

A STUDY OF THE
GERMAN LUTHERAN AND CATHOLIC IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA,
FORMERLY RESIDING IN TZARIST AND SOVIET RUSSIA

by

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ABSTRACT

After Empress Katherine II of Russia issued a Manifesto in 1763, inviting European settlers to Russia, a substantial number of Germans immigrated and settled, with special privileges, on the left and right hand banks of the lower Volga River. The Napoleonic wars temporarily stopped this first influx of Germans into Russia. With the beginning of the 19th century, a second immigration of Germans started to Russia, which resulted in the foundation of numerous German settlements in the Black Sea region. The high birth rate amongst the German settlers soon made a land shortage apparent with the result that sister colonies were founded in Siberia and Central Asia.

Although the German settlers were on a low level culturally, they progressed economically and when compared to their Russian neighbors, the Germans were a prosperous group. The Revolution of 1917 in Russia brought about tremendous changes in the German colonies, nevertheless the colonists remained residing in their original settlements until World

War II. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the Volga Germans were termed "unreliables" and were resettled to Siberia. The Black Sea Germans, since that area was occupied by German forces, were repatriated to Germany.

As early as 1874, when the German colonists' privileges were curtailed in Russia, an immigration to overseas countries had started. The period from 1874 to World War I, marked their first immigration to Canada. As the Russian-Germans were a rural people, they settled exclusively in the three prairie provinces of Canada. They settled according to their religious faith although their settlements in Canada were sporadic when compared to the close, dense settlements in Russia.

The period between World War I and World War II marked the second immigration of Russian-Germans to Canada. Very few of these immigrants became farmers, the majority of them settled in the cities. After World War II the third immigration period started. These Russian-German immigrants were of the group who were resettled to Germany during the Second World War.

The economic success in Canada culturally elevated the entire Russian-German group. They were leaderless and lacked a national feeling. These two factors caused the rapid adoption of Canadian culture by the Russian-Germans. While the adult immigrants have only reached a level of

adjustment, their children, who are Canadian born and educated, no longer differ from any of their fellow Canadians.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an attempt to present the history of the German Lutheran and Catholic immigrants in Canada who had formerly resided in Tzarist and Soviet Russia. The immediate purpose of this work, however, is to determine the present extent of adjustment or assimilation of these Russian-Germans in Canada. Religious groups such as the Mennonites, Hutterites, and other reformed sects, although they are Russian-Germans, have not been discussed in this work. Extensive written research has already been executed in regard to the mentioned religious groups. References have been made to these groups only inasmuch as they had an immediate bearing on the main theme of this study.

The thesis consists of two Parts; Part I deals with the group in Russia, Part II deals with the group in Canada. Part I contains the historical background of the Russian-Germans, with which knowledge we are enabled to have a greater insight into their present behavior. Part II contains the immigration of the Russian-Germans to Canada, their development in Canada, and their present status as Canadians.

Throughout my work and research, I have been guided by Walter Kuhn's "theory of a language island" (a minority

group in the midst of other nationals). The theory is a product of a study of all the German minority groups in the world and expounded in his book entitled, Deutsche Sprachinselforschung, Geschichte, Aufgaben, Verfahren.

The theory presents a pattern according to which a minority group develops. As a substantial number of the same ethnic group settle in one area, they form a language island. Economic success or failure causes class differentiations, i.e. rich and poor farmers. A class of workers and craftsmen also emerges. Later the group develops a class of intelligentsia, consisting of teachers, pastors, doctors, etc. Lastly a city group is founded. The foundation of a city group marks the cultural advancement which is obtained while drawing from the non-nationals. It is this final state which starts the process of assimilation within the isolated language island.

The material used in this study has been manifold. The historical background of the Russian-Germans has been obtained from literature. Further history and development of the group has been obtained by field work and personal contact with Russian-Germans who have recounted their past from Russia and their pioneering days in Canada. An exclusive work about the Russian-Germans in Canada has never been published in Canada or abroad. Historical sketches of individual colonies in Canada were of extreme value. The most

outstanding work in which the Russian-Germans were extensively treated was Heinz Lehmann's Das Deutschtum in Westkanada. C. H. Dawson's book entitled Group Settlement, Ethnic Communities in Western Canada, was also of great value although he shows no differentiation as to the origin of the Germans in Canada.

PART I

THE GERMANS IN RUSSIA

CHAPTER I

GERMAN SETTLEMENTS IN RUSSIA

I. STATISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION OF GERMAN SETTLEMENTS

The Germans in Russia did not belong to the numerous national groups which were subjugated by force to the Tzarist regime, as were the peoples of the Caucasus, those of Central Asia, and many others. As settlers with tolerable rights, they were invited by the Imperial government for reasons of 18th and 19th century state policy, to settle in the wild or partially cultivated regions of Russia. This led to numerous closed German farm settlements.

In addition to the German farmers, there was an extensive group of Germans who lived in the cities, especially the main cities of European Russia during the 19th century. These people migrated to Russia individually where skilled services were in great demand, and most of them were to a greater or lesser degree absorbed by the Russian population.

Before World War I almost two and a half million Germans were resident in the Russian Empire. The separation of the Western areas from Russia, i.e. the Baltic States, Galicia, Bukovina and Bessarabia, all strongly German, reduced the number according to the Soviet census in 1926 to

1,238,486. The Germans were thus classified as the thirteenth largest national group in the Soviet Union. Of these 1,053,486 were classed as rural and 184,769 as urban.¹

From 1763 to about 1850, German colonists² migrated at different times and from various areas of Germany and had established the so-called 'Mutterkolonien' or main colonies. These main colonies were founded by settlers who came directly from Germany. Only later in the nineteenth century were numerous sister colonies founded. The Soviet census of 1926 shows the following numbers of colonists for the various regions:³

1. Volga German Republic - 379,000.
2. Germans in the adjacent provinces of Astrachan, Saratov, Stalingrad, Samara - 69,000.
3. Black Sea region and Crimea - 437,000.
4. Transcaucasus - 25,000.
5. Orenburg - 10,500.⁴
6. North Caucasus - 69,000.⁴
7. Siberia (Omsk) - 36,000.⁴
8. Kazakhstan - 51,000.⁴

1 Mende von, Gerhard, Die Voelker der Sowjetunion, Rudolf Schneider Verlag, Reichenau, 1939, p. 97.

2 "Colonists" was the common term in Russia for the German settlers.

3 Mende von, op. cit., p. 100.

4 These were sister colonies founded by Germans coming from the main colonies.

Perhaps a more useful division of the Germans in Russia is one made according to their religious denomination. Although Karl Stumpp's table⁵ is incomplete, it gives us a fair picture of the religious groups in the Black Sea region. Before World War I, the number of colonists in this area was about 600,000 - two-fifths Catholic, two-fifths Lutheran and one-fifth Mennonite.⁶ To these three we have to add the Hutterites and other reformed sects, which amounted to only a few thousand. The Volga Germans, with an aggregate population of about 554,818 in 1910, had a more uneven distribution; about four-fifths were Lutheran and one-fifth Catholic. A few thousand of the reformed group are included with the Lutherans.⁷

II. SETTLEMENT OF THE VOLGA REGION

In the 16th century after the Tatars on the Volga were destroyed as a power, a constant effort was maintained by the Russian government to settle this area with their own people. Thus we find a considerable group of Ukrainians settling in the lower Volga area. Katherine II, Empress of Russia, made the only attempt to settle these vast regions

⁵ See Table III.

⁶ Stumpp, Karl, Die deutschen Kolonien im Schwarzmeergebiet, Ausland und Heimat Verlags Aktiengesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1922, p. 36.

⁷ Verband deutscher Vereine im Auslande e. V., Wir Deutsche in der Welt, Kommissionsverlag Verlagsanstalt Otto Stollberg, Berling, 1940, p. 106.

with a non-Russian population. Conscious of the advantages of having Russia's unpopulated areas cultivated and developed, she issued an Imperial Manifesto on the 4th of December, 1762. In it she invited West European settlement of these arable steppes along the Volga River. The Manifesto was looked upon as an unreliable document by those who might have desired to migrate to Russia. Since the document did not secure the immigrants' rights, they were fearful of becoming subjugated to the system of serfdom, which was at its peak at that time in Russia. The result was that the Empress issued on the 22nd of July, 1763, a second Manifesto in which she promised the immigrants full freedom to settle either in the city or in the country. A number of privileges were also secured for the generations to come.

The prospective settlers were promised the following privileges:

1. Full religious freedom.
2. Exemption from taxes and other burdens for ten years.
3. Exemption from any kind of military and civilian services; however, the settlers were welcome in the services.
4. A loan for building houses and other instalments repayable free of interest after ten years.
5. A grant of land of thirty desjatins⁸ per each family.

⁸ 1 desjatin equals 1.09252 hectares or 0.370 desjatins equals 1 acre.

6. Every family was permitted to bring its movable possessions as well as goods for market to the sum of three hundred rubles.
7. Those who desired to return to their native land had to repay first their debts to the government as well as taxes for three years.

(Only main points are mentioned from the Manifesto of 1763.)⁹

After the proclamation of the Manifesto a general agitation was started by the diplomats and private agents of Katherine. Western Europe, and especially Germany, became the recruiting field. Especially successful in this project were the agents of Regensburg, Ulm and Frankfurt on the river Main.

There were different reasons for the success of the emigrant agents:

1. The Seven Years' War devastated most of Western Germany, notably the palatinate and the Province of Hessen.
2. The despotic rule of the Dukes in the century of absolutism.
3. Religious intolerance.
4. The introduction of new taxes and increase of prices in general.
5. The severity with which minor crimes were punished.
6. The general exhaustion of the citizens.¹⁰

⁹ Langhans-Rätzeburg, Manfred, Die Wolgadeutschen, Im Ost-Europa: Verlag, Berlin W.35 und Koenigsberg, 1929, pp. 153-157.

¹⁰ Brendel, Johannes, Aus deutschen Kolonien im Kutcherger Gebiet, Ausland und Heimat Verlags Aktiengesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 5-15.

The desire to emigrate became so strong that the governments often issued prohibitions from leaving the Duchies, or were forced to create settlements for the dissatisfied inside Germany.

There were 8,000 families with a total of 27,000 persons, who answered the call of Katherine and migrated to the Volga region within a period of four years, from 1763 to 1767.¹¹ The year 1767, however, does not mark the end of German migration into Russia; it continued until the second half of the 18th century into the Black Sea region.

Who were these people who left Germany with the hope of finding a better future in the far-off land? Historians and descendants of the Volga group have described the majority of "Katherine's pioneers" as the lowest class of the German people. There were former convicts, ruined merchants and craftsmen, officers and artists, etc. - all people who had failed in life. The least in numbers among them were those who were professional farmers. Bonwetsch, however, disputes this point and maintained that the majority were farmers. His arguments were based on the Statistical Report of Count Orlov in 1769 to the Empress.¹²

11 Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., p. 1.

12 Bonwetsch, Gerhard, Geschichte der deutschen Kolonien an der Wolga, Verlag von I. Engelhorn's Nachf, Stuttgart, 1919, p. 37.

We have only a very general knowledge of the origin of the Volga Germans, since available data fails to give the exact points from which they emigrated. It is established, however, that most of the Duchies of Germany were represented and that they came preponderantly from the Hessen mountainside, Palatinate, Vogelsberg, Wetterau, Spesart and Rhoen, also from Wuerzburg, Bamberg and Bayreuth. Larger emigrations were also recorded from the provinces of Thuringia, Weimar-Eisenach and Meiningen.¹³

The route of migration of these people leads first to the so-called "meeting places" at Luebeck and Danzig, from there by sea to Orienbann near Petersburg and finally by two different routes to the Volga:

1. By land - Novgorod, Twer, Moscow, Rjazan, Pensa to Petrovsk in the Province of Saratov.
2. By water - Neva, Ladoga, Volga to Saratov.¹⁴

As almost all pioneers, they too had to experience deep disappointment because all they found was a vast area of uncultivated land with neither houses, huts, nor implements to start the pioneer life. Many of the settlers were ill and weak, thus they were unfit for hard labor such as is demanded from the colonist. After having been convinced that

¹³ Important evidences to determine original places of immigrants are language, place names, family names, and partly, also, the style of villages and houses.

¹⁴ Bonwetsch, op. cit., pp. 29-31.

here, too, prevailed the now proverbial saying, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou earn thy daily bread", many returned to their land of origin; others remained in Russia only because they could not defray their travelling expenses.

The promised capital of the Manifesto to be used for building their houses was not at hand, they had to contrive implements and other instruments for themselves. The severe winter and surrounding nomadic people provided serious difficulties for the colonists; worse, however, were the various epidemic diseases. The Pugachev Rebellion of 1774 also left its traces of devastation in the newly founded settlements.¹⁵ In spite of all these, they were not completely discouraged. They erected huts, which were soon transformed into wooden houses. Lumber was the best construction material on the Volga, in contrast with the South Russian custom of using clay for building peasant houses. Later immigrants from Germany found conditions much better. In a letter dated Jan. 13, 1774, written by a colonist in Russia to his homeland, we read:

We received everything....houses to live in, barns for the crop, horses and wagons and everything which is necessary for farming.¹⁶

¹⁵ According to A.S.S.R. der Wolgadeutschen, Deutscher Staatsverlag, Engels, 1938, the colonists participated in the Rebellion. Pushkin also mentions in his Pugachevskaja Vostanija that the colonists joined Pugachev and formed a regiment of Hussars.

¹⁶ Bier, F. and Schick, A., Aus den Leidenstagen der deutschen Wolgakolonien, Druck der L.G. Wittichschen Hofbuchdruckerei, Darmstadt, 1922, pp. 2-10.

The colonies were established on both sides of the lower Volga River, 44 colonies on the "Bergseite", Province of Saratov, and 59 colonies on the "Wiesenseite", Province of Samara.¹⁷ One colony was founded by French settlers and called Rossoschi or Franzosen. In course of time it was assimilated by the surrounding German colonies.¹⁸ The Volga Germans built their villages at a distance of 5 to 10 kilometers from each other. In this instance, the names of the settlements have no connection with the origin of the settlers. In almost every case the colony received the name of its leader. Already in Luebeck the agents had appointed these heads, whose function was to keep order. Upon arrival at the Volga colonies, each leader assumed his place as head of a particular village, which thereafter was known by his name - so we find such settlement names as Grimm, Balzar or Kraft. In addition, each colony had its official Russian name, received either from the Kontor "Guardian Office" or later in the second half of the 19th century during the period of Russification.¹⁹ During the Soviet regime some of the colonies were further renamed. Thus we find names such as Engels, Marx, and names of other leading communists.

17 See Map I and Table I.

18 Kuhn, Walter, Deutsche Sprachinsel-forschung, Verlag: Guenther Wolff, Plauen i. Vogtl., 1939, p. 223.

19 Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., pp. 5-20.

TABLE I

THE ORIGINAL VOLGA COLONIES

Presented according to year of foundation and administration of that time, made up of Tables by Beratz, G., Die deutschen Kolonien an der unteren Wolga in ihrer Entstehung und Entwicklung, Berlin, 1928, pp. 284-291.

YEAR OF FOUNDATION	NUMBER OF COLONIES	PROVINCE	COUNTY - DISTRICT
1764.....	5.....	Saratov.....	Kamyschin
1765.....	6.....	Saratov.....	Kamyschin
1765.....	4.....	Samara.....	Novousensk
1766.....	8.....	Saratov.....	Kamyschin
1766.....	11.....	Samara.....	Novousensk
1766.....	1.....	Samara.....	Nikolajevsk
1767.....	3.....	Saratov.....	Atkarsik
1767.....	20.....	Saratov.....	Kamyschin
1767.....	21.....	Samara.....	Novousensk
1767.....	23.....	Samara.....	Nikolajevsk

III. SETTLEMENTS NEAR PETERSBURG--LENINGRAD

The Germans near Petersburg-Leningrad consisted predominantly of colonists who left the main route to the Volga and settled around Petersburg-Leningrad where they founded 13 main colonies. In the course of time, 43 sister colonies appeared with an aggregate population of 21,790. Land holdings according to private statistics amounted to about 45,000 desjatins, an area which is very likely too high.²⁰

IV. SETTLEMENT OF THE BLACK SEA REGION

Until 1788 the coast region of the Black Sea was in the hands of the Turks. In 1788, after a six-month's siege, the Russian Fieldmarshal Potemkin took the Fortress of Otchakov. This marked the beginning of the Russian victories over the Turks. And finally, according to the Treaty of Yassy in 1790, the Turks had to clear the Azov and Black Sea region. In spite of the Russian victory the Tatars, kinsmen of the Turks, were not fully subjugated and proved difficult, especially on the Crimean Peninsula. This provoked the Russian government to settle the Crimean area with European settlers, i.e. to create a wall against internal enemies.

