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An Application of a Bicultural Model to a Russian-American Immigrant Case Study[1]

Abstract

Russian-Americans have lacked the advantage of continuous immigration to the United States. This is in contrast to many other ethnic groups who have been able to maintain a constant rate of immigration throughout the twentieth century. For Russian-Americans, this lack of continuous immigration has caused a number of problems. Lack of central communities, deficiency in English, and other social problems all have contributed to an inability to adjust rapidly to American society. In addition, conflicts are provoked by differential adjustment between the children and their parents, which strain the resources available to facilitate resettlement. The application of deAnda's (1984) bicultural model to Russian-American immigration in two Northwest communities with one specific case study, is used to examine the conflicts that can arise within the family, and demonstrates the importance of the individual variables that can promote or discourage effective adaptation.

Key words: Russian-Americans, Northwest, Biculturalism, Differential Adjustment, Immigration

Introduction

The United States has a long history of attempting to assimilate a large and constantly inflowing stream of immigrants. As a result, it has become a heterogeneous nation of peoples from all over the world. This has created problems, not only for Americans who have historically had to bear the burden of assisting immigrants by providing aid and relief, but also to the immigrants who faced the hardship of settling and supporting themselves in a country that was new and often hostile.

Many factors play a role in determining why immigrants leave their home country and go to another. Regardless of whether refugees choose to leave their country of birth voluntarily or are forced into exile by an acute refugee situation, the need for a support network is essential in promoting successful adaptation. Probably no other factor has more influence on the degree of satisfactory resettlement by immigrants than cultural compatibility between their background and the new society they confront (Kunz 1973, Cohon 1981).

The new wave of recent immigrants from Russia illustrates what can occur if certain fundamental social institutions are not present in the host country. deAnda's (1984) bicultural model discusses the processes that take place when one cultural group comes into contact with another. deAnda suggests that if no cultural compatibility exists, and the adjustment between family members is differential, then problems arise as a result of the immigrant's inability to assimilate successfully.

The differential adjustment, such as the differing rates and levels of intensity of cultural and social adjustment

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[1] The real names of the individuals referred to in this case study have been changed to protect their identity.

between sex and age-grades of family members, particularly between adolescents and their parents, is the focus of this research. New immigrant families, specifically those of Russian ethnicity, rely upon the educated and skilled members within the family to facilitate adaptation. When this does not occur, less adaptable members of the family confront major difficulties in adjusting to the cultural, political, linguistic, and gender roles that are present in the United States (Sluzki 1979, Aronzowitz 1984). As Gold (1989) has noted, many of these problems are linked to the differential adjustment experienced by members of new immigrant families.

In this study I use deAnda's (1984) derivation of Valentine's (1971) bicultural model to analyze the association between the United States majority society and immigrant Russian-Americans, and seek to demonstrate the importance of the variables that can promote or discourage effective adaptation. Because Russian immigration was restricted between the 1920s and the 1990s, the social and cultural characteristics of new Russian immigrants, together with the changes that have occurred in American society, have had profound adaptive implications for those families. A case study that I conducted of two Russian-American juveniles is used as an example of how the model is applied in relation to the historical factors that have played a role in the bicultural process.

Historical Background

As early as 1747, Russian colonists searching for a better climate and a more fertile soil than Siberia afforded, crossed the Bering Sea and traveled along the Alaskan coast, finally settling on Kodiak Island (Davis 1922). Later, after the sale of Alaska, many Russians returned home while others went to California. As a result of their influence, California became one of the earliest settling grounds for Russians in America (Davis 1922).

From 1872 to the beginning of the 20th century, the number of Russian immigrants entering the United States was around 1,000 per year. From 1899 until the beginning of World War I in 1913, Russian immigration increased steadily, reaching a peak of 57,926 according to the 1910 census. It should be noted, however, that this number reflects those who considered Russian their primary language (Davis 1922).

