



Master of Arts Thesis
Euroculture

University of Strasbourg (First semester)
Palacký University Olomouc (Second semester)

August 2024

Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan

Submitted by:

Assel Mauliyeva

Student number University of Strasbourg: 22218837

Student number Palacký University Olomouc: 80127839

Contact details: +33749039676 / asselmauliyeva@gmail.com

Supervised by:

Mgr. Lukáš Perutka, Ph.D.

Samim Akgönül, Ph.D.

Place, date

Strasbourg, August 1, 2024

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Assel Mauliyeva".



MA Program Euroculture Declaration.

I, Assel Mauliyeva, hereby declare that this thesis, entitled “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan”, submitted as a partial requirement for the MA Program Euroculture, is my original work and expressed in my own words. Any use made within this text of works of other authors in any form (e.g., ideas, figures, texts, tables, etc.) are properly acknowledged in the text as well as in the bibliography.

I declare that the written (printed and bound) and the electronic copy of the submitted MA thesis are identical.

I hereby also acknowledge that I was informed about the regulations pertaining to the assessment of the MA thesis Euroculture and about the general completion rules for the Master of Arts Program Euroculture.

In case the research process involved participants (especially participants from vulnerable communities and populations), please ensure that the following boxes can be ticked before submitting the thesis, or tick the third box, if not applicable to your project:

- I declare that I have obtained the required permission from the relevant ethics committees of the two universities supervising my thesis concerning my research proposal in order to proceed with proposed research involving participants;
- I declare that I have obtained informed consent from these participants and that the consent forms are stored lawfully and in accordance with the rules of the two universities supervising my thesis.

The two items above do not apply to this project.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Assel Mauliyeva".

Date: August 1, 2024

Abstract.

Kazakhstan is home to people of different ethnicities with varying cultures and customs. One of the main reasons behind this cultural diversity lies in its history. Its location on the Eurasian continent made it easy for neighboring countries to travel to and explore its territories. Many people migrated to Kazakhstan voluntarily, but most of them did not arrive on their own accord. The main reason for this is that the Soviet authorities, as part of their repressive policies, chose to send people of different nationalities to Kazakhstan. The vast and poorly populated territories of Kazakhstan were perfect places to welcome forcibly deported newcomers. The main waves of Stalin's deportations took place in the 1940s. Germans were one of the ethnic groups severely impacted by this deportation. This thesis aims to examine "The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan." The thesis aims to address a crucial question concerning the evolution of the German diaspora: How did different waves of migration to Kazakhstan impact the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans? In an attempt to answer this important question, this thesis applies a mixed-methods approach, combining historical methodology using six collections of archives with a semi-structural interview method with five Kazakh German participants. The thesis will help to understand the migration history of Germans to the Russian Empire and Kazakhstan and investigate the transformation of the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans.

Key words: Diaspora, ethnic identity, migration, deportation, Russification.

Number of words: 29 549

Preface.

Kazakhs say that Kazakhstan is a bridge between Europe and Asia. Not only does its geographic location make it diverse, but so does its cultural heritage. Since very ancient times, the Central Asian steppes have been the homeland of the current Turkish, Bulgarian, and Hungarian people. As a result of similar migratory trajectories, modern Kazakhstan has people who belong to a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Ethnical, cultural, and historical diversity of my country is a unique trait that makes me proud of it. Having a combination of two continents, it can undoubtedly be referred as Eurasia.

Although I was familiar with Kazakhstan's history, I had never thoroughly examined the histories of ethnic minorities in our country. As I began my research on the topic, I found myself deeply immersed in analysis and discovered a life-changing fact. While deciding on what diasporic group to choose for my thesis, I learned the surprising news that I am related to ethnic Germans in the USSR. Having learned that my great-grandfather was an ethnic German who moved from Russia to Kazakhstan, I got even more excited to conduct my research.

However, despite being interesting, the topic of the evolution of the German diaspora in Kazakhstan has its own difficulties and limitations. Strict surveillance and secrecy still surround most Soviet-era documents. Therefore, I have tried my best to write this thesis using the available information from the documents and interviews. As a person of mixed background, I also have a small part of German ancestry, and I can confidently declare that I am analyzing my family's history.

Acknowledgments.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisors, Professor Lukáš Perutka and Professor Samim Akgönül, for providing guidance, constructive criticism, and insightful feedback throughout this journey.

Secondly, I extend my deepest thanks to academic experts in the German diaspora in the USSR who agreed to come in contact with me and share their valuable work. Namely, I would like to thank Alfred Eisfeld, Viktor Krieger, Arafat Mamyrbekov, and Johnathan Otto Pohl. Their research helped me delve into the unknown historical aspects of the German diaspora, both in the USSR and Kazakhstan.

Furthermore, I would like to express my wholehearted appreciation to my loving family. Without their support and encouragement, I would not be able to achieve my goals and aspirations. They were constantly sending me different archival materials that included books, documents, and newspapers from different libraries in Kazakhstan.

Last but not least, a huge thanks to the entire Euroculture program. The academic staff and coordinators have always been very helpful and understanding throughout the whole program. I am honored to be part of the 2022–2024 cohort. My Euroculture journey allowed me to not only enrich my academic knowledge, but it also strengthened my multicultural and communication skills. As a person considering herself to be a world citizen, Euroculture is a dream come true.

Table of Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	3
<i>Preface</i>	4
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	5
<i>Introduction</i>	9
<i>Literature Review</i>	17
Theoretical Framework	17
1.1. Internal Cultural Imperialism	19
1.2. The Concepts of Russification and Mankurtization	20
1.3. The Concepts of Diaspora and Ethnic Identity	21
Methodology	22
1.1. Historical Methodology	25
1.2. Semi-structured Interviews	25
1.3. Ethical Considerations	26
Chapter 1. Germans of Kazakhstan: from voluntary to forced migration	26
1.1. Migration of Germans to Russian Empire (XVIII-XX)	27
1.2. Migration of Germans to Kazakhstan (1880-1917).....	33
1.3. The position of Germans in Kazakhstan after the creation of the USSR (1917-1941)	38
Chapter 2. Life of ethnic Germans during and after the mass deportation (1941-1950)	38
2.1. Deportation	42
2.2. Labor Army	46
2.3. Cultural Aspects	52
Chapter 3. Rehabilitation policy: mechanisms and consequences (1953-1991)	52
3.1. Political stabilization process of German diaspora of Kazakhstan.....	57
3.2. Development of cultural and spiritual life of Germans in education and religion	64
3.3. Development of cultural life of Germans in arts and mass media.....	70
<i>Interview Results</i>	72
<i>Conclusion</i>	73
<i>Bibliography</i>	83
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	84
Appendices	85

Appendix A - Interview Guide86

Appendix B - Information Letter87

Appendix C - Informed Consent89

Appendix D - Debriefing Letter90

Introduction.

Kazakhstan is a multinational country that has about 124 ethnicities and nationalities.¹ Those nationalities, despite having different origins, have a number of things in common. Although according to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazakh is the official language of the country, one of the main things that unite all of the Kazakh people and various diasporic groups in Kazakhstan is the Russian language, which is considered to be the language of official communication. The fact that all people in Kazakhstan can speak Russian is related to its history. First, it was part of the Russian Empire since 1731, then it became part of the USSR in 1936.²

This mixture of population and the use of the Russian language was a result of the cruel policies of Russian officials who tried to wipe off the national identity of different ethnic groups. One of these ethnic groups is the German diaspora in Kazakhstan. Nowadays, it is the seventh-largest diaspora in Kazakhstan. However, once upon a time, right before the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was the third-largest ethnic group in our country.³ The reason for this is the fact that after the fall of the USSR, most of them went back to their historical homeland. Today, Germans in Kazakhstan and Germans who left after the collapse of the Soviet Union have strong ties and connections thanks to the special policies of the German and Kazakh governments.

In my thesis, I am going to examine “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan.” In particular, I am going to analyze how different waves of migration to Kazakhstan affected the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans. Firstly, I will provide a historical overview of the arrival of ethnic Germans in Russia, their reasons for doing so, and the activities they participated in prior to their migration to Kazakhstan. Later, I will explain the migration process of the first German migrants to Kazakh territories, leading up to the period of mass deportation that began in 1941. Not only did the mass deportation affect ethnic Germans, but it also left deep scars on the local

¹ Vladimir Nikitin, “V Kazakhstane Prozhivayut Predstavately 124 Natsyonalnostey,” [“Representatives of 124 nationalities live in Kazakhstan”], *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, May 1, 2023, <https://www.kp.kz/online/news/5250538/>.

² A. Rubaev and O. Niconov, “Rossiya i Kazakhstan: Istoricheskiy Opyt Vzaimootnosheniya I Perspektivy Sotrudnichestva,” [“Russia and Kazakhstan: historical experience of mutual relations and prospects for cooperation”], *Svobodnaya Mysl*, 2021, 172. <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/rossiya-i-kazahstan-istoricheskiy-opyt-vzaimootnosheniya-i-perspektivy-sotrudnichestva>.

³ “Nemtsy Sostavlyayut 0,92 % Ot Naseleniya Kazakhstana,” [“Germans Make up 0.92% of the Population of Kazakhstan”], *DAZ Asia*, December 2, 2023, <https://daz.asia/ru/nemtsy-sostavlyayut-0-92-ot-naseleniya-kazahstana/>.

Kazakh population. In order to provide a clear understanding of the realities of that time and what people have been through, I will analyze Kazakhstan's labor armies. Next, I will analyze the living conditions of Kazakh Germans from the rehabilitation period until Kazakhstan's independence.

The study focuses on the German diaspora in Kazakhstan from the 19th century until the collapse of the Soviet Union and describes how the hardships they went through affected their ethnic identity. In order to examine "The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan," this paper employs the historical method and semi-structured interviews. I hypothesize that different waves of migration to Kazakhstan drastically affected the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans; however, despite the numerous challenges they faced, they managed to preserve their German identity. The interviews aim to validate this hypothesis and pinpoint the ways in which modern Kazakh Germans identify themselves. This thesis seeks to delve into the complex process of the evolution of the German diaspora in Kazakhstan while also examining the effects of migration on their ethnic identity.

Literature Review.

"The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan" is a long process that resulted from several waves of voluntary and forced migrations. The first German settlers started moving to Kazakh territories in the 18th century. However, the primary influx of individuals of German descent occurred as a result of forced deportation. The early 1940s are known to be the period of mass deportations in the Soviet Union. Many ethnic minorities, such as Crimean Tatars, Koreans, and Chechens, were the victims of such a cruel policy.⁴ The Soviet Germans were the ethnic group most impacted by this forced relocation. The lives of Soviet Germans in the USSR have attracted considerable attention from researchers. However, much of this scholarship has traditionally focused on the communities in the Volga and Black Sea regions, since it is the place of primary settlement of Germans in Russia. There are fewer studies about the deportation of ethnic Germans to Kazakhstan and the evolution of the German diaspora because, for a long time, this topic has been restricted. Even after the death of Stalin in 1953, no researcher could write or publish any work related to the repressive policies of the Soviet Union. Only with the independence of Kazakhstan in 1991 did local scholars find the freedom to delve into the previously forbidden topic. Although the topic of the establishment of the German diaspora in Kazakhstan received attention from Western scholars, most of the works that have existed in the last thirty years have

⁴ Jonathan Otto Pohl, "The Persecution of Ethnic Germans in the USSR during World War II," *The Russian Review* 75, no. 2 (2016): 285, <https://doi.org/10.1111/russ.12075>.

been written in Russian. This literature review seeks to examine existing research on the topic of “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan”, identify gaps, and lay the groundwork for the analysis and design of the research.⁵

Scholars specializing in the German diaspora in Kazakhstan either have German roots or are graduates of German history departments. This explains why most of the works are written in Russian. Compared to existing literature in Russian, there are far fewer works conducted in Kazakh and English. Among the scholarship written in English about the deportation of Soviet Germans to Kazakhstan, the most notable are the works written by Jonathan Otto Pohl. His expertise in the history of ethnic minorities within the USSR is evident in his monograph called “The Years of Great Silence: The Deportation, Special Settlement, and Mobilization into the Labor Army of Ethnic Germans in the USSR, 1941–1955.” This monograph is based on two different archival sources in Moscow: The State Archives of the Russian Federation and the Russian State Archives of Socio-Political History. It gives detailed information about the deportation of Germans to different Soviet states, including Kazakhstan. The author skillfully traces the forced resettlement of more than a million Soviet Germans from their ancestral homelands to Kazakhstan under the Stalin’s regime. Together with revealing the severe trials and difficulties that ethnic Germans were subjected to during their deportation, the author examines their experience in the labor army.⁶

In his other article, called “Forced Labor in a Socialist State: Ethnic Germans From Kazakhstan and Central Asia in the Labor Army 1941–1957,” Jonathan Otto Pohl examines the mobilization of ethnic Germans into the labor army of Kazakhstan. He gives a thorough explanation of how and why the labor army was created, its legal and material conditions, and the discrimination that ethnic Germans experienced during their work there. The author of this article especially highlights gender discrimination in labor camps because the only women to work in those camps were of German nationality.⁷

Another work written in English by Andrew Brown under the title “The Germans of Germany and the Germans of Kazakhstan: A Eurasian Volk in the Twilight of Diaspora” mostly focuses on the exodus of ethnic Germans to their historical homeland after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The

⁵ Jonathan Otto Pohl, *The Years of Great Silence: The Deportation, Special Settlement, and Mobilization into the Labor Army of Ethnic Germans in the USSR, 1941-1955*, vol. 238 (Ibidem-Verlag, 2022), 19.

⁶ Pohl, *The Years of Great Silence*.

⁷ Jonathan Otto Pohl, *Forced Labor in a Socialist State: Ethnic Germans From Kazakhstan and Central Asia in the Labor Army-1941-1957*, *International Crimes and History*, 2017.

author briefly described the history of German migration to Russia and Kazakhstan, up until massive deportations. This article also examines the difficulties of their lives in Kazakhstan during the Second World War and the discrimination they faced by the Soviet authorities. The author stated that in the past, Germans made up the majority population in Kazakhstan, following Kazakhs and Russians; however, this changed drastically in the early 2000s. Many Kazakh Germans immigrated to Germany. The main reason for this was ethnic Germans' desire to have a better economic and political situation in a more developed country. However, the interviews in this article, which provide opinions on the treatment of ethnic Germans in Kazakhstan during the early 2000s, do not accurately reflect the realities of that time. To be more precise, Andrew Brown stated that one of the reasons why Germans from Kazakhstan decided to move to Germany was that they were required to speak Kazakh by the authorities. However, after the collapse of the USSR as well as in present days, Russian is still the predominant language in Kazakhstan.⁸

Other English writers, such as Eric Schmaltz and Samuel D. Sinner, have been more critical of the Soviet policies of deportation. In their article “‘Will Die under Ruins and Snow’: The Soviet Repression of Russian Germans as a Case Study of Successful Genocide,” they claimed that tragic events such as famine, dekulakization, and mass deportation in 1941 led to the deaths of thousands of Germans, which is equal to genocide. For them, Soviet policies had a contradictory nature. When the authorities claimed to help German people and restore their ethnic culture, none of the promises were fully realized. The authors highlighted that even when Soviet authorities were making national-cultural concessions to minorities, including ethnic Germans, they were only aimed at satisfying Western demands for human rights.⁹ Alfred Einfeld, in an interview with a BBC journalist, supported the argument that the Soviet Union committed genocide against ethnic Germans in the USSR. He concluded that, as a result of forced deportations and work in labor armies, one-third of the Soviet German population lost their lives. He also emphasized that the consequences of deportations and the separation of the young, reproductive German population in work columns were signs of genocide. As a result, the German nation's gene pool was undermined.¹⁰

⁸ Andrew J. Brown, “The Germans of Germany and the Germans of Kazakhstan: A Eurasian Volk in the Twilight of Diaspora,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no. 4 (June 2005): 625–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668130500105290>.

⁹ Eric J. Schmaltz and Samuel D. Sinner, “‘you Will Die under Ruins and Snow’: The Soviet Repression of Russian Germans as a Case Study of Successful Genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 4, no. 3 (2002): 327–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520220151943>.

¹⁰ Yuri Vendyk, “Doktor Einfeld: Deportatsya Sovetskikh Nemtsev Imeyet Priznaky Genocida,” [“Dr. Einfeld: “The deportation of Soviet Germans has signs of genocide”], BBC News Russkaya Sluzhba, September 26, 2016. <https://www.bbc.com/russian/features-37447483>.

The works written in Kazakh mostly focus on a specific region where the researcher has resided. One of such works is the monograph written by Arafat Mazhituly Mamyrbekov called “Shygys Kazakhstandagy Nemis Zhane Polyak Diyasporalarinin Tarihy (XX Gasyr),” which translates as “The Histories of German and Polish Diasporas in East Kazakhstan (XX Century).” The monograph is based on Russian and Kazakh national archival documents. In its part about the German diaspora, it does not only describe the migration movement of ethnic Germans to Kazakhstan but also examines their sociodemographic situation and cultural development during the 20th century. The author proficiently examined the migration waves of ethnic Germans to Kazakhstan as a whole, highlighting the Eastern region up until the rehabilitation policies of the government after the fall of Stalin’s regime. For my research, the part about the cultural development of Germans during and after the deportation holds special significance.¹¹

The article written by Atantayeva, Karibayeva and Karibayev under the name “Deportation of Germans: Adaptation and Life According to Oral Historical Sources” makes a good contribution to the topic of deportation of ethnic Germans to Kazakhstan. It describes the process of deportation which took place in 1941 and its consequences. The article is mainly based on the oral interviews of descendants of the deportees who were directly involved in the deportation process. It narrates history through the perspectives of people who overcame the difficulties of the Stalin’s regime and found a new home in Kazakhstan. The interviews allow its readers to familiarize themselves with the events of that time and delve into the emotions of the people who experienced it. However, the authors of this research focus only on the families who reside in Eastern Kazakhstan.¹²

A monograph authored by Tabuldenov A.N. called “Deportatsya Narodov I Evakuatsya v Severnyi Kazakhstan (1937–1956)”, which translates as “Deportations of Peoples and Evacuation of the Population to Northern Kazakhstan (1937–1956)”, also greatly contributes to the existing literature. The research reveals the features of the Soviet state’s resettlement policy, the process of receiving and accommodating the population deported and evacuated to the northern regions of

¹¹ Arafat Mazhituly Mamyrbekov, *Shygys Kazakhstadagy Nemis Zhane Polyak Diyasporalarinin Tarihy (XX Gasyr)* [*History of the German and Polish Diasporas in Eastern Kazakhstan (XX Century)*] (Semey kalasynin Shyakarim atyndagy memlekettik universiteti, 2015).

¹² Bakyt Zh. Atantayeva, Aizhan S. Karibayeva, and Maksat S. Karibayev. 2023. “Deportation of Germans: Adaptation and Life According to Oral Historical Sources (based on Materials from the Eastern Region),” *Bulletin of L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. Historical Sciences. Philosophy. Religious Studies Series*, 144, no. 3 (2023): 8–22.

the republic, as well as the contribution of immigrants to Kazakhstan's economic, scientific, cultural, and healthcare development.¹³

Ju.I. Podoprigora's monograph, "Nemtsy Pavlodarskogo Priyirtyshya" ("Germans of the Pavlodar Irtysh region"), focuses on the history of Germans in the Pavlodar Irtysh region during the 20th and early 21st centuries. The author comprehensively examines the formation process of German compact settlements in the region, outlines their characteristics, and analyses their migration processes. The author also gives details about the religious composition and the lives of the German population in Pavlodar. What distinguishes Ju.I. Podoprigora's research from other researchers is that the author had access to unpublished archival documents that contained materials from historical and ethnographic expeditions, including information about 19 villages in the Pavlodar region.¹⁴

Russian authors are also among the biggest contributors to the topic. One of the most significant researches is written by Efremova-Shershukova Nadezhda Alexandrovna called "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzpereselenya, reabilitatzya" ("Germans of Kazakhstan: deportation, special settlements, rehabilitation"). The research is based on a wide range of both published and unpublished archival documents, most of which were taken from the funds of the Archive of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The dissertation starts with the first migration waves of Germans to Kazakhstan, which took place until the forced deportation of 1941, and ends with the rehabilitation policies that were employed in the last decade before the collapse of the USSR. The author conducted a comprehensive analysis of German migration to Kazakhstan and their socio-economic well-being up until 1991 using both qualitative and quantitative methods.¹⁵ Tamara Volkova Petrovna is another well-known Russian author who significantly contributed to the existing research about Kazakh Germans. In her book "Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev Kazakhstana," which translates to "History and Culture of Ethnic Germans of Kazakhstan," Tamara Volkova Petrovna provided a thorough explanation of the history of German migration,

¹³ Alibek Nurmagambetovich Tabuldenov, *Deportatsya Narodov I Evakuatsya v Severnyi Kazakhstan (1937–1956)* [*Deportations of Peoples and Evacuation of the Population to Northern Kazakhstan (1937–1956)*] (Kostanay: Kostanay Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan named after Sh. Kabylybayeva, 2015).

¹⁴ Ju.I. Podoprigora, *Nemtsy Pavlodarskogo Priyirtyshya* [Germans of the Pavlodar Irtysh region] (Almaty, 2010).

¹⁵ Nadezhda Efremova-Shershukova Alexandrovna, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzposelenye, reabilitatsya" ["Germans of Kazakhstan: Deportation, special settlements, rehabilitation"] (PhD dissertation, Tomsk State University, 2009).

from the times of Catherine's manifests to the immigration of Kazakh Germans to Germany after the independence of Kazakhstan.

Despite the significant findings, the aforementioned research papers and books have some limitations that need to be considered. The works written by J. Otto Pohl, Arafat Mazhituly, and Tamara Volkova are written with great proficiency; however, they are written in a more narrative tone. Nadezhda Alexandrovna's dissertation, Arafat Mazhituly's and Podoprigora's monographs, and the article by Atantayeva et al., together with Andrew Brown's, Eric Schmaltz's, and Samuel D. Sinner's research, lack a theoretical framework that would allow for a certain angle when analyzing those tragic historical events. Although skillfully written, Tabuldenov's monograph places a special emphasis on the population's demographic change rather than historical developments in the region. It also gives a little information about the relationship between the deportees and local people, which makes it difficult to understand the difficulties that ethnic Germans have been through.

There are many more research papers and works written in Russian by Kazakh authors. The two most cited and well-known books among them are "Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan narody: vremya i sud'by" ("Nations Deported to Kazakhstan: The Time and the Destinies") written by Garifulla Anes" and "Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye pyatna" ("History of Kazakhstan: The White Spots") written by Zhuldyzbek Abylhozhin Bekmuhamedovich. Both books are based on the archives of Kazakhstan and give a great explanation of the 1941 deportation, its conditions, and its consequences. While the first book centers on the deportation process itself, the latter gives a comprehensive analysis of the extended period of German migration waves to Kazakhstan, starting from the formation of the Kazakh Khanate to the fall of the Soviet Union.¹⁶ The book written by Garifulla makes use of the term "Scientific Mankurtization," which excellently reflects on the harsh realities of the Stalin's regime. It describes the process when a person becomes an obedient slave who does not remember his or her own traditions and blindly follows the rules of authorities. Both authors provide a comparison between what was supposed to happen according to the documents of that time and what actually took place during the deportation. Despite having a decent analysis of historical events, the Garifulla's book is written in a more subjective manner. The strong emotional narrations of the author prevent us from focusing on the essence of events.¹⁷

¹⁶ Zhuldyzbek Bekmuhamedovich Abylhozhin, *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye Pyatna [History of Kazakhstan: White spots]* (Almaty: Kazakhstan, 1991).