²⁰ Deutsches Ausland Institut, Der Wanderweg der Russlanddeutschen, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart & Berlin, Stuttgart, 1939, p.128.

At first settlers from the Balkans, namely Bulgarians, were attracted to the newly opened land which was given the name "New Russia". There were approximately 170,000 Bulgarians.²¹ The next group were the Germans who were to settle in this most valuable area of fertile black soil. However, greater precautions were observed this time. The government had realized that among the Volga Germans there were very few able men who were fit for pioneering work and consequently became a burden on the state. This caused Tzar Alexander I of Russia to issue a decree on the 20th of February, 1804. This decree pointed out that among the Volga Germans there were very few useful elements. On the Volga it was vital to bring in as many people as possible since the area was almost completely unpopulated.

In "New Russia", already partly populated, it was important to settle a limited number of people who had a knowledge of farming, craftsmanship, etc. Thus, if acceptance of foreigners was to be continued, they must be settlers of good quality. In view exclusively was the settlement of the area "New Russia" and since the crownlands were limited, the area for settlement was to be selected before bringing in settlers; special attention was to be given to fruit-growers, vine-dressers, cattle and sheep raisers. Accepted also were to be village craftsmen such as tailors, shoemakers,

21 Stumpp, op. cit., pp. 28-35.

carpenters and smiths. All other artisans who had nothing to contribute to the development of the countryside, were to be excluded.

Each prospective settler before immigration into Russia had to fulfill all obligations to his government, i.e. taxes, military service. Each one had to be in possession of money or property amounting to 300 gulden. Those lacking this were to be rejected as immigrants, as experience had shown that poverty-stricken people had great difficulty in establishing themselves. Immigrants were to be men with families.²²

A second great migration of Germans into Russia began about 1804 and lasted until the middle of the 19th century. Their reasons for abandoning their homeland were similar to those of the Volga settlers. The provinces of the Upper Rhine were once more in ruin. For over ten years war had interrupted any peaceful existence as Napoleon's army marched across Europe. In addition to this, letters from German colonists in Russia were in circulation. These presented a very attractive picture of life in Russia. The Russian agents were still agitating for emigration. And lastly from across the Rhine came streams of Alsatians who wandered through Germany into Russia - they, too, automatically became recruiting agents.

22 Brendel, op. cit., p. 13.

In addition to economic factors, religious oppression was a prime consideration in determining emigration. This was especially true for the Mennonites of West Prussia and other reformed groups. In the South-west of Germany it was the Schwaikheim separatist group, that broke away from the church because of their extreme pietistic views. Seeing in the religious Tzar Alexander, the founder of the thousand year kingdom, they emigrated between 1812 and 1817 to Russia, where they settled predominantly in the Caucasus.²³

Year after year the emigration into Russia increased. The years 1808 and 1809 marked the highest emigration into Russia. This was a mass migration from the Province of Baden which often depopulated whole areas. Provinces along the Rhine were not alone concerned in this movement as almost all Duchies of South-west Germany were represented. Against these facts the admonitions of the governments and their institutions remained inefficacious. On the contrary, it served to create among the prospective emigrants a suspicion that the Regent was trying to deprive them of a prosperous future. Also, news items in the popular daily papers that the majority of emigrants had died or were living in misery, did not prevent the desire from growing in these people to seek a new and better homeland. Emigration difficulties became more serious when the local administration suddenly demanded

²³ Verband deutscher Vereine im Auslande e. V., op. cit., pp. 110-111.

proper documents for leaving the country. However, neither these requirements nor the threatened loss of citizenship in case an emigrant wished to return to Germany, could stop their determination to go.²⁴

The route of migration of the Black Sea colonists was the following:

1. The immigrants from Danzig and Elbing went through Koenigsberg, Memel, Riga and from there through Dubrovna to the Black Sea.

2. The immigrants from South-west Germany took the route from Ulm along the Danube through Vienna and Budapest as far as Ismail in Bessarabia and from there on land to Odessa. Those destined for the Caucasus continued their route to Cherson, Taganrog, Rostov, Mosdok to Tiflis. a) A great number branched off in Vienna and took the land route through Radzwillov and from there to the Black Sea. b) Another group which migrated into Russia in 1808 to 1809 chose their route through Silesia, Warsaw, Grodno and then to the Black Sea region.²⁵

The journey was made at the expense of the Russian government. Similar procedures were maintained as with the Volga Germans. Upon arrival at their destination they received the promised sums to build their houses and conditions

²⁴ Deutsches Ausland Institut, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁵ Stumpp, op. cit., p. 32.

on the whole were much better than on the Volga. The Black Sea Germans had many craftsmen who were ready to start building houses. The governor of Odessa at the time, the Duc de Richelieu, an opponent of Napoleon to whom the early colonists owed much, went so far as to found the so-called "craftsmanship colonies" near Odessa for the purpose of helping the settlers with their building.²⁶

However, in spite of the fact that the colonists in the south found conditions much better, many of them disappeared in the first years after settlement. The despotic rule of the local German administrators²⁷ became for many intolerable.

From a general view on the map²⁸ one can see that they founded their colonies close to a river or in a valley, always building several colonies at the same time and establishing them exclusively according to religious denomination. Thus we can speak of areas of group settlement, Kutchurganer, Beresan area, Choritza and others. Only sister colonies founded in the second half of the 19th century had settlers of various faiths. The names of the colonies in the south

²⁶ Leibbrandt, Georg, Die deutschen Kolonien in Cherson und Bessarabien, Ausland und Heimat Verlags - Aktiengesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1926, introduction.

²⁷ See section on self-government, Chapter II, infra.

²⁸ See Map II.

almost always coincided with the name of the place of their origin.

A. Province of Ekaterinoslav

The oldest colonies in the Black Sea region are those of the Mennonites. In 1781 there was already a colony of Mennonites in Gluchov, Province of Tchernigov, who had migrated from Siebenbuergeren, Rumania. The mass migration of Mennonites from West Prussia started in 1790, when large groups left the areas of Danzig, Elbing and Marienburg for Russia. They all settled near Chortiza on the lower right bank of the Dniepr in the Province of Ekaterinoslav. The colonists near Mariupol migrated also from West Prussia but were of the Lutheran faith. Also settlers from Pomerania, Upper Bavaria and Austria in 1789 founded the colonies of Yamburg and Kybalsk near Ekaterinoslav. To complete the immigration into the Province of Ekaterinoslav we have to mention the colonists from the Provinces of Baden and Hessen, who founded their colonies in 1825 to 1826.²⁹

B. Province of Taurien - including Crimea

In 1804 the area near Melitopol on the left bank of the Dniepr was settled by Mennonites from Prussia who in the course of time founded a system of 50 colonies. In 1805 to 1806 South German settlers arrived and established the

29 Deutsches Ausland Institut, op. cit., pp. 128-132.

colonies near Prishib on the north side of the Azov Sea. In the following year many other settlers arrived and founded the largest complex of 87 colonies called the Molotchna. Almost all religious groups were represented in this area; besides the Mennonites, Catholics and Lutherans, there were Quakers, Hutterites and other reformed sects.³⁰ The colonies near Berdjansk were founded between 1820 and 1831 and were exclusively Swabians.

Simultaneously with the settlement of the Dniepr area, that of the Crimean Peninsula took place. In 1804 to 1805 the colonies Neusatz and Friedental near Simferopol were established. These settlers were predominantly fruit-growers and vine-dressers who came from the Provinces of Wuerttemberg, Alsace and Pfalz. Swiss immigrants in 1805 founded Zuerichtal near Theodosia. On the whole, seven main colonies were founded.³¹

C. Province of Cherson

Originally it was Swedish settlers who founded, under Katherine II, the first farm colonies near the Dniepr - known as the "Old Sweden Village". However, because of climatic conditions they soon left the area. In 1804 to 1805, Swabian settlers migrated to the same area and established

30 Deutsches Ausland Institut, op. cit., p. 131.

31 Stumpp, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

the colonies of Schlanzendorf, Klosterdorf and Muehlhausen. From 1804 to 1805, the Glueckstal and Grossliebental areas settled and contained a substantial number of colonies. The years 1808 to 1809 marked the founding of the Kutchurgan and Beresan districts near Odessa.³² These settlers migrated from Alsace, Baden and Pfalz, with only a limited number from Prussia and Wuerttemberg.³³ The settlers in the Province were of Lutheran and Catholic faith.

D. Bessarabia

The settlement of Bessarabia by German colonists started in 1814 from central Poland. Originally these migrated from Wuerttemberg to Poland in 1779 to 1806. Here their expectations had been so disappointed that many were easily provoked to migrate to the promised land of the Tzar. In 1815 to 1817, together with other Germans direct from Wuerttemberg they founded the colonies of Tarutino, Kuhn, Arzis, Brienne, Malojaroslavetz. These names recall battle sites which became famous during the Napoleonic wars. In the next two decades Germans from various parts of Germany and Poland migrated to Bessarabia and founded the colonies of Plotzk, Denwitz, Katzbach and Paris. Sarata was founded between 1820 and 1822 by settlers from Wuerttemberg and by settlers from the Black Sea area. Almost all of the original settlers were

³² See Map II and Table II.

³³ Stumpp, op. cit., pp. 30-37.

Lutherans by faith.³⁴

E. South Caucasus

In 1812 a group of 700 families from Wuerttemberg near Reutlingen and Ulm migrated into Russia. Their aim was the South Caucasus. Enroute through Odessa, 300 families dropped out and founded the colony of Hoffnungstal about 80 kilometers north of Odessa. However, about 100 families from the vicinity of Odessa joined the main body and migrated with them to the Caucasus, where they founded the colonies of Alexanderdorf, Katherinenfeld, Marienfeld and Elisabethstadt, and others near Tiflis. Out of eight main colonies there were eventually another twenty-one sister colonies established. Among these people there were also 700 of the Schwaikheim separatist group. Before World War I, the Transcaucasus colonists had an aggregate population of 20,000 and held a land area of 75,000 desjatins. Most of them were vine-dressers.³⁵

F. Wolhynia

The last mass migration into Russia was that of the Wolhynia Germans, who came from Poland. The actual migration into Wolhynia started after the first Polish insurrection in

³⁴ Leibbrandt, op. cit., pp. 120-150.

³⁵ Verband deutscher Vereine im Auslande e. V., op. cit., pp. 106-114.

1831. Also in 1860 to 1863, which marked the period of the second Polish insurrection, a group of 45,000 Germans left Poland and settled in Wolhynia. Many of them came from the Lower Vistula, Silesia, and Congress Poland. Here, too, we deal with a group similar to the Bessarabian Germans who also came from Poland but had immigrated from Germany a few decades earlier. According to the first Russian census in 1897 there were resident 171,331 Germans in Wolhynia. With the exception of a few hundred Hutterites the Wolhynia Germans were all of the Lutheran faith.³⁶

TABLE II

ORIGINAL SETTLEMENTS OF THE BLACK SEA AREA

Compiled according to Statistics of Stumpp, Karl, Die deutschen Kolonien im Schwarzmeergebiet, Ausland und Heimat Verlags Aktiengesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1922, p. 30.

YEAR OF FOUNDATION	PROVINCE	AREA	NUMBER OF COLONIES	NUMBER OF RESIDENTS	LAND POSSESSED IN DESJATINS
1782.....	Cherson.....	Schweden District.....	6.....	2,356.....	17,169
1789.....	Ekaterinoslavsk..	Josefstal, etc.....	3.....	2,358.....	7,068
1790.....	Ekaterinoslavsk..	Choritzza.....	18.....	8,408.....	39,418
1804-05-10...	Taurien.....	Molotschnaja.....	77.....	33,488.....	169,898
1804-05.....	Cherson.....	Grossliebental.....	11.....	11,902.....	40,800
1805.....	Cherson.....	Glueckstal.....	6.....	7,999.....	30,542
1805.....	Taurien.....	Crimea.....	8.....	3,553.....	10,737
1809.....	Cherson.....	Kutchurgan.....	6.....	7,373.....	27,713
1809.....	Cherson.....	Beresan.....	13.....	13,226.....	66,356
1814-20.....	Bessarabia.....	25.....	24,066.....	139,929
1822.....	Taurien.....	Berdjansk.....	4.....	15,066.....	9,139
1823-35-52...	Ekaterinoslavsk..	Mariupol.....	32.....	12,357.....	58,226
TOTAL.....			209.....	128,152.....	613,994

CHAPTER II

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT UNTIL WORLD WAR I

I. LAND QUESTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The original land granted to the Volga colonist was 30 desjatins per family. The land was not privately owned but belonged to the community, thus resembling the Russian "Mir system" which was in practice during the time of the Volga settlement. Every ten years the land was distributed among all male members of the community - women did not receive any land. The fact that the land was divided only among male persons resulted in large families, since many sons meant much land. Some families numbered ten to fifteen children. The table below shows the rapid increase of Volga Germans.

YEAR	POPULATION
1766.....	23,109
1816.....	61,143
1861.....	219,954
1897.....	344,864
1914.....	554,818

¹ Verband deutscher Vereine im Ausland e. V., op. cit., p. 106.

This rapid increase of the Volga colonists and the restriction of expansion of community land due to the close location of colonies, caused a definite land shortage even at the end of the first 50 years of settlement. The rapidity with which the land-allowance per person was reduced can be seen from the following table:

REDUCTION IN LAND GRANTS²

YEAR	LAND PER MALE PERSON
1789.....	15.5 desjatins
1816.....	10.4 "
1835.....	5.6 "
1850.....	3.8 "
1857.....	3.2 "
1869.....	1.5 "

In view of these facts the Volga Germans were forced to find a means of existence for their surplus population. These colonists had been mainly occupied with farming, fruit-growing and sheep-raising. Now on the mountainside in the Province of Saratov a small industrial area began to develop, mainly textile manufacturing plants and mills. In 1860 in the colony of Norka, there were 1,000 weaver looms in operation. The textile industry had also begun to develop on the left side of the Volga. Karamysh had employed as many as 800 workers. Tobacco plantations were common and in 1866

2 Deutsches Ausland Institut, op. cit., p. 124.

there were 268,840 pud³ of tobacco harvested.⁴ A large number of the surplus population found employment there, thus forming a new social class among the colonists. Others were resettled with the help of the main colonies on the newly-granted land in the Province of Samara. The land question became even more acute in the second half of the 19th century, which led to mass migrations to other provinces of Russia; Siberia and Central Asia.⁵

The land assigned to the colonists in the Black Sea region was as the Imperial Government prescribed, community property. However, contrary to the Volga system, the land was not periodically divided among the adult male persons; it was allotted as hereditary property to each family. There one spoke of a "full farm" (Wirtschaft) or a "half farm". A full farm amounted to 60 desjatins, the original amount of land granted to the colonists in the Black Sea region, i.e. twice as much as that received by the Volga Germans.⁶

The land belonging to one family was inseparable, no division among the sons was tolerated, and the youngest son was entitled to the whole farm. Only when a younger son was unfit to assume the responsibility as heir, was provision

3 1 pud equals 16.38 kilograms.

4 Bonwetsch, op. cit., pp. 102-103.

5 See section on migration within Russia, infra.

6 Stumpp, op. cit., pp. 38-46.

made that an elder son become the inheritor. Movable property was at the disposal of the parents. This practice was similar to the "Erdhof-system", a system which was popular in Germany. The advantage of maintaining such a system was the fact that better development could be accomplished by having the farm undivided, and that eventually the community would be saved from impoverishment.

Here, too, many landless people were recorded, due to the hereditary land-system practiced in the region, and the size of the families. The table below gives the increase of Black Sea Germans and is very similar to the increase of Volga Germans.

POPULATION INCREASE OF BLACK SEA GERMANS⁷

YEAR	POPULATION
1820.....	55,000
1897.....	282,862
1914.....	524,321

However, the problem was solved by buying land outside the community area, or by renting land from the Russian landlords. This land, too, usually became the property of the colonists. In this way the various "Chutoras" (small settlements of colonists) were founded in an area where the population was non-German. The establishment of small industries, such as flour

⁷ Verband deutscher Vereine im Ausland e. V., op. cit., p. 106.

and oil mills, further absorbed the landless population. Many turned to skilled craftsmanship, which often resulted in the foundations of small factories. Examples of such are the wagon factory in Selz near Odessa, and the Hoehn farm implements factory in Odessa. The largest starch factory in South Russia was founded in Halbstadt.