In part, the industrial revolution, brought such profound changes within Europe that large numbers of people were forced by circumstances beyond their control to relinquish their ancestral roots and look for work elsewhere. With the prospect of a better life in America and the increasing economic hardship, religious intolerance, and political upheaval in their home country, Russians immigrated in large numbers (Rozek 1980, Simon 1985, Simon and Simon 1985).

The number of immigrants from the Russian empire in the 1910 census reveals a peak in the number of immigrants, nearly 1.6 million. Those numbers decreased rapidly as World War I began, and continued as the new communist government began prohibiting emigration. Only ten years later, the number of immigrants from the U.S.S.R. to the U.S. dropped to 921,000, then to 62,000 in the 1930 census, and to 1,356 in the 1940 census (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1975). Until 1973 the number of these immigrants never surpassed pre-1900 levels, with a low of 254 in 1969. Census data listed here was drawn from the nation of origin, such as U.S.S.R., and was not broken down by individual republic (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1975). However, the trend of decreasing immigration from the U.S.S.R. was considered adequate for demonstrating

Russian immigration levels because of its high population density.

Only in 1977 did emigration levels begin to increase again as the Soviet Union reassessed their emigration policy. This came after the Jackson-Vanik amendment was passed in 1974, linking U.S.-Soviet trade to free emigration during 1974-76. By the late 1970s, emigration increased dramatically from 16,736 in 1977, to 28,864 in 1978, and 51,320 in 1979 (Salitan 1989).

Soon after World War II, Americans assumed that the "melting pot" succeeded in assimilating immigrants from many nations. The end of free immigration during the 1920's, and the shared experiences of the War and the Depression, seemed to have blended all the ethnic elements together at last (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1975). Non-whites, particularly blacks, remained unassimilated, but in the 1950s, even these groups appeared likely to merge eventually into the new mixture that made up the American people (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1975).

Later, Americans learned the strength of the emotional ties that "ethnics" had to their cultural past and to their origins and group identities. These immigrants, having in all parts of the country found and demarcated their community boundaries, began more than ever in the years following World War II, to cultivate and retain their unique cultural, historical, and political identities. This, in turn, tended to solidify these boundaries and the importance of one's ethnic background was stressed more than ever (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1975). This constant flow of peoples has enabled many ethnic groups like those from Germany, Greece, Spain, and the West Indies, to establish central communities in which new immigrants can usually settle with relative ease. This has not been the case, however, for immigrant Russians, especially those of non-Jewish affiliation (Walter 1995, Associated Press 1997). The fact that Russians in the past had long been denied emigration, and virtually cut off from the United States as well, raises some interesting questions concerning acculturation and assimilation in U.S. society.

The Bicultural Model

The "new immigrants" as some researchers have referred to them (Hutchinson 1966, Bryce-LaPorte 1980), belong to racial and ethnic groups that have not previously migrated to the receiving country in large numbers. Although many immigrants possess a variety of characteristics that facilitate their rapid adjustment to the United States, many Russian-Americans simply are not as skilled, educated, or experienced enough in Western lifeways to readily adjust to American society (Simon and Simon 1985, Gold 1989).

deAnda's (1984) bicultural model, in conjunction with the principle of differential adjustment among family members, seeks to explain the advantages and possible disadvantages that a particular ethnic group has in attempting to incorporate themselves into a new society. The bicultural model is a vehicle for understanding the degree to which minority groups assimilate and socialize within a majority culture. The model holds great promise for understanding the social and cultural boundaries that an individual learns to operate within, and the coexistence of the minority culture within the majority society.

The bicultural model as proposed by deAnda (1984), discusses six factors that affect the degree to which a member of a minority ethnic group can adjust to the culture of a country to which they have immigrated. These are 1) the degree of commonality between the two cultures, including the norms, beliefs, and morals; 2) the availability of cultural interpreters and mediators; 3)

the amount of negative or positive feedback provided by the host society in an attempt to produce normative, assimilative behavior; 4) the problem-solving approaches that the minority member uses to decipher the valued styles of the majority culture; 5) the degree of bilingualism; and 6) the degree of dissimilarity in physical appearance from typical members of the majority culture including skin color and facial features.

