example, is more pessimistic about the secular Jewish identity when he writes: a "*crucial issue for diaspora Jews is whether without substantive manifest thick cultural content Jewishness becomes merely 'symbolic ethnicity'; and whether 'thin culture' is sufficiently substantive and sustainable to preserve a group's distinctiveness on more than a symbolic level.*"[32] (I will come back to these terms later on page 14.) Going back to the notion of secularization, Gitelman says, when there is a change in values, beliefs and rituals, congruence of norms and

[29] Eliezer Ben-Rafael, "Contemporary Dilemmas of Identity: Israel and the Diaspora," in *Jewry Between Tradition and Secularism,* ed. Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Thomas Gergely, and Yosef Gorny, (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 288.
[30] Ben-Rafael, "Contemporary Dilemmas of Identity," 289.
[31] See, for example, David Graham, *European Jewish Identity at the Dawn of the 21st Century: A Working Paper* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2004), 11.
Jonathan Webber, "Introduction," in *Jewish Identities in the New Europe,* ed. Jonathan Webber. (London: Litman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1994), 20.
New Jewish Identities in Contemporary Europe and Beyond, ed. Zvi Gitelman, Barry Kosmin and András Kovács, (Budapest: CEU Press, 2003.)
[32] Gitelman, "Thinking about Being Jewish," 49.

attitudes diminish and when religion becomes a subsystem we can talk about secularization.[33] Therefore, using this concept will mean that *"the religion is no longer a primary force of thinking and acting but does not mean the abandonment of faith."*[34] Webber also talks about secularization but from a more optimistic view. He argues that there is a shift towards Jewish culture, which becomes the centre of identification.[35] This culture can be perceived by the emerging institutions, organizations and even websites that promote Jewish culture, which always includes non-Jewish elements. It represents Judaism too: there is a dialectical relation with religion. He introduces the term *"cultural* minyan,*"*[36] which is, of course, taking place in a virtual reality but I find it very ingenious. It encompasses all the important elements of nowadays' Jewishness. Funkenstein's article goes hand in hand with Webber's observation, namely that even historians cannot deny that Jewish culture has always been adjusted to the climate in spite of the scholars' anti-assimilationist attitudes.[37]

Concisely, there is a trend among sociologists to regard Jewishness as an ethnicity[38] as opposed to the classical approach to regard it as a religion, and many scholars write about identity crisis[39] in the 20th century, which concerns the Jews to a large extent. Following this thought, I agree with those who claim that Jewish identity is a fluid and a "dynamic

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[33] Zvi Gitelman, "Conclusion: The nature and viability of Jewish religious and secular identities," in *Religion or Ethnicity? Jewish Identities in Evolution* ed. Zvi Gitelman. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2009.), 307-308.
[34] Gitelman, "Jewish Identity and Secularism," 242.
[35] Jonathan Webber, "Notes Towards the Definition of 'Jewish Culture' in Contemporary Europe," in *New Jewish Identities in Contemporary Europe and Beyond,* ed. Zvi Gitelman, Barry Kosmin and András Kovács, (Budapest: CEU Press, 2003), 317-340.
[36] Ibid., 339.
[37] Amos Funkenstein, "The Dialectics of Assimilation," *Jewish Social Studies* 2 (1995): 1-14.
[38] See Jonathan Webber, "Modern Jewish Identities," in *Jewish Identities in the New Europe,* ed. Jonathan Webber. (London: Litman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1994), 74-85;
Zvi Gitelman, "The Decline of the Diaspora Jewish Nation: Boundaries, Content and Jewish Identity." *Jewish Social Studies* 4:2 (1998): 112-132.
[39] See, for example, Webber, "Modern Jewish Identities," 74-85; András Kovács, "Changes in Jewish Identity in Modern Hungary," in *Jewish Identities in the New Europe,* ed. Jonathan Webber. (London: Litman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1994), 150-160; Eliezer Schweid, "Changing Jewish Identities in the New Europe and the Consequences for Israel," in *Jewish Identities in the New Europe,* ed. Jonathan Webber. (London: Litman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1994), 42-54; Zvi Gitelman, "Introduction," in *New Jewish Identities in Contemporary Europe and Beyond*. (Budapest: CEU Press, 2003), 1-3.

belonging"[40] which becomes more complicated and hybrid when we talk about the Jewish migrants' identification. Regarding the question of secularization, it is not clear whether Jews become more observant or more secular in Israel. It can be both ways and in this research the goal is to see what the main factors that influence this tendency are.

Jewish identity in Israel is significantly different from that of the diaspora but by examining migrants it can not be avoided to discuss the latter either. As was mentioned earlier, the secularization of Israeli Jewishness is ambiguous. There is an ongoing discussion about the findings and interpretation of the Guttman survey (1999) regarding the understanding of the three forms (religious, traditional and secular based on religious observance) of Jewish identification in Israel. Liebman and Yadgar criticize the differentiation between antireligious and nonreligious and they call both groups secular.[41] In their terms approximately half of the Israeli Jewish population is secular and among them 57% observe a small part of the tradition, 34% do not observe any tradition, and 8% are antireligious. Therefore, they divided the seculars into two groups: those, who observe a small part of the tradition and are not ashamed of their Jewishness but do not feel strong connections to the Jewish nation belong to the "secular by default" group (including the traditionalists), whereas those who are labeled with "secular by ideology,"[42] subconsciously confuse their Jewish and Israeli identities.[43] These findings are important for this thesis because, as Jenkins writes, a minority cannot be studied without the majority[44] and without other levels of one's identity.[45] This is highlighted by another social psychologist as well: Herman argues that membership in a socially stigmatized group has a psychological

[40] Harvey E.Goldberg, Steven M. Cohen, and Ezra Kopelowitz, (eds) *Dynamic Belonging: Contemporary Jewish Collective Identities*. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012.)
[41] Charles S. Liebman and Yaacov Yadgar, "Secular Jewish Identity and the Condition of Secular Judaism in Israel," in *Religion or ethnicity? Jewish Identities in Evolution* ed. Zvi Gitelman. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 149-170.
[42] Ibid., 152.
[43] Ibid., 157.
[44] Jenkins, *Rethinking ethnicity*, 11.
[45] Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking ethnicity*," in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17:2 (1994): 197-223.

implication especially in the Jewish case. He stresses five different aspects that one has to focus on when analyzing the Jewish people. They have to be looked at "as a changing organism", "as a totality", "in historical perspective", "in a comparative context" and "in the setting of the majority culture."[46] That is why I find it extremely important to look at the examined groups in context and to compare them with each other and with their surroundings. I formulated my research questions regarding Jewish identification as the following:

- What are the manifestations of Jewish identity?
- How does Jewish identity (both content and perception of boundaries) change after leaving one's country for Israel? Does being among Jews strengthen, weaken or have no affect on Jewish identification?
- How does it differ from Jewish identification in one's land of birth?
- How do the two groups' Jewish identities differ from one another and how do their forms of identification correlate with the different types of Israeli identity (religious, secular or traditional[47])?

My hypotheses concerning Jewish identity are manifold. I presume that Russian-speakers regard Jewishness as ethnicity whereas Hungarians define it as a culture. Within both groups Jewishness manifests in observing traditions and in the culture. Regarding boundaries, the differences are more striking. Whereas, I suppose, for the Russians Jewish can be only a person who is born of at least one Jewish parent, Hungarians might give a more liberal answer to the question "Who is a Jew". I assume that the Israeli context has a very strong influence on the perception of the Jewishness which might increase with the length of stay. As discussed above, the examined groups are not homogenous either, therefore I would rather assume that a smaller minority in both groups associate themselves with the religious

[46] Herman, *Jewish Identity*.
[47] Liebman and Yadgar, "Israeli Identity: The Jewish Component," in *Israeli Identity in Transition*, ed. Anita Shapira (London: Praeger, 2004), 163-183.

layer of Israeli society, the majority with the traditional and a bigger minority with the secular. In the Russian case the secular identification might be more common than among Hungarians.

1.3. Migration and integration – diaspora and transnationalism

The other focus of this paper is the integration pattern of ethnic migrants to Israel; therefore, here, several interrelated terms and theories will be discussed: the impact of migration on the identification; integration, assimilation and acculturation; and diaspora and transnationalism.

1.3.1. Integration and identification processes after migration

Migration became a trend in the modern world although for the Jews it is not a novelty, they are one of the oldest migrating people and they are one of the most prominent groups in modern European migration.[48] This is even highlighted by DellaPergola and others when they emphasize the interaction between Jewish migration in the last couple of decades and the global environment.[49] We can see that not only migration has a huge impact on the migrants' identification, as is highlighted by many,[50] but also migration can affect the surrounding trends.

There is a debate whether migration is a unidirectional route in one's life or on the contrary, a dynamic concept which is coinciding with the debate between the assimilationists and pluralists (see below). In the beginning, migration theorists looked at migration from the individual's point of view emphasizing push and pull factors. Along with the changes in the migration processes theorists started to look at migration as a stable and international phenomenon and explained it with the "international migration system" theory.[51] I will not

[48] Zvi Gitelman, "From a Northern Country: Russian and Soviet Jewish Immigration to America and Israel in Historical Perspective," in *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Migration and Resettlement*, ed. Noah Lewin-Epstein, Yaacov Ro'i and Paul Ritterband. (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 21.
[49] Sergio DellaPergola, Uzi Rebhun, and Mark Tolts, "Contemporary Jewish Diaspora in Global Context: Human Development Correlates of Population Trends," in *Israel Studies* 10:1 (2005): 61-95.
[50] See Rina Benmayor, and Andor Skotnes. (eds) *Migration and Identity*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.)
[51] Shuval, "Migration to Israel," 4-6.

elaborate on these theories because I am not going to explain migration processes but rather individual choices so I will follow the classical approach stressing on push and pull factors[52] keeping in mind the current migration trends.

The impact of migration was of minor academic concern before the 1880s in the US. At the beginning of the 20th century the first and second generation of the Chicago School looked at migrants with the assumption that they necessarily go all the way through the irreversible assimilation which is a linear process. Although the differentiation between assimilation and acculturation emerged very early[53] the scholars placed more stress on the accommodation and interactions between migrants and the host society which have to precede assimilation.[54] Gordon in the early 1960s contradicted the linear idea of assimilation and came up with a different theory, but still stressing the assimilationist point of view. He argued that there are seven stages of assimilation and after the second step full assimilation takes place.[55] Only in the late 1960s did the multicultural or pluralist approach emerge. Gans attempts to reconcile the assimilationist and pluralist approaches "to prevent further polarization."[56] He justifies this by saying that assimilation and acculturation are distinguished among both scholarly literature and the difference lies in that the *"researchers of the old and new immigrations have studied different generations of newcomers."*[57]

Going back to the pluralist approach, Berry differentiates between four stages: assimilation versus separatism and integration versus marginalization. The first two are considered to be voluntary whereas the immigrants are exposed to the latter two which are

[52] Gabriel Sheffer, "From Diasporas to Migrants – from Migrants to Diasporas," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger. (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 21-36.
[53] Herbert J. Gans, "Toward a reconciliation of 'assimilation' and 'pluralism': the interplay of acculturation and ethnic retention," in: *International Migration Review*, 31:4 (1997): 875-892.
[54] Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1921), 39-40.
[55] Milton Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), Ch.3.
[56] Gans, "Toward a reconciliation", 875.
[57] Ibid.

caused by external factors. Assimilation is the final stage of full dissolution as opposed to integration when one acquires a bilingual and bicultural behavior. The opposite of assimilation is separatism, which is a reactive behavior by rejecting assimilation whereas the opposite of integration is marginalization which is a stage that one reaches forcefully.[58] Scholars are arguing whether the Russian-Jewish community in Israel is closer to integration, separatism or assimilation (the fourth is not an option). I find this distinction very important although scholars have shown that assimilation and ethnic formation are not mutually exclusive which comprises one of the points of this debate.

Funkenstein looks at Jewish assimilation from a historian's approach.[59] He states that assimilation, as opposed to self-assertion, depends a lot on the context. In the Israeli context Remennick looks at four interrelated social indicators which can influence the level of integration in the Russian case: employment, diversification of communication circles, media consumption and the attitudes of the host society.[60] This is similar to Al-Haj's approach which stresses variables for analyzing ethnic identification in the case of immigrants, such as the "motivation behind migration", "background variables associated with the immigrants and home country", and the "receptivity of the host society."[61] Gans also adds that the behavioral component, orientation and identification are highly influenced by the wider society's relation to it,[62] one part of it can be a linguistic aspect: labeling. We will see that the Russian-speaking community received a lot of names by the Israeli population as well as by scholars which I will take into consideration during my analysis.

Gans writes about a "renewed interest" – but not a revival – in ethnicity among the third and fourth generation of European immigrants in America due to the use of "symbolic

[58] Berry. "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation."
[59] Funkenstein, "The Dialectics of Assimilation," 1-14.
[60] Remennick. "What does integration mean?," 28-29.
[61] Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation,* 17.
[62] Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic ethnicity: The future of ethnic groups and cultures in America," Reprinted in *Ethnicity*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), 152. Cited in Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation,* 25.

ethnicity" which means the maintenance of ethnicity on a symbolic and individual level (i.e. it does not require cultural or social participation).[63] He also says that after the fourth generation this is more likely to decline or disappear.[64] Given the fact that it is reduced to a certain place and time it is not applicable to all migrants but I find his term useful for Jewish identity because it expresses very well the essence of it. Gitelman – shifting away from migration theories and turning back to Jewish identity – claims that *"'thin culture' and 'symbolic ethnicity' are replacing 'thick culture' for most Jews."*[65] Thick culture comprises a common language, cuisine, dress and religion, whereas thin culture means *"common and distinct system of understandings and interpretations that constitute normative order and world view and provide strategic and stylistic guides to action."*[66] Webber's volume focuses on Jewish identification from a different perspective: he puts Jewish identity into a larger framework by looking at it in relation to the outside world combined with a historical perspective. He thus takes a stance that Jewish identity differs depending on local context – exactly as we saw it in Funkenstein's study.

Concisely, the main question that comes up when analyzing ethnic identification of immigrants is whether they favor the identification of the host society or they rather *"reconstruct their own ethno-cultural boundaries."*[67] This question is highly intertwined with the previously discussed integration processes and with the newly discussed phenomena of transnationalism and diaspora which I will turn to now. Regarding integration, my main research questions are the following:

- What were the reasons for migrating? When and why did they decide to go to Israel? Were there any other countries taken into account?

[63] Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic ethnicity: the future of the ethnic groups and cultures in America," in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2:1 (1979): 1-20.
[64] Ibid., 14-15.
[65] Gitelman, "The Decline of the Diaspora Jewish Nation," 112.
[66] Zvi Gitelman, "Becoming Jewish in Russia and Ukraine," in *New Jewish Identities: Contemporary Europe and Beyond*, ed. Zvi Gitelman, Barry Kosmin and András Kovács (Budapest: CEU Press, 2003), 108-109.
[67] Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation*, 17.

- What is the examined groups' level of integration?
- Do Hungarians maintain their Hungarian identity and if yes, how? Is biculturalism a typical pattern in their cases as well?

As mentioned earlier, I suppose that in both cases choosing Israel as a destination cannot be simply reduced to economic reasons but Hungarians might be more attached to the country ideologically than post-Soviets due to their historical background. Regarding the level of integration, I assume that Hungarians are much more integrated to the Israeli society than the post-Soviets.

1.3.2. Diaspora and transnationalism

Prior to discussing the specific case of the Russian-speaking Jews in Israel, I will elaborate on the question of the diaspora and transnationalism. The term diaspora used to refer to the three ancient peoples: the Jews, the Armenians and the Greeks. Within them the Jews are considered to be the prototype of diaspora.[68] Transnationalism is often used interchangeably even though there is a difference between them. Transnationalism, as Feist argues, is a larger concept which encompasses diasporas.[69] He also differentiates between the scopes of the groups: while diasporas usually refer to ethnic, national or religious communities, transnational communities can be based on social and economic formations. By following his argument I will consider Russian-speaking Jews as a diaspora. I argue that Jews in general and Russian-speaking Jews in particular, living dispersed around the world constitute a transnational community. I also claim that having a strong transnational community around the world in the Russian case makes it easier for them to create a distinct community than for the Hungarians.

[68] William Safran, "The Jewish Diaspora in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective," in *Israel Studies* 10:1 (2005): 36-60.
[69] Thomas Faist, "Diaspora and transnationalism: What kind of dance partners?," in *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*, ed. Rainer Bauböck and Thomas Faist, 9-34. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 9-34.

As Brubaker notes, the usage of the term diaspora has been proliferated.[70] This is connected to the modernization and globalization processes that occurred in the last century and the changing nature of migration, even though according to Cohen there is no direct causal link between "diasporization" and globalization.[71] Diaspora is not a new, but rather ancient phenomenon; only its meaning, their number, and size have been changed recently.[72] Turning back to the diaspora studies according to Lévy and Weingrod there are two types of scholars in the field of diaspora: the categorizing sociologists or political scientists (i.e. Safran and Cohen) and those anthropologists who place more stress on the diasporic features (i.e. Clifford, Hall, Gilroy).[73] Safran, belonging to the classical scholars, stresses on the diaspora and homeland relation, and names other elements, such as the dispersal, collective memory, non-integration, and the myth of return, which make a community a diaspora.[74] Cohen's typology differs in the sense that he looks for a typology among diasporas which is relevant only from one aspect: he categorizes the Jews as a victim diaspora (as well as a prototype).[75] The question of forced versus voluntary migration is also an important question: to what extent can we say that Jews from the FSU were forced to leave and to what extent was it a voluntary decision? Or differently put, which one was stronger: the push or the pull factors? It might be important to add that both are considered to be a diaspora according to Sheffer.[76]

Turning to the "diasporic approach", Clifford finds that the activities, such as cultural production, are more important than the homeland-diaspora relationship.[77] As will be discussed below, cultural production is in the centre of the Russians diaspora. Clifford's

[70] Rogers Brubaker. "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28:1 (2005): 4.
[71] Cohen Robin, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 175.
[72] Gabriel Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics: at home abroad*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 242-245.
[73] André Lévy and Alex Weingrod, "On Homelands and Diasporas: An Introduction," in *Homelands and Diasporas: Holy Lands and other Places* ed. André Lévy and Alex Weingrod. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2005), 3-27.
[74] William Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return," in *Diaspora* 1:1 (1991): 83-99.
[75] Cohen, *Global Diasporas*.
[76] Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics*, 83.
[77] Safran, "The Jewish Diaspora," 53.

theory also focuses on the hybrid identity,[78] which will receive a lot of attention in my thesis due to the fact that I will analyze first generation migrants who rarely give up on their initial identity.[79] Sheffer's contribution to the field of diaspora is crucial to my thesis. He argues that becoming a member of a diaspora or establishing one is a delayed decision.[80] Lévy and Weingrod question the dichotomy of the homeland-diaspora and take the Russian Jewish diaspora as an example. The authors take a stand that diasporas do not need a centre as it is suggested by others but they are rather equal entities in each country where they live.[81]

Russian-speaking Jews in Israel were studied a lot in the last two decades. Based on their integration patterns they received many titles, such as "cultural enclave",[82] "Russian bubble",[83] and "sub-culture."[84] As argued before, there is an agreement that they constitute a diaspora. This becomes more interesting when we look at them as Jews and claim that they are a returning diaspora from the religious point of view, and look at them at the same time as Russians (or Moldovans, Ukrainians, etc.) and claim that they are a newly established ethnic diaspora. This implies that this returning diaspora transformed from minority to majority members from the religious aspect while at the same time from majority to minority members from the ethnic aspect.

