Social Representations as Emerging from Social Structure:
The Case of the Ethiopian Immigrants to Israel

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The Jews of Ethiopia have moved, en masse, to Israel. They have moved as a community, not as individuals. They retain their communal way of life. The differences between the society structure of Jewish immigrants from Ethiopia (while living in Ethiopia) and that of the absorbing Israeli society does not lie only in differences of customs. This is merely the surface manifestation of a far more basic difference between two systems of social representations, which are in a reciprocal relationship with the different social organization of the two societies.

The study attempts to delineate the differences between the two systems of social structure and organization, and the differences in social representations. These differences make dialogue difficult, and create misunderstandings that cause pain and frustration to both sides. Perhaps, by understanding these differences, we can eliminate some of the mutual misunderstanding and make the absorption of the immigrants from Ethiopia easier.

This research has several purposes. First, to see, how differences in basic social structure cause different social representations? Second, to examine how these differences between social representations of the two cultural groups impact on their communication and relationships. Third, to check the strength of social representations and their tendency to change or preserve themselves under pressure. Fourth, to examine when and how inadequate social representations reveal themselves, even in familiar procedures of every day life and well known situations. The arrival of the massive Jewish immigration from Ethiopia to Israel offered us a unique opportunity to examine those questions. At the outset it must be observed that we are discussing one of the few cases in the world (if not the only one), in which a

whole community of Africans, possessed of a tribal culture, moved - as a community (and not as individuals) - into a modern western society, with a (more or less) mutual desire that the newcomers be accepted as equal members of society.

In the past five years, I was the head of the evaluation team of four nation-- wide projects for the Ethiopian Jews in Israel. The projects (all together) took place in more then 30 localities in Israel. The total target population of these projects was more then 2,500 people, about 4% of the population of immigrants from Ethiopia. Many of the programs in the projects were directed to families, a fact that multiplies the numbers to more then 10,000 people. The projects were aimed at many groups in the population (pupils, infants and parents, adults, community leaders and so on).

Beside the considerably large successes, the same difficulties emerged over and over again, no matter what kind of intervention took place and what kind of population they dealt with. It seems that although we all talked Hebrew, we did not talk the same language, although we said the same words, we didn't mean the same things. Some issues emerged from the beginning as the reasons for most misunderstandings: time, roles, organizations, authority. It was clear that something much deeper, wider and stronger than the dictionary meaning of the words underlies these misunderstandings. The most common problems were:

1. Recruitment and dropout: Tremendous difficulty was encountered in recruiting participants for activities, and the dropout rates among those who were recruited were very high.
2. Initiative: Lack of initiative both among the Ethiopian paraprofessionals, and among the clients, even in very simple tasks such as collecting a key to open the club.
3. Punctuality: There was a problem in arriving on time, and in remaining until the end of activities.
4. Planning difficulties: The Ethiopian professionals and paraprofessionals find long-term planning difficult.
5. Authority: This problem has two faces. One: within the Jewish-Ethiopian community: Ethiopian counsellors encounter difficulties in training Ethiopians, and the Ethiopians find it difficult to accept their peers as authoritative counsellors. Two: Authority demands such as reporting on work hours, were experienced as an insult by Ethiopian workers.
6. Slow pace of change: The slow pace of change relative to the intensive investment, caused considerable frustration on both sides (clients and practitioners). (Levin-Rozalis & Schneider, 1997).

In this article I want to examine the role that social representations played and are playing in the process.

Social representations are social group's common knowledge of language, images, ideas, values, attitudes, action orientations, norms and behaviors (Wagner, 1993; Wagner, 1995; Wagner, 1998). The creation of social representations is a human trait stemming from the human need to clarify the unclear. We continually build them all our lives through social interactions and discourses. (Moscovici, 1961; Moscovici, 1984; Moscovici, 1988) In that sense, they are part of culture as well as of cognition. (Farr, 1998).

Moscovici speaks about the organization of social representations in *themata* which are general enough to include many representations of the same or similar type. A *themata* is a body of knowledge specific to a social representation, a coherent cognitive structure of all social knowledge (Flament, 1989). Furthermore, for someone who has themata of a specific kind, any similar phenomenon will be included in the themata, even if this is neither accurate nor adaptive, until a new themata is built. (Moscovici, 1993). Moscovici claims that in

addition to the social representations that a society creates, a society can bar intellectual possibilities by not including them among the available concepts (Moscovici, 1993).

The theory of social representation is based on two principal assumptions. First, we are dealing with a world constructed through the eyes and interactions of its members, i.e. the group eyes. (Wagner, 1998). Second, the representations can be explained only in the context of a social situation. They are evinced in politics, religion and economics (Moscovici, 1993) and thus to the social structure, social organization and social institutionalisation.

Studies show that social representations are quite stable. They are constructed with a core and a periphery, so that the peripheral parts of a representation are more susceptible to change than the core parts (Guimelli, 1993). But there must be a cultural, social and individual anchoring for a new representation to catch on. (Doise, 1993; Wagner, Elejabarrieta, & Lahnsteiner, 1995; Wagner, 1995, 1998). An English driver who is forced to manage in the streets of New York, must reverse all the directions in his driving, but the themata for driving – steering, gears, car, road, signposts, pedestrians etc. exist. He simply must adapt to driving on the 'wrong' side.

The context: The Beta-Israel - The Jewish Ethiopian community

Immigration of the Ethiopian Jews to Israel was traumatic. Until 1977, only a trickle of Ethiopian Jews reached Israel, on their own. During the seven years from 1977, about 6,000 Ethiopians arrived through clandestine operations, by air and sea. In 1984 the first massive wave of about 10,000 set out to cross the hundreds miles of desert between Ethiopia and Sudan on foot, losing 4,000 dead on the journey. Two out of every five perished in the burning desert sands. In Sudan they waited as refugees for many months, sometimes years, hiding their religion, suffering from hunger and epidemics. In November 1984 the Israeli Government brought the Ethiopian refugees from Sudan to Israel in a large-scale clandestine operation code-named "Operation Moses". 6,300 Ethiopian Jews reached Israel in that operation. In 1991 "Operation Solomon" brought to Israel most of the rest. Now there are about 70,000 Ethiopian Jews in Israel.

Ethiopian-Jewish culture is based on a tribal cultural model, where everyone knows everyone personally, where all tribal decisions are reached by consulting the Elders or religious leaders, whose word is law. Rights in the community are given according to social stature - the older, richer or socially influential one is, the more rights one has. Assistance will be given to the needy on the basis of their personal needs.