This bicultural model provides an adequate framework for analysis of family member relations among immigrants. The analysis of familial interaction regarding bicultural socialization can be thought of as a fusion model of cultures. Biculturalism, the integration and union of two cultures, occurs as the majority and minority cultures meet and interact. In this social interaction, the majority and minority cultures must adapt to each other. This adaptation takes place within the sphere of the six factors of the model and determines if one can successfully become bicultural. The bicultural model, in association with the concept of differential adjustment, also explains the problems that can arise within the family and how they are solved or escalated. The ability of children to learn English more quickly, and the difficulty or unwillingness of the parents to do so is also taken into account.

The Commonality of the Two Cultures

The first factor relating to the degree of biculturalism achieved, is the measure of commonality between the two cultures with regard to norms, values, beliefs, and perceptions. Glazer (1983) noted that there are many differences between various ethnic groups in their educational achievement and in the broader cultural characteristics in which these differences reside. If we take Glazer's remarks seriously, that Russian-American cultural differences may be rooted within their lifestyle, then many social changes and assimilation problems are likely to occur in Russian families when they come to the United States.

The "new society" that erupted in Russia out of the Stalinist era in the 1940s was a blend of factory managers, army officers, technicians, intellectuals, and highly skilled workers (Lawrence 1957). Men and women doing forced labor in concentration camps had become a well-established feature of the Soviet social structure. The organization of Soviet life was such that everyone might expect to have purpose, albeit even if only in a concentration camp (Lawrence 1957). Equality of opportunity was attempted in Stalinist Russia, but was rarely achieved. For immigrants who came out of this social environment, expectations were high that a job would be found in the United States (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1975, Gold 1989, Walter 1995). This was especially true after the fall of communism and the opening of Russia's borders. However, as Russians have attempted to merge, conforming to U.S. society has proved difficult.

A representative of Missoula's World Relief Office has noted that Russian families have many misconceptions about life in the U.S. One perception is that jobs are plentiful, which many Americans know is not always the case. The level of technology in a capitalist society, like that of the United States is far beyond what was available to most Russian citizens. The result has been a large portion of families receiving welfare or other public assistance, because of their lack of technical qualifications in the job market, an increased widening of the language barrier and, hence, a desire by parents to have their children support the family. An article in the Spokesman-Review about Russian-Americans in Spokane, Washington (Walter 1995) also

discussed these problems, noting that isolation, language barriers, and unemployment are major concerns for many of these new immigrants.

Differences in values relating to education and familial responsibility between parents and children can lead to conflict when minority individuals entering mainstream educational institutions are exposed to the beliefs and expectations of the mainstream culture (deAnda 1984). Many parents have become intolerant of their children's adoption of American customs and values, and have sometimes become excessively dependent to the point that they seek to prevent their children from adjusting to American life on their own terms (Cohon 1981, Gold 1989). This is especially true for adolescents, where their world has been shaped by seeing their parents unable to find jobs and resorting to supporting themselves on welfare. This causes a feeling of hopelessness on the part of these children, and despite the fact they are only infrequently ostracized for their economic status, they exhibit shame for their situation (Thompson, personal communication). This is illustrated by my case study of Ivan and Mikhail, which will be discussed later in the paper.

Translators and Mediators

According to deAnda (1984), a translator is an individual from a minority individual's own ethnic or cultural group who has had considerable success at dual socialization. In a sense, the concept of dual socialization, in which people attempt to develop and sustain the new and old cultures in their lives, frequently occurs in most Americans who maintain an ethnic identity within the broader homogenized American culture (deAnda 1984).