Stumpp maintains that the land which was acquired by the Black Sea colonists until World War I, exceeded the original crown grants six times. Thus one can compare 671,000 desjatins of original crownland grants with some 4,209,280 desjatins of acquired land by 1914.⁸ Most of this land was bought from Russian landlords or generals who had received large areas of land after the liberation of the Black Sea region from the Turks. The percentage of colonists and their land-holdings prior to 1918, are indicated below:

COLONISTS LAND-HOLDINGS⁹

GERMANS AMONG THE LOCAL POPULATION	GERMAN OWNED LAND
Province of Ekaterinoslav - 9.0%.....	25.5%
Province of Taurien - 6.9%.....	38.0%
District of Taganrog..... - 3.5%.....	22.0%
District of Simferopol... - 9.2%.....	77.8%
District of Odessa..... - 7.0%.....	60.0%

8 Stumpp, op. cit., pp. 40-46.

9 Verband deutscher Vereine im Ausland e. V., op. cit., pp. 108-109.

Although the colonists had no real competition in developing their economic position, they made little progress in their first 50 years of settlement. This may be due to a number of crop failures caused mainly by the settlers' lack of acquaintance with the new climate and soil. Furthermore, the colonist had no market for his farm products - he simply produced for his own needs. It was not until the second half of the 19th century after the emancipation of the Russian serfs in 1861 that any real economic progress was recorded. Means of communication improved, farm equipment could be obtained, and lastly, the colonist in the Black Sea region was allowed to dispose over his land. The community land system in the Volga, however, was only abolished after the Stolypin Agrarian reform in 1906.

From the two groups of colonists, those in the Black Sea region were more advanced and enjoyed a higher economic standard than their Volga brothers in the north. The reason for this was the better climate and soil conditions in the south. The prosperity in the south was also due to the more advantageous location of the colonies, i.e. closer to trading centers; furthermore, the colonists received twice as much land as those of the Volga; and lastly, they had better opportunities to obtain additional land for their surplus population. Also, the different method of tilling the soil (Dreifelder system) - crop rotation - had some bearing on their better yields.

A comparison of the colonists with their Russian neighbours in respect to economic progress showed that the Russian farmers never reached the level of the colonists. These were not only free peasants in a country where serfdom prevailed until 1861, but they were also blessed with the numerous concessions which the Imperial Government had bestowed upon them. Such factors put the colonists automatically in a more favourable position which subsequently led to prosperity.

The colonists were known as a diligent, hard-working group who had started and completed their colonization process in the best manner possible. The foundation of more than 200 colonies with possession of over two million desjatins of land and an aggregate population of 550,000¹⁰ before World War I on the Volga and the possession of four million desjatins of land and about 600,000¹¹ colonists with a total of 237 settlements in the Black Sea region, and also the foundation of numerous sister colonies in other regions of Russia, may well be described as a success. Many colonizations in the world had been started with a similar calibre of people, who met similar difficulties and were in the end equally successful.

10 Deutsches Ausland Institut, op. cit., pp. 127-128, and Verband deutscher Vereine im Ausland e. V., op. cit., pp. 106-108.

11 Stumpp, op. cit., p.36.

II. STATE ADMINISTRATION

Information is extremely scarce regarding the Russian State administration of the colonies in the first 50 years after their arrival in Russia. According to the Manifest of July 22nd, 1763, there was a "Guardian Office" for foreigners created in the same month. The office was under the presidency of Count Orlov in Petersburg, and was known as the Vormundschaftskanzlei-Tutelkanzlei. Count Orlov was granted the authority of his state colleagues, i.e. that of a special ministry.

The Guardian Office directed the settlement of the colonists and was under obligation to secure the privileges and rights of the settlers and to supply them with cattle, farm implements and capital to build their houses; for this purpose the Guardian Office received 200,000 rubles per year as long as the colonists required government assistance. According to Bauer, the expense of settling the Volga Germans amounted to 5.2 million rubles, a sum which was to be repaid in the course of time by means of farm products. However, Katherine II, reduced the sum in 1782 to about 1.2 million rubles.¹²

¹² Bauer, G., Geschichte der deutschen Ansiedler an der Wolga seit der Einwanderung nach Russland bis zur Einfuehrung der allgemeinen Wehrpflicht 1762-1874, nach Gesetzlichen Quellen und muendlichen Ueberlieferungen, Saratov, 1908, pp. 20-50.

For the purpose of better administration the area where colonists had settled was divided into districts to which special commissions were appointed. Later, when the private colonies were dissolved which until then had been under the jurisdiction of their directors, the number of districts was increased so that in 1773 the Volga area was divided into 11 districts (Kreis) with that number of commissioners. Later in 1775 after the Pugachev uprising and the decline of the Kirghiz riots there were as many as 13 districts with an average of 3-15 colonies.¹³

As the Commissar system proved to be very impractical due to the enormous distance between the Volga and Petersburg, the Imperial Government introduced a local center of administration in 1766 - the Kontor of Saratov. The Kontor consisted of a Supreme Judge with two assistants, a secretary and an interpreter. The Kontor was to be only temporary until such time as the colonists had accepted Russian ways. At the same time, however, the former Commissars were retained but were subordinated to the Kontor.

This system of administration was applicable only to the crown colonies - colonies founded direct by the Imperial Government, 41 in number. The remainder of the 104 original colonies were privately sponsored by three companies. The colonist had signed a contract with these companies in

¹³ Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., p. 3.

which the directors promised to settle them on the Volga, guard their privileges and administer their colonies. However, the colonists soon discovered that they were being deceived and measures were taken to abolish the private companies. According to Langhans-Ratzeburg all private companies were abolished by 1774.¹⁴

A suitable time to incorporate the colonists into the general system of administration was apparent in 1782 when the unitary provincial government was introduced for the whole of Russia. The unique state administration of the Volga Germans - the Kontor in Saratov - was dissolved. The function of the Kontor was from then on in the hands of the provincial government. The district commissars were replaced by the Russian "Zemski Ispravnik", who was responsible for carrying out the law of the government.

The sudden incorporation of the colonists into the new Russian administration system caused a stagnation in their development. Tzar Paul I recognized this and reintroduced the system of administration which was in force from 1766-1782. The Guardian Office and the Kontor in Saratov, not responsible to any provincial government, were again the highest authority of state administration for the colonists. The official language according to Langhans-Ratzeburg was

¹⁴ Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., pp. 10-20.

German; Beratz, however, maintains that it was Russian.¹⁵

Upon the arrival of the Black Sea colonists at the beginning of the 19th century a similar system of administration was put into effect. There too the area populated by settlers was divided into districts which were subordinated to a trusteeship (Fuersorgekomitaet) having a function similar to that of the Kontor in Saratov.¹⁶ However, this system of administration lasted only until 1866. In that year the Russian provincial and district state administration was finally introduced as a permanent authority in the German populated areas. The Kontor's function and that of the Fuersorgekomitaet was from then on limited to church and educational matters until the two offices were completely abolished in 1876.¹⁷

Klaus sees in this act a victory hostile to the German colonists and speaks also of the breaking of a promise by the Russian government. However, the colonists' system of administration was only created for a temporary period; furthermore, no promise concerning the administration was ever made in the Manifesto, hence from the point of view

¹⁵ Beratz, G., Die deutschen Kolonien an der unteren Wolga in ihrer Entstehung und Entwicklung, Berlin, 1928, p. 97.

¹⁶ Leibbrandt, op. cit., p. 9.

¹⁷ Klaus, Alexander, Unsere Kolonien, Verlag Odessaer Zeitung, Odessa, 1881, p. 184.

of state administration the abolition of the Kontor as well as the Fuersorgekomitaet was justified. The new system had in many ways a negative result as the colonists were subjugated to the provincial law, regardless of any individual characteristics.

III. SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE COLONIES

The basis of self-government was set out in the Imperial Manifesto of 1763. Rights were granted the settlers to elect their local government. Due to economic weakness the colonies never actually reached a uniform system of administration. Each colony or district seemed to thresh out its own system suited to its peculiar needs, which often followed unwritten laws of the former homeland.

Little information is available concerning these local governments. Johannes Brendel relates a number of incidents which reflects the despotic power of the rulers, i.e. the community elders (Dorfschulze). From documents, orders given by the individual administrators to the colonists, we read, "I command.....I forbid.....".¹⁸ Throughout these papers the personal ego prevails, showing how a colony was at the mercy of those in authority.

Only after Katherine II issued a number of instructions do we find a more unified system provided. The elder

18 Brendel, op. cit., pp. 15-18.

of a colony was to be elected for a period of one year and was to rule to the best of his ability. He was not only entrusted with the administration but functioned also as a police officer and was able to settle matters of jurisdiction as long as no serious crime was involved. No private buying or selling could be carried out except with permission of the elder.¹⁹ From the Manifesto we see that the Imperial Government denied the appointed Russian district commissars the right to interfere in the self-government of the colonists. Indeed, the function of the commissar was that of a state inspector.

A comparison of the colonist self-government with that of the local Russian administration, shows that the settlers were in a far more privileged position than their Russian neighbors. The Russian community administration consisted of a "Starosta", village elder or tax collector, and a "Sotnik", whose function was that of a police officer. An elected responsible administration as such did not exist. The peasants were thus constantly subjected to oppression and extortion. There was no measure in their system which could protect them against unjustified and irresponsible demands of the collectors.

After the Kontor in Saratov was reintroduced, Paul I saw the necessity of issuing new instructions governing the

19 Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., pp. 3-39.

colonists. A new, complete and uniform system of self-government was introduced. This functioned through two divisions, the community meeting - a kind of village parliament - and the elder with his office (Dorfamt). In the community meeting each family was represented by a male member. The meeting was called several times a year depending on the decisions which were to be made. The Dorfamt was elected by the community for two years. The district administration was founded on a similar basis to the community meeting, the "Oberschulze" was head of the district and all village elders were responsible to him.²⁰

An attempted reconstruction of the self-government apparatus creates the impression that the state administration and the local administrations of the colonists ran in two parallel lines. However, from various reports and orders quoted by Leibbrandt²¹ it is obvious that both Schulze and Oberschulze were obedient servants of either the Kontor in Saratov or the Fuersorgekomitaet in the Black Sea region.

The rule of Alexander II brought a complete change in the self-government of the colonies. On the 4th of July, 1871, the Colonial Codex was abolished and replaced by the Landforms issued in 1864. From then on the settlers were no

20 Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., pp. 15-18.

21 Leibbrandt, op. cit., introduction and appendix.

longer considered as a separate unit. They were subject to the general Russian law, whereby the official language was Russian.²² The abolition of the laws of self-government and its replacement by the general Russian law of administration was thus a breach of the privileges originally granted in the Manifesto of Katherine II.

Another breach of guarantee was the right which was so solemnly granted, of exemption from military service. According to the Imperial reforms of 1874 the Russian nobility as well as the colonists were subject to military draft. Only the Mennonites were exempted from service by the law of May 14th, 1775. As pacifists they were allowed to serve the same length of time in the civil services, forestry, etc.,²³ instead of the military service. The reforms of 1874 caused the first emigration of the colonists from Russia to North and South America.²⁴

IV. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

If we consider the colonists' economic development in Russia as a success, we cannot say the same with respect to their educational progress. Through diligence and endurance they were able to reach material prosperity but they

22 Bonwetsch, op. cit., pp. 104-110.

23 Kessler, Joseph A., Geschichte der Dioezese Tyraspol, Verlag von Rev. George Aberle, Dickinson, North Dakota, 1930, pp. 224-227.

24 For detail see Part II, infra.

were too materialistic to be inspired toward learning. They set no value on schooling and they were too avaricious to spend any money on education. Land and property were all-important and this was their sole objective.

According to Brendel, a community in the Black Sea region consisted of about 90 per cent farmers and 10 per cent other professions. Only the latter class had any education.²⁵ Similar conditions were recorded on the Volga. From the statistics of 1861 to 1863, we can see that only 7 per cent of the colonists were able to read, 5 per cent were acquainted with mathematics, and only 9 to 12 per cent were able to read the written texts.²⁶

Until World War I the colonists speak of a constant intimate relation between church and school. Teachers were always selected by the pastors and the teachers usually acted as sextons of the church in addition to the regular teaching duties. The school, in fact, was a church school in which nothing else was taught but the ABC's and the Bible. Indeed these were the only school texts during the first 50 years of settlement. General enlightenment or creation of initiative for self-education were not on the school program. Means to maintain the school and pay the teachers were raised by the community, while the pastor acted as school-inspector.

²⁵ Brendel, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

²⁶ A.S.S.R. der Wolgadeutschen, op. cit., p. 39.

The teacher, or schoolmaster, as the colonist used to call him, was considered an important man by the very fact that he worked in association with the pastor, who was a highly respected man in the community. Although the colonists had only popular schools and no institutions of higher learning, they had great difficulty in finding teachers.

Education was another aspect of self-government, consequently there was no interference in the matter from either the Kontor and Fuersorgekomitaet or from the Russian government. Paul I, however, did confirm the pastor's supervision over the school. Only at the close of the 19th century, as Imperial reforms curtailed the colonists' privileges, did education come to be a concern of the Russian state. Central schools were established throughout Russia. Such schools were also founded in the area populated by the German settlers. In 1856 a central school was established on the Volga in Katherinenstadt and a second school was established in 1866 at Lessnoi-Karamysh (Grimm).²⁷ In the Black Sea region the following areas had German central schools: Odessa, Grossliebental, Kutchurgan and Landau Prishib, Molotschna and Sarata in Bessarabia. These came to a total of twenty-two in comparison to only two central schools on the Volga. The first central school in the Transcaucasus was established in the Lutheran community of Helenendorf near

27 A.S.S.R. der Wolgadeutschen, op. cit., p. 40.

Tiflis,²⁸ similarly a school was founded in the latter.

These central schools provided a higher education thus enabling the graduates to become teachers or officials in the village administrations. In fact these schools laid the basis of a village intelligentsia. Brendel speaks of the central schools as having more than fulfilled their purpose; not only had they established an educated society in the village but they also prepared students for university entrance. There seems to have been no unified standard of education at the time. According to Bishop Kessler almost all central schools were located in Lutheran communities. These were attended by students of various religious denominations.²⁹ The schools were supported solely by the colonists until they were Russianized after 1871.

After graduation from the central schools a large number of colonists' sons were sent to higher educational institutions abroad. The protestants especially, who never founded a separate institution to provide training for their church leaders, were forced to send their students to the University of Dorpat in Estonia, or to Germany. A more fortunate solution in this respect was recorded by the Catholic sect. In 1848 the Diocese of Tyraspol was founded and with

²⁸ Boelitz, Otto, Das Grenz und Auslanddeutschtum, Druck und Verlag von R. Oldenbourg, Muenchen und Berlin, 1930, p. 142.

²⁹ Kessler, op. cit., pp. 178-179.

it the seminary in 1857. As very few students entered the priesthood many became teachers in the colonies. The seminary in Saratov was the only Catholic institution for higher education. There was no interference from the Ministry of Education as the institution was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior. The seminary was thus free from any prescribed school program. The language of instruction was German. The nature of education was generally a liberal one, however as a religious institution there was a slight tendency toward scholasticism.³⁰

At the beginning of the 20th century the instructors in the seminary were exclusively descendants of the colonists. According to statistics given by Bishop Kessler, the number of priests graduated from the seminary until its abolition by the Revolution of 1917, was 231. Four of them became bishops and J. A. Kessler and A. Zerr were appointed bishops to the Diocese of Tyraspol.³¹

As soon as the Russian system of provincial and district administration was introduced in 1866,³² the Russian government established its so-called "official district schools". Graduates from these schools were permitted to enter the central schools. The community shared the expenses

30 Kessler, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

31 Ibid., pp. 285-288.

32 See section on administration, supra.

necessary to support the school. Besides the official district schools, the government established also the "ministerial schools". Brendel claims that a ministerial school in a Russian community was fully supported by the government, whereas the same school in a colonist center was to be supported by the colonists.³³ The program of these schools was relatively wide and stimulated the desire for further education. Upon graduation the student could enter the fourth grade of a Russian Gymnasium.