¹⁷ Garifulla Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody: Vremya I Sud'by [Nations deported to Kazakhstan: time and destinies]* (Almaty: Arys, 1998).

Most scholars who write research about the deportation of Germans to Kazakhstan or Siberia always give reference to Viktor Krieger, one of the most famous ethnic German authors from Kazakhstan. In his book, “Rhine-Volga-Irtysh: from the History of the Germans of Central Asia,” he analyzes the lives of Soviet Germans in the whole Central Asian region, including Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. In its part about Kazakhstan, the research starts with the lives of Germans in 1880, explains the hardships that ethnic Germans experienced during deportation and in special settlements during 1941–1945, and ends with the period of normalization that took place between 1956 and 1986. The author thoroughly analyzed such an extensive period and could explain what Germans experienced during their movement to several Central Asian countries; however, this book is much more focused on the Turkistan region of Kazakhstan. Emphasizing one region might limit readers from understanding of the broader history of the whole country.¹⁸

In his dissertation titled “Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy Pereselencheskoy Derevni Kazakhstana” (“Socio-economic Development of the German Resettlement Village of Kazakhstan”), Viktor Krieger examined the lives of ethnic Germans in Kazakhstan from the 19th century up until 1917. His extensive research examined the conditions of the first German migrations to Kazakhstan, as well as the attitudes of the Kazakh and Soviet authorities toward the newcomers. However, when describing the socio-economic conditions of ethnic Germans in Kazakhstan, Viktor Krieger was mainly focusing on land ownership rather than other aspects of their lives.¹⁹

One of the most well-known and most cited German scholars in Kazakhstan is Alfred Eisfeld. He has researched the history and culture of the Germans in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union for 40 years.²⁰ His work, titled “Istoriya I Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana” (“History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan”), consists of a number of different articles written by historians such as Viktor Krieger, T. Volkova, L. Burgart, K. Ehrlich, and A. Dederer. The book is written in Russian and German languages. It starts with the arrival of the first German settlers in Kazakhstan and ends with the 2000s, the period in which ethnic Germans were free to revive their culture. Alfred Eisfeld emphasized that this book is the initial attempt to compile the history of Germans

¹⁸ Viktor Krieger, *Rhine–Volga–Irtysh: Iz Istoriyyi Nemtsev Centralnoy Azyii [Rhine–Volga–Irtysh: from the history of the Germans of Central Asia]* (Almaty: Dayk-Press, 2006).

¹⁹ Viktor Krieger, “Sotsial’no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy Pereselencheskoy Derevni Kazakhstana” [“Socio-economic Development of the German Resettlement Village of Kazakhstan”] (PhD dissertation, Shokan Ualikhanov University, 1991).

²⁰ “Eisfeld Alfred,” Wiedergeburt, November 18, 2022, <https://wiedergeburt-kasachstan.de/tag/ajsfeld-alfred/>.

in Kazakhstan, yet numerous aspects still require further investigation. Because many historical documents are either missing or kept secret, there is a lot of room for future research.²¹

Another ethnic German author Valerya Gentshke in her chapter “Nekotorye aspekty vnutrennih deportatsyi na primere nemetskogo I koreiskogo naselenya SSSR” which translates as “Some aspects of internal ethnic deportations using the example of the German and Korean populations of the USSR” of the book called “Nachalnyy period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyni I deportatsyi rossiyskih nemtsev: vzglyady I otsenky cherez 70 let” (“The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years”) analyzes the deportation of ethnic Germans and ethnic Koreans to Kazakhstan. In its part about ethnic Germans, it starts by explaining the lives of Germans in Russia during the tsarist era and during the Autonomous Region of the Volga Germans and then proceeds to the deportation of 1941. The author describes the difficulties that ethnic Germans faced during their forced migration in general and gives specific examples from her own biography, as her family members were also victims of the deportation.²²

Another well-known ethnic German author Ludmila Burgart also contributed to writing “The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years.” In her chapter called “Razhrushenie religioznogo ukhoda zhizny nemetskogo naselenya vsledstviy deportatsyi I printsypialnye podhody sovremennoy otechestvennoy istoriografiy k opredeleniyu mesta I roly religii v istorii nemtsev v Rossii I SSSR” (“Destruction of the German religious way of life population due to deportation and fundamental approaches of modern domestic historiography to determine the place and role of religion in history of Germans in Russia and the USSR”) writes about religious life of ethnic Germans during the USSR. To be more precise, the author examines how mass deportation, mobilization of the labor army, national repression, and anti-religious policies changed the situation and led to some of the religious communities ceasing to exist.²³

²¹ Alfred Einfeld, *Istoriya I Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]* (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017).

²² Valerya L. Ghentshke, “Nekotorye aspekty vnutrennih deportatsyi na primere nemetskogo I koreiskogo naselenya SSSR,” [Some aspects of internal ethnic deportations using the example of the German and Korean populations of the USSR], in *Nachalnyy period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyni I deportatsyi rossiyskih nemtsev: vzglyady I otsenky cherez 70 let [The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years]*, ed. Arkady German Adolfovich (Moskva: MSNK-press, 2011).

²³ Ludmila A. Burgart, “Razhrushenie religioznogo ukhoda zhizny nemetskogo naselenya vsledstviy deportatsyi I printsypialnye podhody sovremennoy otechestvennoy istoriografiy k opredeleniyu mesta I roly religii v istorii nemtsev v Rossii I SSSR,” [Destruction of the German religious way of life population due to deportation and fundamental approaches of modern domestic historiography to determine the place and role of religion in history of

Each of the authors mentioned above made valuable contributions to the topic of “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan.” Although these researchers began their analyses in different historical periods, most of them focused on mass deportations, special settlement regimes, and subsequent rehabilitation policies. Very few works examine the evolution of the German diaspora in Kazakhstan as a whole, while many books and research papers focus on specific regions of Kazakhstan. Most of these studies examine ethnic German migrations in the Eastern and Northern regions. Some researchers tended to adopt a narrative approach, describing historical events without theoretical analysis in a more subjective manner. The most significant gap in the existing literature is the absence of a theoretical framework. Without a theory, it becomes challenging to comprehend the author’s perspective on the historical process, as it serves as a lens for interpreting and connecting the study’s findings to existing knowledge. Only the book of Garifulla Anes mentions the term “Mankurtization” and applies it to Soviet policies aimed at Russifying the minorities of the USSR. In my thesis, I am going to contribute to the existing research by analyzing “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan” as a general phenomenon in the whole country through the lens of “Internal Cultural Imperialism” theory. Since previous researchers did not put an emphasis on the change in ethnic identity of Germans in Kazakhstan, I am going to fill in this gap by conducting up-to-date interviews with Kazakh Germans.

Theoretical Framework.

1.1. Internal Cultural Imperialism.

The theory of cultural imperialism describes how one culture dominates another by imposing its own cultural values and beliefs on less powerful societies. According to this theory, powerful nations use their cultural influence to maintain control over another weaker nation through economic, political, or technological means.²⁴ A number of different scholars investigated the cultural imperialism theory. For instance, Edward Said made use of the theory of cultural imperialism in his profound book named “Orientalism.” In that work, he investigated how Western

Germans in Russia and the USSR], in *Nachalnyi period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyni I deportatsyi rossiyskih nemtsev: vzglyady I otsenky cherez 70 let [The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years]*, ed. Arkadyi German Adolfovich (Moskva: MSNK-press, 2011).

²⁴ Iuliia Gudova, “Concept of ‘a Cultural Imperialism’ and Its Media and Communication Embodiment Today,” *IJASOS- International E-Journal of Advances in Social Sciences* 4, no. 10 (April 30, 2018), 166, <https://doi.org/10.18769/ijasos.417815>.

literature and representations have contributed to the West's dominance over the East.²⁵ Conversely, John Tomlinson, the author of "Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction," underscored the dominance of powerful states over weaker ones. Nevertheless, he noted that cultural imperialism is a very difficult process that includes both the imposition of external cultural elements and active adaptation and hybridization by local cultures.²⁶ However, Herbert Schiller, an American communication scholar and political activist, popularized the term. In his book, "Communication and Cultural Domination," he mainly focused on the example of the US, which exerts cultural hegemony over other countries through the export of media and cultural products. According to cultural imperialism theory, cultural dominance and imposition of values can occur through multiple channels, influencing identities, power relations, and cultural diversity globally.²⁷

We can divide cultural imperialism into two categories: external cultural imperialism and internal cultural imperialism. External cultural imperialism occurs when a country's culture is propagated in another country.²⁸ In the case of the Soviet Union, external cultural imperialism implies the promotion of Marxist-Leninist ideology worldwide, its military support for third countries, and different cultural exchanges in the form of artistic performances that aim to show how Soviet communism can surpass Western capitalism.²⁹ Internal cultural imperialism concentrates power in the center and exerts its cultural influence on the periphery. In the case of the USSR, Moscow serves as the center, while other Soviet states, particularly those on its Asian flank, represent the periphery.³⁰ Internal cultural imperialism in the Soviet Union generally refers to policies aimed at unifying and assimilating various ethnic groups and nationalities into the dominant Soviet culture, often associated with Russian culture. The process of internal cultural imperialism included not only Russification—the promotion of Russian language, customs, and cultural practices as the standard—but also the suppression or marginalization of other ethnic and cultural identities as part of the drive to create a unified Soviet nation, which implies "Mankurtization."³¹

Many ethnic minorities were the victims of internal cultural imperialism even before the creation of the USSR. Although less effective than under Soviet rule, authorities in Tsarist Russia took

²⁵ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 2-3.

²⁶ John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1991), 2-8.

²⁷ Herbert I. Schiller, *Revival: Communication and Cultural Domination* (1976) (New York: Routledge, 2018), 10.

²⁸ Gudova, "Concept of 'a Cultural Imperialism,'" 166.

²⁹ G. Doug Davis and Michael O. Slobodchikoff, *Cultural Imperialism and the Decline of the Liberal Order: Russian and Western Soft Power in Eastern Europe* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018), 50.

³⁰ Gudova, "Concept of 'a Cultural Imperialism,'" 169.

³¹ Brian Silver, "Social Mobilization and the Russification of Soviet Nationalities," *American Political Science Review* 68, no. 1 (1974): 48, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1959741>.

steps to assimilate minorities.³² With the establishment of the Bolshevik state, the authorities' actions were more focused on imposing Russian culture and creating a unified Soviet identity. This simply meant that minorities, in order to be decent Soviet citizens, had to speak only Russian in public, and neglect their religion in favor of atheism. The ethnic Germans of Kazakhstan were one of the ethnic groups most affected by cultural imperialism.³³ This thesis aims to investigate the ups and downs that Germans experienced during several waves of migration to Kazakhstan, as well as how the migrations affected their ethnic identity.

1.2. The Concepts of Russification and Mankurtization.

When discussing internal cultural imperialism in this research, it is essential to acknowledge its two fundamental components. These components are "Russification" and "Mankurtization." Kyrgyz author Chingiz Aitmatov first described this concept in one of his novels called "The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years." The novel uses the term "Mankurt" to describe a captured individual who became a weak-willed slave, fully subservient to their owner, and completely oblivious to their past life. The person underwent such thorough "brainwashing" that they lost all sense of their own identity, history, and culture.³⁴

Nowadays, "Mankurtization" is a widely used term among historians and anthropologists who specialize in former Soviet countries. It is used to describe a person who has lost connection with their historical or national roots, has forgotten their kinship, or, on the other hand, remembers their kinship but harbors hatred towards their own people. "Mankurtization" took place mainly during the Stalin era. Its primary goal was to promote a homogeneous Soviet identity at the expense of marginalizing the diverse cultural and ethnic identities of the various nationalities within the USSR. This concept has been used metaphorically to describe processes of cultural imperialism and assimilation, particularly in the context of Soviet policies towards ethnic minorities.³⁵

Stalin's era was marked by a severe suppression of Germans' cultural expression, as they were prohibited from speaking their native language and practicing their traditions. The deliberate suppression of linguistic and cultural roots began a gradual process in which the German population began to forget their language, leading to a subsequent change of ethnic identity. In

³² Alexander Morrison, "The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union: Too Soon to Talk of Echoes?" In *Echoes of Empire: Memory, Identity and the Legacy of Imperialism*, edited by Kalypso Nicolaidis, Berny Sèbe, and Gabrielle Maas, 160, International Library of Colonial History (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015).

³³ Abylhozhin, *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye Pyatna*, 261.

³⁴ Chingiz Aitmatov, *The Day Lasts More than a Hundred Years*, trans. John French (New York: Indiana University Press, 1983), 88.

³⁵ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 213.

order to intensify the effect of “Mankurtization” the Soviet authorities mixed the populations, forcibly separated families, and sent them to labor armies as part of a systemic effort to eliminate distinct ethnic identities. This coercive strategy aimed to assimilate diverse ethnicities and nationalities into a homogenous Soviet identity, stripping them of their unique cultural heritage and traditions.³⁶

Another term that perfectly describes the situation of many ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan, including ethnic Germans, is “Russification.” Just like “Mankurtization,” the policy of “Russification” encourages non-Russian ethnicities to adopt the Russian language and culture. Consequently, they relinquish their ethnic identity in favor of identifying with Russian culture.³⁷ “Mankurtization” and “Russification” are similar processes; however, the former has more negative connotations. This thesis will use the terms the “Mankurtization” and “Russification” to show how the ethnic identity of Germans was changing. The primary and secondary literature clearly demonstrate the shift in German cultural affiliation. Official documents in primary literature clearly state that Russian is the language of instruction in all official institutions. The secondary literature shows how ethnic Germans started using Russian more, not only in public places but also in their private lives.

A huge number of ethnic minorities, including Germans and Kazakhs, were victims of Soviet policies. They shared a common fate that forced them to become “Russified,” or “Mankurts.” All minorities living in Kazakhstan had to adapt to a new situation and learn new languages. Therefore, changes in ethnic identity were inevitable.³⁸ This thesis is written through the lenses of “Russification” and “Mankurtization,” which are both aspects of cultural imperialism. This paper does not explicitly utilize the theory of cultural imperialism, but it employs the concepts of “Russification” and “Mankurtization” to illustrate the notion of cultural imperialism. Analyzing “Russification” or “Mankurtization” of Germans allows us to understand the changes in their ethnic identity during both voluntary and forced migrations to Kazakhstan.

1.3. The concepts of Diaspora and Ethnic Identity.

Throughout the history of humankind, people have been constantly moving from one place to another for political, economic, or social reasons. Living outside of their historical homeland, they

³⁶ Natalya Gellert, “What Motivates the Soviet Germans?” *Neues Leben*, September 27, 1989, 40th ed., 5.

³⁷ Petr Dostál and Hans Knippenberg, “The ‘Russification’ of Ethnic Minorities in the USSR,” *Soviet Geography* 20, no. 4 (April 1979): 199, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00385417.1979.10640287>.

³⁸ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 218.

started forming diasporas. Diaspora is one of the most highly contested terms. “Diaspora” is a word of Greek origin meaning “dispersion” and defining the collection of ancient Jews who settled outside Palestine since the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C.E., as a result of their forced relocation to Babylonia after the capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II. Gradually the term began to be applied to other religious and ethnic groups.³⁹ According to Robert Cohen, diaspora refers to a community of people whose members share a common identity that is rooted in a collective memory of a homeland and group consciousness. Diaspora maintains active social, economic, and cultural ties with both their homeland and their new residence.⁴⁰ The diaspora is created by migrations, which, in turn, depend on the historical events that gave birth, shaped and developed it.⁴¹

Being a minority has never been easy for any ethnic group living in foreign territories, as they have had to adapt to different cultures and ways of life. Because of this movement, their ethnic identity has always changed. This thesis aims at examining how the deportation to Kazakhstan affected the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans. In order to understand the transformation of the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans, it is significant to give a definition of this term. According to Anthony Smith, an ethnic group refers to a group of people with distinctive norms and cultures based on a shared origin. Ethnic identity is a commitment to a particular ethnic group. The characteristics that form ethnic identity include a common history, a shared geographical location, cultural customs, traditions, religious beliefs and practices. Ethnic groups are characterized by the presence of different levels and ways of belonging to their ethnic group. It is of utmost importance to note that, under the influence of both external and internal factors, people’s commitment to their ethnic group can change over time.⁴² When analyzing ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans, this thesis mainly focuses on the ability of Germans to speak their native language, preach their religion, keep their traditions.

³⁹ G.M. Mendikulova, *Istoricheskoye Sud’by Kazakhskoy Diaspory [Historical destinies of the Kazakh Diaspora]* (Almaty: Gylym, 1997), 7.

⁴⁰ Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2023), 3.

⁴¹ Steven Vertovec, “Three Meanings of ‘Diaspora,’ Exemplified among South Asian Religions,” *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 6, no. 3 (December 1997): 278, <https://doi.org/10.1353/dsp.1997.0010>.

⁴² Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 32.

Methodology.

In order to examine “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan,” a qualitative research method was adopted. Qualitative methodology was chosen for its ability to facilitate detailed analysis of historical events. To be more precise, this research employs two types of qualitative methodology: historical methodology and semi-structural interviews. Historical methodology allows to describe and examine past events to better understand the present and anticipate possible future consequences for the German diaspora in Kazakhstan. This method is particularly advantageous for comprehending the multifaceted migratory trajectories experienced by ethnic German populations prior to their settlement in Kazakhstan and the subsequent establishment of a diasporic community. To offer a deeper understanding of the experiences and hardships faced by the German diaspora during and after their migration to Kazakhstan, semi-structured interviews were conducted with second generation migrants. This type of interview was chosen due to its flexibility, which gives room for adapting the questions to the specific context and participant, capturing a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

1.1. Historical Methodology.

To comprehensively examine the historical events experienced by ethnic Germans in Kazakhstan, a diverse array of primary and secondary sources was meticulously employed. Primary sources encompass the six collections of archival documents and newspapers. This research utilized several editions of the most popular German newspapers in Kazakhstan, including “Freundschaft” and “Neues Leben.” Those newspapers generally reveal the lives of ethnic Germans in Kazakhstan, including social, cultural, political, and economic spheres. By reading the newspapers, one can understand how the conditions of life of Germans were changing from time to time. According to the country’s leadership, the German population required explanatory work on the party’s and government’s policies. The newspapers capable of effectively guiding and directing the German population could inform them in their native language about the challenges of cultural and economic development, share advanced knowledge in industry and agriculture, and instill in them a communist work ethic. The newspapers were supposed to help Soviet Germans keep up with the times and participate together with the entire country in the construction of a communist society. All of the collections of archival documents contain original archival documents compiled into 700 pages. The collections of archival documents consist of different resolutions, decrees, and letters written during the Russian Empire period and the Soviet era. Each of those publications

deals with a specific period. In general, it is enough to read those collections to grasp the realities of deportation.

The first collection of archival documents, “Iz Istoryii Nemtsev Kazakhstana 1921-1975,” written under the editorship of G.A. Karpykova, is based on the Archives of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Published representative documentary sources contain information about the legal, political, and social situation of Germans in Kazakhstan from 1921 to 1975. These are mostly official documents of the governing bodies of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, which dealt with the problems of the German population periodically, only with the emergence of special situations requiring the intervention of the central government. The documents’ composition is quite diverse, including resolutions of the republic’s party bodies, information, certificates, statistical data, telegrams, letters from Soviet bodies, and correspondence from industry and political departments.⁴³

The second one, “Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1930-1935,” edited by Nadezhda Gavrilova, covers the history of deportations to Kazakhstan between 1930 and 1935. It is based on the Archives of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Central State Archive of the Committee of Information and Archives of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This collection of archival documents contains documents about the deportations of the collectivization period. At that time, only “kulaks,” or, in other words, wealthy peasants, were deported to Kazakhstan. Soviet Germans were one of the ethnic groups who were deported based on their social class. The archival documents in this collection reveal the conditions under which people were deported and how they were treated by the authorities.⁴⁴

The third collection of archival documents written under editorship of Z.S. Aydarbekov, “Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1935-1939,” is about the history of deportations to Kazakhstan from 1935 to 1939. It is based on the Archive of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan. These archival documents include information about preparations made for the reception of German and other special settlers, their resettlement, and their involvement in the economic life of the republic, as well as their living and working conditions. Most importantly, this collection of archival documents also contains a separate section that includes documents characterizing changes in the national policy of the

⁴³ G.A. Karpykova, *Iz Istoryii Nemtsev Kazakhstana 1921-1975: Sbornik Dokumentov [From the History of Deportations of Germans of Kazakhstan 1921-1975: Collection of documents]* (Almaty/Moskva: Gotika, 2000).

⁴⁴ Nadezhda Gavrilova, *Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1930-1935: Sbornik dokumentov [From the History of Deportations Kazakhstan 1930-1935: Collection of documents]* (Almaty, 2012).

leadership of the USSR, which led to “Russification.” From these documents, one can learn how those socio-ethnic and ethnic deportations affected the deportees.⁴⁵

Another collection of archival documents edited by D.Yu. Abdukadyrova, “Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1939–1945,” is based on the Archives of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Those archival documents contain information not only about the forced resettlement of ethnic Germans but other minorities as well. From this collection of archival documents, one can learn a lot of information about the deportation of Germans from Russia to Kazakhstan and the conditions under which they were deported. Most importantly, about the conditions of the resettlement, how much money was spent to realize the plans of resettlement, and what kind of assistance and compensation were provided to Germans who newly arrived. According to those documents, it is not only possible to learn about the political and economic conditions of the lives of Germans after the deportation, but it is also possible to learn about socio-cultural aspects of their lives. The documents include information about building new schools for ethnic Germans and special conditions for the children of the deportees.⁴⁶

The collection of archival documents, “Iz istoryii deportacii nemcev v Kazachstan 1941–1945 gg,” edited by Alfred Einfeld, analyzes the history of deportations in Kazakhstan, spanning from 1941 to 1945. It is based on the Archives of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the State Archive of the Russian Federation. The first half of the publication contains documents about the lives of ethnic Germans during their deportation to Kazakhstan, such as resolutions, decrees, and letters where it is stated how much fuel would be needed for trains transferring Germans, about the difficulties of food procurement, especially the deficiency of bread supplies, and many other issues. The second half of the publication contains information about the mobilization of ethnic Germans into labor columns, and according to these documents, we can learn about the regions and cities where Germans worked in Kazakhstan as well as the fate of the children whose parents worked in labor armies.⁴⁷

The last collection of archival documents, “Deportation Sondersiedlung Arbeitsarmee: Deutsche in der Sowjetunion 1941 bis 1956,” written under the editorship of Alfred Einfeld and Victor Herdt

⁴⁵ Z.S. Aydarbekov, *Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1935-1939: Sbornik dokumentov [From the History of Deportations Kazakhstan 1935-1939: Collection of documents]* (Almaty, 2014).