[78] Clifford, "Diasporas," 302-338.
[79] Remennick, "What does integration mean?" 27.
[80] Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics*, 129-130.
[81] Alex Weingrod and André Levy, "Social Thought and Commentary: Paradoxes of Homecoming: Jews and their Diasporas." *Anthropological Quarterly* 79:4 (2006): 691-716.
[82] Moshe Lissak, *The Immigrants from the FSU: Between Segregation and Integration*, Jerusalem: Center for Social Policy Research in Israel, 1995. Cited in Maya Benish-Weisman and Gabriel Horenczyk, "Cultural identity and perceived success among Israeli immigrants: An emic approach," in: *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 34 (2010): 523.
[83] Baruch Kimmerling, "The new Israelis: multiple cultures with no multiculturalism", *Alpayim*, 16 (1998): 264-308. Cited in Benish-Weisman and Horenczyk, "Cultural identity," 523.
[84] Sammy Smooha, "Outline of the discussion of the impact of the mass Soviet immigration on Israeli society", newsletter of the Israel Sociological Association 13 March: 6–7 (1995). Cited in Benish-Weisman and Horenczyk, "Cultural identity," 523.

The question of returning diaspora is a heated topic. Sheffer suggests that the Jewish diaspora should not be looked at as a unique case.[85] Münz and Ohliger argue that Russian Jews who migrate to Israel constitute a returning diaspora and this so-called ethnic migration differs from other types.[86] For example, as Portes and Borocz suggest, assimilation and absorption is facilitated if there is an ideological affinity between the migrants and the host society,[87] which is supposedly the case for the returning or ethnic diasporas. De Tinguy goes further when she states that returning migrants cannot be considered migrants.[88] Markowitz argues with this idea in her book review,[89] in which she criticizes some points of the edited volume by Tsuda.[90] In this book the authors analyze the phenomenon of ethnic return migration and emphasize both the economic (or pragmatic) aspect of migration and the ethnic affiliation.[91] Shuval challenges the idea of the uniqueness of Jewish migration to Israel which is also related to this debate by neglecting the second aspect. She places the migration to Israel into a larger context and compares Israel's role as a receiving country rather than a symbolically permeated destination of the returning Jewish diaspora.[92] My hypothesis is that the truth is somewhere in-betweens. I rather agree with Tsuda when he claims that *"ethnic ties and affinities channel migrant flow"* even if they do not determine it.[93] Jews do not necessarily immigrate to Israel for ideological reasons but I argue that there is some ideology

[85] Gabriel Sheffer, "A Nation and Its Diaspora: A Re-examination of Israeli–Jewish Diaspora Relations," *Diaspora* 11:3 (2002): 331-358.
[86] Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger, "Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants in Twentieth-Century Europe: A Comparative Perspective," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger. (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 3-17.
[87] Alejandro Portes and Josef Borocz, "Contemporary immigration: Theoretical Perspectives on its Determinants and Modes of Incorporation." *International Migration Review* 23:3 (1989): 606-630.
[88] Anne de Tinguy, "Ethnic Migration of the 1990s from and to the Successor States of the FSU: Repatriation or Privileged Migration?," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger. (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 112-127.
[89] Fran Markowitz, "Ethnic Return Migrations – (Are Not Quite) – Diasporic Homecomings," in *Diaspora*, 16: 1-2 (2007): 234-242.
[90] Takeyuki Tsuda (ed), *Diasporic Homecomings: Ethnic Return Migration in Comparative Perspective*. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009.)
[91] Takeyuki Tsuda, "Why Does the Diaspora Return Home?," in *Diasporic Homecomings: Ethnic Return Migration in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Takeyuki Tsuda. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 21-43.
[92] Shuval, "Migration to Israel," 3-24.
[93] Tsuda, "Why Does the Diaspora Return Home?," 21.

to it that makes this migration more than just a migration to a Western society. Another important factor of returning diasporas is their unconditional acceptance, although it is only typical of the official level (by receiving citizenship and social assistance). Tsuda argues that the preferential immigration policies play an important role in the decision making of a migrant (who thus might become an ethnic returnee).[94] And it became clear in the course of the analysis that preferential policy indeed helps in making this decision. On the other hand, despite and because of the ethnic similarities[95] these ethnic returnees face a lot of difficulties during their integration or "neo-ethnicization"[96]. For example, Russians are not as welcomed as they expected to be.[97] This phenomenon is the central point of ethnic return migration, namely that both sides (migrants and the recipient society) expect that the integration will be easier than for other (non-returning) migrants and it turns out to be more difficult because of the cultural differences.[98] In the examined case this is partially explained by the fact that the essence of returning is not as important as for other ethnic returnees.[99] To conclude, I agree with the statement that the state of Israel plays a crucial role in the formation of Jewish identity in the diaspora,[100] but the Jews are very well integrated into their respective society (but to a different extent). I will come back to this question when analyzing the Hungarian and post-Soviet Jews in the diaspora.

The other focus in the interviews is the question of migration. Following my argument about the uniqueness of migration I consider this returning diaspora as a rather symbolic returning and I will stress more the ethnic element of the diaspora, meaning that they

[94] Takeyuki Tsuda, "Introduction," in *Diasporic Homecomings: Ethnic Return Migration in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Takeyuki Tsuda. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 3.
[95] Ibid., 9.
[96] Markowitz, "Ethnic Return Migrations," 236.
[97] Elazar Leshem and Moshe Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," in *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, ed. Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman. (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 2004), 104-105.
[98] Tsuda, "Introduction," 4.
[99] Tsuda, "Why Does the Diaspora Return Home?," 25.
[100] Shlomo Avineri, *A modern cionizmus kialakulása.* (Budapest: Századvég Kiadó, 1994), 260.

(Russian-speaking Jews) are a newly established diaspora in Israel, the diaspora of the post-Soviet Union (their respective country). Following Brubaker's other criticism regarding the usage of the term diaspora[101] it appears in the thesis as a stance that originates from the community. With the following questions the aim is to find out whether this claim appears among the Hungarian Jews or not by asking the following questions:

- Do the members of the examined groups keep a strong relation with their homeland? How often and in what way?
- Is it important for them to have a strong Hungarian community in Israel?

My presumption is that Hungarians do not constitute a diaspora in Israel by not keeping strong relation with the homeland and not creating their own community in Israel as opposed to Russians.

1.4. Methodology

The method of the research is determined by its goal.[102] The question of identity can be analyzed the best with qualitative methods due to its subjective and sensitive nature. Within interviews there are structured, half-structured and narrative interviews. My interviews are mostly half-structured. I had some guiding questions and topics that I was specifically interested in, but I let the interviewees talk even if it was not closely related.

One of the biggest disadvantages of the qualitative research is that it is not generalizable. On the other hand, we can put more emphasis on the individuals. Another disadvantage is that the process of analysis is more difficult, i.e. more subjective, meaning that the researcher might influence the results through his or her perceptions. In relation to this, another disadvantage can be my Jewish origin. Gans draws our attention to the influence of the researcher on the outcome.[103] I cannot change this but I tried to identify and suppress

[101] Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," 12.
[102] Earl Babbie, *A társadalomtudományi kutatás gyakorlata.* (Budapest: Balassi, 2003), 106.
[103] Gans, „Toward a Reconciliation," 875-892.

my own reflections as much as possible. Being a Hungarian Jew also makes the research easier in two regards. First, I used snowball sampling (see more in section 4.1.1.) and for that I needed to know Jews from Hungary. Second, I had a lot of background knowledge about the Hungarian Jewry which made my understanding easier.

As for the sample, I chose to regard those as Jews who consider themselves Jews and whose environment (in my case the person(s) who refer to the interviewee) consider them as Jews. I prefer the modern definition to the rabbinical one,[104] which, I believe, would go along with Brubaker's criticism towards "groupism." I chose those Hungarians who were born within the present border of Hungary because my intention was for the groups to be as homogenous as possible and I also paid attention to the similarity of the two examined groups regarding their migration. Therefore, I chose migrants who left their respective country in the 1990s. My choice fell on this period, first, because this is the only common period when both groups (Hungarians and post-Soviets) emigrated in large numbers and second, because in both cases the collapse of the Soviet Union made (directly or indirectly) the emigration possible. I also planned to do interviews with a subgroup of post-Soviets (namely the Moldovans) but the project was not successful. I managed to do only two interviews (see more in section 4.1.1.). Despite this, I will use them as illustrations to complete the quantitative data that will be used for this reference group.

[104] Webber, "Introduction," 16.

2. Jews in the diaspora

In this section some general historical and sociological background will be summarized. In order to understand the identification of Hungarians and post-Soviets, it is important to give an overview to see where they came from and what factors should be taken into account when analyzing the post-migration period. Those who lived most of their lives in the origin country might be influenced by those standards and those who grew up in the receiving country are more likely to be under the influence of the latter.

2.1. Post-Soviet Jewry

Jews came to Russian territory more than 2000 years ago but their presence is continuous only since the first partition of Poland (1772) when Russia first acquired a significant number of Jews, accordingly, this is when the Jewish question first appeared and *"the characteristics of Jewish life were born"* during this period.[105] In Imperial Russia, Jews constituted a religious minority, as in any other European country, but the Jewish question was handled in an ambiguous way. At the turning point of the 20th century Russian Jews, with an approximately five-million (4%) population, made up the biggest Jewish community in the world.[106] By the beginning of WW II there were only 3,020,000 Jews.[107] In the 1960's the Soviet Union still had the third biggest Jewish community after the USA and Israel,[108] which consisted of approximately 2,268,000 people.[109] This number declined strikingly to 230,000 by the

[105] Benjamin Pinkus, *The Jews of Soviet Union: a history of a national minority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 10.
[106] Benjamin Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 4.
[107] Alec Nove and J.A. Newth, "The Jewish population: Demographic Trends and Occupational Patterns," in *The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917*, ed. Lionel Kochan (Oxford: Published for the Institute of Jewish Affairs by Oxford University Press, 1978), 135.
[108] Zvi Gitelman, "The Jewish Question in the USSR since 1964," in *Nationalism in the USSR & Eastern Europe in the era of Brezhnev & Kosygin*, ed. George W. Simmonds (Detroit, Mich.: University of Detroit Press, c1977), 327.
[109] Reuben Ainsztein "Soviet Jewry in the Second World War" in *The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917*, ed. Lionel Kochan (Oxford: Published for the Institute of Jewish Affairs by Oxford University Press, 1978), 286.

beginning of the 21st century.[110] Apart from the fact that the borders of the territory discussed here have been changing throughout the 20th century and the demographic trends took a new path recently, this decline in number implies a negative atmosphere. First, the Jews were the target of the anti-Semitic pogroms which lasted from 1881 till the end of WW I. In 1917 with the revolution Jews got to be emancipated, but right after that they were exposed to the Soviet regime with a conflicting framework which served as the bases of the treatment of the Jewish question by the Soviet leaders and determined the situation for the Jews for 70 years.

At the beginning of the socialist era (1920s and beginning of 1930s) Yiddish culture was promoted which was combined with a strong anti-religious propaganda. The goal was to create a modern Soviet secular Jewish nationality having the Yiddish language as its determining characteristics, based socialist and leftist ideology, and considering the Jews as a distinct nationality.[111] Later it was followed by the prohibition of Yiddish culture and absolute restriction on Jewish religion and culture and discrimination of Jews which was on its peak during the Black Years (1948-1953). These policies had a huge impact on the Jewish community. By the time the Soviet Union collapsed, most Jews had only a "thin culture" or "symbolic ethnicity."[112] The opposite of this, is "thick culture" which has tangible manifestations, such as language, customs, food and clothing.[113] Regarding the boundaries, the only diaspora Jews among whom the refusal of intermarriage did not decline is the post-Soviet Jewry.[114] Another indicator of strong boundaries is the answer to the question who is a Jew. Jewishness among FSU Jews is rather perceived as a biological characteristic.[115] It can be illustrated with the answer of those who think that being Christian is acceptable while

[110] "Russia: Situation and Treatment of Jews, State Protection and Support Services," Refworld, accessed December 9, 2012, http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,IRBC,,RUS,,4b7cee87c,0.html.
[111] David Shneer, *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture: 1918-1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4.
[112] Herbert Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity and Symbolic Religiosity: Towards a Comparison of Ethnic and Religious Acculturation," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17 (1994): 577-592.
[113] Gitelman, "Thinking about being Jewish," 49.
[114] Ibid., 56.
[115] Gitelman, "Jewish Identity and Secularism," 251.

being a Jew, but converting is rather a betrayal and also that practicing Judaism does not make someone a Jew.[116] Furthermore, over 50% among Russian and Ukrainian Jews[117] cited anti-Semitism as a component of their Jewish self-definition.

Looking at the question what Jewishness means for the post-Soviet Jewry, it is clear that religion is not an important factor. It is replaced by ethnicity and culture. It means that Jews of the FSU see themselves rather an ethnicity than a religious group.[118] Thus, Jewishness can be described with cultural markers and socio-economic characteristics such as living in larger cities, being highly educated due to great sacrifice, having close family ties, amicable relations between spouses, spending leisure time and money in a certain way, and probably lower alcoholism.[119] Jewishness also means descent and a subjective feeling of belonging to a group, namely to an ethnic nationality.[120] While analyzing my interviews, I will focus a lot on this question: whether or not their Jewish identification changed or not, and if yes, how.

2.2. Hungarian Jewry

Regarding the historical background, I will follow the same method as in the previous chapter by giving a short overview. Jews live in Hungary continuously since the 17th century and there have been a lot of changes in the course of 19th and 20th century. First of all, the Jewish minority played a vital role in Hungarian history. Their number was exponentially increasing during this period. Whilst in 1735 they made up only 0.7% of the population, by 1910 they constituted a significant minority (approximately 5%).[121] Their conspicuous presence was not exhausted by their large number but they also possessed approximately 20-25% of the state

[116] Gitelman, "Thinking about being Jewish," 52.
[117] Ibid., 57.
[118] Zvi Gitelman, "Introduction. Jewish Religion, Jewish Ethnicity: The Evolution of Jewish Identities," in *Religion or Ehtnicity? Jewish Identities in Evolution*, ed. Zvi Gitelman, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, c2009), 1.
[119] Gitelman, "Jewish Identity and Secularism," 244.
[120] Gitelman, "Becoming Jewish," 108.
[121] "A Zsidóság Lélekszámának Változása Magyarországon," A Holokauszt Magyarországon, accessed December 7, 2012, http://www.holokausztmagyarorszagon.hu/tables/tables_2.html.

wealth.[122] What I want to point out with these facts is the willingness and the successfulness of their legal, economic, linguistic, religious, and cultural assimilation which could take place with the assistance of the liberal elite. This "social contract of assimilation"[123] between the liberal elite and the Jews (namely that the liberal elite support the Jews who would assimilate in exchange) is what made for the Jews more difficult or even impossible to comprehend the events that followed: in the Holocaust, according to Braham's estimation, 565.000 Hungarian Jews were killed.[124] Instead of public mourning the Communist Party took over which meant the repression of processing this grievance. During this period there were several identity strategies differentiated by Viktor Karády.[125] Within *(1) dissimilation* we can encounter school (1a) self-segregation, which did not last very long, (1b) Zionism, and emigration as sub-strategies. Zionism can be regarded as an ambivalent type of dissimilation, and emigration was its radical form. It is noteworthy to mention that only (1c) emigration to Israel can be regarded as dissimilation. (2a) Emigration to the West is considered to be one of the (2) *assimilation*'s sub-strategies. Assimilation took a new and different shape from that of the time of emancipation. Due to the fact that the social contract of assimilation was not in force anymore, the Jews encountered the so-called "dilemma of assimilation"[126]. On the one hand, the conditions of assimilation were not clear. Therefore, the assimilated Jews were not accepted by the society. On the other hand, there were no roots where the Jews could go back to and revive their identity. Taking into account this new situation we can differentiate between (2b) forced assimilation and dissimulation which latter is equivalent with Tajfel's

[122] Gábor Kádár and Zoltán Vági, *Hullarablás: A magyar zsidók gazdasági megsemmisítése* (Budapest: Hannah Arendt Egyesület–Jaffa Kiadó, 2005), 27.
[123] The term was introduced by Viktor Karády: "A zsidóság polgárosodásának és modernizációjának főbb tényezői a magyar társadalomtörténetben," in *Zsidóság, modernizáció, polgárosodás* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi, 1997), 84.
[124] Randolph L. Braham. *A népirtás politikája. A holocaust Magyarországon.* (Budapest: Belvárosi Kiadó, 1997), 1245-1247.
[125] Viktor Karády, "Népességi helyzet, integráció, kiválás," in *Túlélők és újrakezdők* (Budapest: Múlt és Jövő Kiadó, 2002), 124-135.
[126] András Kovács, "Az asszimilációs dilemma," in *Világosság* 8-9 (1988), 605-612.

"illegitimate assimilation" concept.[127] The goal of the former was to join the Communist Party, to forget about the Holocaust, and fully giving up on Jewish identity, whereas dissimulation took a less radical shape, such as intermarriage, and demographic mingling. Regarding the inheritance of Jewish identification, there were two ways of finding out about one's Jewish identity.[128] Either the children heard it from non-family members at a later stage of socialization or the parents told them unintentionally at an earlier stage. In both cases the parents attempted to assimilate. This "concealment policy" was supported by the Communist regime but it was counter-productive regarding the outcome of Jewish identity. Furthermore, Jews suffered a lot from the memory of the Holocaust and all these led to the "second generational symptom-group"[129] which was shared by many of those whose parents went through this period.

In 1999, according to a survey, conducted by Kovács et al. among Jews in Hungary, there were six distinct groups along identification in a bi-generational structure.[130] This survey is crucial in the light of this thesis but it has its limitations. Because there are no records on the Hungarian Jewry, the sample might not be representative. The authors believe that the respondents have a stronger attachment to Judaism and have a more intense Jewish identity than the Jewish population of Hungary.[131] The sample comprised 2015 people of which only 10 were Jewish only by religion but not by origin (supposedly converts).[132] As Table 3.2.1. shows, the population scatters among the six groups somewhat proportionally, except the second and the sixth group. The first group is characterized by the rejection of Jewish identity and being closer to the Hungarian one. In the second group rejection is combined in most

[127] Henri Tajfel, "The Social Psychology of Minorities," in *Human Groups and Social Categories* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 309-344.
[128] Ferenc Erős, András Kovács and Katalin Lévai, "Hogyan jöttem rá hogy zsidó vagyok? Interjúk," in *Medvetánc* 2-3 (1985): 129-144.
[129] Erős, "The Construction of Jewish Identity in the 1980s."
[130] András Kovács (ed.), *Zsidók a mai Magyarországon: az 1999-ben végzett szociológiai felmérés eredményeinek elemzése*. (Budapest: Múlt és Jövő Kiadó, 2002), 25.
[131] Kovács, "Jews and Jewry in Contemporary Hungary," 47-48.
[132] Kovács (ed.), *Zsidók a mai Magyarországon*, 17.

cases with party membership. The third group is composed of the "secularizing" Jews; the fourth group regards "tradition as symbol." The "reverting" group is characterized by acceptance and acquired traditions and the sixth observes the traditions. Apart from the 3% strictly religious Jews, most of the Hungarian Jewry identifies with Jewishness through (symbolic) tradition. It is clear from the survey that there was a high level of secularization between the two generations and Jewish identity was composed rather of the memory of Holocaust than religious or cultural practices.[133] But regarding the intensity of identification, through the awareness of Jewishness (67%)[134] it is rather strong which is not coinciding with the intensity of the former. This tendency got even stronger by the revival of Hungarian Jewry. First of all, more people decided to identify themselves as Jews. Second, Jewishness became a determinant factor in their social, political, economic and cultural life.[135]

Table 3.2.1.: Bi-generational identification among Hungarians in Hungary

	All sample	18-34	35-54	55-69	70+
No tradition	18	27	24	16	6
Giving up tradition	28	17	18	35	41
Departing from tradition	15	3	9	20	27
Symbolic Reverting	15	23	19	14	6
Reverting	13	20	21	7	4
Observing traditions	11	10	9	8	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Kovács (ed.) Zsidók a mai Magyarországon, 17.