With the introduction of these various governmental schools a definite Russification process had started. After the Colonial Codex was abolished in 1871, education which was until then a matter of self-government, fell under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. The colonists' schools were incorporated into the general Russian school system and thus made subject to Russian inspection. The language of instruction became Russian - only religion was to be taught in the settlers' mother tongue. A teacher had to be in possession of a teaching diploma and a certificate of political reliability before being appointed.

According to Brendel the teachers of Russian descent in the German settlements amounted to 70 per cent, the teachers of colonist descent only 30 per cent. This percentage was so because the Russian teachers usually had a better

33 Brendel, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

education. They were graduates of teaching seminaries and thus more readily appointed than the colonists who had not received any teachers' training at all.³⁴

The process of Russification was not only noticeable in education but also in many other respects. The abolition of the Colonial Codex, which resulted in the curtailment of the colonial privileges; the use of Russian in the colonies as the official language; and the renaming of the German settlements in the Black Sea region in 1896, i.e. giving them Russian names;³⁵ do reveal a definite policy directed toward Russification of the settlers. Due to the Insurrection of 1904-1905 the Russian government periodically alleviated the Russification policy and tolerated the establishing of German schools again, but soon also these schools were subjugated to the Russian language and the Russian school system.

V. RELIGION IN THE COLONIES

The Manifesto of 1763 promised the settlers full religious freedom. They were allowed to build churches, but the foundation of monasteries was prohibited. In the beginning the government even provided the capital. This included funds to build churches and grants for pastors' salaries.

34 Brendel, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

35 Handbuch des Deutschtums im Auslande, Dietrich Reimer (Ernst Bohsen), Berlin, 1906, p. 184.

Later on the colonies had to support their church leaders by themselves.³⁶

As already pointed out, the colonists settled in separate religious communities. Thus we find distinct settlements of Lutherans, reformed groups, Roman Catholics or Mennonites. Only the town of Katherinenstadt (later Marxstadt) on the Volga had a population of both Catholics and Protestants. Because of these separated communities, any close relation between the religious groups was impossible. This separation was also to avoid religious friction among the sects, which would have been a certainty in a mixed community. However, due to the lack of Catholic priests in the early years of settlement a number of Catholics were converted to the Lutheran faith. This was notably true in the Crimea where the Catholic and Lutheran communities were located close to each other. On one occasion, a former Catholic priest Ignaz Lindl advocated the Black Sea region colonists to convert to the Lutheran faith. With a small group of converted Lutherans, he moved to Bessarabia and helped found the colony of Sarata in 1820.³⁷

No religious organization existed among the communities in the first years after settlement. However after Katherine's annexation of eastern Poland the Bishopric of

³⁶ Beratz, G., op. cit., p. 219.

³⁷ Kessler, op. cit., pp. 22-24.

Mohilev was established and also included the German Catholic settlers. Since the Consistorium of the Bishopric was too far from the settlements the colonists received little benefit from it. The Lutheran sect had no higher church organization whatsoever. Although Katherine II permitted the establishment of a Lutheran Consistorium in each province in 1785, it was not carried out until 1810, so that each community was left to its own responsibility. The same is applicable to the reformed sects.³⁸

In 1810 an administration center of all non-orthodox churches was established which fell under the jurisdiction of the Kultus Ministry in 1818. This enabled the Lutheran Church to establish an "Imperial General Consistorium" for all Lutheran churches in Russia. The General Consistorium was subdivided into eight Consistoriums which were located in the centers of the main Lutheran settlements. As the Reformed groups and the Lutherans could not be united, the General Consistorium was limited to the Lutheran sect. The system described above lasted only until 1832 when all Lutheran communities in Russia were divided into two sections with their Consistoriums in Moscow and Petersburg.³⁹

The Lutherans comprised the largest group of settlers in the Volga as well as in the Black Sea region. Four-

38 Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., pp. 20-26.

39 Ibid, pp. 27-30.

fifths of the Volga settlers were Lutherans (this includes a few thousands of the reformed group) out of a total of about 550,000 before World War I. In the Black Sea region there was a total of 224,280 plus about 40,000 Wolhynia Germans who were all of the Lutheran faith, except a few thousand Hutterites.⁴⁰

With regard to Catholic Church administration in the 19th century, we must mention that the Catholic settlers who belonged to the Archdiocese of Mohilev until 1848 were then incorporated into the newly established Diocese of Tyraspol with its seat first in Cherson, later Saratov, and in 1917 in Odessa.

According to Bishop Kessler, Tzar Nicholas I visited the Pope of reign XVI in 1845 at which meeting negotiations for the foundation of the new diocese took place. A papal delegate was sent out to Russia who made a survey of all the colonies and determined the boundary of the diocese. Finally in 1848 the document (Urkunde) "Universalis Ecclesia cura" was signed which laid the foundation for the new diocese.⁴¹

Until 1860 the priests among the colonists were almost all of Polish origin who scarcely spoke the language of the colonists. Thus, the settlers were actually without

⁴⁰ See Table III.

⁴¹ Kessler, op. cit., pp. 25-28.

leaders and received very little benefit from the services of the Polish priests. This period without leadership was clearly reflected in the development of the educational standard. Even after the Catholic Seminary was established in 1857, which produced teachers and leaders for the Catholics, they were unable to attain the level of the protestant group.^{42,43} Only for a period of twenty years, from 1801 to 1820, were German Jesuits active in the colonies. Since these Jesuits were only ten in number and had to serve so great a population of colonists, they were unable to leave a deep impression of their teachings.

With the establishment of the Seminary the numbers of priests were increased⁴⁴ and one could then speak of an actual parish with a permanent priest. A parish often had several affiliations, and a few parishes made up a Dekanet. There were twelve of these in the diocese.⁴⁵ According to the Catholic Encyclopedia the Diocese of Tyraspol was the largest in the world in area. The Armenian Catholics in the

⁴² Bonwetsch, op. cit., p. 87.

⁴³ The protestant group devoted more attention to education and was thus more progressive. A striking illustration of this fact is that during the Soviet regime the majority of the teachers in the Catholic communities were protestants. Simultaneously with their progress in education, they drew from Russian culture at the expense of their own and in consequence their national resistance was less than that of the conservative Catholics.

⁴⁴ See section on education, supra.

⁴⁵ Kessler, op. cit., pp. 278-284.

south of the Caucasus, or those in the Crimea, did not belong to the diocese but formed a separate group. The members of the diocese were exclusively German colonists with only a few hundreds of other nationalities.

Regardless of what the religious denomination may have been, the colonists were ardent followers of their faith and hence religious inter-marriages were very rare indeed. It was a serious offense not to attend church. The Church was the only form of organization and the pastor was thus the leader. The Church provided the only form of relief from the daily work of the colonists. They were extremely conservative in their attitude toward their faith. The unusually high respect for the man of the church created an atmosphere of restraint between the pastor and parishioners, especially amongst the Catholics.

The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, as already stated, marked the period wherein the settlers' privileges were curtailed. However, the promised non-interference policy of Katherine with regard to church matters was maintained until the Revolution of 1917.

VI. CHARACTERISTICS AND CULTURAL ASPECTS

From the previous chapters one can see that the colonists' period of existence in Russia was characterized on one hand by the economic, and on the other hand by the religious strength of the group.

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS IN THE
BLACK SEA AREA

Compiled according to Statistics of Stumpp, Karl, Die deutschen Kolonien im Schwarzmeergebiet, Ausland und Heimat Verlags Aktiengesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1922, p. 36.

PROVINCE	LUTHERANS	CATHOLICS	MENNONITES	TOTAL 1911
Bessarabia.....	57,931.....	4,914.....	62,845
Cherson.....	66,663.....	99,072.....	3,578.....	169,313
Taurien.....	56,581.....	27,050.....	50,293.....	133,924
Ekaterinoslav...	26,811.....	48,109.....	48,290.....	123,160
Don Region.....	13,927.....	13,879.....	540.....	25,346
Kharkov.....	2,367.....	2,617.....	1,719.....	6,703
TOTAL.....	224,280.....	195,641.....	104,370.....	524,291

Until the end of the 19th century the colonists were almost completely isolated from their original homeland. Due to this isolation no cultural contact could have been maintained, nor were there the learned people who would have looked to their homeland as a source of culture. The colonists' sole desire was to establish their economical standard. Their activities were limited to the tilling of the soil. Mind and soul were occupied with the number of cattle and horses. Their ties with the new homeland were loose. Thus there was the constant desire to emigrate which was inspired by lust for land.

The colonists' life was colorless. They were conservative in their convictions, clinging to the old traditions. Lack of educated people deprived the settlers of economic, cultural, and political organizations. Political and general enlightenment were outside the scope of their interest; a book or newspaper was for the schoolmaster. They had a strong belief in God on whom they relied entirely. To the colonist the church tie was the strongest and often the only spiritual requirement which released him from the duties of his daily existence. And as any isolated group, as Walter Kuhn maintained, their spiritual nourishment (Geistige Nahrung) was drawn mainly from the Bible, hymnbooks, and calendars.⁴⁶

46 Kuhn, op. cit., pp. 332-338.

The characteristic feature of the average colonist was that he was a farmer, firm, steady and full of enormous initiative; branded however with the deeply etched features of a troublesome past. A certain slowness was to be seen in his behavior. He was suspicious and envious however, thereby cunning and scornful.⁴⁷ God-fearing in isolation he became naive and confiding towards the events outside of his own world.

Although the colonists had almost completely lost the ties with their original homeland for reasons as stated above, they nevertheless preserved what they had inherited from their forefathers. The fact that they had founded purely German settlements isolated from all other nationalities did enable them to preserve their national identity. Many customs and habits which were victims of modernization in Germany remained unchanged in the colonies, so that a study of them would have been rewarding to the student of folklore.

Christmas and Easter were the most celebrated church festivals. Numerous fetes were also observed of which "Kirchweih-Kerva" and "Fastnacht" were the most important. Folksongs were verbally transmitted from generation to generation. An intensive analysis of the folksong of the Russian-Germans presents the gradual breakdown and change of the song; lines have been dropped from the original lyrics and there

⁴⁷ Bonwetsch, op. cit., p. 87.

are occasionally only individual verses remaining which in course of time were adopted as a complete song in itself. The original context is therefore often unconsciously misrepresented by the singer. Unintelligible words of Standard High German become replaced by similar sounding senseless expressions. Unison and similarity of context often led to the borrowing of verses from other songs. All these phenomena of the deterioration of the songs also occurred in Germany, but among the Germans in Russia this was more acute.⁴⁸

The dialects spoken by the early colonists were fully preserved. The Mennonites spoke a West-Prussian Low German dialect, whereas the Lutherans and Catholics spoke the South-West German, Low Alemmaine as well as the Rhemish-Franconian dialects. In some colonies, notably among the Lutherans and Catholics, a new dialect was shaped as settlers from various areas came together in one community.

The influence of Russian culture affected the colonists to a certain extent, notably after World War I. Although the colonists were generally conservative they tried to maintain the style set by those who came in contact with the Russian urban population. In addition climatic conditions caused them to adopt Russian dress, i.e. the big fur coat and felt boots worn during the winter. The urban

⁴⁸ Schuenemann, G., Das Lied der deutschen Kolonisten in Russland, Muenchen, 1923, p. 40.

Germans were Russified in their moods but they still spoke the German language. Because of this the urban German was more ready to inter-marry with the native Russian. The village intelligentsia also tended to imitate Russian ways. This was usually the reflection of a higher Russian educational institution.

In the first years of settlement the borrowing from Russian culture was limited to material cultural forms. According to Kuhn this process actually works both ways. A certain exchange (Ausgleich) takes place between the isolated language group and that of the native people. But only much later, after having been acquainted with the native people and after they are able to master the language of the natives does a borrowing of spiritual cultural forms occur.⁴⁹ In such a process fairy tales and proverbial sayings were adopted. In matters of folk music, there has always been a tendency amongst the colonists of Eastern Europe to readily accept the superiority of the native music, especially if they have been living amongst Ukrainians and Russians. In this manner Russian and Ukrainian melodies of song and dance were willingly adopted. The songs were adopted because of their beautiful melody, although the lyric was not understood.

The influence of the Russian language was unavoidable since Russian was the language of the country. The use

⁴⁹ Kuhn, op. cit., pp. 298-299.

of official Russian terms, expressions designating new types of furniture or clothing, for which no counterpart existed in the dialect were common. The use of the first name and the father's name when addressing each other was striking as this is a way which is exclusively Russian.

In spite of this influence of Russian culture, the average colonist had unconsciously maintained his nationality. As among other isolated minority groups, the Church served as a great support to preserve this national character. Elementary schools were "Church schools" and were supervised by the pastors before the period of Russification at the close of the 19th century. Religious ceremonies were presented in German. The church was the only form of organization amongst the colonists and held them together. In isolation, the church thus became a facsimile of a national church, however, there was no definite policy pursued that led to the preservation of their national identity. It was merely that deep desire to keep what was handed down through tradition by their forefathers.⁵⁰

According to Kuhn, as the isolated group begins to develop materially as well as spiritually, and religious pamphlets are replaced by news of the world, and as the people

⁵⁰ The preservation of the national identity was aided by the natural separation from the natives as the colonists settled in purely separate religious communities. The difference in faiths avoided inter-marriages and thereby also the association with the natives.

acquire a higher standard of living, as well as draw their cultural forms from non-nationals, then the isolated language island has reached a dangerous period, that of assimilation. Only then, a powerful impulse from the outside can re-awaken the national consciousness and re-establish the contact with the motherland as well as to secure future cultural sources.⁵¹

The group in Russia never reached the level described by Kuhn. The majority were still farmers living in their own secluded world and thus they never reached the point of assimilation. Nevertheless they did receive such an impulse. The definite Russification process at the end of the 19th century coupled with the antagonistic feeling following World War I, created a certain German consciousness in the group. However, as Germans who had no contact with Germany and had never been there, they became a unique group which had in course of time coined its own form of culture. As such the group was never fully accepted by the average German. A fact which manifested itself when part of the group was resettled to Germany during World War II. They spoke of another member of the group as "one of ours", as the people of Alsace do who call themselves neither German nor French but Alsatians.

* * * * *

51 Kuhn, op. cit., pp. 384-385.

Literary publications amongst the settlers were scarce.⁵² In many of the calendars and magazines, historical sketches of individual colonies were published. Notable for that was the "Neuer Haus- und Landwirtschaftskalender fuer die deutschen Ansiedler im suedlichen Russland". In 1912, a noteworthy novel appeared anonymously on the Volga entitled, Nor net lopper g'gewa, which described the attitude of the German colonist toward an idealist young teacher with progressive views.⁵³ Another publication which appeared on the Volga, was a collection of folksongs and childrens' poems of the Volga colonists, which was written by Goebel, Gottlieb, and Alexander Hunger and entitled Fest und True, oder der Kirgis-en-Michel. All this literature, including the historical works, were issued in Russia. Only after World War I when for the first time in their history the colonists in Russia attracted the attention of their original homeland, did a number of publications appear in Germany.⁵⁴

The following list contains calendars, newspapers, magazines and historical works. The dates of publication

⁵² For literary publications after World War I, see Chapter III, infra.

⁵³ Luther, Arthur, "Deutsche Dichtung in Russland", Der Auslandsdeutsche, Jabrg. XII, No. 10, Stuttgart, 1929, pp. 316-318.

⁵⁴ In 1914 there were a series of research works published for the first time by the newly founded "Institut fuer auslandskunde und Auslandsdeutschtum" in Leipzig. The climax of research concern about the Germans in Russia was reached in Germany after 1933.

mark the period of prosperity whereas they ceased publishing with the onset of World War I when they were prohibited.

A. Calendars⁵⁵

1. Amtskalender fuer evangelische Geistliche in Russland, 1871-1914.
2. Christlicher Familienkalender, Semferopol, 1897.
3. Der Wolgabote, a Calendar for German settlers on the Volga, 1883-1906.
4. Kalender der deutschen Kolonien in Russland, Petersburg.
5. Molotschnaer Volkskalender, for the German settlers in South Russia, 1881-1914.
6. Neuer Haus- und Landwirtschaftskalender, for the German settlers in South Russia, 1865-1915.
7. Wolgadeutscher Kalender, 1873-1915.

B. Newspapers and Magazines⁵⁶

1. Hausfreund, issued by Kanonikus Rudolf Reichert, Odessa, 1892-1906.
2. Heimatglocken, Talovka, 1905, a Lutheran weekly.
3. Klemens, a Catholic Weekly founded in 1897, Saratov, published as a weekly until 1906 then issued as a supplement to the "Deutsche Rundschau" until 1914.
4. Moskauer deutsche Zeitung, a weekly.
5. Odessaer Zeitung, a daily, 1865-1914; 1915-1918.
6. St. Petersburger Zeitung, 1727-1915.
7. Saratower deutsche Volkszeitung, Saratov.