⁴⁶ D.Yu. Abdukadyrova, *Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1939-1945: Sbornik dokumentov [From the History of Deportations Kazakhstan 1939-1945: Collection of documents]* (Almaty, 2019).

⁴⁷ Alfred Einfeld, *Iz istoryii deportacii nemcev v Kazachstan 1941-1945 gg: Sbornik dokumentov [From the history of the deportation of Germans to Kazakhstan 1941-1945: Collection of documents]* (Göttingen/Almaty: Print House Gerona, 2022).

examines the deportation of Germans in the Soviet Union. The collection primarily makes an emphasis on conditions of ethnic Germans working on the labor army. The collection includes normative documents from the highest authorities of the Soviet Union, and numerous manuscripts from different provenances which provide insight into the preparation, process and results of individual measures made by the authorities. These primary sources serve as the foundation on which the study is built, providing reliable first-hand accounts and contemporary accounts of the events in question. Secondary sources, consisting of historical books, scholarly journals, and scientific articles, were systematically integrated to provide critical contextualization and scholarly perspectives that enrich the analytical framework.⁴⁸

1.2. Semi-structured Interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to examine “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan,” which took place as a result of voluntary and forced migration. The interviews help shed light on the impact of migration waves on the ethnic identity of Germans in Kazakhstan. Since a number of ethnic Germans who faced difficulties during the mass deportation to Kazakhstan are no longer alive, their descendants took part in the interviews. Overall, five second-generation migrants around the ages of 60 and 70 agreed to participate. Although this is a very sensitive topic, they were very enthusiastic about sharing details about their family histories. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on June 18th, and each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. The participants were asked 15 questions about their sense of belonging and their understanding of German cultural values. Their responses were recorded and carefully transcribed. These oral histories serve as an invaluable resource, offering poignant personal accounts that enrich the historical narrative and imbue it with a human dimension, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex historical trajectory of the German diaspora in Kazakhstan.

1.3. Ethical Considerations.

In order to ensure the utmost ethical conduct, each participant was given a comprehensive overview of the study’s objectives prior to their involvement, and their consent was sought before

⁴⁸ Alfred Eisfeld and Victor Herdt, *Deportation Sondersiedlung Arbeitsarmee: Deutsche in der Sowjetunion 1941 bis 1956: Dokumentensammlung [Deportation special settlement labor army: Germans in the Soviet Union 1941 to 1956: Collection of documents]* (Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1995).

any recording commenced. Thus, all five respondents were provided with an information letter, an informed consent form, and a debriefing letter in advance. This process aimed to secure their consent for participation while keeping their responses confidential. The documents were primarily prepared to instill a sense of assurance and dispel any concerns regarding confidentiality and the purpose of the research. Moreover, participants were pre-informed about the upcoming interview a day in advance, despite having already made prior arrangements to avoid any potential conflicts with their assigned responsibilities. Lastly, in adherence to the ethical dimensions of the study, pseudonyms were thoughtfully incorporated during the analysis phase to safeguard the identity and ensure the anonymity of the research participants.

Chapter 1. Germans of Kazakhstan: from voluntary to forced migration.

1.1. Migration of Germans to Russian Empire (XVIII-XX).

Before relocating to Kazakhstan, ethnic Germans traveled a significant distance to reach Russia. The vast majority of Germans began moving to the Russian Empire in 1762, when Empress Catherine II signed the manifesto on foreign settlement. A year later, in 1763, Catherine the Great issued a new document, which became an organic continuation of the Manifesto of 1762. According to it, the settlers were exempt from military service, from paying taxes for 30 years, and received funds for recovery and financial assistance in the construction of estates.⁴⁹ Moreover, they were promised the preservation of self-government without interference in the organization of the internal life of settlements by government officials. It should be highlighted that not only Germans who moved were subject to aforementioned benefits but their descendants who were born in Russia too. It was during this period that there was a large influx of Germans, Jews and Bulgarians who moved to Russia in search of a better life.⁵⁰

The migration to Russia was beneficial for both Germans and Russians. Thousands of Germans could escape from constant instability and chronic military conflicts in their homeland by settling in the undeveloped lands of the Russian Empire on the banks of the Volga, Black Sea, Dnieper, Dniester, in the Caucasus, Volyn, and Siberia. Since the Manifesto of 1763 exempted foreigners from military service for a long-term, Mennonites, one of the largest religious groups among ethnic Germans, had a chance not to abandon their ideology of pacifism. Mennonites constituted one of the largest ethnic German religious groups in Russia. However, the special conditions and

⁴⁹ Mamyrbekov, *Shygys Kazakhstadagy Nemis Zhane*, 36.

⁵⁰ Krieger, "Sotsial'no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy," 26.

privileges provided to the settlers were not a selfless gesture, but were intended to introduce the traditional hard work and productive agricultural methods of the German people into a country where the economy was based on serfdom. In addition, political goals were also pursued. It was intended to use migrants from Germany as internal colonists in moving to the east of the country and to create centers of European and Christian culture there.⁵¹

The process of adaptation to new conditions for German settlers was quite difficult. The colonists found themselves in a socio-economic, ethnic and natural-geographical context that was far from the living conditions on the land of their ancestors. In addition, already in 1810, the regulation of the Russian Cabinet of Ministers abolished the payment of subsidies to immigrants. After 1842, those who came to Russia not only stopped receiving preferential government allotments, but gradually lost all previously provided benefits. However, the presence of fertile soils, proximity to the Azov-Black Sea ports, rational use of land, efficiency, love of order and discipline, manifestation of ethno-confessional specificity in production activities became real factors that allowed the colonists to achieve significant success in economic development.⁵²

By the beginning of the 20th century, many German colonies had turned into thriving settlements, centers of industry and trade, and the economic successes of the German colonists contributed to the development of the most important branches of Russian agriculture. Although ethnic Germans were living in the territories of the Russian Empire and collaborating with local people, their ethnic identity did not experience a tremendous shift. The main reason for this is that ethnic Germans were living in their own community, surrounded by other Germans, speaking their native language, and preaching their religion. Their Germanness remained unaffected as they did not have to fully integrate into Russian society.⁵³

1.2. Migration of Germans to Kazakhstan (1880-1917).

Because of their hard work and diligence, ethnic Germans were successful farmers and landowners, and, as such, constituted the wealthiest fraction of society. However, it has not always been the case. Due to the severe famines of 1880–1881 and 1891–1892, many German families became poor as there was no harvest. In order to escape from this difficult situation, thousands of Germans chose to migrate to different countries, such as the US, the Northern Caucasus, and

⁵¹ Abylhozhin, *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye Pyatna*, 253.

⁵² A.A Hermann and I.R Pleve, *Nemtsy Povolzhya [Volga Germans]* (Saratov: Izvestiye Saratovskogo Universiteta, 2002), 20.

⁵³ Abylhozhin, *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye Pyatna*, 255.

Kazakhstan.⁵⁴ Malinovsky highlights four groups of people who moved to Kazakhstan. The first group comprises the landless poor people of the south of Russia, farm laborers, and sharecroppers, who moved mainly with the help of the community to state-owned lands. The second group consists of impoverished communal peasants from German villages in the Volga region. The third group includes the sons of rich colonists, “full owners,” who moved to purchased or partly leased land, and the last group consists of entrepreneurs who built factories for agricultural machinery and mills in general, striving to found their own “business.”⁵⁵

The main reasons for the resettlement of peasants from the Volga region were land shortages and regular crop failures, which significantly undermined the productive forces of low- and medium-income families. Being less prosperous than the southern Russian colonists, they could not buy land without the assistance of the Peasant Land Bank, which issued loans only to Russians. Ethnic Germans as citizens of the Russian Empire should have been entitled to receive such loans as well. However, for central government, they were not Russian enough to secure benefits enjoyed by the majority population. As a result of such mistreatment, Volga Germans decided to move to Kazakhstan where the officials promised to grant great opportunities. The main motive for resettlement for landless and land-poor peasants of Novorossiia is the opportunity to buy enough land to create an independent farm. They could become large landowners and switch entirely to agricultural production, even though land values tended to rise significantly.⁵⁶ A number of ethnic Germans from Samara and Saratov provinces moved to Akmola region of Kazakhstan in the 90s of the 19th century under the influence of ridiculous rumors that benefits were given up to 300 rubles, and that even houses were ready for immigrants. As a result of such movement, the German peasants founded the village of Rozhdestvenskoye. They were granted 153 rubles, 15 acres of government land per person for eternal hereditary use free of charge, and 54 acres of land per family which made them richer than the average citizen of the village.⁵⁷

Archival documents show that Germans living in Kazakhstan were not integrated to a new society as Russians wanted them to be. Ethnic Germans did not have close relations with the Russian population. In the village of Romanovsky, relations were so hostile that it was impossible to avoid armed clashes, and the administration subsequently separated the Russians into a new area. As farmers, they were not inferior to the peasants in their ability to cultivate arable land; they settled down on the plots even better than the peasants. They had their own schools and houses of worship.

⁵⁴ Krieger, *Rhine–Volga–Irtysh*, 9-14.

⁵⁵ Lev Viktorovich Malinovsky, *Nemtsy v Rossiya i Na Altaye [Germans in Russia and in Altai]* (Barnaul: Barnaulskiy gosudarstvennyy pedagogicheskiy universitet, 1995), 57.

⁵⁶ Krieger, “Sotsial’no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy,” 32.

⁵⁷ Abylhozhin, *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye Pyatna*, 257.

Ethnic Germans tried to preserve their ethnic identity through living in closed communities where they could only speak their native language, marrying within their own community and constantly struggling for independence in an external multinational environment.⁵⁸ Compared to other ethnic minorities of Kazakhstan who lost their ethnic identity under Russian rule, ethnic Germans successfully managed to survive as an ethnic group keeping their own culture and traditions. Therefore, Catherine II's plans to integrate and dissolve peasants who came from Europe into the Russian community did not achieve the expected result. This is evidenced by the travel notes of Evgeniy Schuler, who traveled along the Volga in 1873 and said that the lifestyle of Germans was not affected by Russians. On the contrary, Germans influenced Russians who they contacted with.⁵⁹

The fact that Germans living in Kazakhstan did not integrate into Russian society ignited hostility and prejudice towards ethnic Germans by Russian citizens. This antipathy was even furthered by some events including the unification of Germany in 1871, the deepening contradictions between Germany and Russia, largely caused by the strong economic development of a single German state, and the growing competition of German industrial goods on the Russian market. They began to see some “outposts” of a powerful competitor among ethnic Germans, supposedly leading to the “peaceful conquest of Russia by the Germans.” Anti-German sentiments particularly spread after the defeat of the first Russian revolution of 1905–1907, when conservative tendencies began to manifest themselves in public life. In that time, many monarchist and Black Hundred parties and associations appeared with the goal of “fighting foreigners”—no matter who it was: Germans, Jews, Armenians, Poles.⁶⁰

Despite being discriminated by Russians, a number of ethnic Germans from southern parts of the Empire had a chance to move to Kazakhstan with the help of Stolypin agrarian reform which aimed to fight overpopulation by giving an arable land and accommodation in undeveloped areas. It began by decree on November 9, 1906, and ended by decree of the Provisional Government on June 28, 1917. In 1912, the government headed by P.A. Stolypin, introduced a bill to the State Duma aimed at depriving all persons of foreign origin the right to purchase and lease land. The highlight of this bill was the provision of governors with the right to deprive the ownership and

⁵⁸ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 47.

⁵⁹ Krieger, “Sotsial’no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy,” 39.

⁶⁰ Tamara Petrovna Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of Ethnic Germans of Kazakhstan]* (Almaty: Wiedergeburt, 2022), 25.

use of land of those foreigners who “have not adopted Russian nationality.” However, the bill was withdrawn as not receiving sufficient support from legislators.⁶¹

Although the bill was not officially issued, Russians continued showing their negative attitude towards Germans. Patriotic newspapers and magazines, Orthodox church publications, articles, and books by scientists and public figures continued to persecute ethnic Germans, accusing them of their reluctance to learn the Russian language and assimilate Russian nationality. They were also blamed for buying up and speculating on land plots, thereby “embarrassing Russian peasants” and “exploiting” Orthodox farm laborers and hired workers. Germans were also blamed for having connections with Germany and allegedly receiving subsidies, and orders from there.⁶²

In one of his reports Steppe Governor-General von Schmidt stated that the administration’s attitude towards the German colonists changed several times, but in general, despite temporary prohibitions on settling Germans in a particular area, the administration saw in the Germans a great cultural force useful for the state and therefore, encouraged the formation of German settlements in the region. However, Russian officials still pressured ethnic Germans in economic, and cultural spheres. For instance, in June 1913, von Schmidt said: “During my recent tour of the Steppe Territory, I came across an extremely undesirable phenomenon in one village. This village has been inhabited by German colonists for several years and still they do not have a Russian school or a Russian teacher, but even almost all of them, both adults and children, do not understand Russian at all... I made an impression on the peasants about the need to know and study Russian language as the state language... At the same time, I proposed to the local peasant and district leaders not to satisfy all requests and petitions of this village until they fulfill my demand.” This speech of the Russian official shows the extent to which they wanted to Russify German population of Kazakhstan. Despite temporary restrictions made by Russian government, ethnic Germans could purely save their ethnic identity.⁶³

One of the main reasons for this was the fact that German villages were far from the cities, where mainly the Russian population resided. This denied them access to Russian culture, encompassing classical Russian literature, theater, music, and more. However, even if German colonists had access to Russian culture, due to their negative attitude toward Russian language and culture, they would not try to learn it. For ethnic Germans, the Russian language is associated with hated tsarist officials and other officials, as well as with poor farm laborers who came to work for well-fed and

⁶¹ Victor Dönninghaus, “Agrarnaya Revolyutsya ‘Sverhu’ i Nemtsy Povolzhya (1906-1914),” [“Agrarian revolution ‘from above’ and the Volga Germans (1906–1914)”], *Istoriya Povsednevny*, 2020, 98-99.

⁶² Abylhozhin, *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye Pyatna*, 260.

⁶³ Krieger, “Sotsial’no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy,” 80.

prosperous German colonies. The animosity toward the Russian language was so strong that even the colonist children refused to study this farm laborer's language at school.⁶⁴

On the other hand, the cultural influence of Germany was too weak to contribute to the flourishing of cultural life in the German village. Only through the prayer book, through church literature and individual magazines did the literary language and information from Western Europe about the development of science and culture ethnic Germans. At school, the study of German literature was limited to individual poems from the classics and spiritual chants and reading the Bible. German romances of the 19th century, such as the student song "Good Youth...", which was rewritten in its own way, also penetrated into the village through roundabout routes. Musical culture flourished both as church music and as folk song.⁶⁵ In mixed-gender schools opened by the government where teachers were supposed to teach in the Russian language, the classes were taught in German. Because of the faraway location of German villages, there were no real teachers from the cities, so the villagers who did not have a pedagogical education had to take on their roles. No one from the villages wanted to be a teacher since the payment was not in money but in grain. In order to receive any kind of benefit the teachers had to sell this grain, and had to have their own farm.⁶⁶

The outbreak of the First World War extremely complicated the position of the Germans in the Russian Empire. As a result, all soldiers of German origin were transferred from the Western Front to the Caucasian Front. During the first world war, doubts of the Russian government and army leadership about the loyalty of the German settlers increased. People felt the change especially sharply in their daily lives. The Germans were now considered an "enemy within." In order to fight this enemy, the government decided to deport thousands of Volyn Germans to the east of the country during the war. It was forbidden to speak or teach in German; meetings of Russian Germans were prohibited; enterprises in which the Germans participated were liquidated; the German press was banned; all German names of settlements were renamed into Russian. It was even prohibited to listen to German music. In order to be able to listen to Beethoven, ethnic Germans had to say that he had Dutch origins.⁶⁷

These prohibitions and the adoption of special liquidation laws, tsarist decrees of February 2 and December 13, 1915 which prohibited Germans from buying land, forced some ethnic Germans to

⁶⁴ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 28.

⁶⁵ Malinovsky, *Nemtsy v Rossiya i Na Altaye*, 75.

⁶⁶ Krieger, "Sotsial'no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy," 81.

⁶⁷ Tamara Petrovna Volkova, "Pervaya Mirovaya i Grazhdanskaya Voyny, Ustanovleniye Sovetskoy Vlasty," ["First World War and Civil War, Establishment of Soviet Power"], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Eisfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 56.

renounce their nationality and also call themselves Dutch. It is interesting to highlight that those Germans who corresponded to the Dutch origins of their distant ancestors, considered themselves Germans, spoke and wrote in German and did not remember their Dutch origin, up until 1914. The persecutions influenced the mood of the German population of the Russian Empire and their economic life. The rental and purchase of land ceased, crops were reduced, the import of agricultural machinery and spare parts for them ceased, some horses were requisitioned for the army, the Mennonites served in hospitals and ambulance trains.⁶⁸

These discriminatory laws and negative attitude of the officials made Germans resent the government and create hatred towards Russians. In his reports to higher authorities, Sukhomlinov, Governor General of the Steppe Territory since 1915, cited absolutely unsubstantiated information and statements that the Germans persistently defended their separate existence, expressing not only unfriendliness, but also direct hostility towards both the Russian population, and to government power. Russian authorities could not accept the fact that ethnic Germans were not still Russified. Although, the derogatory rules forced some Germans to renounce their nationality, they still did not accept Russian culture as its own.⁶⁹

In 1917, the tsar issued a more severe law about evicting Germans of Kazakhstan from their homes, taking away their land, as well as movable and immovable properties. Exceptions were granted to those persons who certify that they belong to the Orthodox faith or to the Slavic nationality, or who have one of their immediate relatives who participated in hostilities as a volunteer or officer. This law is further proof of how much the Russians wanted to Russify the Germans. To enjoy privileges, Germans had to change their nationality and religion.⁷⁰

The Russian authorities especially put harsh restrictions on Germans' cultural field. All German-language newspapers and magazines were shut down, sermons in churches in their native language were prohibited, cultural and educational unions were dissolved, the use of German in school was forbidden, etc. The unfairness of the authorities' actions towards the German population is evident by the fact that men of military age, along with Russian and Ukrainian peasants, were mobilized into the active army and served there until the last days of the war. For example, according to the census conducted in the summer of 1917, 1,126 people lived in the village of Rozhdestvenskoye, of which 146 were in the army. In the village of Romanovskoe, out of 1,169 residents, 136 were mobilized and were in the army. The situation was similar in other German settlements in the

⁶⁸ Malinovsky, *Nemtsy v Rossiya i Na Altaye*, 100.

⁶⁹ Volkova, "Pervaya Mirovaya i Grazhdanskaya," 60.

⁷⁰ Krieger, "Sotsial'no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy," 86.

region. In the first month of the war, 94 Mennonites were mobilized from the Omsk district for forestry work in state-owned forests and to perform sanitary service in the army. During the early conscription of conscripts of 1915-1918, carried out during 1915, 129 Mennonites were mobilized from Pavlodar district, and in February 1917, another 34 conscripts were mobilized.⁷¹

1.3. The position of the Germans in Kazakhstan after the creation of the USSR (1917-1941).

The February Bourgeois Democratic Revolution that took place between 8 and 16 March of 1917, saved ethnic Germans of Kazakhstan from the expulsion. On March 11, 1917, the Provisional Government adopted a resolution “On the suspension of the implementation of the Laws on land ownership and land use of Germans,” and on March 20, the government approved a resolution on the abolition of religious and national restrictions. One of the first legal acts of the Soviet state was the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, approved by the Council of People’s Commissars of the RSFSR on November 2, 1917, which abolished all national and religious privileges and restrictions, proclaimed equality and sovereignty, the right to self-determination of all peoples of the former Russian Empire.⁷²

The crop failure of 1921 led to the famine in Kazakhstan by which Germans mostly employed in agriculture suffered significantly. Also, there were land and water reforms and transformations in agriculture that deprived some of the landowners of their plots of land. As a result of these, there was some outflow of ethnic German population to Central Russia, Western Siberia and Ukraine between 1921 and 1924.⁷³ The Soviet government, interested in winning over representatives of all ethnic groups inhabiting the country, did not interfere with the free migration of the population. One of the most important reasons why some Germans decided to leave Kazakhstan was the creation of the Autonomous Region of the Volga Germans (1918), which in December 1923 was transformed into the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of the Volga Germans. Autonomy on the Volga was perceived by the Germans of Kazakhstan as a real opportunity to develop their culture and preserve their national identity, so part of the German population of the Russian outskirts decided to return to their previous places of residence.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 51.

⁷² Krieger, “Sotsial’no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy,” 88.

⁷³ Burgart, “Razhrushenie religioznogo uklada zhizny,” 199.

⁷⁴ Abylhozhin, *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye Pyatna*, 263.

By the end of the 1920s, the German community had formed an opinion about the incompatibility of the policies of the Soviet government with the traditional values of their ethnic group. The existing experience of resettlement to other territories led to the idea of another emigration among the Germans. This time Canada was chosen as the destination. By the summer of 1929, emigrant sentiments had captured almost all Germans in Kazakhstan.⁷⁵ The resettlement movement covered the Akmola, Kostanay, Pavlodar, Petropavlovsk, Semipalatinsk, and Syr-Darya districts. In total, 5,037 households decided to move. The common sense inherent in the Germans did not allow them to emigrate without preparing a place of residence for their families to move, and therefore a wait-and-see attitude prevailed among them. In an atmosphere of anticipation of change, German peasants tried to prepare as much as possible for potential emigration. To this end, they sought to pay off all taxes, fulfill all plans for the delivery of agricultural products, and obtain all the certificates from village councils necessary for processing travel documents.⁷⁶

The security forces of the Soviet state managed to take advantage of the delay that the Germans unwittingly provided, delaying the departure to new places of residence. Having perceived the mass emigration of the German population as “an open form of protest against the communist regime,” representatives of the OGPU began to forcibly return settlers home, actively identifying agitators, individuals from the German population propagating the ideas of disobedience to Soviet power and the need for urgent departure from the country. Local party authorities were looking for possible ways to solve the problem of German emigration. A number of documents, resolutions, and orders from local authorities indicated attempts to overcome the crisis with positive measures: increasing the number of German schools, better supplying German settlements with literature in German, translating office work into German, issuing consumer loans to settlers, and returning “to the German population all draft animals.” Repressive measures were also proposed. In particular, it was suggested to cleanse apparatuses of party from unreliable elements.⁷⁷

The first practical steps to involve the Germans in party and state structures of Kazakhstan were taken in 1926. The Bureau of the Kazakh Regional Party Committee instructed the Organizational and Preparatory Department to select candidates to work with the German population of Kazakhstan. It turned out to be almost impossible to carry out this order due to the lack of necessary personnel. The Germans themselves ignored almost any attempts to attract them to power, and

⁷⁵ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 55.

⁷⁶ Tamara Petrovna Volkova, “Emigratsyonnoe Dvizheniye Nemtsev v Kazakhstane,” [“Migration Movement of Germans in Kazakhstan”], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Einfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 218.