In Ethiopia, the Beta-Israel (the Jewish community) was spread throughout hundreds of highland villages in the north-western regions of Gondar and Tigray. The small villages were of large, extended patriarchal Beta-Israel families. They were a Jewish minority a region populated by a Christian majority. Jews from different regions in Ethiopia differed in their languages, dialects, clothing and customs. Despite the noted differences and variations they were closely interconnected. Jews in different regions of Ethiopia shared the same lifestyle, and essentially shared a culture with the Christian population. (Pankhurst, 1995). The Beta-Israel economy was based on subsistence agriculture and the community in Ethiopia worked in several specific crafts like blacksmithing and pottery making. The men were responsible for farming and relations with the outside communities. (Herman, 1996; Kaplan, 1992; Kaplan, 1995;)

Ethiopian Jews arrived to a reality that is very different from their own and from their dreams. Many of them had not seen white people before arriving in Israel, and most of them did not expect the Israeli Jews to have a different skin colour than their own. Israel is not the biblical Holy-Land. People there do not wear long white flowing garments, there is not a

steady flow of milk and honey. The new immigrants from Ethiopia were in shock from the journey, from the deaths, the hardship and suffering, and from arrival at destination Israel - a western country that was so different from what they knew or expected.

The Ethiopians-Jews who came from Addis Ababa and were well educated, comprised less then 1% of the population. Part of the population has only a basic knowledge of reading and writing in any language (mostly Amharic), while a large group is completely illiterate (in any language) until this very day.

On the other hand, knowledge in Israel about Ethiopian Jews, their habits, language and way of life, was almost non-existent. Thus, the difficulties of becoming part of the host Israeli society added to the shock from the journey, the mortality rate and the arrival were far greater than the difficulties facing newcomers from Europe, Asia, North and South America and North Africa.

The Ethiopian Jews have a strong communal identity and they live in Israel in close communities, in two areas, in the north and in the south of the country, a situation that consolidates their separate identity. (For example there are schools in which 80% of the pupils are Ethiopian Jews, while pupils of Ethiopian origin are just 2% of the total sum of pupils in Israel). (Anteby, 1995a; Anteby, 1995b; Anteby, 1997; Ashkenazi, 1988; Ben-Ezer, 1985; Benita & Noam, 1995; Flum, 1998; Friedman & Santamaria, 1990; IAEJ, (1999a); IAEJ, (1999b); Lazin, 1997; Rosen, 1985; Rosen and Kaplan, 1994; Weil, 1995a; Weil, 1995b; Westheimer and Kaplan, 1995).

Today (the end of 1999) the Ethiopian Jewish community in Israel, includes about 70,000 members. The host society in Israel is a modern society. The Ethiopian community is a traditional one.

The structure of the Jewish-Ethiopian community described here emerges from research material), and from the interviews that I administered myself. The Jewish-Ethiopian community in Ethiopia seems to have been a society characterised by stable social and cultural structures, with little division of labour or specialisation, a very low level of urbanisation, and a high level of illiteracy. The dominant interrelationships are primary relationships, generally face to face.

The differences between the main stream of the host society's culture in Israel and the Ethiopian-Jewish society are very large and mainly affect various areas of social organization. Israeli society is characterised by a large measure of urbanisation, complex division of labour, high rate of literacy, and exposure to mass processes (Eizenstadt, 1966; Ben-Porat, 1993). Urbanisation and mass social processes are opposed to a low level of urbanisation and unity of social roles. Dominance of individual achievement and achieved statuses, are opposed to dominance of ascribed statuses. Prominence of secondary task specific relationships as opposed to diffuse primary relationships, are some of these areas (Eizenstadt 1966). Social and cultural communication is mainly through mass media such as written publications, radio, television, and the Internet are opposed to interpersonal face to face communication. (Katz and Gurevitch, 1976). Emphasis is put on industrial and technological occupations, as even food production is highly mechanised and computer runs, as opposed to traditional, hand labour, house hold agriculture. Social differentiation is on the rise, and traditional and national identification are decreasing. The power of the bureaucracy has increased enormously. (Anteby, 1995b; Ben-Porat, 1993; Herman, 1996; Rosen, 1987;).

The following table summarises the differences between the host society and that of the immigrants from Ethiopia (see also Bodovski, 1996; Flum, 1988; Weill 1995b). Further on I hope to show how this disparity in social organization is found in the interaction of social representations of the two groups, producing an essential difference between them that is hard to bridge.

Table 1
The differences in social structure between the two groups.

The Society dimension	The host Israeli society	The immigrants from Ethiopia
Structure and Social organization	Modern industrial society: bureaucratic, specialising, universal standards, universal criteria, secondary relationships	Traditional agricultural society: rural community, structurally amorphous, primary relationships, particularistic criteria
Organization of work	Division of labour, multiple roles in society, multiple functions and status to the individual.	Unity of functions, mostly agricultural. Few roles and functions in society.
Groups	Involvement and participation in varied and multiple groups primary and secondary relations according to different roles.	Units are the extended family, the village, the group of friends, who make up a holistic lifestyle. Grouping for a specific task is rare.
Social roles	Multiplicity of social roles for the individual.	One social role with many tasks for the individual.
Dominant mode of relationships	Specific role relationships, result orientated.	Diffuse relationships, attitude to the whole person.
Status	Dominance of achieved status.	Dominance of ascriptive status.
Communication	Complex mass communication, written and verbal, impersonal.	Interpersonal verbal communication, gesturing, unwritten, not cross status.

I would like to show that these crucial differences in the structure and character of the societies give rise to very different social representations in almost every area.

Research process and methodology

The research process: Two research phases took place. The first phase was carried out during the evaluation work of the four large projects for the immigrants from Ethiopia. During this first phase, I talked to as many people as I could in order to understand the causes of the difficulties mentioned above.

The second phase of my research was more organised. I knew what I was looking for. So I directed the questions and observations, mine and those of my staff, toward these topics, in their relevant contexts.

The subjects were young or adult immigrants from Ethiopia with various roles – program operators, paraprofessionals, tens of participants in various intervention programs run for the Ethiopian community in Israel, and non-Ethiopian professionals who work with the immigrants from Ethiopia.

The sample is representative for several reasons: first, the variability among the new immigrants from Ethiopia, in the issues important to this research (organization of life, society structure) is very low, as previously indicated. Most immigrants from Ethiopia live in Israel in close communities, a fact that inhibits fast changes. Second, the research tools covered a large range of roles, and all the existing socio-economic levels for the community of Ethiopian

immigrants in Israel, from the most educated: university students, undergraduate and graduate to the very minimally educated and the very poor. The phenomena reveal themselves in all these populations. Third, the two research phases, covered a very large population.