⁵⁵ Handbuch des Deutschtums im Auslande, op. cit., pp. 187-188.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

8. Unterhaltungsblatt, for the German settlers in South Russia, Odessa, 1825-1871.

C. Historical Books

These works have been written by the descendants of the colonists and several of the books have been published abroad.⁵⁷

1. Bauer, G., Geschichte der deutschen Ansiedler an der Wolga seit Ihrer Einwanderung nach Russland bis zur Einfuehrung der Allgemeinen Wehrpflicht, 1766-1874.
2. Beratz, Gottlieb, Die deutschen Kolonien an der Unteren Wolga in Ihrer Entstehung und ersten Entwicklung, Saratov, 1914.
3. Bonwetsch, Gerhard, Geschichte der deutschen Kolonien an der Wolga, Stuttgart, 1919.
4. Kessler, Bishop Joseph A., Geschichte der Diozese Tyraspol, Dickinson, North Dakota, 1930.
5. Klaus, Alexander, Unsere Kolonien, Odessa, 1871.
6. Loesack, Georg, Einsam kaempft das Wolgaland, Leipzig, 1936.
7. Schenk, M. F., Geschichte der deutsche Kolonien in Transkaukasien, 1869.
8. Schleuning, Johannes, Die deutschen Kolonien in Wolgabiet, 1919.
9. Schleuning, Johannes, In Kampf und Todesnot, Berlin - Charlottenburg, 1930.
10. Stach Jakob, Das Deutschtum in Sibirien Mittelasien und dem Fernen Osten, Stuttgart, 1939.
11. Stumpp, Karl, Die deutschen Kolonien im Schwarzmeergebiet, Stuttgart, 1922.

⁵⁷ A great number of historical works and articles were published by the Mennonites, but since the Mennonites and their literary works are well known, they shall not be mentioned here.

Numerous verbal stories which were never written down circulated amongst the colonists. In the long winter evenings these stories were told; they all spoke of the colonists' past and their adventures in the early days of settlement. Stylistically they were an adoption of Germanic heroic poems which were brought by the early settlers. In time the poems were localized, i.e. the characters and heroes in the poems were replaced by local people.

The yearly festivals held by the church choirs must be mentioned here as an important aspect of the colonists' artistic activity. Where cultural life was at best so restricted, these religious celebrations helped to supply an important need in the community.

VII. INTERNAL MIGRATION AND SISTER COLONIES

Perhaps no other national group in the world was in such a constant uninterrupted movement as the Germans of Russia. The settlement of the mother colonies lasted from 1763 until the middle of the 19th century. The Volga, Black Sea region, Caucasus and Wolhynia were selected as settlement areas. Almost simultaneously with the completion of the settlement of the mother colonies, a new movement started into other areas of Russia. Neither pressure nor oppression on the part of the Russian government caused this migration into isolated districts. The apparent land problem and the inherent urge of the colonists to acquire land, drove them to

spread out from every nucleus of settlement. Heads of families wished each son to have an area equal to his own. Therefore in large families there was a constant search for new land. No opportunity was missed to enlarge holdings of property. Price differences helped in this regard. Settlers sold their land when values were favorable and moved into distant areas where they could buy cheaply. The natural desire to own one's farm soil and the acquisitive nature of these colonists to possess cheap land and much of it, sent them wandering from one district into another. The early migration had established mother colonies which soon were surrounded by sister colonies. When all the available land was taken, a migration eastward took place.

According to Jakob Stach, as the colonists became subject to military service and emigration abroad had started, large numbers of Mennonites from Molotschna migrated to the newly acquired territory in Turkestan. The majority of them came from the Province of Taurien, later in the 1890's they also came from the Volga. The Governor of Turkestan promised each person a sum of fifty rubles and exemption from taxes for eleven years. The total of the settlers who accepted this proposal was about 1,000.⁵⁸ From 1899 to 1901 an extensive number of colonists migrated from the Province of Cherson in Bessarabia to the area of Tashkent.

⁵⁸ Stach, Jakob, Das Deutschtum in Sibirien, Mittelasien und dem Fernen Osten, Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1939, p. 43.

The colonies in the Don area and North Caucasus were founded by Volga and Black Sea Germans. In the Don area the colonists settled near Taganrog. Later after 1900, migrations from here to the North Caucasus and Central Asia were recorded. The foundation of the colonies in the North Caucasus followed the year 1860, when Black Sea and Volga Germans settled there. These colonies were predominantly located near Stavrograd, Vladikawkas and Novorossijsk. Before World War I the number of colonies was over seventy-six with the same number of Chutoras (smaller settlements) and an aggregate population of 100,000. As sister colonies they were small in comparison to the mother colonies and had populations of only 1,000 to 2,000 persons.⁵⁹

The general migration to Siberia at the beginning of the 20th century was due to two historical events in Tzarist Russia: (a) the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad; and (b) the Stolypin Agrarian Reform of 1906 which was passed by the Duma in 1910.⁶⁰

The coming of the railway caused the resettlement of more than three and one half million people - even during the Russo-Japanese War 90,000 people were resettled in Siberia.⁶¹ The agrarian reform dissolved the "Mir system" whereby

59 Boelitz, op. cit., p. 141.

60 Stumpp, op. cit., p. 21.

61 Stach, op. cit., p. 61.

the land was community owned and was periodically divided among the male members of the settlement. (Note that only the Black Sea Germans were not subject to the "Mir system".) The new law freed the peasant from any obligation towards the community. He was free to buy or sell land wherever he wished. Furthermore, the land became his personal possession. This agrarian reform corrected the mistake of 1861, whereby the abolition of serfdom did not bring with it the right of private ownership.

The reform in turn marked the biggest colonization period of the 20th century as the government made a number of special concessions to the prospective settler for Siberia. Colonists were entitled to fifteen desjatins of land besides a fair reduction for transportation, etc. These inducements brought in settlers from Bessarabia, Cherson and the Volga.⁶² After 1905 the following complexes of colonies were founded in Siberia:

In the area of Slavgorod.....	118 colonies.
In the area of Omsk.....	205 colonies.
In the area of Orenburg (European Russia).....	22 colonies.
In the area of Kholmink.....	42 colonies.
In the area of Semipalatinsk (Central Asia)....	64 colonies.

Although the above figures only present 451 colonies, there were about 500 German colonies in Siberia before World War I.

⁶² Stach, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

The colonists possessed a total of 800,000 desjatins in land-holdings.⁶³

Summing up the mother colonies and sister colonies in Russia we see the following picture: out of 318 original mother colonies founded by German settlers in European Russia, there were 3,000 sister colonies established with 90,000 Chutoras founded by the original German settlers. In time they increased eighteen times, i.e. 1.6 million by World War I.⁶⁴

To complete the migration of the German settlers within Russia we must mention the last migration during the Soviet regime. During World War I when the Wolhynia Germans were ordered to leave their homeland, an extensive number of them settled in the Far East of Russia. In 1926 to 1929, the period of collectivization marked a migration from all German settled areas to the Far East. The Soviet government granted tax exemption and other concessions to people who were ready to settle in the Far East. In this way fourteen colonies were founded on the Amur and Ussuri Rivers by German settlers.⁶⁵ During the Soviet regime, as the colonists were ousted, there was also a great influx of Germans into the

63 Deutsches Ausland Institut, op. cit., p. 135.

64 Ibid.

65 Quiring, Walter, "Die russlanddeutschen Fleuchtlinge in China", Der Wanderweg der Russlanddeutschen, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1939, pp. 272-273.

cities, where they took employment as laborers and various skilled crafts.

CHAPTER III

THE COLONISTS BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

I. WORLD WAR I AND THE IMPERIAL UKAS OF 1915

The outbreak of World War I marked the beginning of the most difficult period in the history of the colonists. The planned Jubilee commemorating their arrival in Russia had to be forgotten. Instead of the joyful festivals the prevailing mood was sadness and disappointment. As full citizens of Russia they were drafted into the army and had to fight against their land of origin. The antagonism existing towards the colonists reached a climax in the Ukas of 1915.

The location of the German settlements, i.e. Wolhynia which was strategically important to Russia, led to a number of anti-German measures at the beginning of the war. The Ukas of 1915 proclaimed the confiscation, with compensation, of the entire German land-holdings along the Polish border. Within a few days they had to start their march towards Siberia. There were 180,000 people on the way to Siberia. Diseases and starvation were their constant companions. These measures were the more drastic as the entire male population was fighting, only women and children home.¹

¹ Deutsches Ausland Institut, op. cit., p. 264.

In 1916 the Tzarist government decreed the expulsion from their homes of the Volga Germans and those of the Black Sea region. The decree, however, fell into abeyance with the overthrow of the Tzarist regime. Only after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918, were the Wolhynia Germans allowed to return to their homes. There they found a devastated area, a reflection of a raging battle-field.

As these measures had been enforced, the Tzarist government could not expect any great loyalty from the colonists. Although individuals were in the Western battle-field against Germany, it was the policy of the Russian government to have the colonists on the Turkish front. Georg Loeb sack in his heroic treatment of the Volga Germans, Einsam kaempft das Wolgaland, maintains that at least 40,000 Volga Germans had given their lives at the Battle of Erserum.² Erserum, near Trapesunt, became the cemetery of the colonists in World War I.

II. THE MARCH REVOLUTION OF 1917

The March Revolution of 1917 seemed to have brought better times as the provisional government restored cultural and national self-determination. They were to develop their future nationality free from any pressure and force of the government. A sudden desire for unity prevailed amongst all

² Loeb sack, Georg, Einsam kaempft das Wolgaland, R. Voegt-laeder Verlag, Leipzig, 1936, p. 145.

the Germans in Russia. A strong unification was craved by the colonists in order that their rights would be preserved in case of need.

In order to give this new movement character and a uniform aim, Professor Lindemann, in accordance with other leading colonists summoned representatives from the German settlements to Moscow. The meeting took place in April, the 20th to 23rd, 1917, under the chairmanship of Prof. Lindemann and Duma deputy Lutz. Eighty-six delegates from fifteen Provinces had gathered for the first time in order to defend the colonists' cause in Russia. At this Conference, resolutions of immediate importance were thrashed out. Foremost amongst these was the demand for equal rights as Russian citizens, the introduction of German in the colonists' schools, the foundation of German newspapers, the foundation of a German Society in Russia,³ and immediate help for the expelled Wolhynia Germans.⁴

Before the proclamation of self-determination of the peoples in Russia by the provisional government on the 20th of March, 1917, the Volga Germans had already founded a private executive for the purpose of combating the unfavorable measures undertaken against the colonists. This private

3 This Society had no political affiliations.

4 Schleuning, Johannes, In Kampf und Todesnot, Bernard u. Graefe, Berlin-Charlottenburg, 1930, pp. 30-33.

executive was now augmented to an organized executive which soon called a General Meeting in April, 1917. Three hundred and eighty-six delegates from all the Volga colonist settlements had gathered and elected a "Central Committee" with its seat in Saratov. Questions of economy and culture were to be administered by this committee. Its primary aim, however, was the establishment of autonomy for the Volga colonists.⁵ From March until the October Revolution of 1917, according to Schleuning, there was an active participation noticeable amongst all the people for the re-establishment of the "Verlorenes Volksgut" (national character). During this period a German paper "Die Saratower deutsche Volkszeitung" was founded and numerous teachers' congresses were held by the Volga Germans.

Similar activities were carried on by the Black Sea colonists. At the end of March of 1917, they had already called a Conference in Odessa for the purpose of founding a "Society of all Germans in Russia". Here, too, the resolutions of the Moscow Conference were adopted which were to be carried out under the auspices of the elected "Central Committee" with its seat in Odessa. A weekly magazine was founded to promote the cause of the colonist. This magazine was at first issued in Russian and later in the German language. Contrary to the Volga Germans, the Black Sea colonist

5 Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., pp. 41-44.

did not strive for autonomy due to the territorial distances between the settlements.

The Caucasian colonists who especially had to experience the antagonism of the Tzarist government, enthusiastically welcomed the March Revolution. As on the Volga and Black Sea, they too called a Congress in Tiflis. Although they were one of the poorer groups they were able to collect enough funds to establish a German highschool (Oberrealschule) in Helendorf by the fall of 1917.⁶

Parallel to the activities in the mother colonies were those activities of the colonists in Siberia. In Slavgorod there was a Congress called which decided on the foundation of a German teachers' training school. The school was ready for its opening by the fall of 1917.⁷

However this great enthusiasm for the purpose of re-establishing their former status as a self-determined group, was of short duration. The eight months from March until October were not long. The October Revolution and its consequences brought even more destructive elements to the colonies. The colonies were exposed to the anarchism of either the retreating and resisting Imperial forces or the approaching troops of the new regime.

6 Schleuning, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

7 Stach, op. cit., pp. 130-150.

III. OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND SELF-DETERMINATION

The attitude towards the new Soviet regime was one of resistance. Only the poorer landless elements became followers of the Bolshevik system as they expected land from the new government.⁸ The colony of Balzer on the Volga showed the greatest resistance towards the Bolsheviks. This resistance resulted in an armed uprising against the invading Red forces.⁹ Even after the October Revolution of 1917 when the Bolsheviks were dominating the Volga cities, the "Central Committee" which was elected during the period of the provisional government was still resisting.¹⁰ This committee called the Warenburg Conference in February of 1918 as a protest against the formation of local Soviets in the town.¹¹

But with the increasing power of the local communists, the "Central Committee" was crushed and replaced by the "Commissariat of the Volga Germans". The Commissariat had the task of preparing for the coming Congress of the Soviets

8 Stumpp, op. cit., p. 42.

9 Schleuning, op. cit., p. 42.

10 "Nemcev Povolzja A.S.S.R.", Bol'shaja Sovetskaja Ensiklopedija, Vol. 41, O.G.J.Z., R.S.F.S.R., Moskva, 1939, pp. 594-604. This article states that the Volga Germans were predominantly ardent followers of the communist idea, and that their contribution to the cause of the revolution was great. The article goes on to describe the heroic participation of Volga German regiments against the invading troops of Denikin and Kolchak.

11 Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., p. 42.

of the Volga colonies and that of carrying out the decrees of the Soviet regime. Preparation having been completed, the first Soviet Congress of the Volga Germans was summoned to Saratov by June of 1918.¹² It was only in October of 1918 at the second Congress that the "Autonomous Workers' Commune of the Volga Germans" was proclaimed. This was in accordance with the Soviet national policy which secured the right of self-determination to all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. Now all questions pertaining to economy, administration and culture were under the jurisdiction of the elected "Soviet Congress" of the Autonomous Workers' Commune of the Volga Germans.¹³

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk even secured the right to the Volga Germans to emigrate to Germany. German government officials arrived on the Volga to organize this emigration, but the collapse of Germany in 1918 made a quick end to this beginning.¹⁴ In 1921, a "Zentralkomitee der Deutschen aus Russland" was founded in Germany. The organization undertook the task of assisting the colonists to emigrate to overseas countries.¹⁵

12 Gross, E., A.S.S.R. Nemcey Povolzja, Izdanije "Nemgosizdata", Pokrovsk, 1926, p. 13

13 A.S.S.R. der Wolgadeutschen, op. cit., pp. 1-10.

14 Gross, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

15 "Zentralkomitee der Deutschen aus Russland", Der Auslandsdeutsche, Jabrg. 10, No. 13, Stuttgart, 1927, pp. 463-467.

It was only by 1924 that the Autonomous Workers' Commune was able to exist as a self-contained economical unit. At that time it was raised to the level of an "Autonomous Republic", as part of the large Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics. The republic was divided into fourteen counties¹⁶ and had a national composition of:

Germans.....	66.53%
Russians.....	21.1 %
Ukrainians.....	9.72%
Others.....	1.65%

The Black Sea colonist as contrasted to the Volga colonist had a different phase of development. Following the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk the Ukraine was occupied by the German forces, so that the "Central Committee" founded during the provisional government in Odessa was able to function until the end of the German occupation, i.e. November of 1918. After the collapse of Germany and the subsequent retreat of the troops from the Ukraine, the new Soviet regime was able to paralyse the activities of the "Central Committee" in Odessa. However the colonies around Odessa resisted the Soviet regime with an armed uprising and were able to maintain their resistance for a period of two weeks.¹⁷

¹⁶ For details of administration see: Langhans-Ratzeburg, op. cit., and Gross, op. cit.