[133] Kovács, "Jews and Jewry in Contemporary Hungary," 44.
[134] Ibid., 27.
[135] András Kovács and Aletta Forrás-Birró, "Zsidó élet Magyarországon: Eredmények, kihívások és célok a kommunista rendszer bukása óta ," in *JPR Kutatási Beszámoló,* Szeptember (2011), 47.

3. Israel as a receiving society

In order to make the process of integration and the reasons for migration fully comprehensible, in this section the Israeli context will be presented. First, the immigration policy of Israel will be shortly discussed and then some statistical data will be presented to get a sense of the scope and the importance of the migration in general in Israel's *raison d'être*; and the differences between the two migration flows.

3.1. Immigration policy

One of the pillars of Zionist ideology is ingathering of the exiles and even after achieving one of its main aims, the establishment of the Jewish State, the fusion of the diasporas remained a very important part of the political agenda,[136] it was the state's main *raison d'être*.[137] It was supported by actions: first, by stating it in the Declaration of Independence; second, by the introduction of the Law of Return,[138] (1950) and its amendment (1970). The original Law of Return was the "reverse version" of the Nuremberg Laws, namely that everybody who was considered to be a Jew under the Nazi regime (where Jewish origin was understood much wider than the *halachic* laws) has the right to return and gain citizenship. This meant that anybody with one grandparent of Jewish origin can become a citizen of Israel by making *aliyah*.[139] The Law of Return was amended due to the debates on "Who is a Jew?" and it allowed non-Jewish spouses and Jewish descendants of the third generation to become Israelis.[140] This issue coincides with the question of the separation of state and religion which I will touch upon later but it exceeds the scope of the present thesis. This open door policy

[136] Uzi Rebhun, "Major Trends in the Development of Israeli Jews: a Synthesis of the Last Century," in *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, ed. Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman. (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 2004), 11.
[137] Yehuda Dominitz, "Israel's Immigration Policy and the Dropout Phenomenon," in *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Migration and Resettlement*, ed. Noah Lewin-Epstein, Yaacov Ro'i and Paul Ritterband. (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 113.
[138] Rebhun, "Major Trends in the Development of Israeli Jews," 11.
[139] Dominitz, "Israel's Immigration Policy and the Dropout Phenomenon," 114.
[140] Ibid.

that applied only to the Jews (defined above)[141] is highly criticized by several scholars because of its exclusive nature.[142] The open door policy did not exhaust in granting citizenship but the immigrants were given a so-called absorption basket with rental and mortgage subsidies, income support, their health insurance was paid for one year and they had to participate in a five-month long Hebrew language and cultural training which was granted (*ulpan*[143]).[144] Some additional help, such as financial support for opening business, special help to particular sectors, vocational training and retraining are also available.[145] The assistance varies according to the pace of the immigration.[146] It is important to see that the success of integration as well as the reasons for migration might be influenced to a great extent by this policy.

3.2. Immigration statistics

On the eve of the establishment of the State of Israel there were approximately 650,000 Jews[147] which doubled in the following three years. Between 1948 and 1951 688,000 Jews arrived to Israel.[148] Till the Six-Days war (1967) another 500,000 Jews immigrated when there was a rise again in the number of immigrants due to the euphoric atmosphere followed by the victory.[149] Most of the immigrants came from the Soviet Union and from the West (Europe, America and Australia). The Yom Kippur war (1973) was followed by a decline which lasted till the end of the 1980s[150] being the longest decline in Israel's immigration

[141] Ibid., 113.
[142] See, for example, Sammy Smooha.
[143] It is a school where they give intensive Hebrew language courses.
[144] Ari M. Paltiel, Eltan F. Sabatello and Dorith Tal, "Immigrants from the Former USSR in Israel in the 1990s: Demographic Characteristics and Socio-Economic Absorption," in *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Migration and Resettlement*, ed. Noah Lewin-Epstein, Yaacov Ro'i and Paul Ritterband. (Frank Cass, London, 1997), 300.
[145] De Tinguy, "Ethnic Migration of the 1990s," 120-121.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Rebhun, "Major Trends in the Development of Israeli Jews," 8.
[148] Sergio DellaPergola, „Demography in Israel at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century," in *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, ed. Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman (Hanover: Brandeis University, 2004), 24.
[149] Rebhun, "Major Trends in the Development of Israeli Jews," 12.
[150] Ibid.

history.[151] In 1989 a huge immigration wave started with the fall of the Iron Curtain, which could be divided into sub-waves,[152] and lasted till the beginning of the 2000s. During this period (1989-2002) 1,132,768 Jews (and non-Jews) arrived,[153] 86% of all the immigrants in the 1990s came from the Soviet Union and 40.000 from Ethiopia.[154] In the last decade couple of thousands of immigrants arrive per year.[155]

Looking at the Hungarian statistics, 24,143 Jews arrived to Israel between 1948 and 1960. For 30 years it was approximately 1000 per 10 years, and after the fall of regime (1990-1999) 2150 Hungarian Jews arrived to Israel which was followed by 1157 in the next 12 years (2000-2011).[156] It means that the number of *olim*[157] arriving from Hungary in the 1990s is around 200 yearly. (For the exact figure of migration from Hungary see Appendix 2.) It is worth noting, that these numbers show only the figures of those who arrived to Israel which does not necessarily mean that they are still there. Among the Russian-speakers there is also a tendency of going back,[158] but in proportions, to a much smaller extent. The exact statistics of Hungarians living in Israel are not clear. All the interviewees, including the experts, said that the figure of Hungarian-speakers (including second generation and Hungarians from Transylvania, Vojvodina, Sub-Carpathia and Southern Slovakia) is 200.000 but there is no literature underlining it. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, there are 64.200

[151] Phren and Peri, "Prospective Immigration to Israel through 2030," 2.
[152] The first two years were the peak when 350.000 immigrants came and since then (with the exception of the year of 1999) the number of immigrants decreases. in: Phren and Peri, "Prospective Immigration to Israel through 2030," 2.
[153] Theodore H. Friedgut, "Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union: Their Influence and Identity," in *Israeli Identity in Transition*, ed. Anita Shapira (London: Praeger, 2004), 189.
[154] Phren and Peri, "Prospective Immigration to Israel through 2030," 3.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Central Bureau of Statistics, Immigrants, by period of immigration, country of birth and last country of residence, raw data, Http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton63/st04_04.pdf.
[157] Plural form of *oleh*, someone who makes *aliyah*.
[158] In 1997 1,626 went back to Russia from Israel, in 1999 about 1,400. Tolts, Mark. 2009. "Post-Soviet Aliyah and Jewish Demographic Transformation." Paper presented at the 15th World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, 2-6 August

Jews from Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia together, out of which 19.400 are foreign born and 44.900 were born in Israel.[159]

3.3. Russian-speaking Jews in Israel

As argued before, Russian Jews constitute a transnational community. There are Russian Jewish communities in 52 countries and the largest is in Israel[160] where the Russian-speaking community constitutes almost 20% of the country's Jewish population which equals with approximately 1,100,000 Russian-speakers (including the second generation), out of which 170.000[161] did not declare themselves as Jews.[162] Firstly, I find it important to highlight that we cannot talk about the Russian-speaking Jews as a collective:[163] we have to differentiate among them along several aspect which influence their process of integration, such as the wave of immigration, country or region of origin, having lived in urban or rural areas, educational level, age at arrival, time they have spent in Israel, etc. For example the 1990s immigrants from the FSU have a higher level of education than the Israeli society and that of the 1970s.[164]

Due to their different circumstances and lesser number the integration of the veteran migrants is in a far more "advanced"[165] status.[166] The general migrating population was relatively old due to the aging population of the post-Soviet Jewry and there was a predominance of women among them.[167] There were also a lot of skilled workers and

[159] Central Bureau of Statistics, Jews by country of origin and age, raw data, http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton63/st02_24x.pdf
[160] Vladimir (Ze'ev) Khanin, "The New Russian Jewish Diaspora and 'Russian' Party Politics in Israel," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 8:4 (2002): 37.
[161] Scholars estimate the ratio of non-Jews between 10-40%. According to the Cohen and Susser, the real number is somewhere 20-25% which would mean 150-200.000 individuals. Asher Cohen and Bernard Susser, *Israel and the Politics of Jewish Identity* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 114.
[162] Leshem and Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," 83.
[163] Julia Lerner, "'Russians' in Israel as a post-Soviet Subject: Implementing the Civilizational Repertoire," in *Israel Affairs,* 17:1 (2011): 22.
[164] Paltiel, Sabatello and Tal, "Immigrants from the Former USSR in Israel in the 1990s," 295.
[165] We can say advanced if we look at it from the assimilationist point of view.
[166] Ben-Rafael, *Building a Diaspora*, 24.
[167] Paltiel, Sabatello and Tal, "Immigrants from the Former USSR in Israel in the 1990s," 292-3.

professionals which led to a downward occupational mobility.[168] This is more typical of the second wave.[169]

Regarding the geographical dispersion the immigrants of the second wave tended to choose areas where there were already migrants living[170] which led to a high density of Russian-speakers in several cities where their proportion reaches the 30% or more (e.g. in Ashdod and Beer-Sheva).[171] Half of them live in the central area, 30% in the North and 10 in the South and another 10% in the area of Jerusalem. The internal migration is generally higher than that of the Israeli.[172] (For the accurate map of their geographical distribution see Appendix 3.) All in all, their socio-economic status and living conditions are poorer than that of the average but it improves with time.[173]

According to Ben-Rafael, this is neither segregation nor integration; they just want to achieve legitimacy. Lissak, Kimmerling and Smooha claim that they are integrated while maintaining cultural uniqueness and in the future they will be fully integrated having a unique subculture which will be accepted by the Israeli society; Horowitz believes that they are in the status between integration and cultural separation; Danian and Rosenbaum-Tamari sees it as living in two worlds; Al-Haj argues that they keep constituting a distinct ethnic group[174] and Remennick thinks they are both integrated and separatist.[175] I believe that these definitions do not mean very different concepts it is rather a matter of perception: how these scholars evaluate the attempt to maintain Russian culture. The main channels to maintain Russian culture is through media consumption and language usage. There are 44 Russian channels in

[168] Ibid., 308.
[169] Gustavo S. Mesch, "Language Proficiency Among New Immigrants: the Role of Human Capital and Societal Conditions: The Case of Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Israel," in *Sociological Perspectives* 46:1 (2003): 41-58
[170] Paltiel, Sabatello and Tal, "Immigrants from the Former USSR in Israel in the 1990s," 302.
[171] Leshem and Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," 86.
[172] Ben-Rafael, *Building a Diaspora*, 58.
[173] Leshem and Siron, Ibid., 98.
[174] Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation*, 91-93.
[175] Remennick, "What does integration mean?" 45.

Israel and several world channels are being translated into Russian.[176] In 10 years, more than 300 Russian (book, music and video) stores opened up across the country and there is a wide variety of magazines and newspapers available in Russian along with other cultural services, such as theatre, libraries, etc.[177]

[176] Julia Bernstein, *Food for Thought: Transnational Contested Identities and Food Practices of Russian-Speaking Jewish Migrants in Israel and Germany* (Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 2010), 19.
[177] Larissa Remennick, "From Russian to Hebrew via HebRush: Intergenerational Patterns of Language Use among Former Soviet Immigrants in Israel," in *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 24:5 (2003): 434.

4. The research project

In this chapter the research project will be presented. In the first part I will start with the description of the methodology and the illustration of the Hungarians in Israel in general, and the interviewees, in particular. In the second part I will present the findings in details focusing on the main themes, such as reasons for migration, identification and the level of integration.

4.1. Methodology and its limitations

4.1.1. Sampling method

As already mentioned, I conducted my empirical research using snowball sampling which is based on a random sample and its members are asked to refer to others who fit in the research.[178] I tried to reach as many networks as possible by asking a wide variety of people for interviewees to avoid getting back into the same network, which is one of the drawbacks of this sampling method. The interviewees knew only as much as was unavoidable about the project. In order for them not to be influenced by the research questions, I only told them that I was doing research on Hungarians (and Moldovans) who have lived in Israel since the 1990s. The Hungarians were very helpful both in giving me contacts and in participating in my project. I had many more potential interviewees than I could interview, so I started selecting. There were some people who I was referred to by many people, whom I definitely wanted in the research. Due to limited time, I conducted face-to-face interviews with individuals who live in the bigger cities (or came there for the interview) and chose Skype for individuals who live in smaller cities. The one week I spent in Israel in the middle of April in 2013 was not enough to conduct all of the interviews, so I conducted several interviews in Budapest on Skype and in person with those who came to visit Hungary. I conducted some pretesting interviews, which took place before the field trip, in order to evaluate the relevance of the questions.

[178] Uwe Flick, Ernst von Kardorff, and Ines Steinke, *A companion to qualitative research* (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 168.

As for the Moldovans, the sampling was the same but the result was very different. I had several contacts and some of the interviewees were open at the beginning but then they were not willing to participate and some were reluctant from the beginning. I had the same experience when I was earlier doing research in Moldova among Jews in the framework of a different project and I believe that this reluctance is connected the fear they have as Jews and also being Moldovans who were also a minority in the Soviet Union. Therefore, I will use the two interviews I conducted as an illustration and for the comparison I will use the whole Russian-speaking Jewish community living in Israel as a reference group based on the literature (that deals with first generation migrants). There are two difficulties with this method. One is that the comparison of quantitative data with qualitative data might be misleading but the main differences and similarities can still be understood. The second is that the given literature does not contain several questions that I included in my study. In these cases I will present the findings without comparing them. Wherever I compare Hungarians with the two Moldovan interviews due to lack of data, the conclusions have to be drawn carefully.

4.1.2. Description of the interviews and interviewees

The length of the interviews was between 35 and 70 minutes. The environment was either in a cafeteria or at the interviewee's place (or on Skype). Altogether I have 17 Hungarian interviews and two of them are relatives (mother and her son) and there were another two females who are friends. Most of them were suitable for the project (fulfilling the expectations that I drew at the beginning, such as being a Hungarian from Hungary who immigrated to Israel in the 1990s and still lives there). There was one who emigrated before and one who left after the 1990s (the population analyzed here are those who went to Israel in the 1990s). There is also one interviewee who now lives in Hungary but does not know for how long. I decided to include the first two (those who left to Israel before and after the 1990s) in my

research because I found out in the course of the research that the fall of the regime had only a little impact on the decisions of most of the migrants I interviewed. I did not exclude the third one (who lives now in Hungary) because I also learnt that there is a tendency of Hungarian migrants coming back to Hungary and I found it interesting to include and he moved „back" to Hungary only one month before. This tendency is supported by other interviewees who were in Hungary for a certain period and then went back again to Israel.

Regarding the socio-demographical backgrounds and locations of the interviewees they vary. Some of them come from an intellectual family (parents with higher education) and some do not, but all of them finished high school and most of them had BA or MA. Almost all of them are originally from Budapest which is not surprising if we look at the geographical distribution of the Jews in Hungary.[179] As for their Israeli dispersion it is more varied. I found interviewees all around Israel both in bigger and smaller cities. (For more detail about the socio-demographic background see Appendix 4.) Religiosity might be a relevant factor in the Israeli context. Two male interviewees are religious in the sense that they keep all the rules of Judaism and they are both Baal Teshuvah.[180] IntHUN16F, who is a believer, said: *„It is more important that something kosher comes out from my mouth than goes in (laughs)."* Her and another male interviewee come from a strongly Christian background (with Jewish origin) turning into Judaism through God. There is one specifically secular interviewee and the rest are somewhere between tradition keepers and secular varying whether believing in God or not but this is not correlated with keeping traditions or not.

My subjective observations about the interviewees were that they had no difficulty talking about their lives (and touching upon the Holocaust), which is unusual because people in general have difficulties with it. Many of them even asked me to send the results to them

[179] Kovács, „Jews and Jewry in Contemporary Hungary," 3.
[180] Baal Teshuvah: (lit. "master of return") a person who turns to God in repentance, after willful or unknowing transgression of the Torah's commandments; a Jew of secular or not fully observant background who has decided to undertake full Torah observance.

because they found it a very important (or rather relevant) and an interesting topic. All of them were very helpful and offered their help. Some of them even called me and warned me about the siren that goes off on the eve of Yom Hazikaron (Day of Remembrance) and can be scary for a tourist. The first thing I noticed about my interviewees that they had the Israeli (or rather Mediterranean) mentality (e.g. losing the sense of time, preferring to be informal in terms of greetings (hugging instead of handshake) and talking, etc.). What is interesting is that the interviewees themselves noticed these differences and they are fully aware of it.

I found it very important to have some expert interviews due to the lack of literature on Hungarians. I found one organization (*Hitachdut Ole Hungaria*) whose director was willing to talk to me and I used one of my interviewees as an expert too because he knows and sees many things about Hungarians due to his job (i.e. guide). I asked them what they know about Hungarians who live in Israel, what are the patterns for integration and some general information about the community. I also asked the Jewish Agency and other offices to get some statistics but unfortunately nobody could provide me with data.

Regarding the Moldovan interviews I managed to do only two. One interviewee is 31, the other one is 90 years old. The young female is from Chisinau, whereas the male is from Akkerman which is now part of Transnistria. Both are educated and left to Israel at the beginning of the 1990s. Neither of them is religious in the strict sense. They were both open to answer to my questions. (For socio-demographic characteristics, see Appendix 5.)

4.2. Findings

In this section the qualitative interviews will be analyzed. They were analyzed by the same person who conducted the interviews. First I listened to the interviews and then I went through the summaries several times. After the first interview I created a guideline that is similar to the initial guideline that I used during the interviews, and I focused on these themes and sub-themes while listening. The data collection aimed at receiving answers to the

questions, such as what is the level of integration of the Hungarians and how they identify themselves in Israel, how these differ from the Russian community's pattern and what are the main reasons for that.

The interview can be divided into three main parts. My first question was to talk about their life stories in order to find out about their family background, professions and the migration. Then I asked them about the two bigger themes, the processes of identification and integration. In the course of analysis, first I will give an overview of the Hungarian migration. Then I will look at the reasons in particular and then turn to the main aspects of the research. Within identification, the meaning and content of their identities (such as Jewishness, Hungarianness and Russianness) will be shown and then how they label themselves in terms of ethnicity and religion. In the last section the results concerning the level of integration will be presented.

4.2.1. Overview of Hungarian migration

Prior to examining the reasons for migrating I would like to elaborate on the migration of the Hungarians and to answer the following questions: whom they left the country with, whether they had acquaintances in Israel before going there and what other external factors could influence their decision. One of the external factors influencing their decisions was their age at migration. Many of those who left right after finishing high school were motivated by studying and they left alone (but with other Hungarians in a group who attended the same *ulpan*). They were not accepted at the university in Hungary and they heard of the opportunity of studying Hebrew in Israel. Another influencing factor was to have a friend encouraging *aliyah* which does not necessarily coincide with having a friend in Israel which plays a much smaller role among the Hungarians than in the Russian case. It is also important whether there was Zionism in the family (i.e. the Zionist ideology was present or not). Going to Jewish youth organizations and camps could be also a determining component but to a smaller extent

than the previous ones. The opportunity that Hungarians can leave their country (i.e. the fall of the regime) was also an important element, especially for the elder generation. They usually left with their children, if they had any. Anti-Semitism, which followed the fall of the regime, was mentioned in every case. For the religious[181] and believer[182] Jews, Israel is the home country where they can live more easily than elsewhere.