The instruments: were open instruments including open and structured observation, narrative interviews, structured interviews and group discussions.

The second phase consisted of interviews. Sixty adult members of the Ethiopian community were interviewed, some in Amharic or Tigrai, as well as 20 adults who were not of Ethiopian extraction. In addition, I conversed, in non-formal settings, with many immigrants from Ethiopia, on the subjects that this paper covers.

Observations: About one hundred observations were made, both structured and unstructured, during a variety of situations and activities, (guidance and direction for activists, activities for consumers, staff meetings) in which diverse groups participated.

The main differences between social representations and themata

I want now to present the social representations held by the immigrant from Ethiopia, in order to gain better understanding of the difficulties in and even the lack of communication between the host society and the immigrants.

The social representations of time and planning

In our many observations of different types of activity, the idiom 'Ethiopian time' or the 'Ethiopian clock' was often used, both by the immigrants from Ethiopia (about themselves), and by non-Ethiopian people working with Ethiopian immigrants. The lack of punctuality of the immigrants and their inability to keep to a schedule of set times become a common knowledge, a source for jokes and frustration. In accordance with that, there is a real problem in doing long range planning, for example to plan a sequence of home visits in a family, as part of a role as a counsellor in an home visit program. Despite the fact that both sides knew that there was a problem here, little could be done to change it.

The differing social representations of time, which the immigrants from Ethiopia bring with them, create difficulties for their functioning in the every day life of the host Israeli society. The situation is a symmetric one. The people working with the Ethiopian immigrant (as employers, co-workers, social workers, and guides) are in a similar position, since in most cases they do not understand where the problem lies (Levin-Rozalis & Schneider, 1997). Below, I will try to characterise the concept of time of each group.

The invention of the clock was one of the enabling conditions for the industrial revolution and the development of modern society, by virtue of changing the social representations of time. The clock changed the concept of time by making it an independent system. It distances the time from its dependence on the seasons of the year, the hours of darkness and light, sunrise and sunset. The clock moves at a steady, arbitrary, unchanging pace. Without a clock, time is defined by means of the tasks accomplished – how long different tasks take determines the planning of time. In planning with a clock, the time determines how long a task may take, and time is allotted accordingly.

Divorcing the pace of nature from the pace of the clock enables a different type of planning, monochronic planning (Hall, 1983), ongoing planning -steady and unchanging. For example take work in 8-hour shifts that ignores day and night or time needed to complete a task, dividing the execution of a task into parts and stages. In his film "Modern Times", Charlie Chaplin evoked an unforgettable example of this.

When time is independent of everything except the clock, it progresses in a straight line. This is a very different social representation of the essence of time from a representation in which time is an indwelling function of the diurnal and seasonal cycle. When these dictate the pace of the tasks to be done and the times for certain activities, time is circular and repeats itself with the return of the seasons and the passing of days. Tasks like plowing, seeding, reaping, cooking, washing clothes, and milking occur in cycles. The civil calendar used in Israel is built day after day, and year after year, in ongoing linear time line. This year's calendar cannot be used for next year. It is not by chance that calendars found in research into pre-modern and agricultural societies are perpetual and circular. (See for example the Aztec calendar displayed in the Museo National de Antropologia Mexico D.F. and Casasola, 1976).

We have here two crucial differences of dimension: the first is seeing time as circular or seeing time as linear, the second is allocation of time according to tasks, or planing the tasks according the time allowance. In the second dimension, circular time is the dependant variable for carrying out tasks and the task is the independent variable, whereas in the linear concept, tasks are planned according to time, which is the independent variable and the tasks are the dependant variable.

The discussion of representations of time is not merely academic, it has implications for the characteristics and structure of our activities. The dominant representation of time in the host Israeli society is linear and runs forward. In most cases time is the independent variable – fifteen minutes for a coffee break, two days to prepare for an examination, a year to draw up the plans for a bridge. It cuts through the natural sequence of activities. When it is time by the clock for one activity it often cuts short the previous activity – we stop a discussion or housecleaning because it is time to go to a study circle for parents. When time moves forward in a straight line the meaning of 'winter is coming' is very different from its meaning in a circular concept of time. In circular time, next winter is congruent to this winter, while in linear time 'next' is in a different place in the ongoing sequence of time. Long term planning and its meaning are differently grasped. Arbitrary clock time that is external to activities produces a different kind of planning of time, which is linear, long-range, and full of activities that are intertwined.

Circular time is anchored in the days of the week, the hours of daylight, and the seasons of the year, which determine the orientation in time. Someone, who gets up every day at sunrise, gets up every day at a different time according to clock. The hour is irrelevant, but sunrise and the height of the sun are the anchors to the activities of the day. Someone who rises early each morning according to a clock may wake up on some days before sunrise, and some days after sunrise. The natural pattern of the day is no longer an anchor for the orientation in time, and the arbitrary, independent course of the clock becomes one. As one of my interviewee in a governmental position told me: "To this day the hardest thing is getting up by the clock. Even if I sleep more hours, anyone who is used to get up when he has finished sleeping can't get used to getting up by the clock." The Table 2 summarises the different perceptions of time.

The dominant social representations of time among the immigrants from Ethiopia are those of the lower right cell, and are characteristic of many traditional agricultural societies. Time is grasped as circular or sometimes spiral. In most cases, time is the dependent variable and the task "receives the time it needs" Work planning, movement, plans for the day, are usually according to the height of the sun, the change in the seasons or the natural sequence of recurring tasks.

The social representations of ongoing time that is not cyclical are strange to most of the immigrants from Ethiopia, and they find it difficult to adjust to. On the other hand, most people in the host society do not understand cyclical time. Learning to read the clock is not enough to internalise the different social representation of time. The passage from a society

where representations of time are circular, to a society where the dominant representations of time are linear leaves the immigrants from Ethiopia without an orientation in time. The signposts for walking down the pathways of time have been lost. The core of the social representation of time is not mutual, the mutual parts are not enough of an anchor to create a change. The lack of understanding of both parties, where the problem originates, creates frustration and anger. (Hanegbi, 1989).