¹⁷ Schleuning, op. cit., pp. 87-89.

Contrary to the Volga Germans, autonomy never was granted to the Black Sea Germans for reasons of territorial distances between the settlements. However they were organized into "National Districts" of which there were seventeen in the entire U.S.S.R. Administratively they belonged to the particular province in which they were located. Most of them were named after leading German colonists such as, Karl Leibknecht district near Odessa, Ernst Thailmann district in the Donetz area, and Rosa Luxemburg district near Dnjepropetrovsk, etc.¹⁸

IV. ECONOMIC ASPECTS

The four years of war, the October Revolution followed by the civil war and the growing anarchism brought economical disaster to Russia. The constant occupation by either the Soviet forces or the resisting Tzarist troops caused almost a complete impoverishment of the colonies by 1920. In addition to the existing impoverishment, Russia was destined to endure in 1921 the greatest crop failure in its history. According to Ivan Herasimovich, the once so fertile soil near Mariupol returned only .05 of the original seed sown, and as a result, by the winter of 1921 - 79% of the German colonists were subject to the great famine which was

¹⁸ Kolarz, Walter, Russia and her Colonies, George Philip and Son Limited, London, 1952, p. 74, according to information from: Bartels, Bernhard, Die deutschen Bauern Suedrussland, Moscow, 1928.

accompanied by mass starvation and epidemics.¹⁹

The conditions amongst the Volga colonists were no less severe. The statistics below manifest the austerity of the crop failure and the subsequent drop in population in 1921.

AMOUNT OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS EXPORTED FROM
THE AREA OF THE A.S.S.R. OF THE VOLGA GERMANS
TO OTHER AREAS OF RUSSIA²⁰

In 1918.....	18 million pud.
In 1919.....	12 million pud.
In 1920.....	6 million pud.
In 1921.....	1 million pud.

POPULATION OF THE AREA OF THE A.S.S.R. OF THE
VOLGA GERMANS²¹

In 1916.....	570,300 persons.
In 1920.....	660,841 persons.
In 1922.....	527,826 persons.

The loss of 141,000 people in the area was due to starvation and desertion into other areas of Russia.

Through the immediate help of the International Red Cross and church organizations, as well as relatives abroad, conditions were alleviated by 1922. Also the new Russian

¹⁹ Herasimovich, Ivan, Holod na Ukrajinu, Vidavnitstvo "Ukrajinske Slovo", Berlin, 1922, pp. 60-67.

²⁰ Gross, op. cit., pp. 22-38.

²¹ Ibid.

economic policy which guaranteed private enterprise at the beginning of the 1920's helped to overcome this difficult time and many were again on their way to prosperity.

But by 1925 the coming of collectivization was definite. This in turn meant the loss of land which was by no means compatible with the materialistic mind of the colonist. The expected economic instability and the intensified fear of a possible revival of the year of 1921, again motivated the lust to wander in the colonist. This period marked the second great migration overseas which lasted until 1930 when the Soviet government completely stopped the emigration of Russian citizens. After 1930 various illegal ways were contrived to leave Russia.

The period of collectivization also marked the expulsion of rich colonists (Kulaks) from the colonies. The majority of these then moved into the cities. Thus by 1928 the A.S.S.R. could record the existence of 209 collective farms. Ten years later 99.9% of all farms were incorporated into Kolkhoses or Sovkhoses (state-owned farms).²² In addition the Soviet Encyclopedia records a tremendous upswing in industry and mechanization in the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans.²³ Similar statements in regard to collectivization can be made about other German populated areas. Only amongst the

22 A.S.S.R. der Wolgadeutschen, op. cit., pp. 30-33.

23 For detail see "Nemcev Povolzja A.S.S.R.", op. cit.,

Germans in Siberia was collectivization introduced later.

It remains to mention that the famine of 1921 found a recurrence in 1930-1931, when the crop failure and additional taxes deprived the people of Russia of their daily bread. At the close of the decade people had been reconciled with their fate of being collective farmers and conditions were generally improved. It was World War II which marked an end to this period.

V. RELIGION IN THE COLONIES

Soon after the October Revolution of 1917 the two Lutheran Consistoriums in Leningrad and Moscow were dissolved.²⁴ However the Lutheran Seminary in Leningrad was still functioning until 1925.²⁵ From among forty pastors which served one hundred and fifty Lutheran colonies on the Volga, only fourteen remained by 1926. Sixteen retired and the rest fled abroad.

Similar actions were undertaken against the Catholic hierarchy. Many priests including Joseph A. Kessler, Bishop of the Diocese of Tyraspol, were able to leave Russia before measures were undertaken against them. The Catholic Seminary in Saratov was dissolved in 1918 and property confiscated.²⁶

²⁴ Schleuning, op. cit., pp. 170-185.

²⁵ Gross, op. cit., p. 98.

Before the war each of the thirty-nine Catholic settlements had one priest and one cantor. By 1926 there were nine vacancies.²⁷

Although statistical information is not available for the colonies in the Ukraine and other areas, one can assume a similar situation in regard to religious matters. Religion as a whole was banned from the school and so were the teachers of religion.

Isolated and without leadership, the individual pastors carried on with their work until 1937 when most of them became victims of the great purges of 1936-1938 in Soviet Russia. Churches were closed and often transformed into dance or recreation halls. A vivid propaganda against the Church as an institution was carried on by the younger generation who were members of the "Society of the Godless". Their main organs of propaganda were the German weekly magazines; "Die Trommel" - published in the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans, "Die Trompete" - published in the Ukraine, and "Neuland" antireligioese Zeitschrift der Sowjetdeutsche - published in the Ukraine.²⁸

The literature published in the Soviet Union in regard to the colonists' attitude towards such measures is

27 Gross, op. cit., p. 97.

28 Schleuning, op. cit., p. 192.

strikingly contradictory when compared with the literature published abroad. In the Soviet publication of E. Gross, he stipulates that by 1926 the colonist had developed a negative attitude toward the church due to the enlightenment by the revolution and partly by the corrupted clergy themselves.²⁹ Johannes Schleuning states exactly the opposite in his German publication. In spite of the intimidation practiced by the Soviet government the majority of the settlers remained ardent followers of their religion. It was after all their deeply rooted belief that had kept and served them during their historic period in Russia.³⁰

VI. GERMAN NATIONAL SCHOOLS AND CULTURE

According to the Soviet Constitution all people of the U.S.S.R. had the right to national schools:

Article 121. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to education.

This right is ensured by universal and compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for students of higher educational establishments who excel in their studies; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations, and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.³¹

29 Gross, op. cit., p. 99.

30 Schleuning, op. cit., p. 147.

31 Constitution of the U.S.S.R., American Russian Institute, New York, 1950, p. 40.

In pre-revolutionary Russia the Russian language was the only official language and the principal means to denationalize the non-Russian population. According to the Soviet national policy, the Soviet government had no such intentions. On the contrary it granted entire lingual autonomy and it promoted the development of education in their language and literature.^{32,33}

For the Germans in the Soviet Union this meant only a continuation of what had been partly started during the provisional government, who had also granted the national schools to its people. In all the colonists' schools whether located in the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans or in German National Districts, German became the language of instruction. The language of administration in the colonies was also German.

Simultaneously with the introduction of German, the foundation of more highschoools, technical schools and higher educational institutions started in the German colonies. For the purpose of combating the great lack of German teachers,

32 Kohn, Hans, Nationalism in the Soviet Union, George Routledge & Sons Ltd., London, 1933, pp. 90-98.

33 For many people, especially the nomads, who had never had a written language the Latin alphabet was adopted. And for the first time their folklore was written down. Later in 1938, when the Soviet government issued the decree on obligatory teaching of Russian in all non-Russian schools, a revision of the alphabet was necessary. Since it would mean the learning of two alphabets, the use of the Latin script was stopped and replaced by the Cyrillic alphabet.

several Pedagogical Institutes were established. One of the institutes was affiliated with the University of Saratov, the other with that of Odessa.³⁴ Before World War I, there were only seven hundred and seventy-one teachers in the area of the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans. In 1938 the number increased to three thousand, three hundred and twenty-six. Thus the great campaign to liquidate illiteracy had become realization.³⁵

The cultural activities received similar attention by the Soviet government. Especial stress was placed on the foundation of national theatres. "Travelling play groups", as they were known, were founded and the most notable was the "Deutsches Wandertheater" in the Ukraine. In larger German towns music schools were established, with even a conservatory being called to life in Marxstadt (Katherinenstadt) on the Volga. Libraries and national museums were founded. A scientific association for research into the national culture also came into existence.

The German Volga Republic became the cultural center of all the Germans in the U.S.S.R. during the Soviet regime. All the German school-books were printed in Pokrovsk (Engels), capital of the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans, after the republic received its own publishing house in 1922. Many

³⁴ Schleuning, op. cit., p. 133.

³⁵ A.S.S.R. der Wolgadeutschen, op. cit., p. 43.

German papers and magazines (periodicals) were also issued.

Notable were the following:

1. Unsere Wirtschaft, an illustrated weekly for the enlightenment of the rural population in matters of husbandry, technics and culture.
2. Revolution und Kultur, a magazine in publication since 1933.³⁶
3. Nachrichten, a magazine and organ of the government of the A.S.S.R.
4. Seit Bereit and
5. Rote Fahne, were papers for the youth and were sent out to the distant German settlements in the Soviet Union.
6. Deutsche Zentral Zeitung, printed in Moscow.
7. Zur neuen Schule, a periodical for teachers printed in Moscow.³⁷

From amongst the official historical publications by Germans in the Soviet Union, some were the works of:

1. Bartels, B., Die deutschen Bauern in Russland, Moscow, 1928.
2. Schmidt, D., Studien ueber Geschichte der Wolgadeutschen, I Teil, Pokrovsk, 1930.

The publications by the Volga German, George Dinges, and by the Russian, Victor Schirmunski, were of great linguistic and folkloristic importance. Both men completed their studies in Germany. Dinges was appointed Director of the "Wolgadeutsches Zentralmuseum" and later in 1925 Director of the "Research Institute for German Dialectics" on the Volga. He was finally made Rector of the newly founded "Deutsche

36 Kuhn, op. cit., p. 124.

37 Gross, op. cit., p. 107.

pedagogische Hochschule" in the capital of the Volga Germans. His work was devoted to the compilation of the Volga German dialects, the folklore, the creation of a dictionary, and the first language Atlas of the Volga area.³⁸

Victor Schirmunski was a professor of Germanics and since 1929 had been Head of the Department of Folklore and Art at the University of Leningrad. He devoted his research to the studies of the German colonies in Northern Russia, Ukraine, Crimea and the Caucasus. His first publication was Die deutschen Kolonien in der Ukraine, Moscow, 1928. In his second book, Volkskundliche Forschungen in den deutschen Siedlungen der Sowjet Union, he treats dialects, folksongs, and history - all in a similar manner. Numerous articles of his were also published in the German periodical "Teuthonista". They were remarkable for the systematic treatise of the development of the new mixed dialects among the Germans in Russia.³⁹

The Conference of German teachers of the Soviet Union decided in 1931 that the Gothic script which was used in Germany at the time should no longer be used in Soviet schools. This attitude of abolishing all traces of Germany was carried on to such an extent that the teachers' assembly recommended the simplification of German spelling. Their

38 Kuhn, op. cit., p. 134.

39 Ibid.

aim for this was;

the provision of a proletarian German language which shall be intelligible to all, clear, concise, and natural.⁴⁰

With the promotion of research into the colonists' past, the granting of entire lingual autonomy, and the encouragement of national culture, one should actually expect a close tie with the motherland. Germany could have offered much at this time especially since the Germans in Russia had not maintained the same cultural level. They were a few decades behind in progress of the people in Germany. Such ties with Germany were not maintained nor tolerated by the Soviet regime. Germany could not serve as an example to the Germans in the Soviet Union. No school-books were to be imported from Germany. Only books printed in the Republic of the A.S.S.R. of the Germans were to be used in German schools.

It was therefore, the aim of the Soviet regime to create a communist German people within the U.S.S.R. with no cultural association with Germany. The culture being bestowed on them in their native language was thus to be a:

culture national in form, above all in language, but supra-national, Socialist, or proletarian in essence.⁴¹

No secret was made of this aim, for J. V. Stalin already said

40 Kohn, op. cit., pp. 97-98.

41 Ibid, p. 88.

in 1930:

the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the building of Socialism in the Soviet Union is the period of the flowering of the national civilization, which while intrinsically Socialist are national in form.⁴²

In 1938 the Soviet government had recognized that no matter how closely the party had been supervising the execution of the Soviet national policy it had created and encouraged "local and linguistic nationalism" by the very fact that linguistic autonomy had been granted to the minority groups. To combat this phenomena the Soviet Authority issued a decree on March 13th, 1938, on "obligatory teaching of Russian in all non-Russian national schools".⁴³

This measure was carried to such an extent that in schools of German National Districts, Russian became the language of instruction and German was taught as a foreign language. Thus the national was deprived of the very essence which made him a member of that national group, namely of his language.⁴⁴ The consequences of this policy were soon

⁴² For detailed account see Stalin, J. V., "Political Report to the 16th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, July 1930", Vsesoiuznaia Kommunisticheskaia Partia (B), New York City Workers' Library Publishers, 1930.

⁴³ Kolarz, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

⁴⁴ It is this decree of 1938 and its practical application which is a striking contradiction to Article 121 of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. This article secures the right of national schools for all people of the U.S.S.R.

apparent - notably amongst the city Germans who numbered about 50,000 in Russia. They were distributed as follows: Moscow - 10,000, Leningrad - 15,000, Saratov - 20,000, and Odessa - 10,000.⁴⁵

In time the student began to master the Russian language. Russian papers and books were his only sources for reading. The German papers and periodicals had ceased publication. No cultural contact was maintained with Germany for reasons as stated above. Popular Russian songs were more appealing to the student than the "obsolete" folksongs of his people. If he wished to be impressive, he spoke Russian to his fellow member. These and other reasons are all signs that the younger generation was rapidly losing the cultural niveau of an isolated language island and was readily drawing from Russian culture. The extent to which some of the city Germans had been assimilated into Russian ways is seen from the quotation below. A report on the repatriated Germans from the Soviet Union during World War II in a Salzburg camp (Austria) states:

There are many among them who can no longer speak German, but now are learning the German language with enthusiasm....⁴⁶

From the above presentation we can conclude that during the

⁴⁵ Boelitz, op. cit., p. 142.

⁴⁶ Schechtman, Joseph B., European Population Transfers 1939-1945, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946, p. 212, according to the "Salzburger Zeitung", April 20th, 1944.

period of the Soviet regime the Germans in Russia had matured as an isolated language island.⁴⁷ They had reached their final state of development - that is the formation of a substantial city group. Once this city group had been formed the minority group no longer remained isolated for it then drew rapidly from non-national culture and was thus on the border-line of assimilation.

⁴⁷ See introduction for Walter Kuhn's theory of the development of an isolated language island, supra.

CHAPTER IV

RESETTLEMENT AND REPATRIATION DURING WORLD WAR II

I. THE EVE OF WORLD WAR II

The outbreak of World War II caused the Soviet government to undertake similar actions as the Tzarist's did during World War I. Both wars brought a drastic change in the colonist's position as citizens of Russia. The difference, however, is that World War II and the subsequent policy caused by it not only brought a resettlement about but they were expelled from the family of the Soviet people. They disappeared from all ethnographical and statistical references of the ethnic composition of the U.S.S.R.¹

The position of the Germans in the U.S.S.R. constantly fluctuated with the Soviet-German foreign relations at the close of the 1930's. The Soviet-German relations had grown so tense that any day war could be expected and thus the Germans in the Soviet Union were treated as associates of

¹ The post-war Soviet Encyclopedia has completely ignored the existence of Germans in Russia either past or present. In contrast, the Encyclopedia of 1939, devotes ten pages to a long historical description of the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans. It praises their achievements and contributions to the construction of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.

Germany. During this time they had lost full status as Soviet citizens. Officers of colonist descent were dismissed from the Red Army as unreliaables. For similar reasons the colonists had not been drafted into the army since 1938, in spite of the compulsory military training which existed in the U.S.S.R.