A cultural translator, who would facilitate understanding and correct perception of the majority culture, is not often seen in Russian-American families because of their recent immigration and the lack of previously established communities. For example, an individual who attends a school of higher education would be in a good position to help others familiarize themselves with that particular institution.

The availability of cultural translators, mediators, and models plays a major role in differential adjustment within the family. Gold (1989) notes that new Russian immigrant families have supported themselves through the inclusion of distant relatives and unrelated persons as parts of their extended family unit. This, however, has been observed most frequently in Russian Jewish families who have consistently had more success in assimilating (Gitelman 1978, Jacobs 1981, Simon and Simon 1985). For the most part, this has not appeared to be the case with Russian immigrants of non-Jewish affiliation.

Corrective Feedback

Corrective feedback is important when considering positive and negative responses by the minority member toward the majority society. Although an individual may become familiar with the norms of a particular culture by observing the behavior of members in the majority culture, the shaping of his or her behavioral repertoire requires corrective feedback to conform more accurately to the majority culture (deAnda 1984). An individual's behavior will conform more accurately to cultural norms if there is a greater availability of corrective feedback (deAnda 1984). Without this corrective feedback, an individual may engage in certain behaviors that the person assumes is suitable, but which, in reality, are perceived by the members of the majority culture as improper (deAnda 1984).

A World Relief Office representative suggests that criminal activity in Missoula, Montana, predominantly stealing, is a result of a lack of positive integration with their American peers and, thus, has led to a segregation of some Russian-American adolescents in the public school system. Corrective feedback in both of these instances has been particularly important in clarifying which behaviors are appropriate in particular contexts. This can then be related to the importance of "learning" a culture if one is to assimilate into the majority culture.

Problem-Solving Skills

Problem solving is a process by which an individual discovers a combination of previously learned rules that can be applied to achieve a solution for a novel problem situation (Gagne 1970, deAnda 1984). Lack of appropriate problem solving skills hampers the ability of Russian-American families to adapt to U.S. society because of a lack of adequate analytical approaches to the process of dual socialization (deAnda 1984).

The degree of bicultural socialization that can possibly be achieved by the minority person may be affected by the dominant cognitive style cultivated within their culture and that of the mainstream culture (deAnda 1984). The cognitive style relates to the most valued approach for understanding and comprehending one's own environment. Individuals from the minority culture that nurture the majority cognitive style of adaptation are the most likely to be successful in relations with the majority culture. The interaction between cultures is analyzed in a manner similar to that of the Empowerment Group Work model in that there is an increasing utilization of social support networks in problem-solving within different ethnicities (Chau 1991). The more economic and social resources that the minority culture has, the higher the probability that an individual will interpret successfully the demands of the majority culture (deAnda 1984).

There exists in Russian-American groups, a "nonconcious ideology" (Kidder 1981). In other words, an individual or a group often may be unaware that they are utilizing their own set of beliefs in an atmosphere of contradictory or different beliefs. The degree to which concepts and rules are contextually embedded may affect the ability of the minority individual to understand and adequately overcome the social demands of the majority culture (Valentine 1968, 1971).

Children in Russian-American immigrant families have had difficulty in adjusting because of the problem-solving approaches that their parents employ. For example, many parents are frustrated that their children cannot be assimilated within the public school system. Their reaction to initial failure to assimilate is to stress other means of existence within the social framework. Most often, family economic support is stressed (Freeman 1986). Conflicts sometimes erupt because the children resent having their lives planned by their parents (Aronzowitz 1984, Gold 1989). In Gold's (1989) study, resettlement workers commented on adolescents who became depressed and lonely because they worked and lived with their parents without really having a social life with friends (Gold 1989, Nguyen and Henkin 1984). These issues have also been addressed recently among Asian-Americans in Seattle (Associated Press 1997). Hence, the problem-solving approaches taken by both parties in these situations only exacerbate the continuing problems that influence adjustment.