Table 2
Social representations of planning as an outcome of the social representations of time

	Linear time	Circular or spiral time
Planning the task according to time Time is the independent variable. Task is the dependant variable	Scheduling tasks by the time allotted. Interrupted and fragmented tasks. Time is a resource in itself -("Time is money").	Many tasks being done completely and simultaneously – as in Medieval guild workshops, or in a way – editing a newspaper.
Planning time according to task Task is the independent variable. Time is the dependant variable	Long range planning by stages: e.g. Primary School, High School, first degree in University, further professional training.	"Natural" time, finish harvest before sowing, finish sowing before rain, finish cooking a meal before doing laundry.

One of our interviewees explained why she had refused a better job that she had been offered at higher pay but that required her to use organised transportation to the workplace. "I can't manage with their time. The car comes on time and returns on time, but for me, my time does not suit that. Sometimes I come earlier and sometimes later. Sometimes I work fast and sometimes slow."

Another interviewee: "Sometimes, on the way to work I meet someone who is older – 'how are you, and how are your father, mother, children? I'm on pins and needles, late for work, and I can't say anything. He doesn't understand what time for work is, what being late means. Now we are talking, work is afterwards."

Western society, including the Israeli society, are societies that plan. The skills of planning on various levels are vital to their functioning. The representation of time as circular and natural, dependant on the task or changes in the surround is antithetical to long range planning. First, it does not include farseeing vision and even interferes with it, because the outlook is limited to the activity or the cycle of time. Second, these social representations do not require things to be finished at a specified time. On the contrary, times are decided by finishing tasks. Third, since time is dependent on the task, planning simultaneous, interconnected activity is beyond comprehension, it is an option that the social representations of time and planning exclude. It is not acceptable to fragment activities and intertwine them - an activity is to be done at its appropriate time, and each activity is thought about separately.

Role

The fragmentation of tasks, arbitrary time and planning are the characteristics of 'role' in a modern society. (Merton, 1957) 'Role' is quite a different social representation among the immigrants from Ethiopia. In Israeli society, 'role' is defined by tasks or parts of tasks, time and place. Among the Ethiopians immigrants, the connection between task and role is different. There are the ongoing tasks of agriculture, or the household, which are not defined as "roles", since they are not differentiated by function, (most of the community does the same thing), and such additional roles as the Kes (religious leader) or the Shmagle (village elder) are few in number.

The immigrants from Ethiopia are industrious and enjoy the results of their labour. The Western type of work that does not allow them to produce a finished product, and in some cases does not produce any product at all, confuses them (Ben – Ezer, 1989). The idea that work is done in a specific place and at a specific time and often in a specific manner and no other way, that work is not always done as a whole piece of work, that workers must be in that place at that time even if there is nothing for them to do, or the tasks have not been completed when the work day ends, seems strange to most Ethiopian immigrants. (Dassa, 1994). One Ethiopian that worked in a restaurant complained that it was hard for her to peel the vegetables and cut them up without cooking the soup from beginning to end. The problem of the "disappearance" of all Ethiopian immigrant workers, because there is a wedding, or more important a funeral, and without informing in advance, is a well known problem.

The different social representations of 'work" and 'role' are a central cause of misunderstandings in the workplace. In one case, a group leader of Ethiopian extraction was supposed to guide for an hour and a half in a certain clubroom that was open for three hours each time. The group leader remained there for the full three hours because "there were still people there", and she had come to guide the people. The arbitrary time of an hour and a half and the definition of the task did not stand up against the fact that there were still people there. The clock time was over, but the task was not. On the other hand, another group leader closed a clubroom because at the hour of opening there was nobody there, so "there was nothing to do".

The difference shown here has multiple layers. Among the Ethiopian immigrants, there is no equivalent for the Western representation of 'role' that is composed of defined tasks supported by the different representations for the relations between time, tasks, and place. Also there is no equivalent to the representation of time as linear and independent. For the immigrants from Ethiopia all this is non-existent. In order to function adequately in the host Israeli society, the immigrant can learn a series of procedures connected to his work, but a change in social representations and construction of new themata can take years, even generations. Interconnected themata, such as those shown in the example of time, role, and planning, together with the social representations of "authority", require changes to be made at the core of social representations, and in many levels and dimensions in order to be meaningful. In the meantime, it will be of help if both partners of the interaction will understand these differences of social representations.

Differences in the structure of division of labour and definition of social roles

One of the important structural characteristics of modern or post-modern society is the high degree of 'division of labour'. That is to say that such a society strongly differentiates roles, and demands a lot of specialisation. A member of a modern society has many roles, some occupational (teacher, student, driver) and some social (parent, friend, neighbour), and the demand for specialisation infiltrates social roles (courses for preparation for parenthood, for human relations, for interpersonal communication etc.). This multiplicity of roles together with the demand for expertise, produces two things. The first is the dominance of specific relationships, or role relationships (Parsons, 1951). Role relations are relations that stress the level at which the person carries out his role and not his character or his personality. The level of the role can even be what kind of a parent he is, or what kind of friend.

The second thing produced, is the multiplicity of social roles one has, according to occupation, position, what neighbourhood his home is in, hobbies, and social obligations - to the point of the role of "being a parent of a child in Ruth's kindergarten".

In Ethiopia, the society of the Jewish community was a traditional agricultural society, which was characterised by a low level of division of labour. There were general divisions into men, women children, a very thin level of leaders, and a few craftsmen who had no competition – crafts were usually passed from father to son (Ben-Ezer, 1989; Herman, 1996; Kaplan, 1992; Kaplan, 1995; Yitschak, 1989)

The children of a Western society grow up into a system of role relationships and of familiar social relationships. Child – kindergartner relationships, child – teacher relationships repeat themselves well beyond the specific kindergartner, teacher, or school that the child reaches at the age of three or four. When children are just learning to speak they learn 'driver', 'policeman', 'doctor'. When one says 'teacher' or 'doctor' there is a social representation full of meanings and expected behaviour patterns that are learned at the beginnings of acquiring concepts, which is parallel to the acquisition of speech. The same is for ''salesman' or 'clerk', or 'group leader'. These social representations so characteristic of Western society do not exist for the immigrants from Ethiopia. The representations of social roles are also different for immigrants from other places. How often do we hear "Well, that teacher comes from Russia. Things are different there." But in Russia or Argentina there are similar representations, with variations, that merely have to be adapted. The immigrants from Ethiopia have no such representations at all, because those social roles did not exist. She or he must learn it from the very beginning. Just as the representations for the complex nature of the Ethiopian Jews' society do not exist in the host society. We can only partially understand the role of 'shmegale' or of 'kes', but the deeper meanings of the way of life, of what one does when and where, when one has to turn to the 'shmegele' and how, will take us a very long time to learn. The great difference between the Ethiopians' complicated social life and its components which creates the different social representations, produces a dissonance in expectations and in defining roles for both sides.