The great purges of 1936-1938 also heavily affected the German group in Russia. Although they affected the Russian just as much as the non-Russian, the latter suffered proportionately more as the purges were directed against the intelligentsia - whose number was limited. The victims were of two kinds. The first group included people who had championed the colonist cause during the Tzarist regime, the second and much smaller group were the people who were raised in the Bolshevik spirit and had become the leaders of the group during the Soviet regime. Examples of the second group were Prime Minister Welsch and President Luft of the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans. Both these men were responsible for previous purges but they were arrested in October, 1937.²

From the above factors one can conclude that the Germans did not occupy a favorable position in Russia at the eve of World War II. Close watch was held on them as the German army crossed the Russian border. From that moment the Germans in Russia were considered unreliaables.

2 Kolarz, op. cit., p. 74.

II. LIQUIDATION OF THE VOLGA GERMAN REPUBLIC

The evacuation of the Volga Germans and with it the liquidation of the A.S.S.R. of the Volga Germans, was caused by the pressure of the German army against Moscow. Another cause was the intention of making Kuibyshev, north-east of the Republic, the residence of the Soviet government and the administration center of the Volga-Ural defense region.³ In order to carry out this project, safety measures had to be undertaken against the sympathizing Volga Germans. The decree of August 28th, 1941, in which the fate of the Volga Germans was sealed, accused the Volga Germans of sabotage and espionage. Although the Soviet government had dealt with them since 1917 on a purely class basis, no differentiations in this respect were made in the decree. Neither were the members of the Communist Youth League nor the Party members excluded from deportation. The statistics below will show proportionately the number of Communist members as compared to the national composition of the A.S.S.R. in 1930.⁴

	TOTAL	GERMANS	RUSSIANS	OTHERS
Population.....	580,000.....	380,000.....	116,000.....	67,600
Party Members.....	2,372.....	927.....	967.....	478

The decree announcing the deportation of the entire Volga German population reads as follows:

³ Edelman, Maurice, How Russia Prepared, Penguin Books Inc., New York, 1942, pp. 32-37.

⁴ Kohn, op. cit., p. 158.

According to reliable information received by military authorities, there are thousands and tens of thousands of diversionists and spies among the German population of the Volga region who are prepared to cause explosions in these regions at a signal from Germany. No Germans (living in the Volga districts) ever reported to Soviet authorities the presence of such great numbers of diversionists and spies. Therefore, the German population of the Volga regions are covering up enemies of the Soviet people and the Soviet power. If diversionist acts were to take place under orders of Germany by German diversionists and spies in the Volga German republic or neighboring regions and there were bloodshed, the Soviet government would be forced according to martial law to adopt measures of reprisal against the entire German population. In order to avoid such undesirable occurrences and to forestall serious bloodshed, the presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR has found it necessary to resettle the entire German population of the Volga regions under the condition that the resettlers are allotted land and given state aid to settle in new regions. Resettled Germans will be given land in the Novo-Sibirsk and Omsk districts, the Altay region, the Kazakstan Republic and neighboring localities rich in land. In connection with this, the National Defense Council is instructed to resettle as soon as possible all Volga Germans, who will be given land estates in new regions.⁵

The decree was soon followed by its execution, for already at the end of August, 1941:

a mournful procession of refugees filled the roads leading to the railway stations of the Middle Volga, four hundred thousand of them carrying bedding, dragging domestic animals, the women weeping, all with the bitterness on their faces of those who have

⁵ Schechtman, *op. cit.*, p. 384, according to the "New York Times", September 9th, 1941.

been driven from their homes.....They were German refugees, the German settlers of the German Autonomous Volga Republic, expelled by decree of the Soviet Government to Siberia.⁶

Little authentic information is available about the fate of the Volga Germans and that of the 100,000 Siberian Germans who had founded their sister colonies at the turn of the century. However the existence of a number of German collective farms bearing names as Rosa Luxemburg, Progress and Arbeiter were officially confirmed in 1951 when over two dozen German collective farmers and tractor drivers of the Omsk Province were awarded medals for excellent work by the Supreme Soviet.⁷

III. BLACK SEA COLONIES UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION

As the advancing German army approached the German settlements in the Ukraine, many of them were evacuated with the retreating Red army. In places where time did not permit evacuations of the entire settlements only male persons were affected. In this manner close to 200,000 Germans in the Ukraine were evacuated by the Soviet authority.⁸

The Black Sea Germans which were not evacuated by the Soviet authorities, remained living in German occupied

6 Edelman, op. cit., p. 31.

7 Kolarz, op. cit., p. 76.

8 Ibid, p. 75.

Ukraine, Crimea and North Caucasus, where they enjoyed a privileged position under the German authorities. This was contrary to the indifferent attitude towards the colonists by the German occupational forces in 1918. During World War II they showed great concern in the Germans of Ukraine as a result of the National Socialist policy.

There remained about 300,000 persons of the roughly 500,000 people before the war. Due to their privileged position they were soon able to establish their private farms and businesses as contrasted to the Russian population, who were not permitted to do so. Constructions of every sort were undertaken and there was no thought of ever leaving their settlements. Within a short period, with the help of the German authorities who were anxious to see a strong, healthy group of Germans, they were well on their way to prosperity.

The German group of 135,000 in the Romanian annexed Transnistria, the area between the rivers Dniester and Bug, had grown especially prosperous. Although the territory was annexed by Romania, the Germans were under the protection and administration of the German "Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle"⁹, which had its seat in Landau the center of the German

⁹ This was an organization which was concerned with Germans abroad and founded for the purpose of carrying out National Socialist policy which was "the unification of all Germans". It thus supervised the repatriation of German groups such as the Baltic and Bessarabian Germans, and the education of the newly gained Germans in the National Socialist spirit.

colonies. The territory's revival was not limited only to the economic field, for education received similar attention. As many times before, German schools were founded in the colonies and a German highschool in Odessa. There were also two teachers' Seminaries established, one in Prishib, the other in Selz. In spite of the lack of priests, religion found a similar revival in the colonies.

It was of great importance and the main concern of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, that the younger generation was trained in the spirit of national socialism. For this purpose, youth leaders from Germany were sent to distant Russia where they organized the German youth, parallel to the organization of the Hitler Youth in Germany. Several youth training camps were set up for the purpose of training leaders from amongst the colonists. As "full" Germans, they were also drafted into the German army.

Similar activities were carried on in all German colonies, while occupied by the German forces. Only the German retreat of 1943-1944 terminated this revival. Contrary to expectation, the German authorities were faced with the sudden decision of repatriating the entire German population from their occupied territories. As previously the Baltic, the Bessarabian and the Bukovina Germans were repatriated, now, the entire population was to be resettled to Germany too. The settlement area selected for these repatriated Germans were the most eastern provinces of Germany.

IV. REPATRIATION FROM THE GERMAN OCCUPIED TERRITORY

Prior to the mass repatriation of the Black Sea group in 1943, the German authorities had resettled some 3,800 Germans, mainly city dwellers from the area of Leningrad. In 1943 a second group was resettled - that of 10,500 persons from the area of Schitomir and 11,500 persons from the North Caucasus. Both groups were transferred to the General Gouvernements (German occupied territory) of Poland and Warthegau, the German annexed Province from Poland.¹⁰

The first mass transfer of the Volksdeutsche from the Ukraine started in the fall of 1943 when the German army started its rapid retreat and simultaneously evacuated the German population. This retreat affected the Germans, from the Crimea, Mariupol and Melitopol, as well as urban dwellers from Zaporozhe and Nikolaev. Between the fall of 1943 and the spring of March, 1944, 72,000 persons were on their march towards Germany from this area. The second group of 73,000, which went on their journey, were the Germans from the area of Dniepropetrovsk - from both sides of the river Dnieper. The third group, largely rural dwellers comprising a total of 44,600, left Wolhynia between October, 1943, and April, of 1944.¹¹

¹⁰ Schechtman, op. cit., pp. 206-207, according to the "Ostdeutscher Beobachter", July 23rd, 1944.

¹¹ Ibid, pp. 209-210, according to the "Ostdeutscher Beobachter".

The last and largest group was that of Transnistria, amounting to a total of 135,000 persons, who left their homes between March and April, 1944.¹² This transfer was the least organized one as the rapidly advancing Russian forces caused chaos and panic among the concentrated masses at the crossing point on the Dniester. In addition to this, the roads were blocked by the retreating Romanian and German troops. Many of them had covered as much as 1,000 miles with horse and wagon and after a period of twelve or more weeks they finally reached their place of destination which was the Warthegau.

But hardly had they found accomodation in the numerous transit camps, then they again had to move on westwards into Germany. The Red army stood at the gate of Germany and the breakdown of Germany was obvious. In this manner the great resettlement scheme of the Third Reich was a complete failure. The plan was to bring home all Germans to Germany, and especially to form a solid block of Germans against the Slavic peoples with the Germans who had withstood assimilation in previous times in other countries.

The refuge from the Warthegau in 1945 was an individual private task. Unorganized, every one fled on his own means and in every direction into Germany. As Germans from abroad they were recognized by the authorities of Hitler, but

¹² Schechtman, op, cit., pp. 209-210, according to the "Ost-deutscher Beobachter", July 23rd, 1944.

as Germans who had been separated and isolated from Germany for over one hundred years they were not fully accepted within Germany by the average German. Deeply disappointed about the "journey home to the Reich", coupled with the desire for one's own home, caused some to contact the Soviet Repatriating Authorities which not seldom resulted in a transfer back to the Soviet Union.¹³ Their hope to return to their former homes was only a mere illusion.

Contrary to the Mennonite group who were well organized and attended by UNRRA, later IRO (International Refugee Organization), the remainder, including Lutherans and Catholics, were dispersed all over Germany as farm helpers and in other occupations awaiting contact with their relatives and friends across the Atlantic. The period starting after World War II until the present time, marked the third immigration period into Canada by Germans from Russia.

¹³ Such contacts were made by Russian-Germans in the French, American and English occupied zones. Russian-Germans had been repatriated from the Russian occupied zone in 1945.

PART II

RUSSIAN-GERMANS IN CANADA

CHAPTER V

IMMIGRATION INTO CANADA

I. CANADIAN IMMIGRATION POLICY IN BRIEF

According to the British North American Act the laws affecting immigration came under the jurisdiction of the Dominion Government. However under the same act, the legislature of each province may pass laws which shall be in accord with any law of the Dominion Government.¹

The basis for immigration and colonization of Western Canada was the Land Act of 1872 which provided free grants of homesteads. This system, which was so effective in the U.S.A., enabled the immigrant to purchase other Dominion lands in addition to the free grants.² Due to poor transportation facilities this policy did not live up to its expectations. The migration to the west consisted largely of Canadians from Eastern Canada.

1 Angus, H. F., "Canadian Immigration: Law and its Administration", American Journal of International Law, The American Society of International Law, Washington, 1934, pp. 74-75.

2 England, Robert, The Colonization of Western Canada, P. S. King & Son Ltd., London, 1936, p. 54.

In 1882, any railway company was able to obtain land north of the Canadian Pacific Railway if tracks were built and the area settled by them within a period of five years. But again, most of the companies failed to live up to their obligations and brought few or no settlers to the area.³

It was not until 1896 that a new immigration policy directed the colonization of the west. It was in that year that the energetic Clifford Sifton became Minister of the Interior under Sir Wilfrid Laurier's government. The previous policy of granting land as payment to railway companies for the construction of railway tracks, was abolished. In this way the government was again able to dispose over large areas of land and grant settlers one quarter of a section as homesteads. The keyword of Clifford Sifton's colonization policy was "settle". The immigrant was to be kept in the area, his living conditions were to be made tolerable, and he was to be supplied with railway facilities.⁴ Arrangements were made with shipping companies, such as the North Atlantic Trading Company, to bring in European farmers. A net of recruiting agents was set up all over Europe. Many of them had to carry on their work secretly as European countries, especially Russia, prohibited immigration of their subjects. In this

³ England, op. cit., pp. 58-59.

⁴ Dafoe, John W., Clifford Sifton in Relation to his Time, The Macmillan Company Canada Limited, Toronto, 1931, pp. 132-136.

manner the prairie population was increased to 1,278,708 persons in the years 1900 to 1914.⁵

The post-war immigration was undertaken on a limited scale as immigration fluctuated with the prosperity of Canada. No limitations were set in regard to immigrants from preferable countries. Some immigrants were allowed from non-preferable countries and such were the immigrants from Russia. The task of bringing in immigrants from non-preferable countries, such as Russia, was given to the railway companies. The Lutheran Immigration Board and the Catholic Immigration Aid Society were religious organizations which worked in conjunction with the railway companies and helped to cover costs of transportation.⁶

With the coming of the depression in 1930, a definite change occurred in the immigration policy of the Dominion. An Order-in-Council dated March, 1931, states:

From and after the 18th of March 1931 and until otherwise ordered, the landing in Canada of immigrants of all classes and occupation is hereby prohibited except as hereinafter provided:

The Immigration Officer in charge may permit to land in Canada any immigrant who otherwise complies with previous of the Immigrant Act, if it is shown to his satisfaction that such immigrant is:

1. A British subject entering Canada directly or indirectly from Great Britain

5 England, op. cit., pp. 66-71.

6 Ibid, p. 103.

or Commonwealth countries, who has sufficient means to maintain himself until employment is secured.

2. A United States citizen entering Canada from the U.S. who has sufficient means to maintain himself until employment is secured.

3. The wife or unmarried child under eighteen years of age of any person legally admitted to and residing in Canada who is in a position to receive and care for his dependent.

4. An agriculturalist having sufficient means to farm in Canada.⁷

This policy had almost completely stopped immigration of Central Europeans during the years of depression. This immigration which had been reduced to minor proportions revitalized after the Second World War. The following steps have been taken by the Canadian Government in regard to immigration policy since World War II:

A. The barriers against British subjects,.....and U.S. citizens had been reduced to the bare minimum of good health and the absence of subversive political views.

B. The list of admissible relatives of legal residents of Canada has been extended to include everyone closer than a cousin,.. .. It also includes persons engaged to marry the residents who make application for their admission.

C. Special provision has been made for the entrance of 30,000 persons who are not otherwise admissible from the Displaced Persons camps of Europe. (Each of these persons when established in Canada may then apply in turn for the admission of his or her relatives.⁸

7 Angus, op. cit., pp. 82-85.

8 Keenleyside, H. L., Canadian Immigration Policy, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1948, pp. 13-15.

It was the Canadian Government which took the initiative amongst overseas countries in finding a solution to the war refugees in Europe. Until March, 1949, Canada has admitted more D.P.'s than all other non-European countries combined.⁹ Great difficulties have been encountered in carrying out this task especially in regard to transportation. For the most part of 1947 the "Beaverbrae", a converted German war vessel, was the only ship which brought refugees from Germany to Canada. Later conditions were improved as three more IRO ships were aiding transportation.

Other persons are admitted since an Order-in-Council of June, 1950, under the following terms: the person must satisfy the Minister that he is a suitable immigrant and is not undesirable owing to his peculiar customs, habits, etc. This act Particularly opened the possibility of German citizens to immigrate to Canada freely and has continued up to the present time.¹⁰

II. IMMIGRATION INTO CANADA 1874-1914

It was economical and political reasons which caused the emigration of colonists from Russia between the years of 1874 and 1914. The economical cause was the shortage of land.

⁹ The Canada Year Book, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, King's Printer and Controller of Stationary, Ottawa, 1950, p. 183.

¹⁰ Friedemann, Wolfgang G., German Immigration into Canada, The Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1952, p. 3.

There was not sufficient land in the original colonies to support the large colonist families and although sister colonies were formed there was an extensive number of landless towards the end of the nineteenth century.¹¹ In 1871 there began a gradual abolishment of the colonists privileges which constituted the political cause for emigration. It was in this year that their self-government was discontinued and the colonies were incorporated into the general Russian administrative system.¹²

The above action on the part of the Russian government did not yet disturb the colonist. However the Imperial Ukas of July, 1871, which proclaimed the coming military service to Russian citizens, caused a general dissatisfaction amongst the colonists. This Ukas especially affected the religious reformed groups as military exemption was one of the basis of their creed. Already in 1871, the Mennonites sent a delegation to Petersburg to petition for exemption from military service. Not awaiting a reply from the Imperial Government, they prepared for emigration.¹³ For the other religious groups, the Ukas was also sufficient to consider emigration as the conditions in the Russian army at the time were unendurable and the term of service lasted from ten to

11 See section on economics, Chapter II, supra.

12 See section on administration, Chapter II, supra.

13 Quiring, Walter, Russlanddeutsche suchen eine Heimat, Verlag: Heinrich Schneider, Karlsruhe, 1938, pp. 10-11.

fifteen years.