Regarding the circumstances, there were three types: those, who decided quickly and went to Israel with the goal of staying there, belong to the first group. These are the ones whose emigration had a connection with the fall of the regime (IntHUN6F, IntHUN11F, and IntHUN14F) and also with escaping from family problems (IntHUN2F and IntHUN3M). There were some who went there and made the decision later to remain in the country (IntHUN1F, IntHUN5F, IntHUN7M, and IntHUN13F). This group coincides mostly with those who went there to study. And there are the religious (IntHUN12M and IntHUN17M) and believer Jews (IntHUN15M and IntHUN16F) who prepared their *aliyah* for many years).

All in all, if I wanted to divide these into two groups: among the pull factors there is Israel where Jews can live freely, religious Zionism, meaning that Jews have to live in the Holy Land, economic opportunities and preferential immigration policy (including educational opportunities, such as the *ulpan*), whereas the push factors are the fall of the regime and the subsequent anti-Semitism, family problems, and a Jewish community not fulfilling some of the expectations despite the fact that there was a Jewish renaissance in Hungary in the 1990s[183] which was even mentioned by these interviewees but they all looked at it with criticism.

[181] I regard those as religious who keep all the *mitzvot* (commandments).
[182] I regard those believers who have a very strong belief in God but they are not necessarily religious.
[183] Kovács and Forrás-Biró, "Zsidó élet Magyarországon," 8.

4.2.1. The reasons and motivations for migrating, returning diaspora

In this section the reasons and motivations behind migration will be illustrated: when and why the immigrants (both Hungarians and post-Soviets) decided to emigrate and I wanted to see whether the push or the pull factors were stronger. I was also interested how the two groups differ from each other in this matter by finding out whether they had other countries taken into consideration or it was only Israel they wanted to go to. First always the existing literature on the Russian community will be presented completed with Moldovan interviews, and then the description of the Hungarian interviewees will follow.

Push factors

As mentioned earlier, Russian-speakers were rather pushed than pulled to Israel[184] but here, I have to emphasize again, that this chapter is only about those migrants who arrived in Israel in the 1990s (as opposed to those in the 1970s). Based on several surveys the main motivations for migration were the following: high levels of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, social tension,[185] fear of nationalist persecution,[186] economic crisis and political instability in general.[187] This means, of course, that in their cases the collapse of the Soviet Union (which would be equivalent with the fall of the regime in the Hungarian case) had a lot to do with their migration.

In the Hungarian case we find similar factors but they weigh differently. Among the push factors the strongest was the difficulty of being a Jew in Hungary, which was expressed on many levels. Even though the Hungarian Jewish community is the biggest in Central and Eastern Europe, some of my interviewees needed more cultural and religious community life:

[184] DellaPergola, "Demography in Israel," 25.
[185] Gitelman, *Immigration and Identity*, 26.
[186] Karin Amit, "Social Integration and Identity of Immigrants from Western Countries, the FSU and Ethiopia in Israel," in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 35 No. 7 (2012): 1290.
[187] Larissa Remennick, "A Case Study in Transnationalism: Russian Jewish Immigrants in Israel of the 1990s," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 375.

> *I was surrounded by Jews. And that was also… a bit... I know, in Hungary there is always Jewish renaissance [ironically], but I always met the same 30 people in all the events of the Jewish renaissance. I enjoyed those, it's not about that, but it's a bit of dead water.* (IntHUN1F)

> *When I started to date my wife, it became clearer that if we wanted kids, we would want them to get a normal Jewish education and… well, for them to have Jewish surroundings and we didn't want to be the „token Jews" that everybody points finger at. Groups visited us in our flat within the organization of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Hungary [MAZSIHISZ] and said [ironically imitating them] 'Wow, these are THE Jews', and 'Wow, these are religious people and they have a mezuzah on their door' and 'Wow, a kosher kitchen', and 'Wow, I don't know what else they could wonder about, wow'. This is what happened. I didn't like this representative role.* (IntHUN17M)

Moving to the next level, IntHUN9M reported how he does not like to be a member of a minority: *„It always bothered me to live in Hungary because I didn't like being a minority at all. I didn't feel good there. I had a very beautiful life, wonderful parents, but I never liked living there."* Another expression of being a member of the minority from the elder generation:

> *I wanted to be a Hungarian. It's natural. [pause] But there were two things. First, my father needed to talk about his experiences that he went through and that's why I knew a lot about the Shoah by word of mouth. And there, where I lived, in the country, I was the only Jew in the school. In the whole environment, because the Jews were deported from the countryside and usually they didn't come back. [pause] Well, once it happened that... I only remember that I came from the school upset and I told my father that 'they said at school that this is not my country because I am Jewish and this is not my home.' And my father said: 'there is some truth in it because Hungary belongs to the Hungarians.' 'But then where is our home, we Jews?' 'Well, in Israel.' 'So why are we here? And not there?' And then my father said that 'I'm too old to start a new life. We are too old.' Meaning my mother and my father, my parents. 'But if you are going to be old enough, you have to go there.' So I always knew that sooner or later I would come here, but there was always something in the way.* (IntHUN11F)

This is followed by the anti-Semitism that many of them experienced, hence it can be regarded as a push factor. The same theme was touched upon by IntHUN12M but he looked at the question of Hungarian versus Jew from the anti-Semitic point of view. He believed that he was discriminated against.

> *When socialism ended, this is when my parents told me that I'm Jewish and I will be going to a Jewish school which didn't touch me that time at all. I didn't care. This touched me when I left the Jewish school and I went to a non-Jewish school and I became the main Jew. Basically I was discriminated against by Hungarians. It was in 1992-1993.*[188] *They excommunicated me because I was Jewish. And this originated a mess in my identity-consciousness: who am I? What is Jewishness? What is this whole thing that makes them excommunicate me? If they don't*

[188] The same interviewee said that in 1993 after Csurka István's anti-Semitic comments more Jews left to Israel than in the first three years after the fall of the regime due to anti-Semitism.

consider me a Hungarian, then I am Jewish and if I am Jewish, what does that mean? So it originated a mess.

On the most general level: *„I was so eager to leave. Almost all the countries in the world seemed better than Hungary. And more or less it still stands."* (IntHUN10M) Even though family problems never constituted a single cause for migration, I found it important to mention among the push factors because in many cases migration can be an escape from problems (but might not be the best solution – referring to those who come back not much later[189]).

There were many things involved in my aliyah*... [...] So it was a big part of my Jewish identity, but there were a lot of juvenile things involved too: escaping from things and stuff like that. But I think – which is really interesting – that when we came here [the Israeli situation] wasn't good: neither economically, nor socially. And I think that the fact that [despite of this] we didn't go back, that I didn't go back, it is more due to the Jewish identity than not wanting my friends to look at me as a failure. I had many things in Israel that talked to me: learning Hebrew, I remember, reading the Bible in Hebrew.* (IntHUN10M)

Comparing the two groups, the collapse of the Soviet Union caused more serious crisis on a more general level than the fall of the regime in Hungary. In both cases anti-Semitism was present, but the problem was perceived differently. The Hungarians looked at it from the point of view of belonging to a repressed minority (even after the fall of the Communist/Socialist regime) and one of the main problems was the lack of a blooming Hungarian Jewish community whereas in the FSU the crisis reached all (political, economic and social) levels and affected the whole society. Thus Jews were not the only population who started to migrate in the 1990s.

Pull factors

Among the pull factors of the FSU migrants was the preferential immigration policy, which can be also regarded as an external factor, and should be mentioned first. The newly implemented strict immigration policy of the US (from October, 1989) contributed a lot to choosing Israel over the US. We can also find economic opportunities (for both their children

[189] IntHUN3M's mother is planning to come back once she retires and she was absolutely somebody who wanted to escape from family problems (i.e. divorce).

and themselves[190]), and political stability[191] which are completed by ideological reasons: in Gitelman's survey[192] 3% mentioned Zionism and another 15% said that they want to live among Jews.[193] Another pull factor which only contributes to migration to a certain extent is having relatives living in Israel[194] and more particularly, family reunion.[195] Looking at those who stayed in the FSU,[196] 59% would choose Israel for economic reason, 20% for political ones, 13% for ethnic affiliation and 8% for family or health issues.[197] Many of these (relatives living in Israel, Zionism in the family from her father's side, economic considerations and preferential immigration policy) were mentioned by IntMD2F, but the most concise answer: *„Well, it was a kind of natural choice for Jews living in Moldova."* She also added that it was in the air (i.e. *„people were packing"*) and that they did not know how long this freedom would last thus they were eager to leave. It is important to keep in mind that the emigration from the FSU is not a specific Jewish phenomenon but a rather general tendency.[198]

Regarding the Hungarians, the pull factors are more various. The easiest to comprehend is in the case of the religious Jews. For them Israel is the most convenient place to live in because the holidays are taken for granted and the rules can be kept more easily, etc:

> *I feel good now and I am really only one out of the mass and I enjoy this a lot, because this grey mass is composed of religious Jews and I don't have to look for the minyan and the kosher food and the society of similar people. So from this point coming here really worked out well. And from the children's point of view as well. They are growing up seeing this environment; I can let them go to their friends because I know they will eat kosher there. The whole milieu, the whole environment, the whole lifestyle is based on this, I don't have to – and now I will come up with*

[190] Ben-Rafael, *Building a Diaspora*, 122-123.
[191] Mesch, "Language Proficiency among New Immigrants," 42.
[192] There were 809 respondents from the FSU who went to Israel between 1989 and 1991. The respondents had to be above 18 years old and the sample was quota sample. The survey took place in 1992.
[193] Gitelman, "From a Northern Country," 32.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ben-Rafael, *Building a Diaspora*, 122-123.
[196] The random and weighted sample consisted of 1000 Jews from Moscow, Kiev and Minsk. The survey was conducted in 1993.
[197] Robert J. Brym, "Jewish Emigration from the Former USSR: Who? Why How Many?" in *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Migration and Resettlement*, ed. Noah Lewin-Epstein, Yaacov Ro'i and Paul Ritterband. (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 182.
[198] Timothy Heleniak, "The End of an Empire: Migration and the Changing Nationality Composition of the Soviet Successor States," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 131-154.

> *an example from my life – I don't have to make up every kind of reason when there is a Jewish holiday [...] Life here is how it's supposed to be.* (IntHUN17M)

A very good example for the pull factor overwriting the push factors:

> *Why did I come? I didn't have any negative experiences or to escape Hungary, or anti-Semitism. There was the family history in the background, a very obvious Jewish family history and identity and when I came, I thought 'Ok, we will try this'. Zionism was there, so it is not by chance that I came here, but wasn't obvious that I will stay. At the age of 21 one tends to try out many things. And very soon... the fact that we arrived in Jerusalem was determining. I fell in love with the city.* (IntHUN7M)

It is similar to what Sheffer writes about, namely that people intend to join the diasporas later.[199] This can be explained by both factors mentioned in this quotation: that many went there for a one or half a year program with the intention of taking a language exam at the end and coming back to apply for university; and also to what many other interviewees referred to as well: „the magic of Israel which either gets to you or not." I was surprised to find that Zionism was a very strong pull factor, much stronger, and perceived even stronger than among Russian-speakers.

> *I came to a country where if you don't have ideological attachment, it's not logical to choose it. The climate is not good, there is permanent warfare... [...] Obviously, whoever comes here has ideological attachment. It's not worthy financial wise either.* (IntHUN4F)

The two interviewees whom I call believers consider Israel their home in a somewhat religious sense, which I would call religious Zionism. *„I can only encourage everybody to come home!"*[200] (IntHUN16F)

By asking the migrants whether there was any other country taken into consideration, I tried to differentiate between the push and pull factors. As was mentioned before, FSU migrants took into consideration other countries too (mostly the US and Germany) but the immigration policies forced them to change their decisions. Looking at why they do not want to leave the FSU also contributes to the question of separating push and pull factors. Some of these reasons were in a previously mentioned survey,[201] 47% of the respondents wanted to

[199] Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics*, 129.
[200] IntHUN16F emphasized a lot on the word 'home' during the interview as well as while emailing with her about the interview.
[201] See footnote 196.

stay because of ethnic affiliation, 35% for family and health reasons, 12% for economic reasons and 6% for political reasons.[202] I find it also interesting why they explicitly do not choose to go to Israel: 31% out of ethnic affiliation, 29% for economic reason, 26% because of family and 14% for political reasons.[203] There was also an advertisement where an old woman says from Moldova why she does not want to leave the country despite all its difficulties:

> *It's not an easy life in Moldova, but my friend comes from the Joint[204] comes to see me every few days. She brings me food and medicine. And news of my family. They went to Israel three years ago. Life is just starting for them, that's good. But leaving's not for me. This is my place, my home. Everything I know is here. I will never ever leave.*[205]

Some Hungarians also mentioned the US but it remained a dream because of economic difficulties even though some of them had relatives or friends there. I understood from their answers that if immigration policy was not such in Israel they might have ended up in the US, but it is hard to tell. Those who went to Israel because of the language learning opportunity obviously did not think about other countries because they did not consider Israel as their future country of residence, therefore preferential immigration policy counts in their cases too. To compare these results with the answers of the Hungarians living in Hungary, we find that the importance of Israel in their Jewishness is present and this weighs a lot in their decision to make *aliyah*. 73% of the respondents had one or two relatives, friends or acquaintances in Israel and 53% visited the country. 54% agreed with the statement that „Israel is the intellectual centre of the Jews" and 46% agreed that „Israel is the real home of the Jews."[206] 15% of the sample said that they considered migrating to Israel but even among the youngsters (18-25 years) it did not reach the 20%. It might be worthy to add that in

[202] Brym, „Jewish Emigration from the Former USSR," 182.
[203] Ibid.
[204] American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC): JDC is the world's leading Jewish humanitarian assistance organization, impacting millions of lives in more than 70 countries today.
[205] William Berthomiere, "Integration and Social Dynamic of Ethnic Migration: The Jews from the Former Soviet Union in Israel," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 341.
[206] Kovács (ed.), *Zsidók a mai Magyarországon*, 145.

Hungary the migration potential[207] is (and among Jews always was[208]) low compared to other Eastern European countries.[209]

Comparing the two groups, the pull factors were more typical and more various among the Hungarians. FSU migrants were rather pushed than pulled, as was emphasized many times, as opposed to the Hungarians who chose Israel more freely. They were also limited and affected by the different immigration policies, and they were also pushed away from Hungary, but Israel and the fact that it is a Jewish state, played an important role in their decision. Therefore push and pull factors were both present in each Hungarian case, migration cannot be narrowed down to one reason which also stands in the FSU case but those reasons are closer to push factors than the pull factors.

To conclude this chapter, I want to refer to the question: whether they can be regarded as a return diaspora or not. I already presented some scholars' opinions but here I want to base my argument on the findings. In technical terms both ethnicities are regarded as return diasporas because they fulfill the conditions of it and they enjoy preferential policy. In terms of ideology, Hungarians, as opposed to Russian-speakers, rather fit this concept because they did not go to Israel only for economic reasons (like Russians) but there were a lot of other pull factors, such as ideological ones. They fit into Tsuda's concept about return migration, namely that both economic reasons and ethnic affiliation can be present and preferential policy helps in making this decision.[210] For the religious and the believers Israel is regarded as their home but they are not so many. Those who went there only for escaping family problems and economic issues went back to Hungary and those who were caught by the Zionist ethos

[207] Endre Sik and Bori Simonovits, "Migrációs potenciál Magyarországon, 1993–2001," in *Társadalmi Riport 2002*, ed. Kolosi Tamás, Tóth István György, Vukovich György, 207–219. (Budapest: TÁRKI, 2002.)
[208] Karády, "Népességi helyzet, integráció, kiválás," 124-135.
[209] Ágnes Hárs, Bori Simonovits, Endre Sik, "Munkaerőpiac és migráció: fenyegetés vagy lehetőség?," in *Társadalmi Riport 2004*, ed. Tamás Kolosi, György Tóth István and György Vukovich, 272-289. (Budapest: TÁRKI, 2004.)
[210] Tsuda, *Diasporic Homecoming*.

were more likely to stay. One of my interviewees expressed that she feels home there and similarly it was mentioned by others too:

> *I found a livable place. A place that is familiar in every sense. I can't explain this to you. One walks on the street and people come from the opposite direction and you feel like you saw all those before and you know them all and you meet anybody and you start talking with anybody a kind of relation comes into being after a couple of sentences which is... The fact itself that people start talking to each other is unknown in Hungary.* (IntHUN6F)

4.2.2. Identity and integration

This section will deal with the identification and integration processes. Since identity and integration are too intertwined to be analyzed separately, they will be dealt with within one chapter divided by subchapters. The main questions are how the Hungarians identify themselves and whether it differs from the Russian pattern or not. And wherever there are differences, I will delve into it. Regarding integration, the main goal is to see what the level of integration is in the Hungarian case and whether or not it is similar to the reference groups' integration patterns. If there are differences in any aspects of the above questions, I want to see what they are and what the reasons are.

Jewishness

Within identification my first concern was their Jewishness. Following Barth's theory about ethnic groups,[211] I divided Jewishness into content and boundaries. For the former, the questions were what Jewishness means to them, how they define it, what its manifestations in their lives are and what role it plays in their identity. As for the latter, the questions were: whom they consider Jewish and whether it is important to have a Jewish spouse. The last question seemed irrelevant for the interviewees who do not consider marrying non-Jews (i.e. Arabs) because of the social tension and cultural cleavage. I also asked when they found out that they were Jewish and how Jewishness (and the Holocaust) was handled in the family. I believe the family background is a very important factor in one's life especially in the post-Communist region where religion was a taboo for half a decade.

[211] Barth (ed), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*.

Regarding content, in the Soviet Union Jewishness was regarded as a nationality from 1932 but the content of Jewishness was being emptied due to the *"official attacks on Judaism, Hebrew, Zionism, and the traditional* shtetl *way of life"* and only the boundaries were maintained between Jews and non-Jews.[212] This is what they brought with themselves to Israel meaning that Jewishness is an important element in their lives (which was imposed on them by the state and by anti-Semitism) but not in religious terms; rather as a form of ethnic identity. The importance does not diminish though. We will see (in section 4.2.2.) that Jewishness plays a very important role in their identity.

Coinciding with the abovementioned information, as IntMD1M said, Jewishness does not mean that they are *"going to the synagogue on Friday evening. There is no such habit which is a Soviet thing."* Meaning that this is how they are used to it. Even though he lived in the Soviet Union for 51 years, the Israeli influence can be seized in the following: Jewishness was blurred with his Israeliness. For him Jewishness means reading Amos Oz and other Israeli authors. He regards Jews as a nation and also a tradition. He also mentioned that he always knew that he was Jewish and it was rather negative to live in the Soviet Union as a Jew, meaning as a member of the minority. IntMD2F related something similar about her Jewishness:

> *I don't remember. I always knew it [that I am Jewish] but I really didn't know what it means. Didn't mean much for me just that I knew I was different. Jewishness was always part of my identity; it was always in the back of my mind.*

As for the meaning, Jewishness is rather a culture and tradition for her. Both interviewees mentioned the Holocaust as an important milestone in their families' lives and they referred to it as a crucial element of their Jewishness. The past, in general, had a huge impact on their attitude toward Jewishness, namely the treatment of the Jews in the Soviet Union.

Regarding boundaries, when I asked Hungarians "who are the Jews?" most of my interviewees said what IntHUN11F said: *„it's a people whose history partially happened here*

[212] Gitelman, "Jewish Identity and Secularism," 243.