The Degree of Bilingualism

The extent of an individual's proficiency in the language of a culture to which they have immigrated can

either enhance or impede the socialization process (deAnda 1984). An individual that is, or becomes, conversant in the language of the majority culture is more likely to be exposed to a wider range of cultural mediators and translators, and to a wider range of educational and employment opportunities. This would likely lead to an increase in economic stability through higher wages, and would benefit the family. Equal ability of new immigrants in two languages is not prevalent in many ethnic minorities. This also pertains to Russian immigrants.

In a linguistically strange environment, the immigrants might find themselves excluded and isolated from human contact. If, in contrast, the immigrants find a sufficient number of people who speak their language, share the same values, lifestyle, traditions, religion, political views, and food habits, and they are able to evaluate and anticipate their hosts actions and responses, the integration will be accelerated and eventual identification with the new country assured (Kunz 1973).

On January 2, 1968, the Bilingual Education Act was enacted as legislators took their first direct step into the world of bilingual education. This law was enacted to bring "access to opportunity, [and] to give minorities a desire to be part of the nation and its ideology" (Epstein 1977). This "Americanizing" force has, however, often resulted in a declining commitment among ethnic group members to their ethnic language and culture, once they have moved into the economic mainstream. Moreover, intrusions of incorrect English grammatical structures and of accents serve to further accentuate and continually reinforce the dissimilarities between the two cultures and the belief that minority individuals cannot display the competence necessary to meet mainstream norms (deAnda 1984).

The United States is currently facing the dilemma of how to establish effective bilingual educational criteria (Erickson and Omark 1981). Despite the commitment by the U.S. government of attempting to implement a more structured, effective system for teaching minority and immigrant groups English, the goal has not yet been reached. In Russian-American families, the parents' unwillingness to learn English has impeded their societal adaptation. Because of their recent immigrant status, most have not yet shown a decline in commitment to the Russian language. Competence in the majority language can determine, to some extent, the socialization experiences available to the individual, limiting, for example, access to institutions of higher education or favorable job markets. "It is obvious that monolingual minority individuals have the least opportunity to learn the norms of the majority culture, as the lack of any working knowledge of the mainstream culture automatically shuts off important sources of socialization" (deAnda 1984). The limitations of language also relates to the problem-solving factor in the model, and the lack of mediators and translators to enable more frequent access to societal benefits.

Thompson, of the World Relief Office, has noted that because many parents choose to rely on their children for support, the chances that they will not learn English increase. Many studies, for example, have demonstrated that there is a significant difference between age groups in learning the phonology of another language, suggesting that children can learn languages more quickly and retain the information more easily than adults (Asher and Garcia 1969).

The fact that language ability occurs differentially in Russian-American families should be attributed to the family structure, set in the belief that most elderly immigrants are simply not willing to learn the language. The

ability of children to more easily learn English should also be taken into account. In response, parental reliance on their children is more the focus, and of greater importance. Children who learn English quickly and attain job skills are usually more employable, and often become responsible for the economic, social, and emotional needs of parents, grandparents, and siblings (Gold 1989). However, it appears that many young Russian-Americans often feel resentment for being deprived of the extended adolescence and consumption patterns they observe in Americans. Gold (1989) has also observed this trend in Vietnamese families, in which the youths "reacted to this burden in passive-aggressive ways by spending little time at home, refusing to talk to parents, adopting disdained American habits, or not eating mother's cooking" (Montero 1979, Nguyen and Henkin 1984). As a result, economic adjustment of Russian immigrant families in the Northwest has been facilitated by the employment of children at the cost of family stability.

The Degree of Dissimilarity in Physical Appearance

The socialization experiences of a minority individual can be affected by their differences in physical appearance from members of the majority culture (deAnda 1984). This can, in turn, be an obstacle for the process of bicultural socialization. Historically, pronounced identifiers such as skin color or distinguishing facial features have made it more difficult for many minority members to assimilate into mainstream U.S. society (Valentine 1971, Chau 1991, Omi and Winant 1994). The bicultural model explains that because there can be a substantial variation in physical appearance within ethnic groups, those members who most closely resemble the members of the majority culture, will have more mobility within the mainstream. Physical similarities in appearance have made it easier for European immigrants to blend into American society (deAnda 1984), and phenotypical problems do not appear to affect the degree of success of adaptation for Russian-Americans.