⁷⁷ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 193.

local party leadership representatives simply did not have people who spoke German well.⁷⁸ The Germans understood the inconsistency of the socio-economic policy of the new government and did not want to cooperate with it. Primarily, their deep dissatisfaction was caused by the measures of the Soviet government in the field of land policy. Despite the proclaimed decree which declared land as the property of the working people, the Soviet government almost immediately began redistributing land resources in favor of the poor, taking away “surplus” land from richer fellow villagers. The Germans, for the most part, owned large plots of land. The opportunity to conduct large-scale agricultural production was the main motive for their resettlement to Kazakhstan. The authorities violated their traditional forms of land use and methods of farming, as a result, the Germans could not trust such a government and did not want to support it.⁷⁹

The Germans avoided cooperation with the Soviet government for a number of reasons. This is explained by the special attitude of the Germans towards private property and traditional individualism. Part of the German population did not want to cooperate with the new government because of their existing religious beliefs. Anti-religious propaganda deployed by the Soviet government in the 1920s and 1930s hit particularly hard the part of the German population that considered itself Mennonites. They perceived religious oppression as an attack on the very foundations of life, as religion formed the basis of their worldview.⁸⁰

The Soviet government attempted to ideologically influence the German population through children and youth. As a result, national schools in areas where Germans lived densely began to receive special attention. The authorities proposed to include the already existing schools in the state school network. The state began to open public schools in places where the colonists were unable to construct schools or did not have time to build their own schools. However, there were no funds for the construction of new school buildings, and therefore schools began to open in confiscated buildings, which often included houses of worship. The negative attitude of German colonists towards such schools was quite predictable. They refused to send their children to such schools, and boycotted those educational institutions that came under state control due to the lack of a religious component of education in them. Meanwhile, the attack on German schools continued. The teaching staff was changed where possible. Schools simply closed in cases when

⁷⁸ Karpykova, *Iz Istoryii Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№ 6, Soobsheniye Agitpropotdela Kazraikoma Vkp(b)” [“№ 6, Message from the Agitation Propaganda Department of the Kazakh District Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks”], 17.

⁷⁹ Tamara Petrovna Volkova, “Etnisatsiya Agrarnogo Voprosa v Hode Zemel’noy Reformy dvatsatyh godov,” [“Ethnicization of the Agrarian Question during the Land Reform of the twenties”], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Einfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 92.

⁸⁰ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzposelenye,” 62.

officials were not able to find politically and ideologically engaged teachers.⁸¹ In particular, a memorandum from the Kazakh Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks to the propaganda department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks dated September 27, 1926 stated that it was only German schools that were cut by local authorities. In conditions when the sheer number of schools providing instruction in German was small, the closure of some educational institutions by the Soviet government looked like a direct destruction of the traditional foundations of life of the German population.⁸²

On March 13, 1938, a resolution “On the compulsory study of the Russian language in schools of national republics and regions,” was adopted by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Council of People’s Commissars according to which the requirements for studying the Russian language for students of national schools were significantly increased. The national branches that existed at public schools were closed. In connection with the reorganization of German schools, it was also decided to liquidate the German departments of pedagogical schools, transferring those studying in them to Russian departments.⁸³ In parallel with the process of attacking traditional German schools, active propaganda for joining the Komsomol and Pioneer organizations was carried out among German youth. In conditions when almost all school-age children in German settlements attended churches and houses of worship, this kind of work with a pronounced anti-religious orientation was perceived by the German population as the destruction of the most important values for them which constitute religion and family.⁸⁴

The state launched a large-scale persecution of its political and class enemies. Any manifestation of dissent was perceived as a threat to the existing system. One of the practical steps of the Soviet government to eradicate dissent was the policy of deportation. After the civil war and during the period of collectivization, Kazakhstan became a kind of reservation for deportees. In 1934, the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR approved the instructions of the NKVD on the

⁸¹ V. Schmidt, “Nemetskaya Natsyonal’naya Shkola Kazakhstana v 1920 gody,” [“German National School of Kazakhstan in the 1920s”], in *Nemtsy Kazakhstana I Sibiri: Istoriya I Sovremennye Problemy Razvitiya [Germans of Kazakhstan and Siberia: History and Modern Problems of Development]*, ed. I.A.Selezneva (Omsk, 2017), 169.

⁸² Karpykova, *Iz Istoyii Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№ 5, Iz Dokladnoy Zapisky Kazraykoma VKP(b)” [“№ 5, From the Report of the Kazraik Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks”], 16.

⁸³ Z.S. Aydarbekov, *Iz Istoyii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1935-1939: Sbornik Dokumentov [From the History of Deportations Kazakhstan 1935-1939: Collection of Documents]*, “№ 237, Postanovleniye SNK SSSR I TsK VKP (b) Ob Obyazatel’nom Izuchenii Russkogo Yazyka V Shkolah Natsyonal’nyh Respublyk I Oblstey” [“№ 237, Resolution of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks On the Compulsory Study of the Russian Language in Schools of National Republics and Regions”] (Almaty, 2014), 557.

⁸⁴ Burgart, “Razhrushenie religioznogo ukлада zhizny,” 207.

procedure for the stay of special settlers. It identified 20 administrative-territorial units that were supposed to receive the deported population. Nine of them were located on the territory of Kazakhstan. The Germans, who had traditionally been successfully engaged in agriculture, were among the first to be subject to dispossession and deportation. The number of German population in Kazakhstan increased due to forced relocation from the regions of the Ukrainian SSR bordering Poland.⁸⁵ The decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR on the resettlement of politically unreliable elements from the Ukrainian SSR, issued on April 28, 1936, initiated the resettlement of about 15 thousand Germans to Kazakhstan. They were settled in the Aktobe, Almaty, East Kazakhstan, South Kazakhstan and Karaganda regions," which partially determined the redistribution of the German population among the regions of Kazakhstan. Thus, the first forced relocations of Germans to the republic were carried out on social grounds.⁸⁶

The policy of repression greatly affected the German population of Kazakhstan. German traditions of land use, which were in direct conflict with the policy of collectivization, did not allow the Germans to quickly organize collective farms and effectively manage them. Germans strongly believed that the slogan "Prosperous Collective Farmer," put forward by the Soviet government, could be realized only by running an individual farm, raising livestock and planting vegetables. Simultaneously, since 1934, there has been a growing body of information revealing the negative attitudes of political departments towards the realities of operating individual farms. In particular, the head of the political department of the Karabulak's MTS V. Bakunov, signaled about the current situation in the German collective farm "Najdorf" to the People's Commissariat for Agriculture of the Kazakh SSR Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. He drew the attention of the authorities to the fact that collective farmers running individual farms use land and water resources in their own interests, ignoring the needs of the collective farm, which speaks of a "relapse of small property."⁸⁷

The resolution of the Bureau of the South Kazakhstan Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks dated November 17, 1934 contains information about the toughening of attitudes towards Germans living on the territory of Kazakhstan. In particular, local authorities were recommended to "react in the most decisive manner to the slightest manifestations of anti-Soviet and counter-revolutionary sentiment among the German population." In their regard, it was proposed to immediately take the most decisive repressive measures: make arrests, and

⁸⁵ Mamyrbekov, *Shygys Kazakhstadagy Nemis Zhane*, 46.

⁸⁶ Aydarbekov, *Iz Istoyii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan*, "№9, Postanovleniye SNK SSSR № 776-120 SS O Vyselenyii Iz USSR I Hozyaistvennom Ustroystve v Karagandynskoy oblasti KASSR 15 Tysyach Pol'skyh I Nemetskyh Hozyaistv" ["№9, On the eviction from the Ukrainian SSR and economic arrangement in the Karaganda region of the Karaganda ASSR of 15 thousand Polish and German households"], 59.

⁸⁷ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 66.

sentence the evil leaders to death. A number of other measures are also described that are designed to limit the rights of the German population: to oblige the introduction of the Kazakh language into the school curriculum in German schools, demand a complete cessation of communications with foreign organizations. In addition, secretaries of district party committees and heads of political departments were required to provide the regional committee with references of the leaders of German collective farms and chairmen of village councils of German nationality. The first two decades of Soviet power were marked by increased influence on the German settlement colonies in all spheres of public life. The policy pursued by the government consistently destroyed the traditional foundations of German life, destroyed the usual forms of economic management, interfered with the processes of organizing national education and upbringing, and tried to eliminate the isolation of the ethnic group.⁸⁸

Chapter 2. Life of ethnic Germans during and after the mass deportation (1941-1950).

2.1. Deportation.

The Great Patriotic War, which began on June 22, 1941, transferred the German population of the USSR to the category of enemies. The Soviet authorities suspected ethnic Germans to be engaged in espionage and sabotage in order to assist invading Nazi forces. However, in fact, there was no evidence to support political disloyalty of Soviet Germans.⁸⁹ On the contrary, most of the ethnic Germans were willing to join the ranks of the Red Army to defend their homeland. Nevertheless, 145 people were arrested in the Volga German Republic from June 22 to August 10, including on charges of espionage - 2, terrorist intentions - 3, sabotage intentions - 4, participation in anti-Soviet and counter-revolutionary activities - 36, in the dissemination of defeatist and insurrectionary statements - 97. The Germans of Russia became the largest ethnic group that was targeted as victims of the deportation process. The majority of them were relocated to Kazakhstan and Siberia.⁹⁰

The Soviet authorities wanted to create the image of an “internal enemy” from ethnic Germans. The word “German” at that time was associated with fascism. In doing so, the Stalin regime could

⁸⁸ Karpykova, *Iz Istorii Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№34, Postanovleniye Buro Uzhno-Kazakhstanskogo Obkoma VKP (b)” [“№34, Resolution of the Bureau of the South Kazakhstan Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks”], 79.

⁸⁹ Jonathan Otto Pohl, “The Persecution of Ethnic Germans,” 284.

⁹⁰ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 194.

aptly put the local Russian population against ethnic Germans. Moreover, by resettling Germans to different faraway regions both within Kazakhstan, forcing them to work there, the Soviet rulers intended to split German ethnic cohesion. As a consequence, they would gradually lose their Germanness and become “Mankurts.” Therefore, the Stalin regime successfully used the rhetoric of the enemy against Soviet Germans to supposedly prevent them from helping Nazi Germany. As a result, cruel punitive measures in the face of deportation took place.⁹¹

On August 26, 1941, the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks adopted a resolution “On the resettlement of Germans of Volga, Saratov and Stalingrad regions.” The resolution ordered the resettlement of the entire German population of the Volga region to Kazakhstan and Siberia. The decree on the resettlement was signed on August 28, 1941. This six-page document contained a detailed resettlement plan, including the mechanism for loading, unloading, and placing people, as well as the numbers and places of resettlement.⁹²

The deportation was carried out according to a strict schedule simultaneously in all settlements. The process of sending Soviet Germans to Kazakhstan continued from 1941 to 1942. About 444,005 Germans were deported to Kazakhstan during this time frame. Usually, 24 hours were given for preparations. The homes and farms of those evicted were mostly occupied by collective farmers resettled from other regions of the Volga and adjacent regions.⁹³ Property and livestock were given to new owners for a symbolic price or for free. The assessment of personal property was carried out by a special Assessment Commission. Having accepted the property, the commission was obliged to provide a collective farmer with an act indicating what exactly he or she was leaving in place and what the value of this property was. However, the minimum time frame within which this work had to be carried out precluded the possibility of an objective assessment of the value of the property.⁹⁴

The possibility of receiving full compensation at the new place of residence for abandoned property, indicated in the instructions, thus turned into another deception on the part of the authorities. Haste in assessing the property of the resettled often led not only to a formal approach

⁹¹ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzposelenye,” 71.

⁹² Karpykova, “№ 2056-933 ss, Postanovleniye SNK I TsK O Pereseleniyi Nemtsev Iz Respublyky Nemtsev Povolzhya, Saratovskoy I Stalingradskoy Oblastey” [“№ 2056-933 ss, Resolution of the Council of People’s Commissars and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on the Resettlement of Germans from the Volga German Republic, Saratov and Stalingrad regions”], 94-99.

⁹³ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 195.

⁹⁴ Pohl, *The Years of Great Silence*, 95.

to it but also to violation of the rules for processing documents. Therefore, a fairly large number of deported Germans, presenting receipts according to which local authorities were obliged to compensate for what was lost during the eviction, were massively refused the compensation, because there were often no stamps on the documents. This provided a formal reason for failure to fulfill obligations in the allocation of housing, livestock, and materials for construction. Some of the resettled Germans did not receive any receipts at all regarding the acceptance of property from them.⁹⁵

The conditions in which Soviet Germans were deported were inhumane. The carriages of the formed trains were not suitable for transporting people; most of them were intended for transporting livestock. The eviction schedule was drawn up in such a way as to prevent the carriages from standing idle. The Germans were evicted as families, along with children who needed hot food, a place to rest, medical care, etc. Despite having clear instructions which described in detail how food and medical care should be organized along the route, they were not carried out. There was no hot food, the deportees themselves had to get boiling water with great difficulty at large stations, risking falling behind the train, which was considered an escape and punishable by being sent to camps and prisons. In order to ensure that those resettled did not run away on the way, each echelon had to be accompanied by 21 security guards. The head of the train was appointed from among the NKVD employees.⁹⁶

The evicted people had to pack things and food for the entire route. For each family member, the food allowance was no more than 200 kg. In wartime conditions, the fact that in the new places of resettlement no one was going to take responsibility for the availability of warm clothes, shoes, household utensils, and other things necessary for life among the deportees were not taken into account. The German population was given virtually no time to prepare for the journey and, accordingly, local resettlement officials limited the amount of property they were allowed to take with them in order to speed up the eviction period.⁹⁷

The living conditions of the deported Germans were poor. Despite the fact that the Kazakh authorities primarily paid attention to the living conditions of the Germans arriving in Kazakhstan, the amount of housing in which the deported people were to be resettled was not provided for. The Resettlement Administration did not have enough free houses to provide for all the resettled Germans, so they began to move them into the houses of local collective farmers. Some of the Germans were left without housing at all, and given that the deportation began in the fall and

⁹⁵ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 78.

⁹⁶ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 196.

⁹⁷ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 83.

continued almost until the end of winter, the construction of new houses was impossible due to the lack of building materials and human resources, so some deportees were settled in dugouts. Some of the Germans were housed in barns, auxiliary buildings, barnyards, vegetable stores, bathhouses, i.e. in buildings unsuitable for habitation. The situation with catering for the ethnic Germans was also not the best of them as most of them were suffering from hunger.⁹⁸ The Kazakh people greeted them with understanding. Local residents, to the best of their ability, shared everything with people who found themselves in the position of exiles against their will.⁹⁹

The Germans maintained relative freedom of movement and could change their place of residence within the republic in 1941 - early 1942. However, already at the beginning of January 1942, an order of the NKVD of the USSR, limiting the rights of movement for Germans forcibly resettled from Volga Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, as well as from the Saratov and Stalingrad regions was issued. According to this document, the Germans were limited in their right to freedom of movement to the borders of the areas in which they were settled. The authorities of those regions where the deportees were being moved were immediately informed about this.¹⁰⁰

Additionally, there was a violation of the principle of mono-confessional settlements that had traditionally prevailed among the Germans. Residents of a once homogeneous Lutheran, Catholic, or Mennonite colony, upon arrival at new places of settlement, often found themselves scattered into several families in different localities among a local environment of foreign nationalities and religions. As a result, in the second half of the 20th century, two or more religious communities of different faiths could be located in one rural locality. Moreover, despite being promised accommodation, food, and medical assistance, ethnic Germans were deprived of their rights. Under the harsh control of the NKVD, they were not even free to move to other regions of Kazakhstan, which limited communication with their relatives who live in faraway regions of the republic.¹⁰¹

The deportation and the measures taken after it were aimed primarily at eliminating the political, social, and cultural influence of the German population in the Soviet Union. The measures included the destruction of culture, the renaming of German settlements, the confiscation of both citizens' personal property and a significant portion of cooperative property in the Volga German Republic's territory, the restriction of civil rights for many years, the widespread Germanophobia

⁹⁸ Alfred Eisfeld and Ludmila Burgart, "Deportatsya Nemtsev iz Evropeiskoy chasty SSSR," ["Deportation of Germans from the European part of the USSR"], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Eisfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 198.

⁹⁹ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 216.

¹⁰⁰ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetsposelenye," 96.

¹⁰¹ Eisfeld and Burgart, "Deportatsya Nemtsev iz Evropeiskoy, 192.

that affected the entire society, and the discrediting and elimination of the intellectual and party-state elite from among the Germans.¹⁰²

2.2. Labor Army.

According to the State Defense Committee Decree of January 10, 1942, the deported Germans were mobilized into labor columns. The mobilized people started to call those labor columns as the labor armies, and themselves as labor army workers, thereby trying to somehow improve their social status. It should be noted that the entire system was under the jurisdiction of the NKVD, with all the attributes inherent in this organization: a rigid army structure, living in barracks in camps, in the so-called “zones,” under the protection of armed guards.¹⁰³ Mobilization into work columns seemed to the authorities the most optimal solution to two large-scale problems: eliminating social tension in places of mass concentration of deported Germans and attracting a large number of workers urgently needed by a warring country. The total mobilization of the working population into the Red Army led to an acute shortage of labor in agriculture and industry. The country needed workers in the mines, logging sites, and in the construction of military factories, and the Germans, accused of treason and espionage in favor of Germany, were the best suited to recruit into labor columns, where the labor was more reminiscent of slave labor.¹⁰⁴

In 1941, over 600 thousand people were released from places of detention, 175 thousand of them were mobilized into the Red Army. The empty camps experienced an increased need for labor. This was one of the reasons for the creation of the labor army. The German population forcibly resettled in Kazakhstan was considered by the authorities as a source of not only cheap, but also mobile labor. Already on January 10, 1942, State Defense Committee’s Decree “On the procedure for using German deportees of military age from 17 to 50 years” was issued, according to which 120 thousand people of German nationality were subject to immediate mobilization to work in the rear for the entire duration of the war. Preliminary work to prepare the mobilization of Germans into work columns was carried out by the NKVD.¹⁰⁵ According to their data, at the beginning of 1942 there were 85,280 German special settlers aged 17 to 50 eligible for conscription in Kazakhstan. Evasion from mobilization, refusal to work, violation of discipline, desertion,

¹⁰² Ghentshke, “Nekotorye aspekty vnutrennih deportatsyi,” 142.

¹⁰³ Abdukadyrova, *Iz Istoyii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan*, “Postanovleniye GOKO №1133 ss, Gosudarstvennogo Komiteta Oborony SSSR O Napravlenyah Razmeshenya Nemtsev-Pereselentsev Prizyvnoyego Vozrasta ot 17 do 50 let” [“GOKO Resolution No. 1123ss, Resolution of the State Defense Committee of the USSR on the Guidelines for the Deployment of German Resettlers of Military Age From 17 to 50 years”], 225.

¹⁰⁴ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzposeleniye,” 117.

¹⁰⁵ Abdukadyrova, *Iz Istoyii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan*, “Postanovleniye GOKO №1133 ss, Gosudarstvennogo Komiteta Oborony SSSR O Napravlenyah Razmeshenya Nemtsev-Pereselentsev Prizyvnoyego Vozrasta ot 17 do 50 let” [“GOKO Resolution No. 1123ss, Resolution of the State Defense Committee of the USSR on the Guidelines for the Deployment of German Resettlers of Military Age From 17 to 50 years”], 225.

according to this resolution, was necessary to be considered at a Special Meeting of the NKVD of the USSR with the application of punishments up to capital punishment according to its decision.¹⁰⁶

The labor armies had significantly a smaller number of workers than the Soviet authorities planned to mobilize. For that reason, the country's leadership decided to additionally mobilize ethnic Germans of Kazakhstan who were not the victims of the deportation, but lived in the region until 1941. On February 14, 1942, the State Defense Committee Decree "On the mobilization of German men of military age from 17 to 50 years, permanently residing in regions, territories, autonomous and union republics" was adopted.¹⁰⁷ The Germans of Kazakhstan, mobilized into the labor army, were sent to build the South Ural Railway to ensure uninterrupted delivery of goods to enterprises of ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy located in the Chelyabinsk, Orenburg, Kuibyshev regions of the RSFSR, Bashkir Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and North region of Kazakhstan. However, even this call for labor columns could not cover all the needs of the country.¹⁰⁸

In the second half of 1942, another, most massive mobilization of Germans into the labor army took place. Due to the high mortality rate of those conscripted into the labor army and the lack of a working-age population to work in the defense industry, the age limits for conscripted German men were expanded. According to the State Defense Committee Decree "On the additional mobilization of Germans for the national economy of the USSR" dated October 7, 1942, all Germans aged from 15 to 55 years were subject to conscription. The labor shortage was so great that it reached the point of absurdity, since disabled and seriously ill people were called up to carry out the mobilization plan.¹⁰⁹

The need for labor could not be solved by the waves of mobilization that took place, so it was decided to mobilize German women aged 16-45 years into the work column. Among all ethnicities in the USSR, German women were the only women to be drafted into the labor army.¹¹⁰ They were

¹⁰⁶ Anes, *Deportirovannye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 206.

¹⁰⁷ Eisfeld and Herdt, *Deportation Sondersiedlung Arbeitsarmee*, "Resolution Nr. GKO-1281ss, Beschluß des Staatlichen Verteidigungskomitees der UdSSR über die Mobilisierung deutscher Männer im wehrpflichtigen Alter von 17 bis 50 Jahren mit ständigem Wohnsitz in den Gebieten, Regionen, autonomen und Unionsrepubliken" ["Resolution No. GKO-1281ss, Resolution of the State Defense Committee of the USSR on the Mobilization of German Men of Military Age From 17 to 50 Years With Permanent Residence in the Territories, Regions, Autonomous and Union Republics"], 157.

¹⁰⁸ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzposelenye," 121.

¹⁰⁹ Abdukadyrova, *Iz Istoyii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan*, "Postanovleniye GOKO №2383 ss O Dopolnitel'noy Mobilizatsyi Nemtsev Dlya Narodnogo Hozyaistva SSSR" ["Resolution of the State Defense Committee No. 2383ss "On the additional mobilization of Germans for the national economy of the USSR"], 249.

¹¹⁰ Gavrilova, *Iz Istoyii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan*, "№168, Informatsya Direktora Kauchukpromleshoza Dronoca v PP OGPU O Fizicheskom Sostoyanii Trudposeletsev I Usloviyah Ih Zhysny" ["№168, Information from the Director of Kauchukpromleskhov Dronov to the OGPU PP about the physical condition of the labor settlers and their living conditions"], 349.

forced to work in the oil engineering enterprises, and logging. Only pregnant women and those with children under 3 years old were not subject to conscription. Children who had reached 3 years old by the time their mothers were mobilized were handed over to the rest of the family members, close relatives, and, in the absence of such, to German collective farms for upbringing.¹¹¹

This norm, however, was violated everywhere. Families, exhausted by previous mobilizations into labor columns, were incomplete; the majority of able-bodied men were in the labor army. As a result, many children did not even know they had a father.¹¹² Also, there were few German collective farms in Kazakhstan, and they often simply did not have much opportunity to take responsibility for raising and providing for children left without parental care. It was planned to send children who were younger than 8 years old to children's institutions of collective farms. Children over 8 years old were distributed to the families of Kazakh or Russian collective farmers with their consent.¹¹³ German newspapers in Kazakhstan, such as "Freundschaft," shared many stories of Kazakh families adopting German children. As a result, most of those children learned to speak Kazakh fluently and changed their religion. For instance, the guy named Otto expressed gratitude to the Kazakh family who adopted and raised him after the death of his biological parents.¹¹⁴ As a result of family separation, both children and adult Germans had few opportunities to use their native language. The separation, as well as the discrimination against Germans induced by the Soviet authorities, forced them to take the German language to a second plan and become Russified.¹¹⁵

Having learned about the plight of the abandoned children, some German women ran away from the labor camps. Due to their reprehensible behavior, they faced prosecution for desertion. In order not to leave their children to their own fate, a number of German women decided to take them to labor camps. However, there were a lot of problems related to this. One of the most important issues was small ratios of food. Because there were no dedicated ratios of food for children, mothers were often forced to share them with their children, leading to malnutrition and exhaustion for both parties. Consequently, some children faced certain death, while numerous German children found themselves on the streets.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Jonathan Otto Pohl, "The Persecution of Ethnic Germans," 299.