(in Israel), its culture was created here, its religion was created here and this is its home." A people which overlaps with religion and many of them also added that it is also a culture and tradition, including the common history and ancestors. I believe that this might be the influence of Israeli society where Jewish ethnicity is characterized by history, religion and biology.[213]

Although it was not an answer explicitly to this question, I learnt that many of them defined themselves in relation to the Holocaust. It plays an important role in their identity which coincides with the situation of Hungarians living in Hungary. Referring to the latter, as Komoróczy argues, the Holocaust does not only compose the Jewish identity as is suggested by others,[214] but the relation towards it forms part of everyone's identity.[215] In Kovács's survey, the most important factor in being Jewish was also the memory of the Holocaust (4.47 out of 5). The following elements were (in order of importance) the maintenance of the memory of Jewish ancestry (4,09), subjective feeling of being Jewish (4,00), interest and knowledge in Jewish culture (3,98), being proud of Jewish celebrities (3,68), the intimacy of friendship with other Jews (3,45) and feeling close to Israel (3,24).[216] These answers are close to what I received in Israel (see above) but there are also differences which might be the impact of Israeli society. For example, among my interviewees few of them consider Jewishness as Israeliness which might be the impact of the Israeli society where Jewishness cannot be divorced from Judaism: Jewish identity is often confused with Israeli identity.[217]

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[213] Shlomit Levy, "Selective Observance as a Component of Jewish Identity in Contemporary Israeli Society," in *Contemporary Jewry* 22:1 (2001): 20.
[214] Erős, Kovács and Lévai, "Hogyan jöttem rá, hogy zsidó vagyok?" 129-144.
Ferenc Erős, "The Construction of Jewish Identity in the 1980s," in: Yitzhak Kashti, Ferenc Erős, David Shers and David Zisenswine (eds.) *A Quest for Identity. Post-War Jewish Identities*. (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1996.), 51-70.
Kovács and Vajda. *Mutatkozás. Zsidó identitás történetek.*
Virág Teréz. "Children of the Holocaust and their Children's Children," in: *Dynamic Psychotherapy*. 2 (1984): 47-60.
[215] Géza Komoróczy, *Holokauszt. A pernye beleég a bőrünkbe.* (Budapest: Osiris, 2000.)
[216] Kovács (ed.), *Zsidók a mai Magyarországon*, 144.
[217] Liebman and Yadgar, "Secular Jewish Identity," 157.

I found it very interesting that the Hungarian interviewees realized some things about themselves as Diasporian Jews living in Israel. One of them was the „*galut* fear." Many interviewees mentioned this phenomenon which stems from the „reactive" and „negatively defined identity," which means that Jewish identity during the Socialism was defined by others lacking positive identification.[218] This was strengthened by not talking about the Jewish background at home and by finding out at a certain age that one is Jewish instead of knowing it for all of his or her life. All of these were present in my interviewees' lives but to a different extent and with different consequences. I find it very important to emphasize this background because one cannot fully comprehend their present day identification without it. Some of them became very strongly engaged with Jewishness after they found out about their background and some of them got interested in their origin influenced by other factors. Some of them even mentioned the phenomenon that Naomi Gur writes about, namely that even without knowing that they are Jewish they had Jewish friends about whom they found out later on.[219]

By immigrating to Israel, all my interviewees were driven somewhat by their Jewish background but I already touched upon this question. This *galut* fear is strongly connected to the fact that their Jewish identity was oppressed in Hungary as opposed to Israel where they feel free and relaxed as Jews.

> *When we finished the* ulpan*, the teacher – with whom I stayed in touch up till now – said that we should sit in a circle and everybody should put an object in the circle and say why is that. I had nothing on me. Only my ID. The Israeli one. And I put that. And they asked why. And, of course, I started to cry and I said that 'because I chose this country and here I can feel free.' And it remained like this till today. Exactly when that part comes in the anthem about us being free... Yes. This what Israel means to me. Freedom. Here [in Hungary] we weren't free. Neither in the 1980s. We pretended that we are but we weren't.* (IntHUN2F)

[218] Kovács, "Az asszimilációs dilemma," 605-612.
[219] Naomi Gur, "A kortárscsoport szerepe a magyarországi zsidó fiatalok identitásának kialakulásában," in: Zsidóság, identitás, történelem, ed. Kovács M. Mária, Kashti M. Yitzhak, and Erős Ferenc (Budapest: T-Twins Kiadó, 1992), 141-155.

Jewishness plays a very important role in their lives but in very different ways. Many identified Jewishness with Israel and in these cases Jewishness almost reduced in being in Israel, meaning that they do not keep any traditions or almost any. For example IntHUN7M said that by now Jewishness overlaps with the existence of the State of Israel. IntHUN8M related to this problem as being in Israel to some extent fulfilled his Jewishness:

> *It plays a very-very important role, because I am Jewish and that's it. I wasn't educated like that, on the contrary, but it happened this way. [...] In Hungary it was depressing because I wasn't growing up in a Jewish community, I wasn't going to Jewish schools and I didn't have Jewish friends, so it was taboo, so to say. But since I came to Israel things changed. It became somewhat important but I don't keep Jewish traditions or anything, it is just in my blood.*

For IntHUN6F the question itself was a *galut* question, meaning that in Israel it does not make sense. She said: *„Being Jewish means being Jewish. That's it. It contains everything."* IntHUN3M expressed something that I wrote about it as belonging together and it coincides with the statement from Kovács's survey: „the subjective feeling of belongingness to the Jews":

> *Jewishness means for me that I belong to something which doesn't bind me to places but I have somewhere to go if I want to be surrounded by Jews [laughs]. And this is important. But I don't think, for example when I am here, in Hungary, I don't say that I am Jewish and I have different principles and my life is different than anybody else's. I don't want to be part of the Jewish community but rather the part of Hungarian life.* (IntHUN3M)

The manifestations of their Jewishness correspond to how they think about it. As mentioned, the religious aspect is expressed in several ways but there is definitely an interest towards Judaism, Jewish culture and knowledge about it, which in most cases increased in Israel. IntHUN2F said that before going to Israel she had absolutely no idea about the customs and traditions. A story about her arrival and accommodation in the *merkaz klita* (absorption centre) illustrating this phenomenon:

> *So we received… we were three of us... six plates: three soup plates, three plates, etc. with different colors. I liked this very much, I said 'It is so good, I will make the table with colorful plates!' because I had no idea why they give us two different kinds of plate. [pause] Well, that was my Jewish knowledge. This is where my kosherness and Jewish knowledge stood and remained this way.*

The last sentence is an exaggeration because she studied the Torah in Israel for four years and she said that her knowledge about Judaism increased a lot and it is true in other cases. It can

go both ways: either one starts keeping the tradition after emigration because Hanukah, Pesach and kosher food are part of the Israeli life, or one goes against the mainstream and looks for pork and avoids being in Israel during Pesach, as IntHUN2F did this year for example. At first all of them said that they do not cook Jewish food, such as tsimes,[220] cholent, latkes, matzo ball soup, etc. but when I started asking one by one, they realized that they do cook such food on holidays or on an average day.

To compare the two groups we find many similarities as well as differences. Jewishness was treated very differently in the Soviet Union than in Hungary, which influences the interviewees' present approach toward it. In Hungary during the socialist period Jewishness was hidden in many cases whereas in the Soviet Union it was imposed on them but it had almost no content. Jewishness was in both cases a negative reference point due to the situation of minorities, but in Hungary it possessed more and different meaning from the Soviet ethnic type of understanding. In both cases Jews are regarded as a nation but for the Hungarian it also means a culture. The first approach might be the strong influence of Israeli society where Jewishness is partially overlapping with Israeliness and this impact is conspicuous in the interviews. Jewishness plays an important role for both Hungarians and Russian-speakers but the manifestations might be different which I will come back to later.

Turning to the question of boundaries, according to Gitelman, the taboo of intermarriage declines everywhere within the Jews except in the FSU[221] and my Moldovan interviewees living in Israel suggest that it might be the case among those too who live in Israel. For both having a Jewish spouse was very important. Regarding other boundaries, Jews of the FSU remained Jewish mostly because of external factors, such as anti-Semitism and state-imposed identification and these conditions are no longer valid,[222] but their effects are long-lasting.

[220] It is a typical Jewish food made of carrot (sometimes dough or potatoes or meat).
[221] Gitelman, "Thinking about Being Jewish," 57.
[222] Gitelman, "Jewish Identity and Secularism," 260.

IntMD2F related a similar situation about her childhood, namely that her relatives were not accepted at university because of their Jewish origin and she was not allowed to talk about her Jewishness (except to the neighbors because they were Jewish) and she was raised as Jewish but in secret because her mother *„didn't want to raise a goy in the house."* IntMD1M had a complex answer to the question "who is a Jew?" First he said those who speak Hebrew, then, he added the importance of Jewish parents and the person's attitude towards it. IntMD2F gave also an ambivalent answer to this question. She confessed that she wants to be very liberal about it but actually she cannot disregard Jewish descent. She has a roommate who starts to feel Jewish but my interviewee cannot accept that. She said that the blood or some kind of connection to Jewishness is essential.

Among the Hungarians, when it comes to the question "who is a Jew", the picture is very diverse. The religious interviewees defined it, of course, according to halacha. One of them added that Jewishness is inheritable and cannot be got rid of and once somebody converts should fill it in with content, meaning that he accepts converted Jews who keep the religion afterwards. The answers varied, but in almost every interview blood was mentioned as an important element. In general I had the impression that the interviewees tried to combine their more conservative definition, namely that „Jews are those who are born at least of one Jewish parent" with a liberal one, namely that „everybody is Jewish who considers himself Jewish." I wrote "one Jewish parent" because my interviewees (the non-religious ones) explicitly said that they do not expect the mother to be Jewish. This can be traced back to two reasons. First, it might be the impact of the Israeli Law of Return and second, which is connected to the first, is their own origin. I interviewed few people who are considered half Jews in Hungary (because only one of their parents is Jewish) and they had difficulties with this. IntHUN10M touched upon his half Jewishness when I asked about Jewish identity in general. I had the impression that it greatly affected his identification both in Hungary and in Israel. In the

former case it is problematic within the traditional Jewish community whereas in Israel he considers this problematic in general. Some of my half Jewish interviewees converted so that they are fully accepted by society and their surroundings.

In some cases the role of Israel appeared as well as a country which should be considered the home country of Jews: *„Jews are those, who feel at home here and have somewhat Jewish origins and thinks that this is his or her home"* (IntHUN14F). Then she added that she accepts everybody who considers himself a Jew. IntHUN9M had a more radical point on this: he thinks that one cannot be 100% Jewish if he or she does not live in Israel because they have to speak the language, have to share the same culture and so on. Following this line of thought he also said that: *„My Jewishness is as important as my Israeliness. For me it is more important to live in Israel and being not religious than being a religious Jew abroad."*

I found it especially interesting that there were several interviewees who refused the idea of categorization which might be connected to their non-religious life and being discriminated against for that as in the case of IntHUN2F who said the following:

> *I don't know whom shall I consider Jewish. Who is born Jewish. Who feels Jewish. [...] There is too much discrimination: are you Jewish? Is it important? Isn't it more important that we are humans? How we behave and whether we are humane? We can meet Jews who are so trashy. He lies, steals and cheats in the worst manner. Because he can do that to you. Because you are only an Ashkenazi Jew and he is Sephardic. At this point I cannot ask who is a Jew.*

And it might stem simply from the memory of the Holocaust which might be the case for IntHUN3M: *„Jewishness is very important for me but I don't want it to determine my life. For me it's too much when they distinguish me from others based on this. I hate distinctions in general."* What I noticed is that converted Jews are treated separately. Either they are looked up to or they are expected to keep the religion and take Judaism seriously.

As mentioned earlier, choosing a Jewish spouse is obvious in the Israeli context (for those who got married in Israel). Among those who did not find this question absolutely irrelevant, for example IntHUN8M emphasized that having a Jewish spouse *„is important. If they made*

an effort till my generation to protect our clean blood, I will continue. Of course. It is important. Yes." For those who chose a spouse in Hungary it varies. For the religious interviewees it was a very important point of view to have not only a Jewish but religious Jewish wife and among the others there are Jewish and non-Jewish spouses too. In Kovács's survey the importance of intermarriage was 2.73 out of 5, which more or less mirrors this ambivalent attitude towards this.[223] To find out more about this I asked them about their children's spouse and IntHUN9M said that he already talked with his daughter and told her that the most important is that she chooses a Jewish husband who lives in Israel. According to IntHUN4F it is much more convenient to have a Jewish husband, but she does not want to interfere in her daughter's life by telling her whom to marry.

To keep in mind Herman's and Jenkins' idea about analyzing the majority while studying minorities, I will not omit the Israeli society from this comparison. Contrasting these results with that of Israeli society, we find that the immigrants are much more liberal regarding this question. Based on the Guttman survey, 73% consider Jews those who are converted by the rabbinate but do not necessarily keep the tradition, 48% accept those who converted through a non-Orthodox rabbinate, 40% accept those who are born of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother and 33% accept even those who feel Jewish but not born of Jewish parents.[224]

To conclude, not very surprisingly, having Jewish blood plays an important role in considering someone Jewish. It might be strengthened by living in Israel but in both Hungary and the FSU it is a strong condition in being Jewish. The question of intermarriage is less relevant in Israel due to the lack of choice – at least this is how it is perceived by the Hungarians (my Moldovan interviewees did not mention this). For post-Soviets, the importance is rather to marry another post-Soviet in Israel in order to maintain the ethnicity.

[223] Kovács (ed.), *Zsidók a mai Magyarországon*, 144.
[224] Alaya Keissar-Sugarmen, *A Portrait of Israeli Jews Beliefs, Observance, and Values of Israeli Jews, 2009*. (Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute and The Avi Chai Israel Foundation, 2011), 69.

For both Hungarians and post-Soviets, their Jewishness receives an additional element which is the Israeliness.

Regarding religiosity, in the case of Russian-speakers, Gitelman found that it is significantly less important for the youngsters than for the elderly and religiosity is stronger among the Caucasians and Central Asians.[225] 5% of his interviewees included religion into the definition of Jewishness but from the behavioral point of view there are more who affiliate with religion (i.e. observing traditions). In another sample[226] 1,4% said that he is religious, 24,7% defined themselves as traditional, 33,6% fast on the Day of Atonement and 13,2% eat kosher food.[227] For the division of religiosity, the idea of Liebman and Yadgar should be followed in the case of the immigrants too who suggest three categories: religious (including Haredi), traditional and secular.[228]

It is difficult to compare the religiosity of the immigrants with Israeli society because there can be two ways to look at it in the migrants' case and both versions appeared during my research. Either religion (or rather keeping traditions) becomes a routine without living it through or one identifies with it stronger because one lives in the Jewish Land. Supporting the former, IntMD2F said about her experience when she lived in other countries: *„I feel more Jewish when I am outside Israel. [...] In Israel everything is taken for granted. You don't really have to think about it [the holidays] like elsewhere. You eat matzo [during Pesach[229]] because that's what you can buy in the shop."* For the latter, I already cited several Hungarians. And there is a middle way which I found very interesting in the interview with IntMD1M. First he said: *"I am an assimilated Jew. I used to go to the synagogue on the Day of Atonement, but not anymore."* And then: *"I became much more Jewish here [in Israel]."*

[225] Gitelman, *Immigration and Identity*, 32-34.
[226] The author did not specify the details.
[227] Friedgut, "Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union," 196.
[228] Liebman and Yadgar, "Israeli Identity: The Jewish Component," 163-183.
[229] During a 7-day period of Passover, Jews do not eat leavened bread, instead they eat matzo.

Based on the Guttman Survey[230] (which includes temporal comparison but I will refer to the newest data from 2009) approximately one fifth of the society is strongly religious by self-definition, one third is traditional, and almost half is secular (of which a small part is anti-religiously secular).[231] Regarding the observances, 14% keep everything, one fourth keep the traditions to a great extent, almost half observe to some extent and 16% do not observe traditions at all,[232] but two thirds of the Israelis light a candle on Shabbat, eat kosher at home and go to the synagogue on holidays, even more observe holidays other than Shabbat and keep the events connected to life cycle (birth, death, adulthood, etc.) in a Jewish way (e.g. *brit milah*,[233] *bar mitzvah*,[234] etc.). First, it is clear that the two answers do not coincide with each other, which means that choosing a label for the religiosity might be subjective. Second, Israeli society seems to be more observant and religious than the immigrants. According to Levy's finding the Russian-speakers are less observant than the veteran Israelis[235] and it is connected to the fact that 90% of the immigrants were non-religious.[236]

In the case of immigrants, religiosity can become stronger in one's life or weaker. The influencing factors cannot be tracked down based on the given data. The only case when religion becomes a full-fledged part of the identity is in those cases when one chooses Israel strictly because of religious Zionism. In any other case it is rather random whether Judaism (as a tradition) becomes more important or less significant. Knowledge about Judaism though is increasing in every case.

[230] „The research population consisted of the adult Israeli Jewish population of Israel. The sample was composed of 2,803 Israeli Jews who, as of the date of the interview, had celebrated their twentieth birthday. The sample did not include Arabs or foreign residents who do not hold Israeli citizenship including 24 non-Jewish respondents who are eligible for Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return (such as the spouses of Jews) and 42 respondents with a Jewish father who are not Jewish according to *halacha*. Non-Jews (as defined by *halacha*) accounted for 2.4% of those interviewed."
[231] Keissar-Sugarmen, *A Portrait of Israeli Jews Beliefs*, 30.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Jewish religious male circumcision ceremony performed on 8-day-old children.
[234] Jewish ceremony celebrating that a 13-year-old boy becomes adult according to Jewish law.
[235] Levy, "Trends in Jewish Identity," 153-168.
[236] Remennick, "A Case Study in Transnationalism," 375.

4.2.3. Ethnicity in Israel: Hungarianness and the Soviet mentality

In this section the following elements were taken under examination: affiliation with the home country and its symbols, maintenance of ethnicity (*Hungarianness* and Soviet being) on different levels: engagement in Hungarian and Russian culture, such as use of language and behavior. Based on the previously cited surveys, Soviet being is more salient in Israel than *Hungarianness* among Hungarians.