The first example I would like to bring is that of a trip for the mothers and group leaders all new immigrants from Ethiopia, in which it was not possible for an outside observer to determine which participants were mothers and which were group leaders. The expectation that the group leaders would take over and lead, did not materialise, to the disappointment of the organisers.

In order to understand, we interviewed the group leaders. We asked them to talk about the trip. They had enjoyed it tremendously. Then we asked them what a group leader was. They gave an exact, iconic definition of their tasks as in the very particular program that they were working at: "A group leader is a person who goes into the homes of the mothers and guides them about raising children". "A group leader is a person who helps people and doctors in health clinics to understand each other". Although most of them were aware of what the others did, which was different from what they did, yet, they had not acquired a generalised concept of 'group leader'. In answer to our questions asking them to compare the tasks, they answered "Shula (fictitious name) is a group leader in the health clinic, and I am a group leader in the school". 'Group leader' remained a series of varying procedures dependent on concrete tasks and not some generalised themata existing above and beyond the actual tasks and not one of them in particular.

When we appoint a member of the Ethiopian community to be a group leader, we expect him/her to lead. The problem is that he/she does not have a representation for this. For him/her 'group leader' is comprised of the things we tell him/her to do, and only those. That is to say, there is a series of role specific procedures, but there are no themata for a group leader. He/she didn't meet a group leader when he/she was in the scouts, in school, in summer camp, in a museum, in television series. He/she didn't read about them in children's books, so he/she executes those parts of the role that were explained to him/her, and those only.

He/she will not do other things on his/her own initiative because he/she is not acquainted with the other functions of the role. This is a fertile ground for misapprehensions. The group leaders on the trip did not 'lead' because this part of the social role of 'group leader' in Israel was not known to them. Their function was to work in the clinic or the school, or the kindergarten, not to guide a trip. After the leadership aspect of their function was explained to them, the 'lack of initiative' in similar situations disappeared almost completely.

Often members of the Ethiopian community are wrongly seen as passive, lacking initiative, lazy or even stupid through no fault of their. This happens because the employers think that parts of the role assigned to them are obvious to them. In most cases this assumption is unwarranted. Both the Prince and the Pauper in Mark Twain's book were thought to have lost their sanity, or at least their memories, when they were forced to act a role unfamiliar to them (Twain, 1978). There is nothing that is self evident for a person who does not know the role he is expected to fill, and most of the immigrants from Ethiopia fill roles that are unfamiliar to them. Even worse, there is no representation for 'role'. In addition, in the Ethiopian immigrants culture, to take the initiative in the presence of someone senior to oneself is to be both impertinent and insubordinate. (Ben – Ezer, 1989).

To continue with this subject, our observations showed that in many cases in which instructions were not specific enough, misunderstandings occurred, even with easy tasks. In one case the group leaders were asked to prepare work materials. They were shown an example of the materials (work pages on a certain subject) and were told, "Now we will all prepare pages like this." The facilitator was surprised when the group leaders accurately copied the sample pages. This was not an isolated occurrence. In a different locality the same thing happened again when group leaders were asked to prepare posters for the holiday and all of them copied the sample poster. In activities that included filling in and colouring drawings, the same thing happened. In all these cases we are speaking about experienced and senior group leaders. Since they were shown an example and told to do 'like this' they did not know how much leeway they had in light of the instructions, since they had never before prepared something 'like this'.

The passivity frequently stems from unclear instructions. When instructions are not carried out it is usually because they were not understood and not because of laziness or rebelliousness. Group leaders of Ethiopian extraction were told to tell the mothers they were guiding to bring cooked potatoes to the children's holiday bonfire on Lag Ba'omer1. They didn't pass this on. When they were told "Tell the mothers to take potatoes, in their jackets, boil them for ten minutes in water, and bring them to the bonfire" there were no problems.

Knowledge that is taken for granted by the members of the host society and is organised in their basic social representations is not obvious to the immigrants from Ethiopia who acquired their basic knowledge in a world completely different from the one offered to them in Israel. They do not have the most basic themata such as electricity and conductivity – what one may touch and what not, which children in Israel learn when they first learn to crawl, or conceptions of health, or the fact the balloons blown up by breathing into them do not stick to the ceiling.

Themata of universal standards and criteria

As we said before, the familiar and dominant relations among the immigrants from Ethiopia are diffuse. That is to say that the attitude to people is to the individual person as a whole and includes all this person's characteristics. One aspect is not more important than

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1 A traditional Holiday celebrated around a bonfire.

another except, perhaps, for the leaders of the community. The importance lies in the whole person who stands before them.

The immigrants from Ethiopia know no other relationship, unlike the absorbing society, which discriminates between personal relationships and role relationships. They do not understand "he is a nice guy, but a lousy doctor" or "a fabulous manager but a real shit", nor do they understand when these distinctions are made about them. The new immigrant from Ethiopian who likes his employer will go through fire and water for him because the relationship is to the person, and will be insulted if his feeling is not reciprocated in the same manner. A report on his work introduces a foreign element, of disbelief, of strange procedures that are incompletely understood.

Nobody checks if the village blacksmith is a good blacksmith or a not-so-good blacksmith. There are no competing blacksmiths. It is important to understand that there are no representations for standards of execution in the Western sense. This is not to say that there are no standards or different standards, but there is no representation for 'standard'. People do as well as they can, usually for themselves, and whoever cannot do for himself is unsuccessful. Doing for others, including employers is not seen as having to stand up to criteria that go further than the inter-personal relation. Employer employee relationships are personal relationships. As a woman who worked as a maid explained; "I help her with cleaning the house and she helps me with money".

A large number of immigrants from Ethiopia find it difficult to internalise the meaning of standards of execution, but even more seriously they cannot separate the doing from the person that does. Good intentions are more important than good, but grudging, execution of tasks. When one joins this to the lack of representations for 'role' and a negative cultural attitude towards someone who gets paid for ,helping others, such as the social worker, the situation is troubling (Mandelzwieg 1991). Misunderstanding acts on both sides. Since the Ethiopian immigrants have no representation for standards of execution, or for 'role' they find it difficult to distinguish between good will and role, when role is a paid job. When there is good will from someone being paid for helping, they are suspicious. Many workers who are active in and for the Ethiopian immigrant community and give their all, are insulted by what they see as ingratitude for their work when they are told "Well, you get paid to do this." or "It's your job." when they expect gratitude for extra effort. This misunderstanding is greater when a problem does not get solved. Here the immigrants from Ethiopia feel simply cheated. Whoever is supposed to solve this problem not only gets paid, but doesn't do the work.