¹¹² Herbert Wiens, *Volk Auf Dem Weg: Deutsche in Rußland Und in Der Gus 1763 – 1993 [People on the Way: Germans in Russia and the CIS 1763 – 1993]* (Stuttgart: Kulturrat der Deutschen aus Russland: Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, 1993), 61.

¹¹³ Pohl, *Forced Labor in a Socialist State*, 91.

¹¹⁴ W. Adam, "Nach Zwanzig Jahren" ["After twenty years"], *Freundschaft*, January 1, 1966, 1st ed., 3.

¹¹⁵ Podoprigora, *Nemtsy Pavlodarskogo Priyirtyshya*, 60.

¹¹⁶ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetziposelenye," 125.

The living regime determined for the German labor army workers was not much different from the regime of prisoners. The entire daily routine for the labor-mobilized Germans was clearly regulated by the orders of the camp commander. Hours of work, time for rest and meals - all this was strictly fixed in the relevant orders and regulations.¹¹⁷ According to general instructions, working hours for labor mobilized workers were at least 10 hours a day, weekends were set once every ten days, 3 free days per month. For each employee, a production standard was determined, and failure to comply, as well as any violation of these rules, led to the imposition of a disciplinary sanction, from a personal reprimand and warning to trial.¹¹⁸

Data from the Kazvoenkomat indicate that from the beginning of the war until the end of 1944, 50,670 Germans were sent to work in industry. In total, during the war years, 71,977 people were drafted into labor columns. All lawmaking regarding the Germans was limited only to documents regulating their participation in the labor army. In 1943-1945, no one took a proper care about Germans deported to Kazakhstan who were not a part of the labor army. Half-starved old people and young children who remained on the collective farms became only a burden. All funding for Germans who were not mobilized in labor columns ceased; in fact, they were abandoned to their fate.¹¹⁹

Only at the beginning of 1945 did the authorities again turn their attention to the deported people. On January 8, 1945, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR adopted two secret resolutions "On the legal status of special settlers" and "On approval of the regulations on special commandant's offices of the NKVD," which established a special regime for the life of the Germans, under the watchful gaze of the NKVD. The first document stated that special settlers enjoyed all the rights of citizens of the USSR, but at the same time they were limited without explaining the reasons for such an attitude towards the deported people, without any assessment of the grounds on which people were forcibly resettled to new habitats.¹²⁰ With the end of the war, the need to keep Germans in work columns gradually became obsolete. But the labor army was liquidated only in 1946, and the labor army members were transferred to the position of special settlers and often remained attached to those enterprises where they served their labor service during the war years.¹²¹ The Germans mobilized into the labor army were in the position of prisoners and worked in camps, dying from hunger, backbreaking labor, physical and moral

¹¹⁷ Viktor Krieger "Patriots or Traitors? – The Soviet Government and the 'German-Russians' After the Attack on the USSR by National Socialist Germany," in *Russian-German Special Relations in the Twentieth Century: A Closed Chapter*, ed. Karl Schloegel (New York: Berg Publishers, 2006), 152.

¹¹⁸ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzposelenye," 133.

¹¹⁹ Anes, *Deportirovannyye v Kazakhstan Narody*, 208.

¹²⁰ Karpykova, *Iz Istoyii Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, "№88, Informatsya Ministerstva Prosvesheniya KazSSR" ["№88, Information from the Ministry of Education of the Kazakh SSR"], 146.

¹²¹ Krieger, *Rhine-Volga-Irtysh*, 118.

humiliation. Therefore, the years spent in the labor army were the most tragic events in the lives of Kazakh Germans, which severely affected their ethnic identity.¹²²

“Mankurtization” aimed at eradicating Germanness from Soviet Germans. By placing adult men and women into labor armies, the Soviet authorities were separating families who came to Kazakhstan. Most German children whose parents were working in labor armies were left alone. The lucky ones were adopted by either Kazakh or Russian families. When living apart from their parents and with their foreign foster families, German kids started forgetting their native language and were using only Russian as means of the communication. Together with their language, they started forgetting their culture, traditions, and history. Same happened with their families in labor armies. They were under the strict surveillance of the NKVD officers and could not use their language. Even if they had such an opportunity, people they work with were mostly of other ethnic identity.

2.3. Cultural Aspects.

Mass deportation and life in a special settlement had a negative impact on the development of the national culture of the German population. Taken away from their usual habitat, dying en masse on the way to a new place of residence from hunger and disease, and settled in places not even suitable for normal life, the Germans during the war years and in the first post-war decades were deprived of the opportunity to develop their culture, traditions, and religion. The Soviet government declared the right of all nationalities to educate children in their native language, but this principle was relatively successful only in the 1920-1930s, and then became limited. The Russian language began to predominate in education, and the Russian schools replaced other national educational institutions. The Great Patriotic War had a negative impact on the activities of the schools. Wartime conditions presented new challenges for the authorities and schools. It was necessary to continue educating children while establishing new forms of education. In this case, creating Soviet patriotism in schools became the most important task.¹²³

The German population practically did not have an opportunity to be schooled during the war years. This happened due to a number of circumstances. First of all, their forced relocation was

¹²² Elena V. Busyreva, “Vospominaniya Potomkov Rossiyskih Nemtsev O Godah Voyni (Po Materialam Etnograficheskogo Issledovaniya),” [“Remembers of the Descendants of the Russian Germans About the Years of War (On Materials of Ethnographic Research)”], *Trudy Kol'skogo Nauchnogo Centra RAN*, 2020, 179. <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/vospominaniya-potomkov-rossiyskih-nemtsev-o-godah-voyny-po-materialam-etnograficheskogo-issledovaniya/viewer>.

¹²³ Mamyrbekov, *Shygys Kazakhstadagy Nemis Zhane*, 50.

carried out hastily. Even houses were not prepared in advance for the settlers; much less, there was no talk of constructing school buildings. An analysis of archival documents shows that housing construction in the areas allocated for resettlement began only in October 1941. Archival materials provide extensive information about the measures for the reception and resettlement of deportees in their places of resettlement, but documents that solve the problem of organizing education for the children of German immigrants could not be found.¹²⁴

Policy of resettlement of Germans within the regions of Kazakhstan that started from the end of 1941 was another reason for the lack of organized forms of education for German children and adolescents. According to the authorities, it was unacceptable for Germans dissatisfied with resettlement to live in close proximity to the most important centers of industry. In a situation where Germans were constantly being resettled to new places of residence, and were mobilized into labor armies, their children were left without material support. Children were often unable to attend schools due to their lack of warm clothing and shoes. Therefore, most of German children simply did not have the conditions to receive a full education. Only with the end of the war, the situation with school organization was improved and the first information about organization of education for children of special settlers in vocational schools started to appear.¹²⁵

Many state and collective farms had schools that taught only in Russian and Kazakh languages. There were no schools teaching in German. Therefore, some parents decided not to send their children to schools at all. In 1949, only 44% of German children were enrolled in school in the North Kazakhstan region. About 53% of the children of German immigrants studied in the Kokshetau region. The organization of national German schools was also hampered by the settlement of Germans in rather small groups, which made the organization of schools unprofitable for them. There were also not enough teachers. However, despite the lack of specialists, teachers from among the German special settlers were gradually excluded from teaching the humanities.¹²⁶

On September 15, 1950, about 78 thousand children of German nationality aged 7 to 14 years lived in Kazakhstan. About 9 thousand of these children (11%) did not attend school. Along with measures to enroll German children in schools, the Soviet authorities began to pursue a policy of limiting the education of special settlers in higher educational institutions. On May 28, 1952, a secret resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b)K “On the admission of

¹²⁴ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 107.

¹²⁵ Alfred Einfeld and Ludmila Burgart, “Gody Bezmolvya I Probuzhedniya (1941-1964),” [“Years of Silence and Awakening (1941-1964)”], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Einfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 230.

¹²⁶ Tabuldenov, *Deportasya Narodov I Evakuatsya*, 61.

special settlers to higher educational institutions” was adopted. The resolution completely prohibited the admission of special settlers to the Kazakh State University named after S.M. Kirov, to the Almaty Law University, Kazakh Mining and Metallurgical, Physical Education and Pedagogical Institutes. Enrollment to the conservatory was also prohibited. The resolution provided a list of higher educational institutions, admission to which was permitted, but it also provided the number of special settlers allowed for each institution to participate in the competitive selection, and the volume of possible admission to these educational institutions. Of all the universities that existed on the territory of Kazakhstan, only 15 educational institutions were identified for educating special settlers: 3 agricultural, 2 medical, 1 technological, and 9 pedagogical universities. Among the 215 people who were allowed to enter the competition at all these universities, only 105 applicants could enroll. This was an extremely small number of students for a republic in which more than half a million Germans resided.¹²⁷

The German population of Kazakhstan was practically not involved in the intellectual sphere of activity during wartime and in the first decades after the end of the war. Later, it led to a deficiency of the German scientists because the number of German students at most privileged universities were restricted. In connection with the developments that unfolded in the 1930s and 1940s the policy of repression in the country sharply reduced the number of scientists in general. Researchers from among the German Soviet citizens of the country were not only partially destroyed as a result of repressive measures by the authorities, but also died en masse in the labor army, where all Germans were drafted, without taking into account their professional training. With the outbreak of war and mass deportation, most Soviet German scientists lost the opportunity to engage in research work. In rare cases ethnic German scientists were allowed to conduct their scientific work during the Great Patriotic War.¹²⁸ For instance, Kazakh scientist K.I. Satpayev and German Academician I. Bok worked together on the creation of a metallogenic map of Central Kazakhstan. However, such cooperation and, in general, the very fact of the work of a person of German nationality during the war years on a strategically important object was an exception and became possible only thanks to the patronage of K.I. Satpayev, who was at that time the president of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Karpykova, *Iz Istoryii Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№ 104, Postanovleniye TsK KP(b)K” [“№ 104, Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Kazakhstan”], 176.

¹²⁸ Nadezhda Efremova-Shershukova Alexandrovna, “Problema Razvitiya Kul’tury Nemtsev Kazakhstana v Poslevoennoye Vremya v Otechestvennoy Istoricheskoy Literature,” [“The Problem of the Development of Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan in the Post-War Time in Domestic Historical Literature”], *Vestnyk Tomskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, 2009, 142, <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/problemy-razvitiya-kultury-nemtsev-kazahstana-v-poslevoennoe-vremya-v-otechestvennoy-istoricheskoy-literature/viewer>.

¹²⁹ Zh.M. Adilov, A.B. Bakayev, and U.E. Sydykov, *Legendarnyi Politech [Legendary Politech]* (Almaty: KazNTU, 2014), 86.

The organization of cultural and educational work among the German population was no less important for the revival of national German culture. It should be noted that despite the prejudiced attitude towards the Germans on the part of the authorities, they were still allowed to participate in festivals and shows of amateur performances and received incentives from the organizers. In 1948, at the Olympics of amateur artistic circles for coal industry workers, the reader of Krylov's fables G. Blumenkranz and the head of the fine arts circle V. Eifert were rewarded. In 1949, the performer of piano works G. Gun was rewarded in a similar event. Before the adoption of Decrees mitigating the political and legal consequences of the forced deportation undertaken against the German people, the organization of amateur groups and clubs was undertaken only in certain regions of Kazakhstan on the initiative of the Germans themselves.¹³⁰ In particular, in 1953, during the republican show of amateur performances from the North Kazakhstan and Pavlodar regions, five of the delegations of 29 people were ethnic Germans. Other delegations also included Germans, but their amateur performances did not even contain elements of German culture. Germans did not sing German songs publicly during this period of time. This is primarily due to the fact that all the performances were approved by the artistic councils, and they, remembering the recently ended war, could not allow the public performance of songs in a language that the majority of the country's residents associated with the losses suffered during the bloody Patriotic War.¹³¹

During the war years, the only possible activity for ethnic Germans remained in the sphere of religious worship. Religion has always been one of the most significant components of the life of the German people. Religion for the German people was not limited to the ritual aspect, but was a significant component of their spiritual culture. A significant part of the Germans, even under conditions of total control, began to unite in secret religious communities, where they could communicate in their native language and remember the traditions and customs of their nation. However, the recognition of these communities by the state was out of the question. The repressed people, whose rights were grossly violated during forced deportation, could not count on the authorities to favorably view the organization and activities of any associations among them, especially since the attitude towards religion in the Soviet state was negative. The impossibility of organizing religious communities and building places of worship was further aggravated by the fact that the Germans living in a foreign ethnic environment belonged to different religious denominations than the rest of the republic's inhabitants. The population of Kazakhstan, both

¹³⁰ Mamyrbekov, *Shygys Kazakhstadagy Nemis Zhane*, 75.

¹³¹ Tabuldenov, *Deportatsya Narodov I Evakuatsya*, 145.

during the war and post-war times, consisted mainly of people who traditionally professed either Islam (Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Tatars) or Orthodoxy (Russians, Ukrainians).¹³²

During the war, the position of the Germans from a legal point of view was somewhat uncertain. Before the adoption of the Resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On the legal status of special settlers" in 1945, their legal status was not clearly established, which allowed the authorities to control their destinies at their own discretion. Although Germans did not have right to public worship, they had the opportunity to religiously express themselves until the end of 1941. Later on, the NKVD established total control over their lives, that even most of the ethnic Germans were afraid to pray at home. Despite all of these restrictions, Germans managed to organize secret associations where they could satisfy their spiritual needs and receive moral support. Those associations under the totalitarian regime became centers that made it possible to preserve national identity.¹³³

Secret religious communities not only cared about preserving the faith, but also helped to preserve their native language, customs and traditions. However, in a country that proclaimed atheism as the state ideology, such a move into religion could only be perceived negatively. The authorities refused to register religious communities, placing those gatherings for prayers in the position of violating the law on religious cults. Secret religious communities operating in areas where Germans live densely were subject to secret surveillance. The authorities persecuted the priests, they were suspected of conducting anti-Soviet propaganda under the guise of religious meetings. Various sanctions from restrictions on civil rights to criminal prosecution were applied to worshippers.¹³⁴

In 1943, the Soviet government weakened the regime of religious terror. The activities of the Russian Orthodox Church and Islamic confessional associations were legalized. In 1944, the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists was created. It united ethnic Germans of all confessions, Baptists, Evangelical Christians, and Pentecostals. It is indicative that this body was headed by former NKVD employee. However, the German people, deprived of civil rights and under the strict control of the NKVD, could not exercise their right to worship. Fear of reprisals from the authorities, arrests of Protestant priests, all this formed a special psychological

¹³² Burgart, "Razhrushenie religioznogo uklada zhizny", 211.

¹³³ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasiya, spetzposeleniye," 112.

¹³⁴ V. Schmidt, "Sostoyaniye Nemetskih Konfessiy Kazakhstana v Poslevoyenni Period: Osobennosti Politiki Partiynyh I Sovetskih Organov," ["The State of the German Confessions of Kazakhstan in the Post-War Period: Features of the Policy of the Party and Soviet Bodies"], in *Nemtsy Kazakhstana I Sibiri: Istoriya I Sovremennye Problemy Razvitiya [Germans of Kazakhstan and Siberia: History and Modern Problems of Development]*, ed. I.A.Selezneva (Omsk, 2017), 187.

atmosphere among the German special settlers, and therefore they tried not to demonstrate their religious views publicly.¹³⁵ After the end of the Great Patriotic War, attention to religious groups of German special settlers intensified. Religious communities began to be perceived from the point of view of the possible manifestation of counter-revolutionary sentiments in them and the organization of anti-Soviet work. In 1945, the NKVD of the Kazakh SSR sent a directive to the regional departments of the NKVD, which provided for measures aimed at developing an agent network to work in the religious communities of the Germans of Kazakhstan.¹³⁶

By the end of the 1940s, the Council for Religious Affairs, formed in May 1944, decided that Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and other sectarian societies should be opened only in the most extreme cases. By the early 1950s, they also included other Protestant movements, including Pentecostals and Mennonites.¹³⁷ In addition, at this time, the party authorities began to launch mass anti-religious propaganda. The authorities were especially uncompromising towards such Protestant movements as Mennonites, Pentecostals, and Adventists. The authorities were concerned with the level of religiosity of the German people, which was significantly higher than that of representatives of other ethnic groups living next to the Germans. This commitment to religion led to the fact that many Germans did not allow their children to join the Pioneer and Komsomol organizations, which interfered with the authorities' plans to deploy massive ideological influence on young people in order to form a communist worldview in them. In general, 1941-1945 was characterized by a lack of formalization of the legislative and regulatory framework regulating the rights and freedoms of German special settlers.¹³⁸

All actions of local and Soviet authorities were aimed practically only at the fastest possible eviction of Germans from their places of permanent residence and at organizing their labor use for the needs of the warring country. The end of the Great Patriotic War did not change the life of the German population for the better. Throughout 1945 and the early 1950s, there was a constant tightening of the special regime established for the Germans. The spiritual life of the German population of Kazakhstan during this period was also under the influence of destructive processes initiated by the authorities. Under the conditions of the special settlement regime, it was impossible for Germans to fully preserve their national traditions and fulfill religious responsibilities. The weakening of the religious component gradually led to the fact that religious norms and values ceased to be the basis of the defining mentality of this part of the ethnic group. The development

¹³⁵ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasiya, spetzposeleniye," 114.

¹³⁶ Ludmila Burgart, *Nemetskoye Naseleniye v Vostochnom Kazakhstane v 1941-1956 [German Population in Eastern Kazakhstan in 1941-1956]* (Ust-Kamenogorsk: Altay-Vita, 2001), 180.

¹³⁷ Mamyrbekov, *Shygys Kazakhstadagy Nemis Zhane*, 81.

¹³⁸ Karpykova, *Iz Istoyii Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, "№ 110, Iz Spravky Komyssyii TsK Kompartyyi Kazakhstana" ["№ 110, From the Reference of the Commission of the Central Committee of the Company of Kazakhstan"], 190.

of the national culture of the German people was objectively slowed down not only by the process of forced displacement to new habitats, but also by the difficulties of wartime, when all the resources of the deported people were thrown into physical survival. It was during wartime and the first post-war decade that the biculturalism of Kazakh Germans, forced to live in a foreign ethnic environment, began to take shape.¹³⁹

The Soviet policies that aimed at “Mankurtization” tried to make ethnic Germans forget about their culture by prohibiting the organization of German schools. By not being able to attend schools, German children could not learn about their history, language, and traditions. The ones who attended schools had to learn Russian and only the history of the USSR. Not only pupils but young adult Germans did not have a chance to get a successful higher education. As a result, they ended up working only in low-paid jobs. Ethnic Germans were even deprived of their rights to public worship, which forced them to organize secret religious associations where they could unite and honor the traditions of their ancestors. Therefore, religion helped them withstand all the hardships that deportation brought them and gave them the power to preserve their belonging to the German nation in new conditions.

Chapter 3: Rehabilitation policy: mechanisms and consequences (1953-1991).

3.1. Political stabilization process of German diaspora of Kazakhstan.

Internal political changes in the USSR associated with the death of Stalin and the beginning of the “thaw” period, as well as the foreign policy course of the Soviet leadership that changed in the early 1950s, laid the foundation for rehabilitation processes in relation to repressed peoples. Preparations for changing the special settlement system and removing some legal restrictions on special settlers began in the spring of 1953. In September 1953, the authorities proposed a document in which they discussed the inappropriateness of maintaining an almost three million contingent of special settlers in Kazakhstan.¹⁴⁰ As a result, the ruling government proposed a significant softening of the regime, specifically allowing Germans to change their residence and make temporary trips outside their current borders with the permission of local departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This document served as the foundation for the July 5, 1954,

¹³⁹ Eisfeld and Burgart, “Gody Bezmolvya I Probuzhedniya,” 212.

¹⁴⁰ Alfred Eisfeld and Ludmila Burgart, “Uprazhneniye Rezhima Spetsposeleniya I Izmeneniya v Polozheniyi Nemtsev,” [“Abolition of the Special Settlement Regime and Changes in the Position of the Germans”], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Eisfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 244.

resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, “On the removal of certain restrictions on the legal status of special settlers,” which marked the beginning of real changes in the legal status of the deported German people. The commandant’s offices changed the recommended time interval for mandatory registration of special settlers from once every three months to once a year.¹⁴¹

The first resolution did not remove all restrictions for special settlers. It only softened the conditions for the existence of the special settlement regime for deported people. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR promulgated the Decree on December 13, 1955, “On the removal of restrictions in the legal status of Germans and members of their families in special settlements,” freeing German families from total control by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. According to this law, deportees did not have the right to return to the places from which they were evicted. Despite all the limitations of this decree regarding the return of rights and freedoms to the repressed German people, it was the first state document that recognized the injustice of the Stalinist government’s actions in relation to the entire people.¹⁴²

One of the most important laws in the history of the Germans of Kazakhstan was the law adopted on August 29, 1964, which amended the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of August 28, 1941, “On the resettlement of Germans living in the Volga region.” This document, for the first time at the official level, recognized the groundlessness of the accusations made against ethnic Germans, emphasizing their contribution to the victory in the Great Patriotic War. However, this decree also spoke about the “rooting” of the people in new places of residence, which, according to the authorities, made their return to their homeland inappropriate. In general, there was no complete restoration of civil rights for the German population of the country, and the solution to problems of national development was left to the leaders of the regions where they lived after deportation.¹⁴³

Since 1954-1955, with the adoption of the first decrees restoring civil rights to forcibly resettled Germans, their participation in the socio-economic life of the republic has gradually increased. Work in agriculture was predominant for the German population of Kazakhstan, but little by little the Germans living in the industrialized cities of the republic began to participate in industrial production, work in the field of education, healthcare, and cultural and educational activities. However, a significant number of Germans deported to Kazakhstan who had a professional

¹⁴¹ Karpykova, *Iz Istoryii Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№ 113, Iz Protokola Sekretariata TsK Kompartyii Kazakhstana” [“№ 113, From the Protocol of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan”], 193.

¹⁴² Krieger, *Rhine–Volga–Irtys*, 120.