A Case Study

A case study that I completed in 1993, while working at the Spokane County Juvenile Justice Center (SCJJC), illustrates the use of the bicultural model, and shows the effects of a lack of adaptation and the extent of bicultural socialization as a result of differential adjustment. Two Russian brothers with whom I worked in SCJJC had recently immigrated to the United States and had difficulty adapting to American society. Having predominantly associated with a group of juveniles whose social interaction sphere centered around criminal activity, positive-corrective feedback was almost nonexistent. The fact that they had perceived stealing, for example, as "no big deal", was indicative of a lack of good influence among their peers, and eventually led to their incarceration.

Ivan was born in Vladivostok, near Mongolia, in what had been the USSR in Krasnodar, Russia. He is the youngest of ten children in a family that also includes three sisters and six brothers. Ivan came to the United States in 1990, after his parents applied to leave the Soviet Union. All members of their family were consequently stripped of their Russian citizenship for doing so. The mother explained that they left Russia because her husband was a Baptist pastor, and was, therefore, the subject of persecution in their homeland. Ivan also remarked that in typical Socialist fashion, his father had had many other occupations including fireman and truck driver, and also served three years in the Russian army as a paratrooper. Previous to fleeing Russia, Ivan's father had also been in training to be a detective in the police

force. An organization known as Cavitas assisted the family in their defection through Eastern Europe to Italy. In Italy, they applied for refugee status with the U.S. consular in Rome, and stayed there for about three months.

From there they flew to San Diego, California where his father sought work in vain. After staying there for one year trying to survive on public assistance, the family moved to Idaho where the father found work in an auto detailing shop. Ivan noted that his parents felt pressure by the employer of the shop to convert to Mormonism, and that his father was constantly tormented by fellow employees who pulled pranks on him such as locking him in a car after he had sprayed the interior with an aerosol cleaner. After about one year there, the family moved to Spokane, Washington.

The father is also trained as a chauffeur and heavy equipment operator, but his inability to speak or write English has been a major factor in his inability to find work. The mother was also unemployed, although she had previously worked as a seamstress and raised animals on a farm in Russia. At the time of this study the family was living mostly on public assistance.

Also in the home is an older brother, 18 years of age at the time of study, who had just found work at an alloy company fabricating truck trailers. He is competent in English, and this has been an asset not only for getting the job, but for helping to support the family, as well. Three brothers and one sister and their respective families live in the Spokane area. The rest of the children live in Germany, and one other sibling returned to Russia.

The mother refers to her youngest sons, Ivan and Mikhail, as "good boys". She explained that she and her husband were very frustrated with the type of friends Ivan and Mikhail had met at school. Mikhail explained that he had "survived" at high school the year before, but upon moving to a different school in Spokane, he was a "loner", and the only people who would accept him readily were kids "living on the edge".

The conflicts between family members reached a crisis level when Mikhail and his father got into a physical altercation that resulted in Mikhail being left with a scar over his left eye. This seemed to visibly upset Ivan, and both boys ran away from home. They were sheltered by friends, and were later apprehended with them after they became involved in criminal offenses. Their arrests brought counts of second degree burglary, second degree malicious mischief, and three counts of second degree vehicle prowling. Although Ivan and Mikhail had no previous criminal records, they admitted that these were not the only crimes they had ever committed. It seemed evident that because Ivan and Mikhail had two major barriers to overcome, a different language, and disparate social interactions at home, their peers had great influence over them. The mother and father continuously tried to "set them straight," but at times their tempers overstepped acceptable bounds. The fact that both parents have virtually no knowledge of English has contributed to their inability to stay in touch with Ivan and Mikhail.