During extensive observation (for some years) of the members of the steering committee of 'The Association for the Advancement of the Ethiopian Family and Child in Israel', the members often expressed frustration. They defined themselves as a rubber stamp for the (paid, non-Ethiopian) manager of the Association and the senior professional staff. They were angry and frustrated because their decisions about certain activities were not being carried out at once. All the manager's explanations that the Association lives on contributions, that a program must be written, that money must be raised, and only then can the program be operated didn't help. Their complaints against the manager that were repeated again and again in interviews and observations were "She get paid for this and we are volunteers." The volunteer acts out of true motives and his rights are greater than those of the hired manager who acts out of the motivation of salary, and if the manager is paid then he/she must deliver the goods. If he/she does not deliver the goods he/she is seen as either impotent, or a scoundrel or an exploiter or all three.

A request of the group leaders in a certain program that they fill in a work report brought about a revolt out of sheer indignation. "They don't believe us that we work?" On the other hand reporting doesn't always convince. One group leader in a 'Parents Kindergarten', (so

called because every day a different parent comes to help the kindergartner in order to draw the parents closer to the kindergarten) had an impression that parents of Ethiopian extraction were really co-operating. A parents' attendance list that showed that the Ethiopian parents arrived only about 60% of the time, did not change this positive impression. We tried to understand. Perhaps she thought that this was the most that could be hoped for. We did not manage to convince her to pay attention to the statistics in any way. The dialog went like this:

> Group Leader: Danny's mother always comes, Janet's mother comes, Janet's father comes too.
> Interviewer: On Monday nobody came and on Wednesday nobody came.
> Group Leader: Meir's father and mother came together.
> Interviewer: This week there was a parent only on one day.
> Group Leader: David's mother said that she understands now what happens in Vicki's kindergarten.

It would seem that both sides relate to two different worlds of content. It wasn't that the group leader didn't understand the record of attendance – she had made it herself at our request. Her feelings about her good relations with the parents was the meaningful criterion of the parents participation. For her, this was far more meaningful than an attendance sheet.

Themata of bureaucracy

Modern society is bureaucratic. It is run bureaucratically all over the modern world by bureaucratic organisations for any goal, which communicate with each other world-wide, in every field, according to clear and specific rules which are public and predetermined. Banking and economics, science and research, medicine, newspapers and communications, computerisation, fashion, transportation, - you name it, are included. Bureaucratic hierarchical organisations cannot function properly unless their rules for operation are clear. Since we are speaking about world-wide rules, they must conform to universal criteria according to which we receive services or pay our debts or have any other contact with these organisations. The criteria can be in any area or field depending on the nature of the matter – age, income, size, occupation, number of children, state of health etc.

In the Jewish community in Ethiopia there was no bureaucracy. The contact of the members of the community with bureaucratic or governmental agencies was rare. It was not part of people's lives, particularly the people from rural areas in Ethiopia, who form the major part of the community. The dominant characteristic of relationships in the Jewish communities was relationship to the person and the criteria for any act are particularistic.

Most of the immigrants from Ethiopia have no themata for bureaucracy as we have noted. Even the simpler components of bureaucracy, such as concepts of linear time, standards, social roles, division of labour, impersonal grasp of a situation are not among their themata.

A large number of the immigrants from Ethiopia find it difficult to understand bureaucratic functions and even harder to distinguish between them. For many of them, any official is 'government' ('menegist'). Mostly many do not discriminate between the different functions. The immigrants are frequently helpless when faced with the bewildering choice of to whom to turn and with what matter, and why specifically to that one. The bureaucracy is grasped as a series of non-logical procedures that must be carried out, but when speaking of a society as complex as the host Israeli society, the number of procedures is infinite unless one has basic themata for how the system works.

A group leader who didn't find the clerk Susan in the National Insurance Institute, the clerk who had previously dealt with her, went home empty – handed, without knowing that there

must be someone else taking Susan's place. In another case, a community worker with an academic degree who was working with a group of activists explained to them how a certain activity was funded. "The municipal departments of absorption and of welfare, operate from the same budget. All of them are connected together from above". At the same time he knows very well how to turn to different bodies for funding as well as several useful 'tricks'. That shows that procedures exist but no themata for the structure of bureaucratic organisations. He cannot differentiate between the different bodies – "They are all the same thing." in its literal meaning. Another comment "Well, all the budgets for everybody are from the same place." was not referring to the taxpayer.

In the schools the different functions of the class teacher, the special subjects teachers, the guidance counsellor and the principal are not always clear to the Ethiopian parents. They don't know to whom they are supposed to talk. In one case a parent stated his problem to the Ethiopian guard at the entrance to the school and was convinced that he had dealt with the problem. The schools are far from understanding the source of the problem and tend to accuse the Ethiopian parents of not co-operating.

When there are themata for bureaucracy it is relatively easy to adapt them to the local procedures in different countries and different offices. But when there are no representations, the procedures already mastered are not joined to a body of knowledge which would make them applicable in a different situation. Furthermore, learning and remembering a series of unconnected procedures is very difficult, and the greater the number of procedures the more impossible it becomes. This perhaps is one of the reasons for the feeling of helplessness that the immigrants from Ethiopia have vis-à-vis the various offices that are supposed to serve them. There is also the difficulty for the staff of these offices that deliver the service, difficulty that goes beyond problems of language.

The social representation of universal criteria is totally foreign to most of the immigrants from Ethiopia. There is learning up to the stage of 'that's the way' but this is grasped as peculiar and unjust. It makes them feel frustrated and helpless, alienated and shut out. Since universal criteria by their very nature are aimed toward some average, there are always those who are hurt by them and those who profit from them. A feeling of being treated unjustly, of being discriminated against by some arbitrary and capricious power is taking root among the Ethiopian community. If we add to this the ability of the strong to profit more from the bureaucratic system and the failure of the weak to know what their rights are and to fight for them, this feeling of injury grows stronger.

The maladjustment is double. There is maladjustment on the relatively overt level of values. The accepted Ethiopian-immigrants' social representation of 'fairness' that a person receives according to his needs, according to individual criteria no longer holds. On the other hand the method of universal criteria is not understood, so the origins of its lack of accuracy is not as clear. It is one thing to say that criteria are not fair when there is a social representation for universal criteria. Then one must only fight to change the criteria. When the unfairness is not connected to any themata or known system of representations they are seen as arbitrary and increase the feeling of helplessness.