¹⁴³ Herbert Wiens, *Volk Auf Dem Weg*, 95.

education not related to agriculture and settled in villages did not have the opportunity to change their place of residence and work.¹⁴⁴

The improvement in the situation of the German population of the region was facilitated by the company that began in 1954 to develop virgin lands in Kazakhstan. The Germans worked for the good of the country, for which many of them were awarded the title of heroes of socialist labor. Despite the severe labor shortage and management and industrial enterprise specialists, they were rarely employed in this capacity. The professional skills of those Germans who had experience in industry were not used effectively enough.¹⁴⁵ Thus, out of 3,067 Germans who worked in industrial enterprises of the Aktobe region in 1956, 5 people worked as engineers, 1 as chief engineer, and 1 as director. However, despite discriminatory restrictions, analysis of materials from post-war population censuses shows that there was a gradual increase in the share of Germans employed in various sectors of the national economy. The traditional agricultural focus of the Germans' activities was gradually replaced by their employment in industrial production, healthcare, and education.¹⁴⁶

The eighties saw high employment of the German population in the governing structures in the republic's agriculture because, throughout the post-war period, the Germans remained the least urbanized ethnic group in Kazakhstan. The proportion of people of German nationality working in leadership positions in the education system, including directors of secondary schools, vocational schools and technical schools, has also increased. Among the Germans there were also those who managed large factories and other enterprises. In order to activate the citizens of German nationality, a decree of "the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan" was adopted on March 18, 1986. It only paid attention to the degree of representation of Germans among the legal, administrative and military bodies. The beginning of the transformation of Soviet society raised other questions to the authorities related to its very existence, and therefore the intention to help the Germans in their wider participation in social and economic activities remained largely a declaration.¹⁴⁷

Decrees of the 1960-1970s, which abolished restrictions on the legal status of Germans, also increased the degree of their participation in the political life of the republic. Representatives of

¹⁴⁴ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetsposelenye," 115.

¹⁴⁵ Alfred Einfeld and Ludmila Burgart, "Podnyatiye Tseliny," ["The Rise of Virgin Lands"], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Einfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 254.

¹⁴⁶ Karpykova, *Iz Istoriyi Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, "№ 124, Spravka Instruktorov TsK Kompartyii Kazakhstana" ["№ 124, Certificate of Instructors of the Central Committee of the Company of Kazakhstan"], 214.

¹⁴⁷ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 120.

the German people, albeit insignificantly, participated in the work of state party structures. Their membership in the CPSU, which made it possible to apply for leadership positions in various sectors of the national economy, became increasingly significant. However, despite all the steps the authorities have taken to involve Germans as leaders, administrators, and party functionaries, they have not succeeded in solving the primary task: achieving proportional representation of the German people in all these structures. Participation in the socio-political life of the country has not become so large-scale that one can state the real restoration of all the violated rights of the illegally deported people.¹⁴⁸

The end of the 1970s saw an attempt to address another issue: the restoration of the German people's rights. Indeed, unlike other peoples who were forcibly resettled on the republic's territory, the Germans never received fair and complete rehabilitation from the authorities, which would include the restoration of national statehood. The ASSR NP, which existed before the war, was the center of national German culture, its restoration was supposed to revive the German people. A unified autonomist movement of Soviet Germans was gradually formed. Delegations were organized to Moscow, but appeals to the authorities did not bring any significant practical results. Therefore, emigration sentiments among Germans started to form. This concerned the Almaty, Aktobe, Zhambul, Zhezkazgan, and Karaganda regions to the greatest extent.¹⁴⁹

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kazakhstan received 488 applications for permission to emigrate to Germany in 1971. In 1972, the number of requests increased to 1,119; in the first half of 1973, 19,242 such requests were recorded. The authorities faced a dilemma: either allow the Germans to emigrate or restore autonomy. However, the Germans represented a fairly large labor force, and the measures taken by the Soviet government to develop the virgin lands of Kazakhstan required a large number of workers. In addition, the Germans traditionally gravitated toward agricultural activities, and the authorities knew firsthand about German hard work.¹⁵⁰

Growing dissatisfaction with the Soviet authorities' retention policy toward the Soviet Germans prompted the Politburo to organize territorial autonomy for the Germans. The authorities refrained from restoring autonomy in the Volga region, justifying their decision to the public by stating that "the German population did not actually live here and had no historical roots in this area." To create the necessary conditions for the ethnic group's national development, the authorities decided to establish the German Autonomous Region on Kazakhstan's territory. German autonomy was to be located on the territory of the Ermentau and Seletinsky districts of the

¹⁴⁸ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 158.

¹⁴⁹ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 146.

¹⁵⁰ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 166.

Tselinograd region, the Irtysh district of the Pavlodar region, and the Valikhanovsky district of the Kokshetau region. The center of the newly formed autonomy was to be the city of Ermentau.¹⁵¹

At the start of 1979, consultations took place between representatives of the top party leadership and representatives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, some of whom did not support the idea of creating an ethno-territorial entity in the republic. The authorities did not consider it necessary to discuss the issue of changing the borders and status of territories with the population of Kazakhstan, including the Germans. The emergence of autonomy here would consolidate the Germans in their places, cutting off their opportunity to return to the Volga region or Germany. Mass protests have begun since the decision to create autonomy in Tselinograd was announced. On June 16, 1979, a rally of many thousands gathered in the central square of the city. The number of protesters, according to various estimates, was up to five thousand people. Those gathered declared the authorities' decision illegal. The demonstrators carried posters in their hands demanding that the decision to create autonomy be cancelled and that a referendum be held on the issue of forming a national region in Kazakhstan. The protests included not only the Kazakhs but also the Russian and German populations of the republic. During the rally, which lasted about an hour, the protesters informed the authorities that they expected a clear response to their demands by June 19.¹⁵²

The Republic of Kazakhstan and Moscow brought in the state security agencies on June 17 to restore calm and order. On the same day, a meeting was held at which the task was set to “arm all military personnel of the local garrison, the KGB, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs so that if the need arose, they would be ready to use weapons.” Despite all the efforts of the authorities, the rally on June 19 still took place. The protesters were informed of the decision of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan D.A. Konaev that the formation of autonomy will not happen now and not in the future. People greeted this message with applause and after that, the rally stopped. The events of June 1979 were not mentioned in the media of that time. The leadership of the republic and the KGB made every effort to ensure that information about the demonstrations did not become widespread. Only in the second half of the 1980s, in connection with the proclaimed course towards “perestroika” and “glasnost,” fragmentary, scattered information about the events of that time began to appear in the press. Thus, the rehabilitation of the German people was the result of changes in the socio-political life of Soviet

¹⁵¹ Alfred Eisfeld, “Nesostoyavshayasya Nemetskaya Avtonomiya v Kazakhstane,” [“Failed German Autonomy in Kazakhstan”], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Eisfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 366.

¹⁵² Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 168.

society and depended on the objective conditions of the development of the state and its socio-political system.¹⁵³

The political rehabilitation of the Germans was not fully realized. The deportation was recognized as a criminal act of a totalitarian state, and the charges brought against the Germans were recognized as unlawful, but the national autonomy of the people was not restored. The Tselinograd events of 1979 for the German population of the republic only meant that they had no future in Kazakhstan. Economic and social rehabilitation was also not complete. The Kazakh authorities, due to established stereotypes and reluctance to take comprehensive measures to restore the rights of the repressed German people, did not try to equalize the social and professional structure of the ethnic group, mainly engaged in agriculture, to intensify the processes of Germans entering government bodies, to achieve their equal participation in the economic and political life of the region.¹⁵⁴

However, there were further attempts at the Union level aimed at improving the lives of Germans in the whole region. The USSR Communist Party critically evaluated the policy it pursued in the past in relation to the ethnic groups that were part of the USSR. They admitted that the German diaspora suffered the most from this policy. The politicians subtly acknowledged their attempts at “Mankurtization,” which primarily occurred during Stalin's era. This policy provided the Germans of the USSR with the opportunity to restore their ethnic group. The Soviet government's attempts to revive German culture were apparent during the first congress of the “Wiedergeburt,” which took place in Moscow in 1989. “Wiedergeburt” aims at restoring the German ethnic group and its national identity.¹⁵⁵ Understanding the mistakes of the past and striving to revive the culture has yielded fruit. “Wiedergeburt” was also created in Kazakhstan in 1989 in a number of cities such as Almaty, Astana, Atyrau, Karaganda, Kostanay, and in 1990 in Pavlodar. Germans in Kazakhstan have had the opportunity to learn more about the German language, culture, and traditions. Despite their adherence to German culture, Kazakh Germans remained Russified.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Eisfeld, “Nesostoyavshayasya Nemetskaya Avtonomiya v Kazakhstane,” 368.

¹⁵⁴ E.M. Grybanova, “Poisk Putey Preodoleniya Migratsyonnyh Nastoroyeniye Nemtsev Kazakhstana v 1970h gg i ego Resultaty,” [“Search for Ways to Overcome the Migration Mood of the Germans of Kazakhstan in the 1970s and Its Results”], in *Nachalnyi period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyni I deportatsyi rossiyskih nemtsev: vzglyady I otsenky cherez 70 let [The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years]*, ed. Arkadyi German Adolfovich (Moskva: MSNK-press, 2011), 903.

¹⁵⁵ Robert Korn, “Handeln plus enge Zusammenarbeit” [“Action Plus Close Cooperation”], *Freundschaft*, September 22, 1989, 183rd ed., 2.

¹⁵⁶ “Organisationsgeschichte” [“History of the Orhanization”], Wiedergeburt, accessed August 1, 2024, <https://wiedergeburt-kasachstan.de/istoriya-fonda-nem/?lang=de>.

3.2. Development of cultural and spiritual life of Germans in education and religion.

After the Soviet government adopted a number of resolutions to abolish some restrictions on the legal status of the country's German population in the 1950s and 1960s, Kazakh authorities began to take steps aimed at strengthening mass cultural, political, and educational work in their environment. In September 1955, the Ministry of Education of the Kazakh SSR implemented an order "On eliminating deficiencies in the education of children of special settlers," which initiated measures to organize schools in Kazakhstan that would teach either entirely or partially in German. Therefore, ethnic Germans would have a chance to study in German as natives. All regions of Kazakhstan faced challenges in organizing these schools, primarily due to the absence of German language teachers, as well as German-speaking specialists in the field of teaching natural sciences, and social and humanitarian disciplines.¹⁵⁷

As of January 1, 1956, only 186 Germans were studying in pedagogical universities throughout the republic, and 213 representatives of the ethnic group were studying in pedagogical schools. As a result of the government's abolition of restrictions on admission to higher education institutions for people of German origin, the number of Germans studying in pedagogical specialties has increased significantly. Besides the shortage of teachers, there were other problems. Many teachers lacked sufficient methodological literacy. Documents from both the Ministry of Education of the Kazakh SSR and various departments of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan repeatedly mentioned difficulties in providing German textbooks to schools, as well as a lack of didactic materials and reading literature. The activity of the German special settlers in resolving the issue of educating their children in their native language was also low.¹⁵⁸

The Ministry of Education of the Kazakh SSR, together with the propaganda and agitation department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, carried out work in 1955 to identify the opinion of the parents of children of special settlers on the issue of the desired language of instruction for their children. The majority of parents expressed a preference for education in Russian, arguing that children might face difficulties with further education since there are no professional educational institutions in the country that provide instruction in German,

¹⁵⁷ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 78.

¹⁵⁸ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 171.

and there are very few schools where they could establish themselves as German-speaking teachers.¹⁵⁹

On February 27, 1957, the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR adopted a resolution “On the introduction of teaching the native language for children of German nationality in schools of the Kazakh SSR.” The resolution obligated the Ministry of Education of Kazakhstan to implement, starting from the second half of the 1957/1958 school year, a 2-hour weekly German teaching program for children of German nationality in grades 2-4 in schools located in areas with the highest concentration of German population. The resolution also specified the conditions under which the introduction of additional hours could take place. It was assumed that there would be at least 10 students in each German language group. But there was still no special program for studying German in grades 2-4.¹⁶⁰

The first textbooks in German appeared only in the 1963–1964 academic year. In a number of regions of Kazakhstan, authorities started creating groups for studying German; however, the lack of comprehensive methodological support created certain difficulties for the directors of schools, so it was easier for them to document the disagreement of parents to open such groups than to create programs, methodological manuals, teaching texts, and didactic material. Even when those groups were opened, teaching in such groups was often not carried out at the proper level. Despite all the difficulties in organizing groups studying German as a native language, the number of such groups gradually grew, as did the number of children studying in them. This was due to the fact that teachers with special education started working in schools.¹⁶¹

In 1961, the Ministry of Education decided to open groups for training specialists in the study of the German language in a number of pedagogical universities and colleges of the republic. In 1963, the Ministry of Education issued a decree on the creation of pedagogical classes in secondary schools, the content of which included an extended course of the German language. Upon completion of the pedagogical class, graduates received the right to teach their native language to children of German nationality. By the end of the 1960s, such classes were created in the

¹⁵⁹ Karpykova, *Iz Istoriyi Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№ 117, Iz Spravky Brigady TsK Kompartyii Kazakhstana Otdelu Propogandy I Agitatsyii TsK” [“№ 117, From the Reference of the Brigade of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan to the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee”], 203.

¹⁶⁰ Alfred Einfeld, “Prepodovaniye Nemetskogo Yazyka i Assimilyatsya,” [“German Language Teaching and Assimilation”], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, [*History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan*], ed. Alfred Einfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 296.

¹⁶¹ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 174.

Semipalatinsk, Karaganda, Aktobe, Kostanay, Zhambyl, Kokshetau, Almaty regions, i.e., where the majority of the German population of the republic was concentrated.¹⁶²

Graduates of pedagogical classes, colleges, and universities who came to work in schools made the problem of providing the educational process with personnel less acute. In the republic at that time, only at the Kazakh State University, there was a special department at the Faculty of History, where they trained historians with the right to teach history in German. Six schools opened in the early 1970s, offering a number of academic subjects in German. There were 1,740 people studying there, which was clearly not enough when the German primary school groups numbered more than 37 000. As a result, most regions of Kazakhstan began to observe a trend towards a reduction in groups studying German as a native language by the beginning of the 1970s. Every single region of Kazakhstan, in their reports on the enrollment of children in such groups, noted a decrease in interest in learning the language and, as a consequence, a decrease in the number of children studying in them.¹⁶³

At the turn of the 1970-1980s, the Soviet Union entered a period of economic stagnation, which negatively affected the spiritual and cultural life of society in general and the development of education in particular. There was a reduction in the share of spending on education in the structure of the state budget, which coincided with a period of rising inflation in the country and an acceleration in the birth rate, which was especially evident in Kazakhstan. Education system began to experience a serious lack of material and technical support; schools in Kazakhstan no longer had enough places for students. Under these conditions, no one wanted to take care of expanding national German education in the republic. Issues of enlightenment and education are closely related to the development and functioning of language as a whole. The change in the ethnolinguistic behavior of the Germans was characterized by the following interrelated trends: on the one hand, there was an intensive spread of the Russian language, without which it was impossible in the country to get a job or get the desired education. On the other hand, there was a significant loss of the native language because of the aforementioned reasons.¹⁶⁴

According to the 1959 census, 75% of Germans considered German to be their native language. In 1970, this figure for the German population was already 66.8%; in 1979, it was 57%; and in 1989, it was 54.4%. Moreover, data on proficiency in one's native language according to the 1989 census raises serious doubts. The basis for them is that the materials of this census record the

¹⁶² Victor Klein, "Lernen und Lehren" ["Learning and teaching"], *Neues Leben*, July 2, 1969, 27th ed., 7.

¹⁶³ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetzposelenye," 176.

¹⁶⁴ Eisfeld, "Prepodovaniye Nemetskogo Yazyka i Assimilyatsya," 300.

largest number of interethnic marriages among the German population, compared to other ethnic groups; 70% of Germans lived in ethnically mixed families. Given that the language of interethnic communication was Russian and the spouses in marriage could initially communicate only in this language, it raises serious doubts that the second spouse (not German by ethnicity) would be able to master the German language in a fairly short time. All this leads to two conclusions: firstly, the census forms were filled out for young children by their parents, thus deciding which language to record as their native language, secondly, the very formulation of the question: “Native language” - without specifying the degree of proficiency in it, etc.—caused discrepancies.¹⁶⁵

Recognition of the German language as a “native” language did not always mean active proficiency in it or use in everyday communication. Often, respondents listed German as their mother tongue solely because it was their nationality’s language. According to the public association of Germans in Kazakhstan, “Wiedergeburt,” only 8–10% of representatives of the ethnic group actually spoke German in 1989. Meanwhile, the revival of the culture of the people is possible only through the restoration of the native language. However, the complete revival of the German language in order to preserve the culture and ethnic identity of the people turned out to be objectively impossible due to the lack of practical interest of both the authorities and the Germans themselves.¹⁶⁶

In order for the German language to truly become a language of communication and for the effective development of the literary, rather than dialectal, form of the language, it is necessary to read as many books as possible in German, and there were practically none in Kazakhstan. In 1955, the propaganda and agitation department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan proposed to instruct the Ministry of Culture of the Kazakh SSR to develop an action plan for organizing the publication of Soviet writers’ works in German. The proposal also suggested starting the publication of children’s literature in German.¹⁶⁷

The Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan discussed the issue of providing the German population with literature in their native language in 1958 and decided to organize the systematic import of German books from central Moscow publishing houses into the republic. Only a decade later, the republic organized the publishing of such books, but the number of publications failed to meet the spiritual needs of the German population in the

¹⁶⁵ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 177.

¹⁶⁶ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 92.

¹⁶⁷ M. Nadezhdin, “Der Weg zum Leser” [“The path to the reader”], *Neues Leben*, March 20, 1958, 34th ed., 3.

region. Thus, from 1971 to 1973, the publishing house “Kazakhstan” published only 32 titles of books and brochures in German, with a total circulation of 143 thousand copies. In the Republic, home to more than 858 thousand Germans, this volume of literature was clearly insufficient.¹⁶⁸

A paradoxical situation arose in the region: in bookstores, one could buy books in English, French, and even Chinese, but literature in German was not available for sale. An improvement in the situation with the publication of literature in German became possible only in the mid-1980s. However, the literature produced for the Germans did not always consider their national spiritual needs and was frequently uninteresting and irrelevant.¹⁶⁹ In 1990, it was decided to establish two specialized editorial offices for the publication of German literature. However, the events of 1991, marked by the collapse of the USSR and Kazakhstan’s independence, as well as the economic crisis, profoundly impacted every aspect of society. This resulted in the indefinite postponement of all plans to provide the German population of the republic with literature in their native language.¹⁷⁰

The need to intensify work to replenish library collections with literature in German and increase the volume of publication of such literature was constantly discussed both at the Republican and all-Union levels. Repeated from year to year, recommendations to authorities about the need to intensify work with the German population of the republic make it possible to conclude that this activity was formalized; the implementation of decisions made was regularly reported to higher authorities, but nothing qualitatively changed. The constant decline in the number of Germans speaking their native language, the decline in school groups studying it, and the low participation of Germans in events organized by clubs and libraries serve as evidence of this. Even the small amount of German literature available in the republic’s libraries was barely in demand among readers. The presence of literature in the native language is one of the conditions for the formation of national identity. Literary creativity for the Germans of Kazakhstan after the end of the Great Patriotic War was under an unspoken ban. The revival of German literature began only after the adoption of decrees that partially recognized the Germans’ rights to free national development.¹⁷¹

During the war years, the only possible activity for Germans remained in the sphere of religious worship. Although the authorities strongly opposed any religious gatherings, Germans still managed to secretly unite in religious communities, where they could communicate in their native

¹⁶⁸ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 179.

¹⁶⁹ Alexej Debolski, “Perlen Kasachisher Kurzprosa” [“Pearls of Kazakh short prose”], *Neues Leben*, January 9, 1980, 2nd ed., 5.

¹⁷⁰ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 96.

¹⁷¹ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 183.

language and remember the traditions and customs of their people. After the adoption of laws partially restoring the national rights of the Germans, there was no quick restoration of the former religiosity of the German population. Despite this, the first religious associations of Germans began to appear almost immediately after the adoption of the 1954 the resolution of the CPSU Central Committee “On major shortcomings in scientific-atheistic propaganda and measures to improve it” and the resolution “On errors in carrying out scientific-atheistic propaganda among the population.” Thanks to decrees rehabilitating the German population of the country, the first Evangelical Lutheran community was also organized in 1953 in Tselinograd, and the first Roman Catholic community was created in the same year in Karaganda.¹⁷²

From 1955 to 1972, the service was led by the only German pastor in Siberia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia, Evgeniy Bachman, who survived after many years of exile. Pastor Bachman registered the Lutheran community. Following them, Catholics began to organize communities. From Germany, with the support of the Württemberg Bible Society, it was possible to send bibles and other religious literature by mail. From 1956-1957 the pressure on the pastor and the community increased. Persons under 18 years of age were prohibited from attending churches.¹⁷³

After the abolition of the special settlement regime (1956), the religious life of Mennonites and Baptists noticeably revived. The baptism of adult believers took place in the Kokshetau region. Faith in God brought together not only Mennonites and Baptists, who previously lived in different parts of the Union, but also German and Russian-speaking believers. In the Karaganda region, the strengthened fraternal community of Mennonites, consisting of more than 400 believers, became independent. This caused concern for the Council of Religious Affairs, as it made it difficult to control believers.¹⁷⁴

The Communist Party of Kazakhstan accused humanitarian organizations such as the Red Cross of supplying religious literature and called their actions ideological sabotage aimed at Soviet citizens of German nationality. Simultaneously, the authorities decided to conduct anti-religious propaganda among young people, adolescents of school age, and preschool-aged children of German nationality. The authorities encouraged German youth to join the CPSU, the Komsomol and public organizations. To counteract the growing religiosity of the German population of Kazakhstan, it was proposed at the congress of Soviet Germans to create a German theater. The German theater was encouraged to use anti-religious propaganda. It was intended to use amateur

¹⁷² Alfred Einfeld, “Vozrazhdeniye Religioznosty,” [“Return of Religiosity”], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan], ed. Alfred Einfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 310.

¹⁷³ Podoprigora, *Nemtsy Pavlodarskogo Priyirtshya*, 63.

¹⁷⁴ Efremova-Shershukova, “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye,” 116.

artistic performances for the same purpose. However, the authorities were unable to achieve a fundamental change in mood and way of thinking of German people. Improved international relations and the Helsinki process led to a weakening of pressure on believers.¹⁷⁵

P. Dik, summarizing the results of this research, wrote: “The Soviet protective scientific-philosophical, dialectical-materialist spirituality of the eighties, which at that time did not know a real alternative, was unable to constructively resist the harsh clash of extreme worldviews. Perhaps this is why in the late eighties the spiritual and social values of the individual, group and community as a whole turned out to be easily vulnerable.” Despite strong Soviet anti-religious propaganda, religiosity among Germans was more widespread than among other peoples of the USSR. Autonomous churches of the Germans turned out to be the most effective institutions for storing and reproducing the spiritual sphere of traditional ethnic culture.¹⁷⁶

3.3. Development of cultural life of Germans in arts and mass media.

In the post-war period, German media began to develop in Kazakhstan. For the first time, the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan’s resolution, adopted on October 18, 1956, indicated the need to publish newspapers in German. The creation of a press organ for Kazakh Germans was a necessary step to stimulate the development of their national culture and language.¹⁷⁷ In response to persistent pleas from Kazakhstan’s German intelligentsia, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan announced on June 9, 1965, that a German newspaper would be published from January 1, 1966. This newspaper was named “Freundschaft.”¹⁷⁸ The newspaper’s task was to examine the Kazakh Germans’ international education, politics, and spiritual lives. Largely thanks to its publications, the number of children studying their native language in schools in the republic continued to increase; the German population of Kazakhstan had the opportunity to improve the literary German language and obtain information about how Germans live in the country.¹⁷⁹ Additionally, the newspaper actively promotes the enhancement of the cultural life of German residents in Kazakhstan. For example, in

¹⁷⁵ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 43.