Upon arriving in Spokane from Idaho, Ivan was placed in Middle School, and according to School District staff, he did well and completed the 1991-92 school year. After moving to a local high school the following year, his performance dropped dramatically and he was dropped from enrollment when he ran away. Ivan readily blames this on the continuous fighting with his parents. According to completed diagnostic reports by SCJJC, Ivan's key offense factors were 1) classic conflict between parents with Old World values and coping skills versus a desire to be accepted by American peers; 2) naive

belief that he would not be caught; and 3) compromising his own values in order to survive on the run.

Upon further investigation of problem-related incidents in Russian-American families, Thompson of the World Relief Office in Missoula, Montana, notes that differential adjustment within families like this is common among Russian immigrants in Missoula. Thompson notes that in many instances of émigré adaptation, the elderly have a more difficult time adjusting to American culture and society. The burden put on the children to help support the family is often tremendous. Though children sometimes accept that English is a necessity, many elderly émigré's do not place the same emphasis on language ability. This results in manipulation of the parents by the children as a result of this language barrier, and parental control over their children is diminished. This also appeared to be the case with Ivan and Mikhail, eventually leading to an increase in familial conflict.

Discussion And Conclusions

With the possible exception of physical characteristics, the problems that can occur for Russian-American immigrants to the U.S. during socialization are demonstrated by deAnda's (1984) bicultural model. The results of this study suggest that this model can be successfully used in attempting to analyze Russian-American immigration processes.

Surveys of Russian immigrants from the late 1970's listed many reasons for immigrating to the U.S. These included discrimination on the basis of nationality, cultural or political motivations, and economics (Salitan 1989). These reasons reveal a striking similarity to those given at the height of immigration in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Today, many Russian-Americans attribute their less than desirable position in the social scale to their overly high expectations of what economic resources would be available. This is not as common as Russian Jews, however, who typically are more highly educated and assimilate into Jewish communities to a large extent (Rozek 1980, Simon 1985, Zenner 1988, Gold 1989).

While similarities exist between the generations of Russian-Americans of yesterday and today, there are many more challenges for those families who have recently immigrated. It is true that certain members of Russian families do have the resources, skills, and opportunities to facilitate rapid adjustment to American life, but there are many others who face difficulties in coping with the new setting. Problems that affect these Russian-American immigrant families can include a loss of status, generational conflict, role reversals, and dependency on the young by the old (Gold 1989). The different rates of adjustment of members of new immigrant families can lead to conflict as some individuals, usually adolescents, forge a new life quickly, while others, such as the parents, remain isolated and dependent (Simon 1985, Gold 1989). In turn, conflicts provoked by differential adjustment and socialization problems strain the family-based resources that new immigrants use to facilitate resettlement. Difficulties of adjustment that develop early on may adversely affect the younger members of immigrant families, and not become fully evident for several years (Aronzowitz 1984, Gold 1989).

This case study of Ivan and Mikhail shows that the bicultural model can be used to examine and begin to explain the conflicts that can arise from an inability of immigrants to adapt effectively to mainstream society. To help remedy these situations, intervention techniques that are geared

toward the well-being of the 'bicultural' immigrant will be the most beneficial. One must distinguish among different immigrant groups and the particular policies that govern them, and attempt to create a positive socialization process that recognizes the need for a smooth adaptive route into mainstream society, as well as the retention of ethnic and cultural heritage (deAnda 1984). The understanding of processes that surround the quality and extent of assimilation are, however, essential in order for gaining a more detailed perception of biculturalism within Russian-American families. Only then can effective assimilation be more clearly organized and administered.

Although limited in scope, the present study provides preliminary insight into the bicultural socialization of Russian-American immigrants. More research is needed, however, to more accurately assess how these processes take place, especially on a temporal scale. Future studies that incorporate a larger population to increase statistical validity should help to provide a more detailed picture of issues involved with Russian-American immigration.

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