The themata of groups

A recurring phenomenon in almost all the groups that were observed was the high dropout rate, and the great difficulty of building groups that were stable. Program directors would enrol forty people so that the program would begin with twenty-five and end with eight. From interviews with program directors it turns out that this phenomenon is one of the greatest frustrations of program managers working with the immigrants from Ethiopia.

On the other hand we also saw the opposite – programs that began with two or three participants and within a few meetings grew to ten and remained stable. When we asked the participants and the dropouts why they didn't come, the answers were typically: "I don't know anybody there, I don't understand why they put us together." "These people are not friends and not family. I have nothing to do with them." "I was there alone." Even if the purpose of starting the group was interesting and important for them, the idea of being in a group with people who were "not family and not friends" and without understanding "Why are these people with me?" prevented the continuation of the activity.

Modern Western society with its multiplicity of roles organises people into all sorts of secondary groups according to function. The different groups are of different importance, but nobody finds it strange to find himself in all sorts of groups that impinge on his life, such as at work, in studies, in housing, as parents of children etc. Groups whose membership is firm (at least at the beginning) have relationships that are ad-hoc, secondary and specific.

There were very few secondary groups for the immigrants from Ethiopia in Ethiopia. Groups were generally primary – the extended family, and a group of close friends. These were groups that were developed over a long time, sometimes all ones life, from earliest childhood. These groups are characterised by diffuse relationships and are the relevant reference groups.

The host society builds systems of care in a bureaucratic manner and according to accepted criteria: Mothers of children aged 0-3, single mother families, men before or after army service, groups of occupational trainees, groups according to level of education, etc. These groups are meaningless for the immigrants from Ethiopia both because they don't know the representations by which the groups are built, and because the representation of a secondary group is non-existent. This would appear to be the reason for the difficulty in building such groups and the reason for their rapid disintegration. When a group grows 'naturally', by 'internal enrolment' it is constructed according to primary relations: family members and friends, and thus are stable.

It well may be that the manner of building groups in the host society is one of the causes of the suspiciousness of the immigrants from Ethiopia towards the whole system of the establishment. Since they don't understand it they generally suspect its motives (Ben-Ezer, 1989)

Themata of authority and social status

The hierarchical social system in Ethiopia is a traditional system in which the basic components of sex and age determine the status of an individual. The literal meaning of the word 'Shmegele' (village elder) is a person older than forty. The 'kesim,' (religious leaders of the community) are not included. Their function is not inherited and they study for this function from early childhood (Mandelzveig, 1991).

The dominant status in modern bureaucratic society is the achieved status. This is so in the host Israeli society. Education, specialisation, professionalism, money, change the status of the individual.

The social representation of achieved status includes ambition and planning. When status is ascribed status, it is almost impossible to change it – not to mention difficulties previously mentioned derived from different representations for time, role, and other factors. Achieved status is built for each individual separately. The fact that one's father is a doctor may give a candidate for medical school a head start, but cannot assure this status if one doesn't study. Thus a huge effort, from one's earliest years, is invested in attaining this status.

In a system of ascribed status this sort of effort is not required.

The immigrants from Ethiopia have learned that the key to success in Israeli society lies in education. Ethiopian parents want their children to study in universities, (almost 90% of the parents interviewed expressed this desire). Except that the practical, day-to-day connection that begins at the child's birth, for constructing this kind of future, the long-range planning by stages in linear time which are the components of achieved status, are excluded by the social representations of ascribed statuses system, time circularity, and circular planing. It is excluded, in my opinion, because we are dealing with very strong cohesion in a community that does not encourages variety, that presses people to be alike.

The knowledge of how to get the maximum from the bureaucratic organisations that shape this path, or at least to guarantee that they get the minimum, is a non-existent themata. The basic elements are missing.

The transfer of authority to outside agencies of the establishment – "The government teaches the children." "The teachers – the government pays them to teach." –and the acceptance of this responsibility by the authorities who did not involve the parents from the beginning in educational decisions concerning their own children, strengthens the abdication of the parents from the process of education.

The professionals and the Ethiopian para-professionals function in two contradictory systems of status. In the workplace they function in a hierarchical framework where their status is determined by professional standards according to the Israeli concept of achieved status. For most of the Ethiopian community this status is meaningless. Especially noticeable is the gap for women who work with the community. They study, specialise, professionalise and approach their clients as experts in their field. Their clients have the social representation for 'Ethiopian women'. Whatever they may have learned or not learned is not perceived. First of all, there are professions the immigrants from Ethiopia see as part of the absorbing society: social workers, kindergarteners, teachers, and any Ethiopian from those professions is not accepted. "But you're not 'white cheese' so you are not a kindergartner!" exclaimed an Ethiopian child to an Ethiopian kindergartner who introduced herself to the children. Secondly, the social representations include the distinctions of age status. A young Ethiopian woman who is supposed to guide a much older woman is an impossibility. To guide a male is beyond belief.

Here too, the problem is duple. The overt level is the maladjustment of the customs and culture of the immigrants from Ethiopia. The covert level is the existing social representations of social roles that do not include (or even exclude) achieved status. This fact does not permit possibilities of competition for status and planning for its achievement.

In observations conducted in a psychodynamic workshop for women of Ethiopian extraction, the participants who were senior, relatively educated, and who had been working for more than 10 years in Israel, made it clear that the whole process of working in the absorbing society is a long and ongoing process of narcissistic injury and insult. These are women who are highly valued in their places of work (Heyman & Hylel, 1998).

As we noted, the social representations of Ethiopian immigrants don't include standards nor is there a representation for specific relationships. That makes the Ethiopian immigrants extremely sensitive to what they see as an insult to their honour or prejudice when speaking of their professional status or of the standards of execution of their function. Since their approach is diffusive, they also grasp any comment on their work diffusely – as a personal insult. That makes learning and improving almost impossible, and form the situation of work as an on going insulting process.

Community orientation

Among the immigrants from Ethiopia the ties to the community and the clan are very strong and identification with the community is dominant in spite of internal disputes and friction. A well known phenomenon is attendance at funerals which, since the deceased belonged to the community, each member feels obliged to attend (even when they didn't know him or his nuclear family personally). Weddings also are obligatory community celebrations like a departmental seminar in the university. This does not depend on personal acquaintance with the couple getting married.