¹⁷⁶ Alfred Eisfeld, “Vozrazhdeniye Religioznosty,” 324.

¹⁷⁷ Karpykova, *Iz Istoriyi Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№ 125, Postanovleniye Buro TsK Kompartyii Kazakhstana” [Resolution of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Company of Kazakhstan], 221.

¹⁷⁸ Karpykova, *Iz Istoriyi Nemtsev Kazakhstana*, “№ 133, Postanavleniye Prezidiuma TsK Kompartyi Kazakhstana” [“Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan”], 243.

¹⁷⁹ Gerhard Schachner, “The Soviet-German Newspaper ‘Freundschaft’ and the Cultural Transformation of the Soviet-Germans in Kazakhstan,” *Nationalities Papers* 9, no.1 (1981): 81–98, doi:10.1080/00905998108407904.

one of the 1970 newspaper issues, an article stated that the Temirtau city department of culture organized the celebration of Ludwig van Beethoven's birthday in Temirtau. Professional performers sang German songs and danced to them during a massive festival. This demonstrates the government's efforts to revive German culture.¹⁸⁰

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan approved a plan of additional measures on June 28, 1977, to further strengthen political and educational work among citizens of German nationality. This plan focused on the republic's cultural departments and unions of writers and journalists to intensify their efforts in "improving the reflection of the life of Soviet Germans in works of art." In 1986, a "resolution of this kind" determined the need to create a series of essays on the history of Soviet Germans that year and publish them in separate brochures. Despite the many years of persecution of poets and prose writers among the German people, Soviet-German writers gradually began to make their way into the "great literature."¹⁸¹

However, not only measures to preserve the native language were necessary for the revival of national German culture. No less important was the work on organizing cultural and educational work among the German population, which began to unfold in Kazakhstan only at the beginning of the 1960s. One example of such work was the creation of clubs that focused on the national specifics of different ethnicities living in Kazakhstan. In the early 1960s, Kazakhstan's number of clubs ranked 10th among the 15 union republics. In the country as a whole, there was one club establishment for every 940 people; in Kazakhstan, there was one club establishment for 1,334 people. In the Kokshetau region, there was only one club per 1,918 people, whereas in the Chimkent region, there was only one club per 1,814 people. Karaganda, Zhambyl, Tselinograd, and Kostanay regions also experienced a significant need for organizing club institutions. The fact that most clubs were located in rural areas of the republic and the majority of the German population lived in villages could objectively facilitate the creation of a network of club institutions focused on serving the spiritual needs of the German population. The club establishments in Kazakhstan primarily showcased music and dance genres. Other types of amateur performances were poorly developed.¹⁸²

Obviously, this is due to the fact that, under conditions of severe discrimination, this type of creativity was most accessible to mass perception and replication. The revival of national culture began with the creation of amateur art groups in villages with a predominantly German population.

¹⁸⁰ A. Surkow, "Beethoven-Ehrung in Temirtau" ["Beethoven tribute in Temirtau"], *Freundschaft*, December 31, 1970, 260th ed., 2.

¹⁸¹ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 184.

¹⁸² Ludmilla Hort, "Das Gewichtige Wort eines Propagandisten Perlen Kasachisher" ["The Weighty Word of a Propagandist Pearls of Kazakhstan"], *Neues Leben*, March 19, 1969, 13th ed., 2.

Since the early 1960s, the first German choral singing circles and soloists have appeared in Kazakhstan. As of January 1, 1960, there were 6,921 amateur art groups operating in Kazakhstan's Ministry of Culture system, in which more than one hundred thousand Germans participated. For amateur artistic circles to succeed, enthusiasts must be capable of organizing and attracting the German population of Kazakhstan to participate in their work. Certain financial costs were also required for the purchase of instruments, sheet music, and the allocation of premises for rehearsals. Most German creative groups existed through self-financing.¹⁸³

Since the mid-1960s, Kazakhstan has witnessed the emergence of numerous amateur German groups. University teachers in Semipalatinsk helped form an amateur German group that included a choir, an orchestra, and a dance group. In the village of Konstantinovka, Uspensky district, Pavlodar region, an amateur group of German folk art was created. They founded a German choir at the Teacher's House in Zhezkazgan.¹⁸⁴ One of the first professional German groups was the symphony orchestra, founded at the music school in Temirtau, led by the director of the school, composer G. Kleiman.¹⁸⁵ The foreign language departments at several universities in Tselinograd, Pavlodar, and Kokshetau significantly contributed to the preservation and advancement of national German culture. For example, Kokshetau University students organized fascinating workshops in school dedicated to teaching pupils German history. The students at Kokshetau University invited a number of old men and women who were knowledgeable about German history and asked them to share their stories with schoolchildren. Such an intriguing approach to the revival of German culture certainly piqued students' interest. They not only taught history through storytelling, but they also used musical performances to make it more interesting for young children.¹⁸⁶

The German choir, created at the Kokshetau State Pedagogical Institute and headed by V. Mayer, set as its goal "to bring German folk songs to the masses" and worked successfully for a number of years. Teachers from various departments, along with a few employees from German-language editorial offices, started gathering folk songs, proverbs, and sayings that were preserved in the memory of older Germans. One of the brightest pages in the cultural life of the German people of Kazakhstan was the activity of the German pop-vocal ensemble "Freundschaft", created in 1968 in Karaganda, which toured not only in the territory of the republic but throughout the USSR. This

¹⁸³ Lilly Stein, "Unvergessliche Erfahrung" ["Unforgettable experience"], *Neues Leben*, May 11, 1979, 19th ed., 3.

¹⁸⁴ P. Borodichina, "Musikschule in Dsheskasgan" ["Music School in Zheskazgan"], *Freundschaft*, March 28, 1967, 62nd ed., 3.

¹⁸⁵ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 187.

¹⁸⁶ Helene Sikorskaja, "Kennst du die Geschichte Deines Volkes?" ["Do you know the history of your people?"], *Freundschaft*, December 26, 1990, 248th ed., 2.

group played an important role in the development of amateur artistic creativity of the Germans of Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. The beginning of the 1970s in the republic was marked by the massive appearance of German folklore groups. The peculiarity of their emergence was that they were created not in cities, but in state and collective farms in Kazakhstan.¹⁸⁷

The development of amateur artistic creativity among the German population was particularly noticeable in the places of greatest concentration in the republic: in the Tselinograd, Karaganda, and Pavlodar regions. In particular, 10 German folklore groups worked in the Tselinograd region; there was even a folk drama theater that staged German performances. In the mid-1970s, numerous German family groups emerged in Kazakhstan's amateur art system. The Gaman brothers were among the first to participate in the work of the Temirtau Symphony Orchestra in the mid-1960s. In 1970, they founded a German brass band in Karaganda, which performed only German folk music. Then various German musical groups emerged. They included the family brass band of the Baummer family from Zhezkazgan, the musical group of the Baymeister family from the Chimkent region, and the family propaganda team of Karl Ivanovich Resh from the Mirny state farm in the Pavlodar region, and many others. The appearance of such groups was a new direction in the development of amateur creativity among the Germans and played a certain role in the revival of the spiritual culture of the German people. By the end of the 1970s, there were more than three hundred German amateur groups in the republic, which performed not only German folk songs but also works written by modern composers based on poems by great German poets.¹⁸⁸

It was decided to create a professional German pop concert brigade to serve the German population. In 1972, the Ministry of Culture of Kazakhstan issued a decision to open a German department for the training of pop artists in the Republican Studio of Pop Art. It was assumed that 12-15 people would study on it annually. In 1975, a German studio was created at the Moscow Shchepkin Theater School, where several young men and women of German nationality came from Kazakhstan in December of the same year to study theater skills. The development of mass cultural work among the German population was hampered by the lack of musical and methodological literature necessary for successful work. Only in the mid-1970s, at the disposal of activists for the revival of national German culture, were collections of German folk songs published in small editions (up to 5 thousand copies) and methodological materials to help the organizers of club work in German and Russian, which described not only the methodology for

¹⁸⁷ R.M. Musabekova, "Sozdaniye Nemetskogo Estradnogo Ansamblya 'Freundschaft' v Karagande (1968-1971)," ["Creation of the German Variety Ensemble 'Freundschaft' in Karaganda (1968-1971)"], *Ezhegodnyk Mezhdunarodnoy Assosyatsiyi Issledovateley Istorii i Kultury Rossiyskyyh Nemtsev* 1, no. 7 (2020): 77.

¹⁸⁸ Efremova-Shershukova Alexandrovna, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetsposeleniye," 189.

holding events but also contained information on the traditions and customs of the German people.¹⁸⁹

If amateur and professional groups performing songs, dances, and music carried the primary burden of reviving the national culture of the German people in the 1960s and 1970s, the opening of the first German drama theater in Kazakhstan and the entire USSR in the 1980s marked the revival of the German cultural life. The German Theater was created on September 27, 1977, in the city of Temirtau, Karaganda region. The decision to create a theater in a city that does not even have regional status was well thought out from a political point of view. On the one hand, the authorities dispelled all accusations of their insufficient attention to the spiritual needs of the German people. On the other hand, the theater's activities in a small town could not be so significant as to provoke a significant increase in national self-awareness among the resettled Germans of Kazakhstan. In its first years of existence, the theater's audience was small; the Germans did not want to visit it, being afraid to show their nationality. The German theater staged performances not only based on plays by German playwrights but also by Russian ones. The troupe's repertoire included productions whose main task was a theatrical display of German national rituals.¹⁹⁰

To develop the self-awareness and culture of the German people, the German Drama Theater took the initiative to hold all-Union festivals of German creativity. The German Drama Theater organized all-Union festivals of German culture and art in Pavlodar in 1989 and Almaty in 1990. They included not only the Germans of Kazakhstan but also the entire USSR. Within the framework of the festival, daily screenings of performances of the German drama theater, concert programs, film screenings in German, exhibitions, excursions, press conferences, practical seminars for amateur art organizers, and round tables were organized.¹⁹¹ The theater not only garnered recognition within the USSR, but also gained international recognition. In 1989, the theater's artists ventured out to conquer the stages of the Federal Republic of Germany. Working on German stages improved their professional skills and brought them closer to Germans, which encouraged them to strengthen their German identity.¹⁹²

The development of media that engage in dialogue with readers, listeners, and viewers in their native German language was an equally important condition for the preservation and development

¹⁸⁹ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 94.

¹⁹⁰ K. Erlich, "Nemetskyi Dramaticheskyy Teatr," ["German Drama Theater"], in *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, ed. Alfred Einfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017), 348.

¹⁹¹ Volkova, *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev*, 123.

¹⁹² Robert Fink, "Eine bevorstehende Gastspieltournee" ["An upcoming guest tour"], *Freundschaft*, September 30, 1989, 189th ed., 4.

of national identity. The Kazakh Republican Radio also carried out active cultural work among the German population of the republic, within which, by order of the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR, adopted in May 1958, the editorial office of German broadcasting was created. The Chairman of the State Committee for Radio Broadcasting under the Council of Ministers of the USSR ordered the daily broadcast of the German edition of the All-Union Radio on the Kazakh SSR's territory starting from June 20, 1958. The broadcast included news blocks and conversations on general political topics, as well as coverage of events in the lives of the German population in the republic. The broadcasting featured extensive music programs, introducing listeners to folk and modern songs performed in German by the top bands in Kazakhstan. The broadcast also featured literary thematic issues that introduced listeners to the works of German, Russian, and Kazakh writers.¹⁹³

No less significant for satisfying the spiritual needs of the German population of Kazakhstan was the organization of television programs in German. Since 1964, the Karaganda television studio has been producing German-language programs. They talked not only about the current socioeconomic problems of Kazakhstan's German population but also about their cultural life. The program constantly used recordings of performances by the "Freundschaft" pop ensemble and German amateur art groups, which made it not only informative but also emotionally charged.¹⁹⁴ One such amateur art group was the German folk art ensemble at the Tselinograd state farm. They sang German folk songs and danced to them. They were not inferior to amateur artists from Ukraine, the Volga, and the Altai region. Their repertoire changed and became more meaningful from year to year, and their skill increased from one performance to another. By 1989, there was not a single soul who did not know about this ensemble because of its infectious popularity. The most remarkable thing about this ensemble is the fact that its participants were ordinary teachers, pig breeders, milkmaids, and nurses. This demonstrates that anyone, regardless of their background in art, can participate.¹⁹⁵ German television programs often emphasized the strengthening of the socialist system and frequently broadcasted the labor achievements of Germans in Kazakhstan. Such programs played a significant role in meeting the spiritual needs of the German people. The programs promoted the Soviet way of life and the achievement of socialism for the Germans. Despite all the efforts of the authorities to organize full-fledged

¹⁹³ Efremova-Shershukova, "Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportasya, spetzposelenye," 198.

¹⁹⁴ R.M. Zhumashev. et al., *Chronika Kul'turnoy Zhisny Karagandinskoy Oblasty 1936-2000 Godov [Chronicle of the Cultural Life of the Karaganda Region 1936-2000]* (Karaganda: KarGu, 2008), 90.

¹⁹⁵ Jüngen Österle, "Laienkunst Wird Populär" ["Amateur art becomes popular"], *Freundschaft*, September 20, 1989, 181th ed., 4.

television broadcasting for the German population of Kazakhstan, it has not become a significant factor in satisfying the spiritual and information needs of the ethnic group.¹⁹⁶

Interview Results.

The German diaspora in Kazakhstan was formed through a series of migrations, which were either voluntary or forced. However, most Kazakh Germans came to Kazakhstan as a result of 1941 deportation. The deportation took the lives of thousands of people and left permanent scars in their souls. Therefore, in order to forget the atrocities they experienced, the vast majority of Kazakh Germans decided not to transfer this painful memory to their children. All five Kazakh German interview participants were aware that their parents moved to Kazakhstan as a result of the mass deportation; however, they did not know much about their parents' destiny.

Depending on their ethnic background, Kazakh Germans identify themselves differently. Most German families residing in Kazakhstan have a mixed background. Two of the interviewees are half German and half Russian, and one is half Kazakh. The remainder of the participants are full Germans, with both ethnic German parents. Because of the historical migration processes, the citizens of Kazakhstan, especially those of mixed backgrounds, have a very sophisticated identity that is difficult to understand for people outside of the CIS countries. I would say that Kazakh Germans have triple consciousness, which is a mix of German, Russian, and Kazakh identities. With parents of different ethnicities, a child is free to choose whatever nationality suits them. Although, unofficially, they can identify themselves as mixed, they have to choose just one nationality on paper. All of the five interviewees from Kazakhstan identify themselves as German.

My dad is Russian, but my mom is German. Although I have never been to Germany personally, I call myself German. Since early childhood, we have baked German bread and made potato salad. I think that's the main reason for my sense of belonging. (Participant 1)

They all speak different levels of German; full Germans can proficiently speak their language. Others have basic knowledge. However, when asked about their first language, they chose Russian.

All CIS countries, including Kazakhstan, speak Russian as an international language. Although I can speak German, I mostly use Russian in everyday life. When I go shopping, in my working life, and when watching television. (Participant 3)

¹⁹⁶ Zhumashev et al., *Chronika Kul'turnoy Zhisny Karagandinskoy*, 91.

The given answer shows that despite being able to speak their native languages, all of the respondents chose Russian to be their main language, which means the “Russification” of society has been successful.

It is noteworthy to highlight that the participants of mixed backgrounds considered themselves to be Orthodox Christians, while the ones whose parents are both ethnic Germans are Catholic Christians. Despite having different faiths, all of them celebrate German and Russian holidays such as Christmas and Easter. Additionally, all of them celebrate non-religious Kazakh holidays, such as Nauryz.

I remember searching for hidden colored eggs and delicious sweets as I child. I used to hang painted eggs on trees with my family. (Participant 5)

All five interviewees studied in Russian schools. Despite studying in Russian schools, they had Kazakh language and literature, as well as the German language class. Since early childhood, they have had friends from different ethnic backgrounds, including Germans, Kazakhs, and Russians. Their friends and colleagues also influence their ethnic identity. Five interviewees started adding Kazakh and Russian words when speaking German. The only language they did not mix was Russian.

All of the participants feel fully integrated into Kazakh society; they did not face any discrimination. However, during their parents’ deportation to Kazakhstan and the initial decade following the war, they encountered individuals who were unfriendly towards them. This experience led them to conceal their German identity. Many Germans left Kazakhstan to move to Germany after the country’s independence. The interview participants did not want to leave the country, since they all consider Kazakhstan their homeland. They actively participate in the Kazakh-German organization and assist in organizing various cultural events. They are pleased with the state of the relationship between Kazakhstan and Germany, and they hope that the partnership programs between those two countries will strengthen. If given a chance, they would not move to Germany, but they stated that their children are free to choose where to settle down.

I have two daughters and they are planning to move to Germany. They fluently speak German and like German culture. Of course, it is nice to have them nearby but if they willing to change their place of residence, I am not holding them back. (Participant 4)

The interviews prove the hypothesis to be correct. Different waves of migration to Kazakhstan drastically affected the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans; however, despite the numerous challenges they faced, they managed to preserve their German identity. Although their ethnic

identity is different from that of Germans who live in Germany, they still speak the German language to some degree and keep German traditions. They have a unique triple consciousness, as they identify as Germans, refer to Russian as their first language, and call Kazakhstan their homeland. Despite preserving their German identity, they became Russified, which makes their identity even more diverse.

Conclusion.

The evolution of the German diaspora is a long process that began with voluntary migrations in the 18th century. During voluntary migrations, the identity of ethnic Germans did not change much because they enjoyed some privileges from the authorities, which allowed them to live a prosperous life in a new territory. Furthermore, they were living in the neighborhood with fellow ethnic Germans, which facilitated the development of their language, culture, and religious practice. However, the forced migrations, particularly the one that began in 1941, significantly impacted the ethnic identity of Germans deported to Kazakhstan.

Throughout the times of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union authorities, pursued a policy of “Russification” towards all minorities living in their territories. While the level of “Russification” was not strong enough in the Russian Empire to influence the Germanness of ethnic Germans, it intensified in the Soviet Union. The legislations and propaganda in Soviet times aimed for a stronger “Russification” which is referred to as “Mankurtization.” The Soviet authorities used deportations to implement plans related to the preservation of state power. By carrying out the deportation of people of different ethnic origins whom they considered enemies, the Soviet authorities condemned them to physical and moral destruction. Ethnic Germans were the ethnic group most affected by this forced relocation. With the outbreak of World War II, the Germans of the Soviet Union were falsely accused of helping Nazi Germany, which was the reason for deportation.

With a number of ethnicities living in one big territory under the name of the USSR, it was important for the local authorities to build a common identity among their citizens. The reason why different ethnic groups could be united into one community is the Russian language. They were forcing ethnic Germans to speak only Russian, to forget their religion, and to be proud citizens of the Soviet Union. Therefore, Soviet authorities tried to turn Germans into “Mankurts.” “Mankurtization” was easier to accomplish with the help of deportation when the deportees lost all the rights of Soviet citizens. During the deportation, the most important task for ethnic Germans was to save their lives. The German people were subjected to violent measures carried out against

them by the government of the USSR. This included being sent to labor armies and separating families during their placement in Kazakhstan. Most of the time, foster families adopted the children who had lost their parents. Even when the families were full, the prohibition on speaking German and forming religious communities prevented the children from preserving their traditions and culture. All of these factors made it difficult to preserve German ethnic identity.

Despite all the discriminatory rules, the Germans in Kazakhstan did not become “Mankurts.” They were not deprived of their memory. Proof of this is the religious revival of Baptists, Mennonites, Catholics, and Lutherans. The Germans of Kazakhstan were a heterogeneous population with different socio-political dreams and aspirations. An example of this can be manifestations such as the movement for the complete rehabilitation of the Volga Germans, the desire to achieve the restoration of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of the Volga Germans, and the emigration movement, which began shortly after the abolition of the special settlement regime. Also, the steps taken by the Union and Kazakh governments to satisfy the cultural needs of the German population, such as amateur artistic performances, radio and television programs, the German department of the Kazakhstan publishing house in Almaty, and the German Drama Theater in Temirtau, showed how Germans tried to save their Germanness.

Undoubtedly, this was insufficient to maintain a fully developed ethnic identity, but it was necessary to consider the demands of the population and make concessions. This alone was insufficient to maintain the linguistic environment. The implantation of the Russian language in all spheres of life was a priority in the Soviet patriotic education and education of all peoples, with the aim of forming a single “Soviet people.” This was not achieved. The findings of the interview reveal that Kazakh Germans have succeeded in preserving their ethnic identity, though it has undergone substantial transformations. Originally referred to as Russian Germans, this group has evolved into Kazakh Germans who are fluent in Russian, Kazakh, and German. Consequently, they exhibit a form of triple consciousness, integrating elements of all these identities. Despite having multiple countries that they might consider homelands, they consistently regard Germany as their true motherland. This proves the hypothesis that different waves of migration to Kazakhstan drastically affected the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans; however, despite the numerous challenges they faced, they managed to preserve their German identity.

Bibliography.

- Abdukadyrova, D.Yu. *Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1939-1945: Sbornik dokumentov.* [From the History of Deportations Kazakhstan 1939-1945: Collection of documents]. Almaty, 2019.
- Abylhozhin, Zhuldyzbek Bekmuhamedovich. *Istoriya Kazakhstana: Belye pyatna.* [History of Kazakhstan: White spots]. Almaty: Kazakhstan, 1991.
- Adam, W. “Nach Zwanzig Jahren” [“After twenty years”], *Freundschaft*, January 1, 1966, 1st ed.
- Adilov, Zh. M, A.B. Bakayev, and U.E. Sydykov. *Legendarnyi Politech.* [Legendary Politech]. Almaty: KazNTU, 2014.
- Aitmatov, Chingiz. *The Day Lasts More than a Hundred Years.* Translated by John French. New York: Indiana University Press, 1983.
- Anes, Garifulla. *Deportirovannyye v Kazakhstan Narody: Vremya I Sud'by.* [Nations deported to Kazakhstan: time and destinies]. Almaty: Arys, 1998.
- Atantayeva, Bakyt Zh., Aizhan S. Karibayeva, and Maksat S. Karibayev. “Deportation of Germans: Adaptation and Life According to Oral Historical Sources (based on Materials from the Eastern Region)”. *Bulletin of L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. Historical Sciences. Philosophy. Religious Studies Series.* 144 (3):8-22.
<https://doi.org/10.32523/2616-7255-2023-144-3-8-22>.
- Aydarbekov, Z.S. *Iz Istoryii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1935-1939: Sbornik dokumentov.* [From the History of Deportations Kazakhstan 1935-1939: Collection of documents]. Almaty, 2014.
- Borodichina, P. “Musikschule in Dsheskasgan.” [“Music School in Zheskazgan”], *Freundschaft*, March 28, 1967, 62nd ed.
- Brown, Andrew J. “The Germans of Germany and the Germans of Kazakhstan: A Eurasian Volk in the Twilight of Diaspora.” *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no. 4 (2005): 625–34.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30043909>.