Affiliation with the countries

Looking at the country affiliation, I hypothesized that we will get a different picture because the (post-) Soviet Jews may be uniquely the product of a Soviet environment that no longer exists.[237] This seems to be contradicted by IntMD2F, who said that she considers herself more of a citizen of the USSR than of Moldova. (I must note here that she also added that whenever there is an international competition, she brings the Israeli flag with her but she feels close to both Israeli and the Canadian flag (she lived there for a couple of years) but not the Moldovan one.) Another phenomenon that underlines the strong affiliation with the Soviet Union is the findings of Bernstein,[238] who noticed that the Russian-speaker community is reconstructing a small Soviet Union within Israel through many channels, such as food and cultural consumption, social networks, etc.[239] It might seem strange at first sight taking into account their negative associations with the Soviet Union, but the nostalgia overrules it which might stem from the dissatisfaction of their present lives. According to some findings, there is an intensive interrelation with the country of origin and its culture.[240] Their affiliation towards other Russians or Soviets is rather present though and it is expressed through

[237] Gitelman, "Jewish Identity and Secularism," 260.
[238] She is an anthropologist therefore she was doing participant observations as well as interviews. She conducted her research both in Israel and Germany to compare the two communities. She is a migrant herself from the former Soviet Union who lived in Israel and then moved to Germany which might be reflected in her findings. Despite this I will quote her a lot because her findings are supported by others.
[239] Bernstein, *Food for Thought*.
[240] Leshem and Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," 109.

transnationalism: the reliance on co-ethnic networks both abroad and in Israel plays a very important role in their lives.[241]

Affiliation toward Hungary was conceptualized by many aspects. Only a few interviewees distance themselves from Hungary by refusing the idea that it is their home and consider only Israel as their home country. IntHUN9M stated that: *„I came to Israel in order to be an Israeli and my children to be Israeli. If I wanted to bring- if I wanted to teach that (Hungarian) culture where I come from, I wouldn't have left the country. This is how I think."* The rest are rather ambivalent. In Hungarian there are two words for home: *itthon* (at home) and *otthon* (back home) which is hard to translate into English and most of them use *itthon* for Israel and *otthon* for Hungary. Both are their home. As IntHUN15M said *„That's why I always say that this is here at home [itthon] and I am at home [itthon], and that is back home [otthon]. So I keep that as my home [otthon]."* And IntHUN16F expressed the same by saying: *„I am home [in Israel] and I go home [when I go to Hungary]."* IntHUN10M defined Hungary as a country where he feels only a little bit more home than in other countries:

> *There is always something to it: when I go to Hungary, it is in a sense going home. But only a little bit more home than going to another country in Europe. I don't want to lie and say that when I go to Hungary I don't run into [the shop] and start eating „túró rudi" [cottage cheese bar coated with chocolate] and 'sport szelet' [type of Hungarian chocolate] and I don't know what else, but this is not homesickness. I don't have that. There are things that I miss but Hungary, homesickness – no.*

For IntHUN3M, who lives now in Hungary, the determining factor is where his life is:

> *I'm working here now. [pause] My life is here now. I decide whether I live here or there. If I want to be here, I am here [in Hungary] and if I want to be there [in Israel], I will be there... so after 21 years it's time for me to be here. [...] I don't have a flat neither here nor there. [laughs] So there is nothing that ties me. [...] I think a lot about this question. Now that I live here for a longer period, I like being here [in Hungary]. And there are things that I can identify with better. So I am the type who might feel better here. But when I am there [in Israel] the other half of my being appears. I don't know.*

IntHUN6F is thinking differently about the whole question: *„It is totally by chance where we are born. But it is not by chance that I am here, that we live here [in Israel]."* She also said

[241] Larissa Remennick, "Transnational Community in the Making: Russian Jewish Immigrants of the 1990s in Israel," in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28:3 (2002): 515.

that it could have been that she was born in Israel if things went in a little bit different way, meaning that Zionism was there but *„tragically/unfortunately my family didn't realize this dream [of going to Israel]."*

Having children and serving in the army are the two very important milestones in considering Israel as their home country and determines a lot in identifying with the country. IntHUN4F voiced her opinion about the first one:

> *Hungary… Yes, absolutely. This is where I was born, my parents live there, it is a very important place for me. Maybe not close enough, but I am updated about what's happening there, but I... I moved my life here, you know? And from the point you sit here with a child... I don't know. It ties me here a lot, this experience.*

IntHUN5F said similarly that the fact that her children are born in Israel makes Israel her home. As IntHUN7M said about the army *„You are either there or you are not there."* After being in Jerusalem (as a first milestone), for him the army was the second point when he could really fill the meaning of being in Israel with something. He also said that he does not consider Hungary his home anymore. When he meets Hungarians they always ask him *„When are you coming home?"* And his answer: *„I am at home, thank you."* And the other side of the coin is Hungary and its anti-Semitism that makes them distant from their motherland. Everybody is shocked and upset with the high level of anti-Semitism and they became reluctant now to visit the country, let alone going back to live there.

Another way to measure their affiliation to the country is through their attachment to the flag and anthem and I also asked which team they would cheer for if there was an Israeli-Hungarian match. The majority said that both flags and anthems are close to them but the Israeli is a little closer and they would support the Israeli team but the question was not easy to answer. IntHUN2F said that *„If I hear the Hungarian anthem, automatically I have to stand up. When I hear the Jewish anthem, I cry. Always. [pause] My eyes are filling with tears."* One of the reasons is that the Hungarian flag became the symbol of the nationalist

parties and it does not carry the same meaning anymore. The other reason is the closeness to Israel as their home.

Country affiliation was not studied separately in the case of the Russian-speakers but if we look at their identification (see section 4.2.2.), Israeliness plays an important role in it. On the other hand, in their behavior it is rather Soviet-being that can be easily grasped by keeping touch with their co-ethnics and by maintaining a post-Soviet community there. In the case of the Hungarians, the picture is clear. Hungary is the country where they were born and they have some friends and relatives there but they consider Israel as their home *(itthon)* and Hungary is back home *(otthon)*. The influencing factors are having children who were born in Israel, serving in the army and the length of staying in the country. First, in Hungary, anti-Semitism increased in the last couple of years[242] which gives a negative connotation to it. Secondly, the differences might stem from power. The Soviet Union was one of the two big powers during the Cold War and even if the evaluation of it might not be so positive, its *émigrés* could be proud of it hence it brought superiority with them.

Language use and cultural consumption

One of the most important questions within Russian or Soviet being is the role of the Russian language and according to the findings, *"Russian culture and language are major factors in their identity and they are determined to preserve them."*[243] Even though Russian-speakers learn Hebrew (to a certain level) very quickly (among those who arrived in 1990 64% spoke the language in 1995 and 26% could express himself in Hebrew) and they are eager to learn it

[242] ADL, "Press Release. ADL Survey In Ten European Countries Finds Anti-Semitism At Disturbingly High Levels," ADL Survey In Ten European Countries Finds Anti-Semitism At Disturbingly High Levels, accessed May 24, 2013, http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/anti-semitism-international/adl-survey-in-ten-european-countries-find-anti-semitism.html.

[243] Marina Niznik, "The Russian Language as a Base Factor: The Formation of the Russian Community in Israel," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger. (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 360.

for ideological and pragmatic reasons (i.e. they realize the importance of it),[244] they are not interested in Israeli (or Hebrew) culture because they tend to look down on it.[245] Even more, 75% of the Russian immigrants believe that Russian culture is superior[246] and their native language is rated much higher in every respect: being more beautiful, useful, international, respectable and cultural and even in relation to one's Jewishness.[247] Therefore the Hebrew is used for the public sphere and Russian becomes the language for the family, community and cultural needs.[248] This is supported by IntMD1M who uses Hebrew on the street and in the shop whereas he uses Russian in every other situation. Russian does not become less important but rather carries a new meaning. The relation, illustrated here, between Russian (as the language of the home country) and Hebrew (as the language of the host country) is determinant in ethnic self-identification.[249] Another feature which is not very unusual is the mixture of Hebrew and Russian what Remennick named "HebRush"[250] and was noticed by other researchers too.[251] Another language that becomes part of their lives is – similarly to the Hungarians – English.[252] Both Hebrew and English are regarded as tools of socio-economic mobility.[253]

Regarding the cultural consumption, two elements will be emphasized here. The first is the cultural consumption in the strict sense. For example going to Russian theatre (*Gesher*) is widespread among them and reading books in Russian have priority. Cultural life, in general,

[244] Amanda Klekowsky von Koppenfels, "Who organizes? The Political Opportunity Structure of Co-ethnic Migrant Mobilization," in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger. (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 307.
[245] Niznik, "The Russian Language as a Base Factor," 356-360.
[246] Remennick, "Transnational Community in the Making," 523.
[247] Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Elite Olshtain and Idit Geijst, "Identity and Language: The Social Insertion of Soviet Jews in Israel," in *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Migration and Resettlement*, ed. Noah Lewin-Epstein, Yaacov Ro'i and Paul Ritterband. (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 371.
[248] Niznik, "The Russian Language as a Base Factor," 365.
[249] Larissa Remennick, "Language Acquisition, Ethnicity and Social Integration among Former Soviet Immigrants of the 1990s in Israel," in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27:3 (2004): 432.
[250] Remennick, "From Russian to Hebrew via HebRush," 439-442.
[251] Niznik, "The Russian Language as a Base Factor," 366.
[252] Ben-Rafael, Olshtain and Geijst, "Identity and Language," 371.
[253] Remennick, "Language acquisition," 445.

is thriving in Israel among Russians.[254] There are educational institutions (*Mofet*), professional associations and NGOs in the cultural and educational spheres, a lot of book, video and music stores opened throughout Israel and they support the publications of Israeli Russian writers.[255] IntMD1M said it unambiguously that he reads in Russian even though he speaks English, French and Hebrew besides his native languages (Russian and Moldovan). IntMD2F related that her mother was very insisting on teaching her Russian (she had to copy books) and that time, because she was too young, she could not appreciate it but now she is trying to maintain it and reads Anna Karenina in Russian and uses this language a lot.

The second element is somewhat more abstract: the consumption of Russian or Soviet food. There is a whole immigrant consumer market that was established by them.[256] As it was hinted earlier, Russian food consumption is very widespread and several shops opened in Israel. The main importance of this is not that the immigrants can eat their own chocolates, but rather the nostalgia towards it. *"Chocolates without history are meaningless"*[257], said one of Bernstein's interviewees.

Among Hungarians, all in all, I found that *Hungarianness* is a very important part of their identity (in almost all cases) but the manifestations and the extent of it are very different. Starting with Hungarian food, many of them cook it and those who do not; it is because either they do not like it (it is too fat) or because they do not cook at all. Among the older generation it is more common to do it whereas within the younger ones international food is more dominant. It is connected to globalization. IntHUN17M reported that there is a shop where they can buy Hungarian jam but in general there are no such tendencies in the country.

The cultural manifestations are more visible and tangible and I looked at the same factors The most important is the (Hungarian) language use. All my interviewees use Hungarian. The

[254] Remennick, "Transnational Community in the Making," 523.
[255] Remennick, "From Russian to Hebrew via HebRush," 434-35.
[256] Friedgut, "Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union," 192.
[257] Bernstein, *Food for Thought*, 95.

most common channel for using Hungarian is to speak with relatives, mostly parents or children, which I will come back to. The other very common way is reading. I tried to find out what is their preference when choosing a book (written by a non-Hungarian and non-Israeli because in these two cases it might be a different answer) and most of them would choose Hungarian. (Those who would not, they would either choose English or Hebrew but the latter usually for professional purposes.) This is related to the difference in the alphabet and some of them still prefer to look at the English notice, if there is, than the Hebrew. The other reason is that they find Hungarian culture rich and they lived in it for at least 18 years (some of them much more) and it is difficult to leave it behind. Many enjoy using Hungarian language.

> *I know that I am Hungarian, I know that my roots are here [in Hungary]... Actually my culture is here, not the roots. Actually they are lost: neither here, nor there. But the culture is here. So if I start talking with someone and the conversation is such, then József Attila quotations come up and every kinds of quotation. These things I will not have them in Israel but I know that it exists.* (IntHUN2F)

IntHUN15M finds so important to maintain his Hungarian knowledge that he is writing a blog in Hungarian. He also said that he likes Hungary which is his past, Hungarianness is very important to him and *„The Hungarian countryside, the Hungarian food, the Hungarian language, my Hungarian past, there is a lot of Hungarian in me: my mother is Hungarian. I don't deny that and don't oppose it, on the contrary. I like it."* IntHUN12M works as a cook and sells Hungarian food. I think these are the small things that bind them to Hungary and to Hungarian culture without explicitly accepting it.

Russian-speaker Jews are characterized with bilingualism and biculturalism which is true even in the second generation.[258] Hungarians also maintain Hungarian culture to some extent but it remains on the individual level and it seems that it disappears in the second generation. There are no initiatives on the community level, such as opening cultural institutes and book shops.

[258] Marina Niznik, "Cultural Practices and Preferences of 'Russian' youth in Israel," in *Israel Affairs* 17:1 (2011): 89-107.

Mentality

The level of maintaining ethnicity, (post-) Soviet mentality is also more salient. They tend to maintain Soviet lifestyle and behavioral patterns, such as family planning and parenthood, individualism, rationality, pragmatism, and the wider acceptance of white-collar crime.[259] As it was mentioned, IntMD1M referred to the existence of Soviet mentality in relation to not going to the synagogue on holidays. In relation to this, for FSU migrants the importance of keeping the origin tradition is higher than for Western migrants but lower than for the Ethiopians. In general, the Slavic elements dominate in their lives.[260]

Another way of carrying Hungarian culture is mentality and the often mentioned Hungarian accent. Some of them hear it from Israelis that they behave like Europeans or Hungarians in being afraid (or the so-called "*galut* fear"), what was already touched upon. Other often mentioned characteristics of the Hungarians are that they are complaining, in Hungary life stops from Friday till Sunday evening, as opposed to Israel where life is much more intense. In Hungary relations are more distant whereas in Israel it takes shorter period of time to get to know somebody. IntHUN8M said that *„I am not a typical arrogant Israeli."* Another similar comment from IntHUN5F: *„They often say that Israelis are insolent. Now I don't notice this anymore, I did only at the beginning. Here the mentality is different and there are things that I like about and I espouse them and there are some that I don't like."* IntHUN7M admitted that even though he become Israeli very fast, he cannot and do not even want to deny his Central European identity which confronts him at work when he does something by „using his brain" when trying to solve a problem, as opposed to others who do not, as he related this. This is when he experiences the cultural shock, he said. And this cultural difference is an obstacle in having Israeli friends for some. Closeness, cordiality as

[259] Leshem and Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," 104-105.
[260] Ibid., 109.

well as indiscipline and disrespect were often mentioned by many interviewees in relation to Israelis.

To conclude, the strength and level of maintaining nationality differs among Hungarians and Russian. Hungarians are more likely to keep Hungarianness through individual channels whereas Russians do everything to preserve Russianness or the Soviet mentality as a community as well as on the individual level. The differences are the following: the size of the two communities; the role of the Russian leaders who came with them to Israel weighing a lot in creating a strong community; and I would also suggest that the importance of the Russian language through the Russian culture gives them justification to feel superior.

4.2.4. Defining identity

In this section I will dwell on the question how the members of the examined groups define their identities and whether it changed since their migration. Even though their answer about the latter is retrospective therefore it is not totally reliable I find it important to see how they perceive this change. It is also part of the comparison whether the explicit definition and the manifestations of identity correlate with each other or not, i.e. whether they express their identity through their actions in the same way as they define it.

Among the Russians there were several surveys conducted on identity. According to Amit's result[261] Israeli, Russian and Jewish identity were almost equally marked by Russian Jews.[262] In Remennick's survey[263] 69% marked Russian and Israeli, 17% said he is a Russian living in Israel and 11% chose regular Israeli.[264] Another survey[265] showed that 78% of the Russians are first and foremost Jewish, 66% is a Jew from the FSU, 44% is Israeli and 21% is

[261] The sample consisted of three sub-samples: immigrants from Ethiopia (N=383), Western countries (N=386) and FSU (N=485). The respondents aged from 20 to 60 years.
[262] Amit, "Social Integration and Identity of Immigrants," 1297.
[263] "The survey in a national sample of Russian-speaking Israelis was conducted in April-May 2001. The sample included 800 adults aged 18+ living in 11 cities, towns and villages across the country; all had arrived in Israel after January 1989 from various parts of the FSU. The socio-demographic make-up of the sample reflected that of all Russian immigrants of the 1990s." (p.519)
[264] Remennick, "Transnational Community in the Making," 522.
[265] The representative sample consists of 707 adult (18+) immigrants who arrived to Israel in the 1990s.

Zionist.[266] The Jewish component was stronger among the older generation than the youngsters.[267] Ben-Rafael's findings[268] show that the first choice of expressing identity was Jewish, the second most frequent was Israeli and the third was Russian. In the same survey Jewishness was mostly (52% chose this out of four options) connected to peoplehood, Russianness to a culture (72% chose it out of three options) and Israeliness to territorialism (44%) as well as to peoplehood (41%).[269] In another survey[270] the findings were similar: they had to choose the order of importance and 50%[271] chose Jew-Israeli-Russian, 22% Jew-Russian-Israeli and 15% Israeli-Jew-Russian (and the rest is divided between the other three options[272]). Al-Haj[273] found that Jewishness (78.4%) and being a Jew from the FSU (72.9%) describe them the most; these are followed by being an immigrant from the FSU (67.4%), Israeliness (45.9%), and then Zionism (22.8%).[274] In another survey[275] which compared Russian Jewish identity with veteran Israeli identity, 8% defined themselves as Israeli, 47% as Russians and 45% as Jews, whereas among the latter, 48% as Israeli, 33.5% as Jews and the rest according to ethnicity (Ashkenazi or Sephardic).[276] The results differ from each other mainly because of the methods (e.g. there were some surveys where there were several options whereas in other surveys they could choose only one and they were not the same) and also because they were taken in different times. What we can see from the findings is what Ben-Rafael noticed, namely the parallel presence of the three elements: Russian as the former nationality, Jewish as a link between the past and present and Israeli as their new

[266] Leshem and Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," 107.
[267] Ibid.
[268] The random sample consisted of 570 interviewees (18+) who were born in the FSU. The sample was representative with regard to demographic characteristics.
[269] Ben-Rafael, *Building a Diaspora*, 124-5.
[270] The survey was conducted in 1992 and the random sample consisted of 612 immigrants. Concerning identity the percentage was high of no response.
[271] Not including those who did not respond.
[272] 5% chose Russian-Jew-Israeli, and 4-4% chose Israeli-Russian-Jew and Russian-Israeli-Jew.
[273] The highly representative sample consisted of 707 immigrants (18+) who immigrated to Israel between 1990 and 1999.
[274] Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation*, 103.
[275] The survey was conducted in 1999 and 400 immigrants composed the sample.
[276] Friedgut, "Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union," 196.

identification.[277] When I asked IntMD2F about her identity she said that she has multiple identities and that depends a lot on where she is at the moment. (Here I must add that she lived in Canada for seven years and then in Hungary for four years.) IntMD1M who lived longer in the Soviet Union (from its establishment till the collapse) he said *„I am Jewish."* This expresses the strong influence of the Soviet Union where Jewishness filled their whole identity.

The question of becoming a Russian in Israel from being a Jew in the Soviet Union is perceived as a problem[278] because the migrants are a returning diaspora (at least on the official level) and they expect unconditional acceptance but they face partial hostility. Ben-Rafael refers to this as *"ethnicity becomes nationality and nationality becomes ethnicity in Israel."*[279] As IntMD2F pointed to this: *„I came here [to Israel] and in the school they started to call me 'new Russian'. So I was Jewish [in the Soviet Union] and then I was suddenly called a Russian: it was a little bit strange."* This phenomenon was found among Hungarians too. IntHUN17M expressed what I mentioned while analyzing Russians: *„It is a cliché, but it is true. In Hungary you are a Jew; in Israel you are a Hungarian. It's absolutely obvious that I am the Hungarian in the kibbutz. Or we [he refers to the family] are THE Hungarians."* Many people warned him that if he immigrates to Israel he will be only one of „them" whereas in Hungary he is THE [his name]. It means that, despite the expectations, becoming from a religious or ethnic (depends which country we look at) minority to an ethnic minority in Israel, is more tangible than becoming from being a minority as a Jew to majority by arriving to the Jewish State. This is what Jenkins argues by saying that categorization plays a big role in socialization. The interviewees become Hungarians (or Russians) by receiving these labels.

[277] Ben-Rafael, Olshtain and Geijst, "Identity and Language," 370.
[278] De Tinguy, "Ethnic Migration of the 1990s," 124.
[279] Ben-Rafael, *Building a Diaspora*, 292.