The 'aliya' (immigration) to Israel was also a community activity. The community decided to go to Israel as a community. The immigration to Israel, in the last century, had been of individuals. Even the huge immigration from the Soviet republics was made up of a mass of individuals. That was the uniqueness of the exodus from Ethiopia, which elicited parallels to the biblical exodus from Egypt – being a communal and not an individual affair. Other immigrations, even if they came on foot and suffered from highwaymen, like the immigration from Iraq or from Turkey in the '30s, have little similarity to the Ethiopian aliya.

We have mentioned the differences in the meanings of secondary and functional relationships in modern society to the primary and essentially diffuse relationships in Jewish-Ethiopian society. These differences connect and stem from the different nature of the type of social solidarity, or the differences in the structure of the community between the two cultures. In the host Israeli societies solidarity is linked to mutual dependence of one occupation on the occupation or specialisation of others. The solidarity of the Jewish-Ethiopian community is the 'togetherness' of the community. (Durkheim, 1933).

The community is the basic themata for the Ethiopian immigrants. Their significant activities are community activities, face to face. As a member of a community the Ethiopian immigrants accept the totality of customs – dress, behaviour, patterns of language, idioms and even common patterns of thought.

Themata of communality include activities that are done together. The social representations of communalism, including self – identification with the group, the feeling of 'belonging', of participating, includes remaining similar. The social representations of the main stream in the host Israeli society include individualism and encourage people to 'do their own thing'. The further one goes in professionalism and specialisation, the better one is in his profession, and the more he contributes to society.

We can see two layers here as well. The relatively overt layer of culture and customs, of the social structure of the community can be observed. But in the depths is the representation of what it means to be an Ethiopian Jew. This means being a member of a community. This is not a matter of choice or of social pressure which hold on the overt level as well, but of lack of a cognitive possibility to see oneself differently, as an individual. For most of the members of the Jewish-Ethiopian community the possibility of determining one's own life-style does not exist. It is excluded by the existing themata of community life. This exclusion makes change a very difficult process.

Conclusion

The aim of this work was to examine some questions concerning social representations emerging from the social structure, social organization of a society, and what happens when two societies with different social organization come to live together.

The answers, I think, are clear. Difference in social structure and organization does create very different *themata* and different inter-related systems of social representations. The

impact of these differences is in almost every aspect of life. The social representations are stable by nature, and resistant to change, especially when one is speaking of the most basic representations of the principles that organise the socio-cultural surround. From what we saw, the stability of social representations, even under the pressure of the situation of a new country, and a new way of life, is remarkable.

Social representations tend to reveal themselves all the time and in the less expected areas. An example from last month can illustrate it. The deputy manager of a big association, which conducts programs for early childhood, add his signature, including his job title, to a petition sent to the minister of education, demanding that money not be given for early childhood programs, but rather to students. The deputy is a young man who arrived from Ethiopia at the age of ten in Operation Solomon. He was an officer in the army in a prestigious elite unit, and finished his university degree in social work. He couldn't understand why his colleagues at the association were cross with him. "All my friends signed this petition" he explained. Friends (primary group) are more important then a job role and title. Identification with an organization (even one where you have high rank) is difficult or non-existent. (Beside the fact that young children are in the lowest status among the Jewish-Ethiopian community).

Why is this so? It seems to me that these differences are so very difficult to overcome for several reasons.

The first reason is that the disparity is mutual. Both groups are unable to apply or to understand the social representations of the other. There are not enough anchors in both groups' social representations to bridge the misunderstandings. The fact that the language used by both groups is Hebrew, paradoxically increases the gap. The use of a common language gives the mistaken notion that we are speaking of the same thing, that the same word or verbal term means the same thing to both groups. This is frequently incorrect. The common language makes it more difficult to find and identify the basic misunderstanding.

The second difficulty is that we are speaking of two groups that are trying to mesh together, without losing their particular identity, and not of individuals trying to integrate into a different group. Social representations are a social product and so their change must be through social discourse and social experience. The way of life of the immigrants from Ethiopia in Israel, in relatively closed and isolated communities, with little contact with the host society, does not promote the mutual change that is desired.

As time passes and both groups become more intermingled, the differences in social representations become more and more significant and cause more and more difficulties. The more the interactions between the groups in daily life become frequent, the more the misunderstandings and problems multiply. The friction between the groups may serve to maximise the possibility that the social representations will change for both groups, but it may also maximise mutual exclusion. This may preserve the internal dialogue in each group separately, but it will also perpetuate the existing difficulties or even intensify them.

The meetings between the two societies are fragmentary and the treatment is local. From the theory and research into 'social representations' we learned that the overt differences in the structure and organization of a society and the group behaviours, are simply a visible stratum of covert social representations. One of their roles is to give the overt dimension its meanings. Change in the overt stratum without change in the underlying social representations and *themata,* produces fragments of knowledge, which do not connect together. This incoherent fragmentation is confusing. Since social representations are interconnected and create a coherent cognitive – affective - behavioural body, the fragments of knowledge, which are acquired in a random and haphazard manner cannot produce a change. If these fragments of knowledge cannot be joined to the existing representations, if there are no anchors to connect the fragments of new knowledge to the existing social representations, they remain

isolated. The argument that stems from this theory is that dealing with the overt behaviour without understanding the underlying social representations will not succeed in making a significant change that can be applied in other areas.

Our ongoing behaviour is mostly part of our social representations. We can behave according to isolated procedures that we learned *ad-hoc* sometimes, but we can't avoid (as shown in the article) the revelation in everyday life of inadequate social representations, and the consequent maladjustment to every day situations.

Why do the social representations that emerge from social structure and social organization have so much influence? I think that because of two main reasons. One, as shown in the article, social representations emerging from social organization are core social representations that connect to many other social representations, such as time, roles, bureaucracy, job, specialisation, standards, achieved status, in themata that deal with very large parts of every day life.

Second, which is more important, these social representations are almost transparent. We usually just don't see them. They are so obvious that we usually don't notice them. We (and I mean in all societies) seldom notice our social structure, it is something that we born into and learn to function in, without much thought. There are many other social representations and *themata* such as those dealing with skin colour, or Judaism, or purification customs, or folk stories and fables. Every one can see the difference of skin colour, or notice the difference of heritage. Many programs for the Ethiopian population in Israel deal with these subjects. It is easy to see the differences in health and illness concepts, and there are programs that help in this area. We observe economics and politics systems. But how can you see social structure and social organization, not as separate isolated procedures but as an underlying unified whole? Our social organization is something so comprehensive that it envelops us like the atmosphere envelops the earth. The atmosphere is not visible to us despite its enormous influence on our life. This quality, this transparency of the social representations emerging from social structure, obscures them from our sight and makes the communication problem they create so difficult to deal with.

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