- Burgart, Ludmila A. *Nemetskoye Naseleniye v Vostochnom Kazakhstane v 1941-1956. [German Population in Eastern Kazakhstan in 1941-1956]*. Ust-Kamenogorsk: Altay-Vita, 2001.
- Burgart, Ludmila A. “Razhrushenie religioznogo ukhoda zhizny nemetskogo naseleniya vsledstviy deportatsiy i printsypialnye podhody sovremennoy otechestvennoy istoriyografiy k opredeleniyu mesta i roly religii v istoriyi nemtsev v Rossii i SSSR.” [Destruction of the German religious way of life population due to deportation and fundamental approaches of modern domestic historiography to determine the place and role of religion in history of Germans in Russia and the USSR]. In *Nachalnyy period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny i deportatsiy rossiyskikh nemtsev: vzglyady i otsenki cherez 70 let. [The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years]*, edited by Arkady German Adolfovich. Moskva: MSNK-press, 2011.
- Busyreva, Elena V. “Vospominaniya Potomkov Rossiyskikh Nemtsev O Godah Voyni (Po Materialam Etnograficheskogo Issledovaniya).” [“Remembers of the Descendants of the Russian Germans About the Years of War (On Materials of Ethnographic Research)”]. *Trudy Kol'skogo Nauchnogo Centra RAN*, 2020.
<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/vospominaniya-potomkov-rossiyskikh-nemtsev-o-godah-voyny-po-materialam-etnograficheskogo-issledovaniya/viewer>.
- Cohen, Robin. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2023.
- Davis, G. Doug, and Michael O. Slobodchikoff. *Cultural Imperialism and the Decline of the Liberal Order: Russian and Western Soft Power in Eastern Europe*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018.
- Debolski, Alexej. “Perlen Kasachisher Kurzprosa” [“Pearls of Kazakh short prose”], *Neues Leben*, January 9, 1980, 2nd ed.
- Dostál, Petr, and Hans Knippenberg, “The ‘Russification’ of Ethnic Minorities in the USSR.” *Soviet Geography* 20, no. 4 (April 1979): 197–219.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00385417.1979.10640287>.
- Dönninghaus, Victor. “Agrarnaya Revolyutsiya ‘Sverhu’ i Nemtsy Povolzhya (1906-1914).” [“Agrarian revolution ‘from above’ and the Volga Germans (1906–1914)”]. *Istoriya Povsednevnoy*, 2020.

- Eisfeld, Alfred and Ludmila Burgart. "Deportatsya Nemtsev iz Evropeiskoy chasty SSSR." ["Deportation of Germans from the European part of the USSR"]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.
- Eisfeld, Alfred and Victor Herdt, *Deportation Sondersiedlung Arbeitsarmee: Deutsche in der Sowjetunion 1941 bis 1956: Dokumentensammlung. [Deportation special settlement labor army: Germans in the Soviet Union 1941 to 1956: Collection of documents]*. Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1995.
- Eisfeld, Alfred and Ludmila Burgart. "Gody Bezmolvya I Probuzhedniya (1941-1964)." ["Years of Silence and Awakening (1941-1964)"]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.
- Eisfeld, Alfred. *Iz istorii deportacii nemcev v Kazachstan 1941-1945 gg: Sbornik dokumentov. [From the history of the deportation of Germans to Kazakhstan 1941-1945: Collection of documents]*. Göttingen/Almaty: Print House Gerona, 2022.
- Eisfeld, Alfred. *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.
- Eisfeld, Alfred. "Nesostoyavshayasya Nemetskaya Avtonomiya v Kazakhstane." ["Failed German Autonomy in Kazakhstan"]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.
- Eisfeld, Alfred and Ludmila Burgart. "Podnyatiye Tseliny." ["The Rise of Virgin Lands"]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.
- Eisfeld, Alfred. "Prepodovaniye Nemetskogo Yazyka i Assimilyatsya." ["German Language Teaching and Assimilation"]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.

Eisfeld, Alfred and Ludmila Burgart. “Uprazhdeniye Rezhima Spetsposeleniya I Izmeneniya v Polozheniyi Nemtsev.” [“Abolition of the Special Settlement Regime and Changes in the Position of the Germans”]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.

Eisfeld, Alfred. “Vozvrasheniye Religioznosty.” [“Return of Religiosity”]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana, [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld (Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017).

“Eisfeld Alfred.” Wiedergeburt, November 18, 2022. <https://wiedergeburt-kasachstan.de/tag/ajsfeld-alfred/>.

Efremova-Shershukova, Nadezhda Alexandrovna. “Nemtsy Kazakhstana: Deportatsya, spetsposelenye, rehabilitatsya.” [“Germans of Kazakhstan: Deportation, special settlements, rehabilitation”]. (PhD dissertation, Tomsk State University, 2009).

Efremova-Shershukova, Nadezhda Alexandrovna. “Problema Razvitiya Kul’tury Nemtsev Kazakhstana v Poslevoyennoye Vremya v Otechestvennoy Istoricheskoy Literature.” [“The Problem of the Development of Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan in the Post-War Time in Domestic Historical Literature”]. *Vestnyk Tomskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, 2009. <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/problemy-razvitiya-kultury-nemtsev-kazahstana-v-poslevoennoe-vremya-v-otechestvennoy-istoricheskoy-literature/viewer>.

Erlich, K. “Nemetskiy Dramaticheskyy Teatr.” [“German Drama Theater”]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan]*, edited by Alfred Eisfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.

Fink, Robert. “Eine bevorstehende Gastspieltournee” [“An upcoming guest tour”], *Freundschaft*, September 30, 1989, 189th ed.

Gavrilova, Nadezhda. *Iz Istoyii Deportatsyi Kazakhstan 1930-1935: Sbornik dokumentov. [From the History of Deportations Kazakhstan 1930-1935: Collection of documents]*. Almaty, 2012.

Gellert, Natalya. "What Motivates the Soviet Germans?" *Neues Leben*. September 27, 1989, 40th ed.

Ghentshke, Valerya L. "Nekotorye aspekty vnutrennih deportatsyi na primere nemetskogo I koreiskogo naseleniya SSSR." [Some aspects of internal ethnic deportations using the example of the German and Korean populations of the USSR]. In *Nachalniy period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyni I deportatsyi rossiyskih nemtsev: vzglyady I otsenky cherez 70 let*. [The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years], edited by Arkadyi German Adolfovich. Moskva: MSNK-press, 2011.

Grybanova, E.M. "Poisk Putey Preodoleniya Migratsyonnyh Nastoroyeniy Nemtsev Kazakhstana v 1970h gg i ego Resultaty." ["Search for Ways to Overcome the Migration Mood of the Germans of Kazakhstan in the 1970s and Its Results"]. In *Nachalniy period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyni I deportatsyi rossiyskih nemtsev: vzglyady I otsenky cherez 70 let*. [The initial period of the Great Patriotic War and the deportation of Russian Germans: views and assessments after 70 years], edited by Arkadyi German Adolfovich. Moskva: MSNK-press, 2011.

Gudova, Iuliia. "Concept of 'a Cultural Imperialism' and Its Media and Communication Embodiment Today." *IJASOS- International E-journal of Advances in Social Sciences* 4, no. 10 (April 30, 2018): 166–69. <https://doi.org/10.18769/ijasos.417815>.

Hermann, A.A, and I.R Pleve. *Nemtsy Povolzhya. [Volga Germans]*. Saratov: Izvestiye Saratovskogo Universiteta, 2002.

Hort, Ludmilla. "Das Gewichtige Wort eines Propagandisten Perlen Kasachisher." ["The Weighty Word of a Propagandist Pearls of Kazakhstan"], *Neues Leben*, March 19, 1969, 13th ed.

Karpykova, G.A. *Iz Istoyii Nemtsev Kazakhstana 1921-1975: Sbornik Dokumentov*. [From the History of Deportations of Germans of Kazakhstan 1921-1975: Collection of documents]. Almaty/Moskva: Gotika, 2000.

Klein, Victor. "Lernen und Lehren" ["Learning and teaching"]. *Neues Leben*. July 2, 1969, 27th ed.

- Korn, Robert. “Handeln plus enge Zusammenarbeit” [“Action Plus Close Cooperation”], *Freundschaft*, September 22, 1989, 183rd ed.
- Krieger, Viktor. *Rhine–Volga–Irtysk: Iz istoriyi nemtsev Centralnoy Azyii*. [Rhine–Volga–Irtysk: from the history of the Germans of Central Asia]. Almaty: Dayk-Press, 2006.
- Krieger, Viktor. “Sotsial’no-Ekonomicheskoe Razvitiye Nemetskoy Pereselencheskoy Derevni Kazakhstana.” [“Socio-economic Development of the German Resettlement Village of Kazakhstan”]. PhD dissertation, Shokan Ualikhanov University, 1991.
- Krieger, Viktor. “Patriots or Traitors? – The Soviet Government and the ‘German-Russians’ After the Attack on the USSR by National Socialist Germany.” In *Russian-German Special Relations in the Twentieth Century: A Closed Chapter*, edited by Karl Schloegel, 133-163. New York: Berg Publishers, 2006.
- Malinovsky, Lev Viktorovich. *Nemtsy v Rossiye i na Altaye*. [Germans in Russia and in Altai]. Barnaul: Barnaulskiy gosudarstvennyy pedagogicheskiy universitet, 1995.
- Mamyrbekov, Arafat Mazhituly. *Shygys Kazakhstadagy Nemis Zhane Polyak Diyasporalarinin Tarihy (XX Gasyr)*. [History of the German and Polish Diasporas in Eastern Kazakhstan (XX Century)]. Semey kalasynin Shyakarim atyndagy memlekettik universiteti, 2015.
- Mendikulova, G.M. *Istoricheskyye Sud’by Kazakhskoy Diaspory*. [Historical destinies of the Kazakh Diaspora]. Almaty: Gylym, 1997.
- Morrison, Alexander. “The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union: Too Soon to Talk of Echoes?” In *Echoes of Empire: Memory, Identity and the Legacy of Imperialism*, edited by Kalypso Nicolaidis, Berny Sèbe, and Gabrielle Maas, 155-174. International Library of Colonial History. London: I.B. Tauris, 2015.
- Musabekova, R.M. “Sozdaniye Nemetskogo Estradnogo Ansamblya ‘Freundschaft’ v Karagande (1968-1971).” *Ezhegodnyk Mezhdunarodnoy Assosyatsiyi Issledovateley Istoriy i Kultury Rossiyskiy Nemtsev* 1, no. 7 (2020): 76–81.
- Nadezhdin, M. “Der Weg zum Leser” [“The path to the reader”]. *Neues Leben*. March 20, 1958, 34th ed.

“Nemtsy Sostavlyayut 0,92 % Ot Naseleniya Kazakhstana.” [“Germans Make up 0.92% of the Population of Kazakhstan”]. DAZ Asia. December 2, 2023. <https://daz.asia/ru/nemtsy-sostavlyayut-0-92-ot-naseleniya-kazahstana>.

Nikitin, Vladimir. “V Kazakhstane Prozhivayut Predstavately 124 Natsyonalnostey.” [“Representatives of 124 nationalities live in Kazakhstan”]. Komsomol’skaya Pravda, May 1, 2023. <https://www.kp.kz/online/news/5250538/>.

“Organisationsgeschichte” [“History of the Organization”]. Wiedergeburt. Accessed August 1, 2024. <https://wiedergeburt-kasachstan.de/istoriya-fonda-nem/?lang=de>.

Österle, Jüngen. “Laienkunst Wird Populär” [“Amateur art becomes popular”], *Freundschaft*, September 20, 1989, 181th ed.

Podoprigora, Ju.I. *Nemtsy Pavlodarskogo Priirtyshya*. [Germans of the Pavlodar Irtysh region]. Almaty, 2010.

Pohl, Jonathan Otto. Forced Labor in a Socialist State: Ethnic Germans From Kazakhstan and Central Asia in the Labor Army-1941-1957. *International Crimes and History*, 2017.

Pohl, Jonathan Otto. “The Persecution of Ethnic Germans in the USSR during World War II.” *The Russian Review* 75, no. 2 (2016): 284–303, <https://doi.org/10.1111/russ.12075>.

Pohl, Jonathan Otto. *The Years of Great Silence: The Deportation, Special Settlement, and Mobilization into the Labor Army of Ethnic Germans in the USSR, 1941-1955*. Vol. 238. Ibidem-Verlag, 2022.

Rubaev, A, and O. Niconov. “Rossiya i Kazakhstan: Istoricheskyi Opyt Vzaimootnoshenyi I Perspektivy Sotrudnichestva.” [“Russia and Kazakhstan: historical experience of mutual relations and prospects for cooperation”]. *Svobodnaya mysl*, 2021. <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/rossiya-i-kazahstan-istoricheskiy-opyt-vzaimootnosheniy-i-perspektivy-sotrudnichestv>.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

- Schachner, Gerhard. "The Soviet-German Newspaper 'Freundschaft' and the Cultural Transformation of the Soviet-Germans in Kazakhstan." *Nationalities Papers* 9, no.1 (1981): 81–98, doi:10.1080/00905998108407904.
- Schiller, Herbert I. *Revival: Communication and Cultural Domination* (1976). New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Schmaltz, Eric J., and Samuel D. Sinner. "'you Will Die under Ruins and Snow': The Soviet Repression of Russian Germans as a Case Study of Successful Genocide." *Journal of Genocide Research* 4, no. 3 (2002): 327–56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520220151943>.
- Schmidt, V. "Nemetskaya Natsyonal'naya Shkola Kazakhstana v 1920 gody." ["German National School of Kazakhstan in the 1920s"]. In *Nemtsy Kazakhstana I Sibiri: Istoriya I Sovremennye Problemy Razvitiya. [Germans of Kazakhstan and Siberia: History and Modern Problems of Development]*, edited by I.A.Selezneva. Omsk, 2017.
- Schmidt, V. "Sostoyaniye Nemetskih Konfessiy Kazakhstana v Poslevoyenni Period: Osobennosty Politiki Partiynih I Sovetskih Organov." ["The State of the German Confessions of Kazakhstan in the Post-War Period: Features of the Policy of the Party and Soviet Bodies"]. In *Nemtsy Kazakhstana I Sibiri: Istoriya I Sovremennye Problemy Razvitiya. [Germans of Kazakhstan and Siberia: History and Modern Problems of Development]*, edited by I.A.Selezneva. Omsk, 2017.
- Sikorskaja, Helene. "Kennst du die Geschichte Deines Volkes?" ["Do you know the history of your people?"], *Freundschaft*, December 26, 1990, 248th ed.
- Silver, Brian. "Social Mobilization and the Russification of Soviet Nationalities." *American Political Science Review* 68, no. 1 (1974): 45–66. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1959741>.
- Smith, Anthony D. *The ethnic origins of nations*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1986.
- Stein, Lilly. "Unvergessliche Erfahrung" ["Unforgettable experience"], *Neues Leben*, May 11, 1979, 19th ed.
- Surkow, A. "Beethoven-Ehrung in Temirtau" ["Beethoven tribute in Temirtau"], *Freundschaft*, December 31, 1970, 260th ed.

- Tabuldenov, Alibek Nurmagambetovich. *Deportatsya Narodov I Evakuatsya v Severnyi Kazakhstan (1937–1956)*. [Deportations of Peoples and Evacuation of the Population to Northern Kazakhstan (1937–1956)]. Kostanay: Kostanay Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan named after Sh. Kabylbayeva, 2015.
- Tomlinson, John. *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*. London: Pinter Publishers, 1991.
- Vendyk, Yuri. “Doktor Einfeld: Deportatsya Sovetskih Nemtsev Imeyet Priznaky Genocida.” [“Dr. Einfeld: The deportation of Soviet Germans has signs of genocide”]. BBC News Russkaya Sluzhba, September 26, 2016. <https://www.bbc.com/russian/features-37447483>.
- Vertovec, Steven. “Three Meanings of ‘Diaspora,’ Exemplified among South Asian Religions.” *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 6, no. 3 (December 1997): 277–99. <https://doi.org/10.1353/dsp.1997.0010>.
- Volkova, Tamara Petrovna. “Emigratsyonnoe Dvizheniye Nemtsev v Kazakhstane.” [“Migration Movement of Germans in Kazakhstan”]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana*. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan], edited by Alfred Einfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.
- Volkova, Tamara Petrovna. “Etnisatsya Agrarnogo Voprosa v Hode Zemel’noy Reformy dvatsatyh godov.” [“Ethnicization of the Agrarian Question during the Land Reform of the twenties”]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana*. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan], edited by Alfred Einfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.
- Volkova, Tamara Petrovna. *Istoriya i Kultura Ethicheskikh Nemtsev Kazakhstana*. [History and Culture of Ethnic Germans of Kazakhstan]. Almaty: Wiedergeburt, 2022.
- Volkova, Tamara Petrovna. “Pervaya Mirovaya i Grazhdanskaya Voyny, Ustanovleniye Sovetskoy Vlasty.” [“First World War and Civil War, Establishment of Soviet Power”]. In *Istoriya i Kultura Nemtsev Kazakhstana*. [History and Culture of the Germans of Kazakhstan], edited by Alfred Einfeld. Göttingen/Almaty: Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 2017.

Wiens, Herbert. *Volk auf dem Weg: Deutsche in Rußland und in der Gus 1763 - 1993. [People on the Way: Germans in Russia and the CIS 1763 – 1993]*. Stuttgart: Kulturrat der Deutschen aus Russland: Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland, 1993.

Zhumashev, M. R., Z. G. Saktaganova, K. S. Uskembayev, L. V. Miheyeva, and A. Yu. Samohyn. *Chronika Kul'turnoy Zhisny Karagandinskoy Oblasty 1936-2000 godov*. Karaganda: KarGu, 2008.

List of Abbreviations.

USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

OGPU - Unified State Political Administration

RSFSR - The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

NKVD - The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs

Kazakh SSR - Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic

MTS - Machine and Tractor Station

Kazvoenkomat - Kazakh Military Commissariat

Kg - Kilogram

CPSU - Communist Party of the Soviet Union

ASSR NP - Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic of Volga Germans

KGB - The Committee for State Security

Politburo - Political Bureau

Appendices.

Appendix A- Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me about your family's migration history?

- When did your family migrate to Kazakhstan?
- Was the migration voluntary or forced?

2. What do you consider to be your native language?

- How proficient are you in German, Kazakh, and Russian?
- What languages do you speak at home and with friends?
- If you speak German, where did you learn it?
- Do you believe that a person who identifies as German should speak German language?

3. How do you identify yourself ethnically?

- Do you feel more German, Kazakh, Russian, or a mix of these identities?
- What factors influence your sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group?

4. Do you identify as a religious person?

- If yes, what religion do you belong to?

5. Do you feel a strong connection to the German community in Kazakhstan?

- Can you describe this connection?

6. How do you feel about your connection to Kazakh culture and society?

- Do you feel integrated into Kazakh society?

7. What role does the Russian language and culture play in your identity?

8. What German cultural traditions do you and your family still practice?

- How do you celebrate major holidays?
- Are there specific traditions you follow that are German, Kazakh, or Russian?
- How important are these traditions to your sense of identity?

9. What is your social circle like?

- Do you have friends from different ethnic backgrounds?
- Have you ever experienced any form of discrimination or bias based on your ethnic background?
- How has this affected your sense of belonging?

10. What kind of education did you receive?

- Was your education in German, Kazakh, or Russian schools/universities?

11. How does your workplace influence your sense of identity?

- Are there any particular dynamics related to your ethnic background?

12. How do you see your children (or future children) identifying ethnically?

- What cultural traditions and languages do you hope they will maintain?
- What do you think the future holds for the German community in Kazakhstan?
- Do you think the sense of German identity will strengthen or weaken over time?

13. What country do you consider as your homeland?

- If given a chance would you move to Germany?
- What is necessary to preserve the national identity of the Germans?

14. What do you suggest Kazakh authorities to strengthen ties of German community in Kazakhstan with Germany?

15. Is there anything else you would like to share about your sense of identity and belonging?

Appendix B – Information Letter

Information about the study: The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan.

- **Purpose of the Research Project**

The aim of the research is to analyze how different waves of migration affected ethnic identity and sense of belonging of Kazakh Germans.

- **Procedure**

A semi-structured interview online involving questions about sense of belonging of Kazakh Germans. The interview should take between 60 minutes or lesser based on speed of the participant's speech and responses.

- **Possible Risks or Discomfort**

Private questions related to your ethnic identity. If questions prove to be too uncomfortable, you may choose to not answer.

- **Confidentiality of the Research Data**

The results of this study will be treated confidentially. Your data will be recorded and processed only by means of a participant number.

- **Further Information**

If you have any questions about this study, you can ask them now. If you have any questions after participating, you can contact me: Assel Mauliyeva, asselmauliyeva@gmail.com, +337490396762, Rue du Vieil-Armand, 67100 Strasbourg.

Appendix C – Informed Consent

I

Participants' name

consent to participate in a study conducted by

Assel Mauliyeva, +33749039676, University of Strasbourg and Palacký University Olomouc.

I am aware that participation in this study with the title

“The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan”

is entirely voluntary. I may withdraw my participation at any time and have the data obtained through this study returned to me, removed from the database or deleted.

The following points have been explained to me:

1. The purpose of the study is

to analyze how different waves of migration affected ethnic identity and sense of belonging of Kazakh Germans.

2. I will be asked to

answer some questions regarding my sense of belonging and to express my opinions on issues.

3. What the potential risks or inconveniences are

private questions related to your sense of belonging. If questions prove to be too uncomfortable, you may choose not to answer.

4. The entire duration of my participation will be approximately

60 minutes

5. The data obtained during this study will be recorded, and then processed confidentially.
6. The researcher will answer any questions I have about this study, now or at any time while the study is ongoing.
7. I have been provided with the contact details for the researcher.

Date:

Researcher's signature

Date:

Researcher's signature

Appendix D – Debriefing Letter

Debriefing for the study: “The Evolution of the German Diaspora in Kazakhstan”

Thank you very much for participating in this research!

Your participation has helped us move a step further in our knowledge about the how living in Kazakhstan affected the ethnic identity and sense of belonging of Kazakh Germans.

- **Purpose of the study**

to analyze how different waves of migration affected ethnic identity and sense of belonging of Kazakh Germans.

- **Research question and expectation?**

How did different waves of migration affect ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans?

The hypothesis that different waves of migration to Kazakhstan drastically affected the ethnic identity of Kazakh Germans; however, despite the numerous challenges they faced, they managed to preserve their German identity.

- **More questions?**

If you are interested in finding out the results of this study, you may leave your email address. As soon as the results are known, you will be sent an e-mail with a summary of the study. If you have any questions after participating, you can contact the responsible researcher: Assel Mauliyeva , asselmauliyeva@gmail.com, +337490396762 Rue du Vieil-Armand, 67100 Strasbourg.