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Encounters between the Russian Community in Germany and the German Society in the Period between 1918-1935

This work will focus on one of the largest spots of concentration of the Russians beyond the boundaries of Russia right after the end of the World War II – the Germany. This community's origination was a direct consequence of the October Revolution and the Citizens War, which followed. This war ended with a defeat of the "White Forces" in 1920, which caused a large flow of the Russians out of the country. From some 1.5-2 millions of immigrants about half million had arrived to Germany. Statistical data: among all immigrants, who left Russia during the concerned period, 73.3% were males, 85.5% were from 17 to 55 years-aged, 54.2% were educated. As in the same period hardly about 10% of all Russian population had been literate – it's obvious that this immigration flow consisted mainly of higher society representatives. Though the Russian community in Germany reflected the higher Russian society, the other social layers were clearly yet disproportionately presented. This immigration community in Germany as a matter of fact consisted of the representatives of all social layers and was in particular heterogeneous. Along with the White Armies remnants, which included many simple soldiers, who left Russia along with their commanders, there were also numerous civil immigrants from both noble and bourgeois classes: businessmen and merchants, artisans and writers, advocates and physicians, scientists and politicians, priests and philosophers, Cossacks. In the beginning the Russian community in Germany considered their being abroad simply as sojourn but as years went on their optimism and hopes of returning to Russia faded. Then the time came to realize that the state of thing was permanent and settlement and assimilation were inevitable.

This composition is an attempt to study the interaction between the immigrants who came to Germany during the '20-s and the German State as well as the German society. The research deals with the process of the Russian community formation in Germany after the World War II and examines the following questions: - had the Russian

community been envisaging itself an integral part of the future Germany or had it definitely considered itself a group of exiles longing to return home?

- were there any manifestations – either in culture or in the way of life - of this community's willingness and readiness to become an equal part of German society and culture?

- were there any mixed marriages and if so – to what extent?

- how did the immigrants cooperate with the government of the Weimar Republic and, later, with the Nazi Regime.

Opposed – and complimentary - to the above are the questions of in what way had the Weimar Germany and its society looked upon the Russian immigrants and treated them, what had been done to absorb this massive wave of incomers, should be attended too as well as what had changed in this attitude and treatment when Hitler came to rule the Germany.

Another part of this research will deal with the German media attitude towards the immigrants, and the stereotypes, which the German papers retreated to when writing about the Russians. This would aim at determining whether these stereotypes were mainly negative or the positive, Russophile ones were present too.

A special part of this research will be dedicated to the Russian immigrants of Jewish Origin, who nevertheless homologate themselves with the Russian culture and considered themselves inalienable part of the anti-Bolsheviks "White" movement. This work will analyze the process of absorption of these Jews in the German society, the attitudes they received inside the Russian community and outside it, what course of action had been chosen by the Russian Jews with the beginning of the National-Socialist regime.

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