Regarding present-day identity, in the Hungarian case the answers were less diverse. The most common answer was that „I am a Hungarian speaker Israeli Jew", but it had several variations. For some it was more important to emphasize the Hungarian identity. As IntHUN4F said, who has a Transylvanian Jewish husband who lives in Israel for 25 years: *„His Hungarian identity is obviously stronger than mine. The relation with the language was totally different for people living there [in Transylvania], than for those who lived in the mother country."* For the religious ones, Jewishness is the most important. IntHUN3M who lives now in Hungary seems like being caught by identity crisis and, as I expected, he was not the only one who could not answer to this question without specifying the location:

> *In Hungary I am Hungarian and in Israel I am Israeli. There is no point in emphasizing my Hungarian origin in Israel although it always comes up because I have an accent there as well, so they always ask me 'where are you from after all' (laughs) and then I explain that in Hungary I am Israeli and in Israel I am Hungarian and then realize that I don't belong anywhere, because I am a bit of a stranger everywhere (laughs). But I got used to this. I can't hide my accent. Neither here, nor there.*

Regarding the changes, their Hungarian identity weakened, whereas Jewish identity strengthened and there is an additional Israeli identity (except in one case when Israeli identity replaced the Hungarian one). I found very interesting that IntHUN4F defined her identity in this way that *„My Jewish identity of Budapest didn't change but there is an extra Israeli identity."*

In general, among Hungarians I felt that there was a gap between what they explicitly said about their identity and their actions in favor of the latter. Through this we can grasp a sense from their identity, namely the struggle. And it is true in both cases. There are three elements (Jewishness, Israeliness and ethnicity (either *Hungarianness* or *Russianness*)) that express different levels and among the first generation the role of these elements are not outlined yet. What makes this process even more complicated is the confusion of Jewish and Israeli identity. Among the Russians, the strength of Jewishness is more explicit than one would think about it in Central Eastern Europe (where Jewishness is rather regarded as a religion or

culture) but taking into account the Soviet environment, it is well-known that Jewishness means almost purely ethnicity. Concerning the changes in identification the surveys are not comparable. Therefore, I can only conclude that in the Hungarian case it is a linear tendency toward Israeliness and stronger Jewishness. All in all, identification is similar between the two groups but for the post-Soviets maintaining Russian (or Soviet) identity is easier because they have a community supporting them.

Comparison with the host society

Comparing the immigrants with the Israeli society cannot be avoided because it strongly influences the migrants' identification. It can be done if we look at their Jewishness. According to Kopelowitz and Rosenberg, there are two types of identification: 'Jewish Israeli' and 'Israeli Jew'.[280] The former regards Jewishness as an autonomous factor of their identities and they are mostly traditionalist or religious whereas the latter do not distinguish between Jewish and Israeli components and mostly secular Jews belong to this group.[281] Based on the results of the Guttman survey Jewishness (51%) as the most important factor of identity (there was only one choice allowed) overrated Israeliness (41%) and belonging to an ethnic group or being religious shared the same ratio (4-4%). The answers depend on religiosity: the more religious the person, the more important Jewishness is, and the less religious, the more important Israeliness is.[282] Even though it is perceived that the Israeli society is going through a process of secularization[283] – which is, according to some scholars,[284] is an exaggeration – Jewishness in the Israeli society is still higher than among the immigrants, or to put it differently, it has a different meaning and depth. The same Guttman survey was analyzed by

[280] Ezra Kopelowitz and Lior Rosenberg, "'Israeli Jews' and 'Jewish Israelis' and the Ritual Connection to Diaspora Jewry," in *Dynamic Belonging: Contemporary Jewish Collective Identities*, ed. Harvey E. Goldberg, Steven M. Cohen, and Ezra Kopelowitz. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012).
[281] Ibid., 137.
[282] Keissar-Sugarmen, *A Portrait of Israeli Jews Beliefs*, 71.
[283] Shlomit Levy, Hanna Levinsohn and Elihu Katz, "Beliefs, Observances and Social Interaction among Israeli Jews – The Guttman Institute Report," in *The Jewisness of Israelis: Responses to the Guttman Report*, ed. Charles S. Liebman and Elihu Katz. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 2.
[284] Liebman and Yadgar, "Israeli Identity: The Jewish Component," 163-183.

other scholars and they differentiated between three groups as opposed to the dichotomy (secular versus religious) and they found that among the seculars 57% observe small part of the tradition, 34% do not observe traditions at all and 8% is antireligious.[285] Among the Russian-speakers the ratio of the seculars and antireligious is 73%.[286] If we include the traditionalists then 74% is secular, 24.6% is traditionalist and 1.4% is religious.[287] The differences between the results might stem from the fact that the surveys are not conducted the same way. And also from the fact that the answers can differ whether it is an open ended question or a closed question. It was tested by Gitelman and he found big differences between the two types of questions in this particular context (Russian Jews in Israel).[288]

As was repeatedly pointed out earlier, there are many aspects in which migrants are influenced by the Israeli society, such as the confusion of Israeliness with Jewishness, the assured background of Judaism (i.e. the conditions (eating matzo during Pesach) are given), etc. But in both cases the background where they come from (Hungary and the Soviet Union) is strong enough to have an impact on them too.

4.2.5. Integration and perception of Hungarians' integration patterns

In this section the integration will be taken under examination: both on the individual and community level. The goal is also to look for factors that play an important role concerning integration. Prior to writing about these issues, I will illustrate how the Hungarian community is integrating in Israel based on what the expert interviewees and others said.

Perception of Hungarians' integration patterns

One thing that was mentioned by many is that Hungarians tend to go back to Hungary. According to an unofficial data from the Jewish Agency approximately 100 out of 120 immigrants (per year) return to Hungary. Some also mentioned that among those Hungarians

[285] Liebman and Yadgar, "Secular Jewish Identity," 153.
[286] Ibid., 154.
[287] Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation*, 102.
[288] See Gitelman, *Immigration and Identity.*

who stay in Israel, start living in a kibbutz but many of them leave for the big cities a bit later because they cannot stand the kibbutz life. Three of my interviewees still live in kibbutz but that is not the usual pattern, they say. In the 2000s the migrants differ from the earlier migrants and these new *olim* started to organize facebook groups and connected events, a Hungarian library opened up in a flat where they also organize book launching, there is a Museum of Hungarian-speakers in Safed, etc. Before, these events were organized only in the official sphere (e.g. by the Hungarian embassy).

Looking for patterns among Hungarian immigrants, based on the perception of IntHUN5F, there are those who were taken at a younger age (as IntHUN3M) and that can create tension (i.e. being taken away from their peers and loves); there are those who go after graduation (between the age of 18-29) and for whom the integration is easier, above 30 it is more difficult because they have to start a new life profession-wise and those who go at an elder age are usually going with their children. According to IntHUN8M the integration is the most difficult for the elderly and those who come with their parents. Another factor can be the origin: *„There are many not totally Jewish Hungarians who especially cannot integrate because in Israel it's not easy to be non-Jewish."* (IntHUN8M) According to IntHUN9M, an expert, those who go with their children at the age of 30 are easily integrated through their children and the immigrants from 2002-2004 are complaining a lot. The most recent immigrants are much more interested in the Israeli society and integrating into it. They are motivated by Zionism as opposed to the previous wave where the push factor was stronger. Hungarians in general do not want to integrate compared to Anglo-Saxons. According to IntHUN12M many people go back because financially they are better off in Hungary than in Israel. IntHUN14F said that she know many migrants who came only for financial reasons. I find these perceptions very interesting and controversial. They are all charged with their own problems and experiences: half the world knows not how the other half lives.

Integration

As it was mentioned, integration can be hardly divorced from identity but I tried to draw a line between them. I conceptualized integration in the following way: I divided the variables into two groups. The former contained everything that is connected to Israel, such as participating in the Israeli society, Hebrew language knowledge and usage, changing one's name into Hebrew, intention of staying in Israel and regrets about migration; and the latter included those with Hungary or the FSU, namely: following closely the news of the home country, having co-ethnic friends and social network, going to ethnic events in Israel, being homesick, missing and bringing products (from Hungary or the FSU) and memories, teaching children Hungarian or Russian language, and frequency of visiting the respective home country. These indicators partially overlap with those of Al-Haj's and Remennick's (see on p.13).

Turning to the affiliation with Israel, the Hebrew knowledge is rather good among Russians, but according to a survey, 55% speak only or mainly Russian after five years of residence and 10% speaks Hebrew almost all the time.[289] Linguistic and cultural arrogance discourage them from learning more about the new homeland and becoming full-fledged.[290] So there is integration without real acculturation if we understand this as partaking of the host symbolic system and cultural consumption.[291] They are characterized by biculturalism. Regarding the question of homeland, both my Moldovan interviewees regarded Israel as their home for the same reasons (e.g. they live there) and many Russian-speakers feel home there.[292] I already wrote a lot about the level of integration because there are several theories about it. What I want to add here is that there are several factors influencing the individual's perception on this. One of the most important factors is socioeconomic status which includes

[289] De Tinguy, "Ethnic Migration of the 1990s," 122.
[290] Remennick, "A Case Study in Transnationalism," 379.
[291] Remennick, "Language Acquisition," 436.
[292] De Tinguy, "Ethnic Migration of the 1990s," 124.

employment. Many scholars have shown that even though unemployment decreases with time, they mostly find downgraded jobs and become dependent on the welfare system.[293] More specifically, in 1991 40% of the émigrés were unemployed as opposed to 1998 when this decreased to 10%, but the unemployment rate was still higher than the national average and they are overqualified for their jobs.[294] Among those who immigrated before 1989 the unemployment rate was much lower (4.3%) than that of the migrants of the 1990 (11.1%).[295] Another point of view is that unemployment in 1998 among the Russians was higher (11%) than within the total population (9%).[296] IntMD2F mentioned that her parents had difficulties with integration because they did not find jobs in their fields. Her mother left to Canada because of this and her father had to learn another profession. She was also very sensitive by mentioning the change that post-Soviet immigrants have to face, namely the transition from Communism to capitalism without any training. And it is important to keep in mind that the immigrants have expectations about their salaries which are usually higher than the actual one.[297] According to Remennick's results[298] the most integrated people were in her sample those who are younger than 30, had high education and they were successful in employment whereas the least integrated were those at the age of 45-50 with less education and being unqualified, unemployed or retired.[299] According to Berry there are some additional factors, such society of origin, general attitude of the society to immigration, diversification of communication circles, media consumption, and their own motivation.[300] I want to touch upon the question of perception of the Russian community which is correlated with their

[293] Remennick, "A Case Study in Transnationalism," 377.
[294] De Tinguy, "Ethnic Migration of the 1990s," 123.
[295] Von Koppenfels, "Who organizes?," 308.
[296] Leshem and Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," 93.
[297] Moshe Semyonov and Noah Lewin-Epstein, "Immigration and Ethnicity in Israel: Returning Diaspora and Nation-Building, in *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: Germany, Israel, and the post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger. (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 334.
[298] The same survey introduced earlier.
[299] Remennick, "What does integration mean?" 36.
[300] Mesch, "Language Proficiency among New Immigrants," 47.

integration.[301] There are a lot stereotypes in the media that shows a picture of Russians, such as *"frauds, bullies and gang members, sex workers, welfare-dependent single mothers, extreme right-wing voters, goyim who entered Israel on false pretences, unemployed professionals sweeping the streets, youths reluctant to serve in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and so on and so forth."*[302] And, following Portes and Borocz's suggestion,[303] the reception of the Russian migrants has to be taken into account too while analyzing their integration. Labeling also plays an important role in one's identification, as Gans suggests.[304] One of the main accusations is that they brought a lot of non-Jews that challenges the Jewish character of the state.[305] From the Russian side it must be said that the immigrants of the 1990s are much more critical than that of the 1970s.[306] What is clear by now that there are many factors that influence integration. Therefore, this is not a fixed but rather an ongoing project.[307]

In accordance with their answers about identity, the Hungarian interviewees, in general, are well integrated into the Israeli society. All of them vote in Israel and they are more or less interested in the political life (those who are not, not interested at all in politics) and were able to find employment in their own field or accepted the option of being retrained in another field in order to get a more suitable job. Almost everybody had some critical remarks on Israel which could mean that they are aware of the Israeli system and have a deeper understanding of it. Two of my interviewees changed their name (but in the bigger sample I had there were more) but they were not the ones that I consider the most integrated, it is more connected to Jewishness than Israeliness and integration. All of them learnt and knows Hebrew and many

[301] Amit, "Social Integration and Identity of Immigrants," 1290.
[302] Larissa Remennick, "Twenty years together: the 'Great Aliya' and Russian Israelis in the Mirror of Social Research," in *Israel Affairs* 17:1 (2011): 2.
[303] Portes and Borocz, "Contemporary immigration," 606-630.
[304] Gans, "Symbolic ethnicity," 152. Cited in Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation,* 25.
[305] Rebeca Raijman and Yael Pinsky „Religion, ethnicity and identity: former Soviet Christian immigrants in Israel," in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (2012): 1.
[306] Remennick, "Twenty years together," 2.
[307] Remennick, "What does integration mean?" 36.

made an extra (apart from going to *ulpan*) effort to be isolated from Hungarians in order to acquire it better. IntHUN16F was not in touch with Hungarians for a year after migration for the same reason, and her son (who emigrated a year before her) also encouraged her to be independent by not helping her all the way. IntHUN5F went to another group where there were no Hungarians so that she is exposed to Hebrew. Many interviewees actually criticized the system that they arrive to Israel and they are in this migrant „bubble" and it's important to break out from there if one wants to integrate. I understood that these six months in the *ulpan* where they are together with other migrants are very determining in terms of friendship especially it was the case at the beginning of the 1990s when going to Israel was a new opportunity.

> *Even though I am mostly surrounded by Israeli people, I consider those two guys the closest to me that I made* aliyah *together with in spite of the fact that they couldn't have stayed here. I think those are the ones [best friends] because they went through the same thing as me. They came with similar background, we had to face similar difficulties and the same things pissed us off and made us laugh. I am the most open and closest to them. Not with the Israeli friends that I know only from a certain point and not with my old friends with whom I don't have new experience, only old memories. (IntHUN8M)*

It is difficult to compare the two groups due to the lack of relevant qualitative data about the Russian-speakers but I argue that Hungarians make a lot of efforts to become fully integrated whereas the post-Soviets are more likely satisfied with their less integrated level and with being more distinct. The differences, again, mostly stem from their various situations: whereas Hungarians are more scattered and cannot rely upon each others' help, the Russians arrive together and stay together for longer period (e.g. it is very common to have three generations living together[308]).

Regarding the maintenance of ethnic origin, I wrote a lot about the cultural activity of the Russians and I already touched upon the fact that there is a strong social network within the community. The more intimate the relationship is the more probable that it will be a member

[308] Ruth Katz and Ariela Lowenstein, "Adjustment of Older Soviet Immigrant Parents and Their Adult Children Residing in SharedHouseholds: An Intergenerational Comparison," in *Family Relations* 48:1 (1999): 45.

of their own ethnicity (i.e. post-Soviet) and the less intimate the relationship is the more probable that it will be a veteran Israeli.[309] For example only 12.5% has romantic relationship with Israelis and 22.6% considered this option.[310] As it is known, migrants can be perceived as threat to the society (e.g. competition for housing, jobs, etc.) and the Bizman and Yinon's finding[311] indicated *„that even among high Jewish identity participants evaluations of the Russian immigrants became more negative with increasing perceived group threat from moderate to high levels."*[312] This means that Russians might have more difficulties with finding Israeli friends than Hungarians who are not perceived as threat because they do not form a big migrant community in Israel. Regarding the maintenance of Russian culture, the studies showed that it does not disappear in the second generation. IntMD2F thinks a lot about this question whether she will teach her children Russian or not but she said that it depends a lot on her future husband whether he will be a Russian or not.

Turning to the level of *Hungarianness*, altogether maintaining Hungarian culture is an important part of their lives but rather on the individual level, as opposed to the community level, meaning that going to Hungarian events are not as common as having Hungarian friends and teaching Hungarian to their children. Even though some of the interviewees visited Hungarian events before, it is rather considered as something for the elderly. Another phenomenon that was attached to the elderly is the Hungarian newspaper, which is called *Új Kelet*. The interviewees all laughed when I asked them whether they read it. Some of them said that it is written for those who are in their late eighties and the language is not well-

[309] Ben-Rafael, Olshtain and Geijst, "Identity and Language," 372.
[310] Remennick, "Transnational Community in the Making," 523.
[311] The sample consisted of 151 Israeli Jews (82 women, 65 men, four participants failed to indicate their sex). 45% were students from several universities in Israel, and the others were professionals. All were born in Israel or lived in the country for at least 15 years.
[312] Aharon Bizman and Yoel Yinon, "Perceived threat and Israeli Jews' evaluations of Russian immigrants: the moderating role of Jewish and Israeli identity," in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 25 (2001): 703.

written Hungarian. They also mentioned that if they want to read Israeli news they rather choose Israeli sources than this.

Regarding friendships, we get a more complex picture than among Russian-speakers. First, I would make a difference between foreign born (or migrant) friends and Israeli friends. Second, among the migrants I would differentiate between Hungarians, Russians and Anglo-Saxons based on their answers. There are only a few interviewees who do not have Hungarian friends at all but almost everybody has migrant friends. Russian-speakers were often mentioned as well as Anglo-Saxons. I tried to dig into this question more by asking about the best (or closest) friends but I didn't find any pattern. Friendships in general might be strongly related to the nationality of the spouse. Many interviewee shares this opinion: *„Only because somebody speaks the same language.. I guess you don't like everybody in Hungary, do you? [laughs] And this is the same here."* (IntHUN5F) Or *„Being Hungarian is not enough criterions for me to become my friend. But if a Hungarian becomes my friend, it is not a problem."* (IntHUN9M) I had the impression that in some cases not being surrounded by Hungarians is a way of protesting against the pattern what the Russian-speakers follow from the perspective of the society and my interviewees. But when it comes to the question of helping Hungarian *oleh* in integration everybody is eager to do it because they have been in the same shoes. (And I find it important to emphasize that this was mentioned by them without being asked.) There are two interviewees who work as tour guides and they mostly have Hungarian groups. And there are two interviewees who did not get torn from the Hungarian and Hungarian Jewish culture due to their jobs, but unlike IntHUN1F, who was motivated to go to Israel by her interest in the Hungarian Jewry and remained in this circle till today, IntHUN6F thinks it is an accident and necessity.

> *Nobody understands why I deal with Hungarian literature. 'Moreover, Hungarian literature in Israel? Are you out of your mind? And what do you have to do with Hungarians?' I said 'Nothing. This is my profession, sorry. That's all this is about. Nothing else.' 'What do you want to do with the language?' 'Nothing. Apart from the fact that they wrote it in that particular*

language that I am dealing with. That's all.' How to say, I have no problem with the language. But language isn't equal with identity.

Teaching Hungarian to their children is a widespread tendency (only one, the most integrated, interviewee does not do that) but with different outcomes and reasons and it is regardless of the spouse's nationality. Many parents feel that they need to speak to their children in their native language and many of them teach for the sake of the grandparents:

> *I will have to teach her/him Hungarian.*[313] *I consider this one of my tasks to teach her/him in Hungarian regardless of the fact that it doesn't make sense apart from knowing another language and that I can speak with her/him in Hungarian and maybe the grandparents can speak in Hungarian with her/him.* (IntHUN12M)

The results vary: it can be a successful project and some of them reported that the children refuse speaking in Hungarian and asked the parent(s) not to speak in Hungarian to them. For the parents it was also important to read Hungarian tales and poems for two reasons. First, most of them are not aware of the Israeli ones; second, it is a kind of nostalgic way of transmitting their own past and nostalgia, as we saw in the case of the Russians, is an important force in one's life, especially in a migrants' life.

Hungarians do partially remain in the migrant community too by having other immigrant friends as Russians, but the migrant being is important for other reasons. Russians become friends with their co-ethnics in order to maintain the language and be with others who share the same culture whereas Hungarians find it important to be with migrants due to sharing the same experiences. By having immigrant as well as Israeli friends Hungarians might be more successful in integration than Russians.

Turning to the level of their satisfaction, homesickness and longing for home is very salient among Russians. They keep their citizenship and apartments at home, some even do business in the home country, and they also go home regularly and call home very often, receive a lot of visitors and keep in touch with co-patriots in other countries which make them

[313] His wife is pregnant but they don't know the gender.

transnational.[314] Russian media consumption does not decrease over time: they just add Hebrew media to it.[315] Regarding the question of satisfaction, according to Gitelman's findings,[316] 60% would do the migration again and mostly those who are satisfied with their lives and 22% would probably do so.[317] Furthermore, two thirds would advise others to immigrate but not necessarily to Israel: 23% would specifically advise not to go to Israel and 20% would advise to stay.[318] Another dimension of the level of integration is whether they want to stay in the country: whereas only two third of the Russians wants to live in Israel, 82% of the veteran Israelis plan to stay there.[319] IntMD2F said that she is not sure whether she wants to stay: *„I like Israel and it's really a very interesting place, but it's also very-very complex, and I'm not sure I want to raise my kid here. The political situation, you know is like... constant fear."* She either wants to go back to Canada where her mum lives or go to the US because her boyfriend is from New York. She said that the fact that she was not a soldier in Israel and that she lived in Canada and got a different perspective might have influenced her attitude on this.

If they could go back in time, all my Hungarian interviewees would do the same in terms of migration, but some of them would have emigrated earlier. Hence, none of my interviewees regret migrating to Israel. Regarding the question whether they are planning to stay, going further or going to Hungary, IntHUN5F said that *„This is a global world, if I get a job offer in the US, we might pack and go."* The same interviewee expressed something very nice about integration and flexibility in harmony with her previous sentence: *„If you want to adjust Israel to yourself, you will be disappointed."* IntHUN9M said it explicitly that even though in Canada they might be better off in terms of financial situation (his wife is

[314] Remenncik, "A Case Study in Transnationalism," 375-6.
[315] Remennick, "Language Acquisition," 446.
[316] The same survey mentioned earlier.
[317] Gitelman, *Immigration and Identity*, 52.
[318] Ibid.
[319] Leshem and Siron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel," 108.

Canadian), he would not want to live there because he would not be entirely happy there (i.e. in a non-Jewish state). Many of them mentioned that they (or their spouse) were offered a job in Hungary, but there is no way they want to come back because of the anti-Semitism. This was expressed explicitly and repeatedly. IntHUN10M, who is a very big critic of Israel, said that even though he disagrees with many things in Israel, he does not think about living in another place, and, even if the prime minister of Hungary said that he is very sorry for the Holocaust and from now on Jews will live equally he would not consider going back to Hungary.

This issue is also connected whether they are satisfied with their lives in Israel. IntHUN11F expressed how fast she felt home there and what are the factors that made it happen:

> *When I arrived, we came to Israel, I arrived and suddenly I felt home. It was an amazing feeling and still is. So it makes me happy every day because I lived like not being at home so long and now suddenly I am at home and nobody doubts that. And the fact that I have a flat and nobody thinks that I stole it from the Hungarians, but rather… Yes, well, I have a flat because I worked for it hard. [laughs] And the people are nice and I don't feel that they are faking this kindness because... It's not like in Hungary that they know that they 'have to pay attention because she is a Jew.' It doesn't exist here. I am floating, swimming in happiness! I am just so happy! [laughs]*

Another one: *„I miss small things that make my home cozy."* (IntHUN8M) And this leads us to the question of homesickness. In general my interviewees are not homesick in the regular sense but there are things they miss from Hungary: these are mostly Hungarian products and the attached nostalgia to them. For example, *túró rudi* is something that almost everybody mentioned (for those who eat kosher food, it is not an option) and since similar thing is sold in Israel by the Russians (where this product originates from), I believe that it is rather a nostalgia toward it than the product itself. There are not many places where Hungarian food can be bought and I asked them whether they bring food for their friends, acquaintances when they visit Hungary and what things they miss from Hungary and the most often mentioned was paprika and for some of them Hungarian salami and bacon. As IntHUN5F said it: *„homesickness is decreasing with time."* But for example, IntHUN10M, the same who said

(see quotation on page 59.) that he is not homesick, found it very important to show his country to his wife (they lived here one year). I think that the contradictions that come up during the interview illustrate very well the complicated feelings and hardships of being a migrant. I find the following lines a comprehensive and concise summary of the whole process and this represents many of my Hungarian interviewees' thoughts:

> *Let's start with that... as a Hungarian and as a minority, if I want to compare with other migrant types who come in masses and can maintain their identities, comparing to those, I am much more Israeli, but still... I still have the Hungarian identity. It's not Hungarian identity, but something attraction to the Hungarian culture and that I come from there. And I like Hungarian literature, Hungarian language. But from this point it was much easier for me to integrate that I am alone and not in a bubble. I was thrown into deep water and I found myself among Israelis and I could not talk to anyone in Hungarian and I integrated very quickly. But it's clear that I am Hungarian and it is clear for everybody because my habits are different. These things are absorbed in me and I have accent, etc. So- but this is not a disadvantage.* (IntHUN8M)

5. Conclusion

This thesis explored the patterns of integration and identification of Hungarian Jews in Israel compared to the post-Soviet Jewish community. The main goal was to see how Hungarians differ in their level of integration from the Russians. My overarching hypothesis was that Hungarians are much more integrated in the Israeli society which comes along with a stronger Israeli identification. The main finding supported this. Hungarians are between integration and assimilation using Berry's concepts, whereas Russian-speakers are rather integrated and remain distinct. While Hungarians tend to integrate into the Israeli (including other immigrants) society, post-Soviets are more likely to remain in their own circles. As Bernstein (and others) noticed in her study, Russian-speakers create their own nostalgic past (i.e. the Soviet Union) within Israel by keeping ethnically defined social boundaries and strong self-identification. Now, I will look at the detailed research questions.

Concerning ethnic identity (Hungarianness and Russianness), the aim was to see whether the examined groups identify themselves more with their country of origin or the country of residence (namely Israel). My hypotheses, that Hungarians are more likely to associate with Israelis than Russians who might feel closer to their co-ethnics; and that Israel and Israeliness have a bigger impact on the Hungarians than Hungary, whereas Russians are more under the post-Soviet influence than under Israeli, were supported. Even though the Hungarians tend to keep their Hungarianness too, this is more characteristic of the individual sphere than the community level as opposed to the Russians. In terms of raising children, Hungarian culture also plays a very important role. I argue that the first generation is rather assimilated without acculturation because Hungarian culture receives more emphasis in their lives than Israeli (or Hebrew) culture but among the second generation it changes as opposed to the Russian pattern where biculturalism is a universal phenomenon.

My hypotheses concerning Jewish identity were manifold. First, I presumed that Russian-speakers regard Jewishness as ethnicity whereas Hungarians define it as a culture. I

found that for both communities Jewishness means peoplehood which could be the influence of the Israeli society as well as the background in the Russian case. Second, I argued that within both groups Jewishness manifests in observing traditions and in the culture, which was supported by my results. Third, regarding boundaries, I hypothesized that the differences are more striking: whereas for the Russians Jewish can be only a person who is born of at least one Jewish parent, Hungarians might give a more liberal answer to the question "Who is a Jew". I found that for both groups the blood is an important element, but the Hungarians tend to be more liberal. Fourth, I assumed that the Israeli context has a very strong influence on the perception of the Jewishness which might increase with the length of stay. Fifth, regarding the role of religion, I found that among Russians the secular identification seems to be more common than among Hungarians, but Jewishness is a very important component for both.

All in all, regarding their identification, the Hungarians acquire more knowledge about Judaism in Israel but it does not necessarily strengthen their Jewishness. It can be either way. The Hungarian identity weakens, especially with time. They become slowly Israelis, and in the second generation it is going to be even more striking. One of the most important findings regarding the examined group is the fact that they go from being minority members to minority members. In Hungary, they are a religious minority and it is more connected to a negative sentiment. First of all, most of them had a strong Holocaust identity. Second of all, many of them found out that they are Jewish because of anti-Semitic comments. Then again, in Israel they are regarded as Hungarians because of their accent and other characteristics that are conspicuous. This seems to disappear among the second generation. I argue that Gans' "symbolic ethnicity" will be able to illustrate the best the integration of the future generations regarding their *Hungarianness*.

My presumption, that Hungarians do not constitute a diaspora in Israel, was supported. None of the elements (that make a community diaspora according to Safran) are strongly

present and the diasporic features (defined by Clifford) are not fitting either. Another closely related question is whether they are ethnic returnees or not which is connected to the question concerning the reasons for migration. The hypothesis was that in both cases choosing Israel as a destination cannot be simply reduced to economic reasons but Hungarians might be more attached to the country ideologically than post-Soviets. On the one hand, Israel offers preferential immigration policy so in this sense its immigrants are ethnic returnees. On the other hand, if we look from the migrants' motivations, it is questionable. In both cases those, who migrated strictly for ideological reasons, were in minority. Hungarians were migrating for various reasons and living among Jews and the Jewishness of the state were part of it, but there were other influencing factors too, such as the preferential immigration policy and language learning possibility, etc. In the Russian case, the pragmatic and instrumental reasons were in majority and the fact that they already had relatives there had a huge pressure on them too. In their case the collapse of the Soviet Union had direct impact on migration whereas in the Hungarian case it was only a partial and only sometimes appearing factor. What was common, is the oppressed past and anti-Semitism as a pushing factor.

There are several reasons explaining the differences with regard to the level of integration. The transnational characteristic of Russians contributes to their less integrated status.[320] And having in mind that the Russians behave the same way in terms of integration in other countries too makes this phenomenon more understandable.[321] The fact, that assimilation is more likely to happen if there is an ideological affinity between the migrants and the host society, especially in the case of ethnic diaspora,[322] can also contribute to the differences. As we saw, Jewishness of Hungarians, which would equal with ideological affinity here, is stronger than that among Russians. One other factor might be that the system could not accept

[320] Remennick, "Transnational Community in the Making," 515.
[321] Niznik, "The Russian Language as a Base Factor," 368.
[322] Al-Haj, *Immigration and Ethnic Formation*, 25.

so many Russians because it was overloaded by the unexpected influx[323] but this plays a smaller role in the explanation. Another big difference is that the Russian-speaking Jews *„have actually made a significant impact on the political and social outcomes in the ongoing process of Israel's nation-building,"*[324] and also influenced the development of high-technology and military industry; educational, cultural and health system and instigated the opening of new internal and external markets.[325] This rather helps the maintenance of the status quo than the initial integration strategy because the contribution started in a later stage.

In order to understand more about the Hungarians, I propose a further study in this topic. It would be very useful to complete this qualitative study with a quantitative survey. The difficulty is with the exploration of the population. Due to the unknown numbers and lack of registration (those who come back are not obliged to let the authorities know), it is only possible through networks and personal contacts. The understanding of the success of integration might be important due to the assumptions that after the next Hungarian elections (with the possible participation of the Jobbik[326] in the government) more Jews will want to go to Israel than before.

[323] Von Koppenfels, "Who organizes?," 308.
[324] Remennick, "Twenty Years Together," 1.
[325] Vladimir (Ze'ev) Khanin, "Russian-Jewish political experience in Israel: patterns, elites and movements," in *Israel Affairs*, 17:1 (2011): 55.
[326] Jobbik is a far-right party in Hungary with strong anti-Semitic tendencies.

Appendix 1: Integration and assimilation

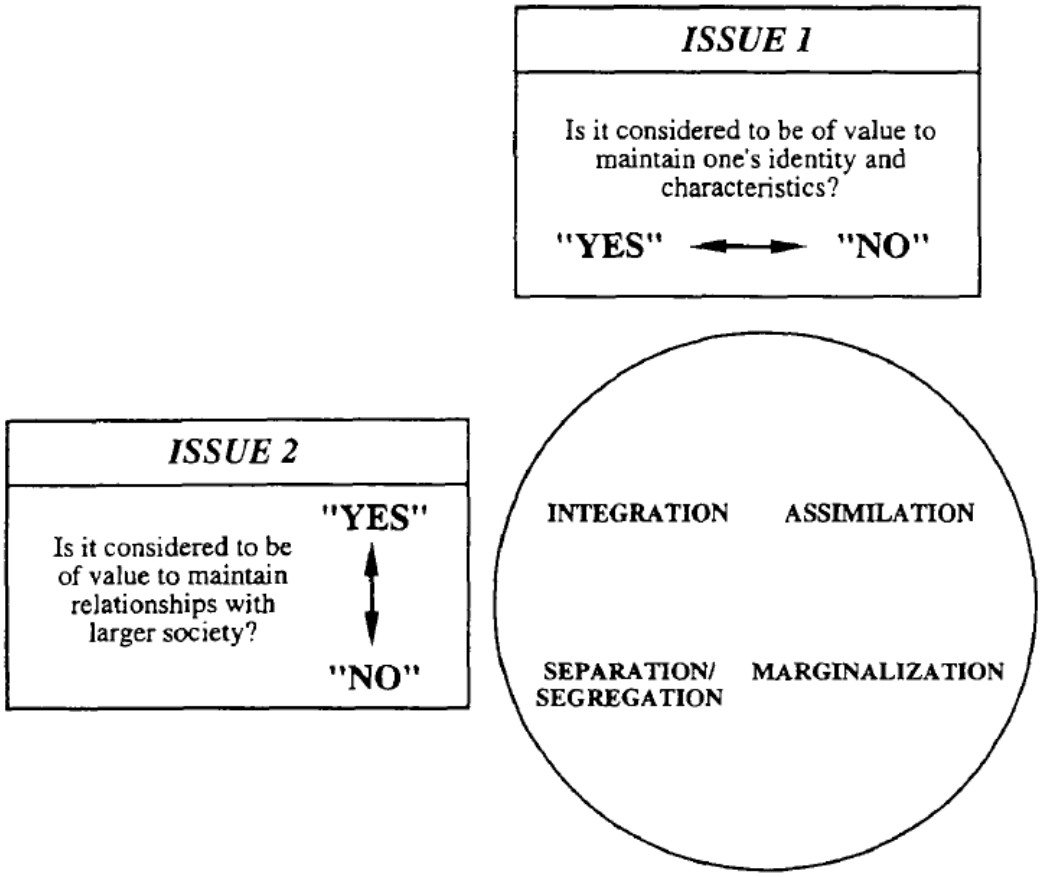

FIG. 1. Acculturation strategies.

Source: Berry, "Immigration, Acculturation and Integration," 10.

Appendix 2: Number of Olim from Hungary in the 1990s

Year	*Number of Olim*
1990	300
1991	231
1992	144
1993	212
1994	214
1995	272
1996	228
1997	157
1998	98
1999	115

Source: The Jewish Agency for Israel: Aliyah Figures from Hungary between 1989-2012. February 7, 2013. Raw data. The Jewish Agency for Israel, Jerusalem.

Appendix 3: Geographical distribution of Soviet migrants in Israel

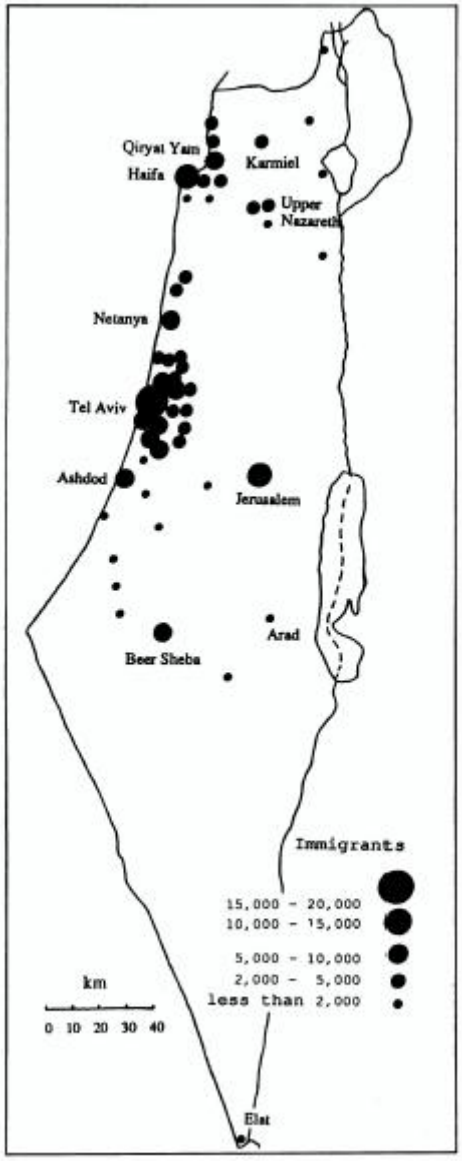

Fig 2 Distribution of Soviet-Jews in Israel 1948-1983

Source: Elisha Efrat, "Geographical Distribution of the Soviet-Jewish New Immigrants in Israel," in *GeoJournal*, 24:4 (1991): 358.

Appendix 4: Socio-demographic characteristics of Hungarian Interviewees

Code of interviewee	Born	Born in	Profession	Edu level	Motivation	Age at migration	Marital status	Lives in	Interview
IntHUN1F*	1971	Budapest	archivist	PhD	Education	26	spouse, one child	Tel Aviv	In Hungary; face-to-face
IntHUN2F*	1950	Budapest	librarian	MA	friend invited	38	divorced, 2 children	Jerusalem	In Hungary; face-to-face
IntHUN3M	1984	Budapest	computer	BA	with parents	7	alone	Tel Aviv/Bp	In Hungary; face-to-face
IntHUN4F	1978	Budapest	psychologist	MA	love	29	married, 2 children	Hulata	Skype
IntHUN5F	1975	Budapest	engineer	MA	education	19	married, 2 children	Tel Aviv	In Israel; face-to-face
IntHUN6F	1946	Budapest	literary historian	PhD	Zionism	45	divorced, 2 children	Kfar Saba	In Israel; face-to-face
IntHUN7M	1969	Budapest	agricultural engineer	MA(?)	Zionism, education	21	married, 2 children	Tel Aviv	In Israel; face-to-face
IntHUN8M	1978	Nyiregyhaza	architect	MA	education	18	single	Haifa	In Israel; face-to-face
IntHUN9M**	1972	Budapest	teacher, guide	MA	Zionism	18	married, 3 children	Ein Vered	In Israel; face-to-face
IntHUN10M	1980	Budapest	guide	PhD	push factors	19	married, 1 child	Jerusalem	In Israel; face-to-face

IntHUN11F	1947	Szekesfehervar	computer science	MA	Zionism	41	divorced, 2 children	Negev	In Israel; face-to-face
IntHUN12M	1974	Budapest	rabbi, cook	MA	religious Zionism	22	remarried, 2 children	Jerusalem	In Israel; face-to-face
IntHUN13F	1976	Budapest	statistician	MA	education	18	married, 2 children	Kfar Saba	Skype
IntHUN14F	1956	Budapest	doctor	MA	fall of the regime	35	single	Hadera	Skype
IntHUN15M	1969	Budapest	graphic artist	high school	Zionism, anti-Semitism	27	married, 3 children	Carmiel	Skype
IntHUN16F	1948	Piliscsaba	embryo protection adviser	high school	religious Zionism	48	widow, 3 children	Acco	Skype
IntHUN17M	1974	Budapest	electrician	MA	religious Zionism	27	married, 5 children	Saad	Skype

* Pretest interviewee
** Expert interviewee

Appendix 5: Socio-demographic characteristics of Moldovan Interviewees

	Age	Born in … (city)	Gender	Profession	Educational level	Age at migration	Motivation	Interviewed
IntMD1M	82	Akkerman	Male	Mechanical Engineer	MA	60	Anti-Semitism	Skype
IntMD2F	31	Chisinau	Female	JDC's field manager	MA	8	Anti-Semitism	In Israel; face-to-face

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