Although the Catholics and Lutherans were not as organized as the Mennonites, they were just as eager to leave Russia. The Mennonites had requested information about emigration to Canada and from a letter dated 1872 by the British Consul Zohrab in Berdjansk to Earl Granville, British Foreign Secretary, we read the following regarding the colonists' reaction to the Ukas:

.....A period of ten years is granted by this Ukas to the Germans, dating from its issue, to elect whether they submit to its conditions or quit the country.....That part which marks military service obligatory becomes law in 1873 while the clause which makes the conscription compulsory on all classes will come into force in 1881.

Further in the Consul's letter we read:

.....From what I have been able to learn, I doubt not the departure of the Mennonites would rapidly be followed by that of Germans of other denominations who are now, I am informed, watching the course pursued by the Mennonites with the object of following it if successful.¹⁴

Following the above reasons for emigration was the definite Russification policy which has been described previously in Part I. Similar causes for emigration prevailed amongst the Volga Germans. In addition, the Russification policy coincided with the years of drought in 1890-1891 on

¹⁴ Corell, Ernst, "Mennonite Immigration into Manitoba", The Mennonite Quarterly Review, vol. 11, Goshen, Indiana, July, 1937, pp. 196-227.

the Volga, which resulted in a mass migration overseas.¹⁵

The causes for emigration of the Russian-German Lutherans and Catholics before World War I, can be summarized as follows:

1. Land shortage amongst the Volga and Black Sea Germans.
2. The Ukas of 1871 which stipulated military service for the Germans.
3. The Russification of schools and the abolishment of self-government.
4. The fear of war after the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.
5. The letters from colonists in America which praised the country.
6. The propaganda of the U.S.A. and Canadian immigration agents.
7. The granting of free homesteads by the U.S.A. and Canada which was satisfying to the colonists' urge for land.
8. The definite preparation for emigration by the Mennonites had its effect on all other religious groups.

* * * * *

An exact summary of emigration from Russia to the Americas as to their numbers as well as origin is practically impossible to compile at the present time. In most cases the early settlers did not keep any records nor were racial origin and nationality kept distinct at the ports of entry.

¹⁵ Bonwetsch, op. cit., p. 110.

It is certain however, that the great bulk of emigrants from Russia were directed to North America.¹⁶

At the close of the nineteenth century the climatic and economic conditions of the Canadian Prairies were not appealing to the average Western European. But these very same conditions were of great appeal to the German from Russia, who was representative of a land-hungry colonizer. He was accustomed to a hard life and possessed little cultural demands.

The first Germans from Russia to immigrate and settle in Canada, were the Mennonites. They founded a closed settlement in Manitoba between the years 1874 to 1879 with a total of close to 7,000 members.¹⁷ Although immigration of Catholics and Lutherans into the U.S. Prairies had already

¹⁶ The Table below compiled by Wagner, Georg, and Mai, Richard, Deutsche ueber Land und Meer, Verlag der Buchgemeinde, Bonn, 1940, p. 281, shows the distribution of Germans from Russia in overseas countries, according to statistics of 1935:

Canada.....	200,000
U.S.A.....	400,000
Mexico.....	10,000
Brazil.....	250,000
Paraguay.....	4,000
Uruguay.....	2,500
Argentina.....	150,000
Total.....	<u>1,016,500</u>

¹⁷ Leibbrandt, Georg, "The Emigration of the German Mennonites from Russia to U.S.A. and Canada, 1873-1880", The Mennonite Quarterly Review, vol. 7, Goshen, Indiana, 1933, pp. 5-41.

started in 1873,¹⁸ it was the Mennonite group which had successfully established itself and thus proved the good farm possibilities of the Canadian Prairies. It is then due to their economic success that directed the immigration of other religious denominations to the Canadian Prairies, especially Saskatchewan.

An immigration agency already existed in Odessa on the Black Sea before 1890 which provided prospective immigrants with assistance and information regarding immigration. The agency Mistler of Bremen had a representative in Odessa who provided tickets from Odessa to Winnipeg at the cost of one hundred and nine rubles.¹⁹ The immigrants journey to Canada was mainly through Hamburg, Antwerp and Bremen.

The emigration of the Catholics and Lutherans was never really a mass migration as it was with the Mennonites who arrived in Canada by the hundreds. The Lutheran and Catholic emigration took place rather in small groups of five to ten families and whose final destination was the Canadian Prairies as it was for many others. Saskatchewan became the

18 Sallet, Richard, "Russlanddeutsche Siedlungen in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika", Jahrbuch der Deutsch Amerikanischen Historischen Gesellschaft von Illinois, vol. 31, Chicago, 1931, pp. 5-127, gives an intensive presentation of the Lutheran and Catholic immigration into the U.S.A.

19 Metzger, H., Geschichtlicher Abriss ueber die St. Peters-Pfarrei zu Kronau, The Western Printers Association Ltd., Regina, Saskatchewan, 1930, p. 10.

center of their settlements.

Although the immigration and with it the foundation of settlements²⁰ was most active in the first decade of the twentieth century, nevertheless there were many settlements founded prior to Clifford Sifton's immigration policy which started in 1896. According to Abele, the first German Catholics from Russia arrived in 1871 and settled near Regina.²¹ The date 1871, however, seems to be in contrast to the chronological development of the emigration of the Germans from Russia.

German Catholics from the south of Russia are traceable in Saskatchewan since the 1880's. They had founded the colonies of Josephstal - 1886, St. Peter - 1890 (near Balgoni),²² New Kronau (Kronau) - 1892, Davin - 1890, and Vibank - 1891,²³ all south of Regina. At the same time many settled in the at that time still small town of Regina. In spite of hardship, as will be discussed later, the influx into these

20 The term "settlement" or "colony" in Part II, does not indicate a closed settlement, but rather a certain farm district. The name of the Post Office, Railway Station, or town which was founded later, was applied to the entire district.

21 Abele, Paul, Festschrift zur 25 jaehrigen Jubilaemsfeier der Gruendung der St. Pauls-Kirchengemeinde in Vibank, Sask., 12. June, 1929, The Western Printers Association Ltd., Regina, 1929, p. 6.

22 Metzger, op. cit., p. 8.

23 Abele, op. cit., p. 6.

colonies continued. It will also be seen that numerous other colonies were founded by the German Catholics from Russia. A survey in regard to origin shows that they all come from the German colonies near Odessa on the Black Sea. The Catholics from Bessarabia and the Crimea are less represented as they were already smaller in numbers than the Catholics on the Black Sea.

The first group of Lutherans from the Black Sea settled in Saskatchewan in 1891 in Beresina and Hoffnungstal near Langenburg. They were from Bessarabia. Another group of Lutherans from Russia settled in Alberta in 1891 in the settlement of Heimthal in the Rabbit Hills near the Railway Station Nisku. There was also a settlement founded west of Wetaskiwin in 1892.²⁴

Since there was a tendency to settle with people of the same faith, we find the Lutherans from Russia settled with other Lutherans from Poland and Bukovina. Examples of the foregoing are Langenburg and Edenwold in Saskatchewan. In addition to numerous settlements, Lutherans have extensively settled in the West Canadian cities.

Starting with 1873, a strong emigration was noticeable in Wolhynia. These colonists arrived and settled predominantly in the U.S. states of Michigan, Wisconsin and

²⁴ See Table IV.

Nebraska.²⁵ Since 1890 they also emigrated to Canada into the Province of Alberta. The first community founded by them was in Wetaskiwin. Leduc was founded in 1891 by Wolhynian Baptists. Lutherort, Bashaw and Ellerslie were founded by Wolhynians in the 1890's. The colonies of Bruderheim, New Sarepta and Bruderfeld were founded by Wolhynian Hutterites.

Wolhynian Germans are also traceable in Saskatchewan since 1892 - namely in Regina, Rostern, Yorkton. Yellow Grass was founded by them in 1892. They have further extensively settled in Kipling, Lemberg, Lipton and Mossbank. Since 1898 Wolhynians began to settle in the neighborhood of the Mennonite settlements in Manitoba - in Gretna, Morris, Brown, Morden, Friedensfeld near Steinbach. They have further settled east of Winnipeg where they have founded Gruenwald and Thalberg.²⁶

The Volga German immigrants were fewer in number than that of German immigrants from other areas of Russia. Their emigration was directed mainly to the U.S. where they settled in the states of Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado and Illinois.²⁷ Nevertheless they also found their way to Canada. As many of their kinsmen in the U.S., they too had a tendency

25 Sallet, op. cit., p. 8.

26 Lehmann, Heinz, Das Deutschtum in Westkanada, Verlag Junker und Duenhaupt, Berlin, 1939, p. 70.

27 Sallet, op. cit., p. 3.

to settle in cities. In such a manner the first Volga colony was founded in 1893 on the Riverside in Calgary. Later arrivals settled in Trochu, Beiseker, and Duffield in Alberta; near Gruenwald in Manitoba; and later in the first decade of the twentieth century in St. Joseph's colony and in the dry belt of Saskatchewan. They came predominantly from the colonies of Norka, Jagodnaja, Poljana, Kolb, Preuss, Brabander, Schilling and Alexanderdorf on the Volga.²⁸

Prior to Clifford Sifton's immigration policy coming into effect, Mr. Hugo Carstens in his Annual Report on immigration and colonization for the year 1896, states the following regarding the immigration of Germans from Russia:

Immigration of Germans from Russia has fallen off during the past season, which I think may partly be due to causes arising from the partial failure of crops last year in the new settlements in Alberta, but mainly from Russia herself having opened new large territories for settlement, to which she is anxious to direct her emigration and the consequent relaxing of some of the oppressive laws which in the past chiefly induced the German colonists to leave Russia.

Should she continue to improve her attitude towards her German colonists we may not look for a large increase in immigration from Russia, although this year's favourable crop throughout the German settlements will no doubt be the means of bringing to us the friends of our good and numerous Russian-German settlers, who have in the past year been held back by

28 Lehmann, op. cit., p. 72.

TABLE IV

COLONIES FOUNDED BY RUSSIAN-GERMANS BY 1896

Compiled from the "Summary Statement" in the Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1896, No. 13, Printed by S. E. Dawson, Printer to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, Ottawa, 1897, pp. 124-125.

NAME OF COLONY	NAME OF NEAREST RAILWAY STATION	NUMBER OF SETTLERS
Landshut.....	Langenburg, Sask.....	110
Beresina.....	Langenburg, Sask.....	220
Hoffenthal.....	Langenburg, Sask.....	40
New Kronau.....	Balgoni, Sask.....	180
Davin.....	Balgoni, Sask.....	130
St. Peter and St. Joseph,	Balgoni, Sask.....	800
Yellow Grass.....	Yellow Grass, Sask.....	70
Leduc.....	Leduc, Alberta.....	650
Wetaskiwin, Red Deer Lake, Bears Hill, etc.....	Wetaskiwin, Alberta.....	1,350
Rabitt Hills.....	Edmonton, Alberta.....	180

unfavourable reports.²⁹

* * * * *

In the first decade of the 20th century, when Clifford Sifton's policy had become a realization, the arrival of Germans from Russia was at its peak. Among the new comers this time, there were also Germans from the Caucasus, Crimea and Siberia. Numerous new colonies were founded by them and many settled in the established colonies. However, immigration was and remained an individual task. They arrived in small groups of a few families and often individuals who had escaped military service.³⁰ Since most of the immigrants were not prosperous, their travelling expenses were subsidized by relatives or friends who had been successful in Canada. The Canadian authorities also allowed them credit for travelling expenses as they allowed them similar credit to obtain farm equipment.

To complete the immigration picture before World War I, we have to mention the extensive influx from the U.S.A. Although immigration from the U.S. had taken place before

²⁹ Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Year 1896, No. 13, Printed by S. E. Dawson, Printer to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, Ottawa, 1897, p. 119.

³⁰ Richard Sallet reports that this practice was assumed to such an extent that the colony of Kassel in the Black Sea area which had a population of 2,000 was unable to present men for draft in 1885. This phenomenon was more acute during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905.

1900, it led all other countries in immigration to Canada between the years of 1901 and 1909 with a total of 393,908 immigrants. The national composition of these immigrants, in addition to English-speaking, was Germans, Scandinavians, and others of non-English speaking races.³¹ The attraction of these settlers was again the cheap land which was no longer available in the U.S. Each person was allowed to take up a homestead in Western Canada at a cost of ten dollars and a so-called "pre-emption claim" for three dollars an acre.³² A large number of these immigrants were Germans from Russia who had previously settled in South and North Dakota, Montana and other states. Among them were also some immigrants of the second generation. They were a great asset to Canada as they brought with them experience and training in agricultural pursuits in North America.³³ Many of them disposed over land or other property before emigrating to Canada. Sallet records an individual case where a Black Sea German sold his land at McClusky, North Dakota, which amounted to 1,280 acres and moved to Morse, Saskatchewan with a steam plough. There he bought new cheaper land. The immigrants from the U.S. had an average of \$1,000 per person.³⁴

31 Dillingham, W. P., The Immigration Situation in Canada, The Immigration Commission (U.S.A.), Washington Government Printing Office, Washington, 1910, p. 28.

32 Sallet, op. cit., p. 22.

33 Dillingham, op. cit., p. 33.

34 Sallet, op. cit., p. 23.

The colonies given below were either founded or predominantly settled by Lutherans or Catholics from Russia in the first decade of the 20th century. In Saskatchewan the settlement of the St. Peter's colony east of Saskatoon had started in 1902 and St. Joseph's colony west of Saskatoon in 1905-1906. Amongst them were the Russian-German Catholics who had previously settled in the U.S. We find them particularly in the latter colony. Extensive advertising in Russia resulted in:

a large influx of Russian-Germans during 1908-1910 into the Tramping Lake - Macklin, eastern part of the St. Joseph's colony.³⁵ Further settlements were founded by German Catholics in Saskatchewan at Odessa - 1901-1904,³⁶ Allan - 1903, Holdfast - 1905, and Selz - 1904. These settlers came exclusively from the Black Sea. Kendal was founded in 1901 by Catholics who were mostly from the U.S. Settlers from the Azov Sea area founded the Catholic colony of Claybank in 1904.³⁷ Billimun was founded between 1910 and 1912 by Black Sea Germans.

Lutherans from Bessarabia settled in Melville, Kipling and Zorra in 1904. Since 1908 they also settled in the

³⁵ Dawson, C. H., Group Settlement, Macmillan Company of Canada, Toronto, 1936, pp. 275-276.

³⁶ Gerein, Frank, History of Odessa, 1901-1954, Western Printers Association Ltd., Regina, Saskatchewan, 1954, p. 10.

³⁷ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 195.

dry belt of south Saskatchewan in St. Bonnells, McEachern, Eatonia, and Bateman. Wolhynia Germans settled in Morse, Saskatchewan. Among the settlers in Alberta who had founded the Catholic colony near Spring Lake in 1902, were many Black Sea Germans who had emigrated from the Dakotas and Minnesota. Freudental near Carbon in Alberta was founded in 1909 by Lutherans from the U.S., but who had formerly come from the Black Sea. The settlement is named after their colony near Odessa.³⁸ In Manitoba further German farm districts were founded near Moosehorn, Camper, Grahamdale and Friedfeld before 1913.³⁹

Immigration continued until World War I but very few new colonies were founded in the last three years before the war. To alleviate the colonists' beginning in their newly adopted country, the railway companies and the religious organizations, such as the "Catholic Settlement Society", directed them to the established colonies.⁴⁰ Further assistance by the Immigration Department in cooperation with the various churches was offered to the immigrants and can be seen from the following quotation:

.....The Canadian steamship manifest contains among other inquiries a question relative to the religion of the immigrant...

38 Sallet, op. cit., p. 67.

39 Lehmann, op. cit., p. 107.

40 Dawson, op. cit., p. 287.

...The information, it is stated, is gathered not because the government lays any stress upon religious belief or makes it in any sense a test of the admissibility of the immigrant, but largely in order to assist the churches in work among those newly arrived. A list of arriving immigrants, classified by their religious belief, and their destinations, is furnished to the head of any religious denomination requesting the same. Such church officials are enabled in this way to notify church authorities in different localities of the arrival of such immigrants, and it is said that much good results, not merely in putting the new immigrants into better social surroundings, but also in the way of helping them to secure work.⁴¹

The difficulties in compiling the exact number of Catholic and Lutheran immigrants before World War I have already been partly mentioned. Although the Canadian Census does not exactly present the number of immigrants, with which I am concerned, nevertheless the statistics below will reveal an overall picture of the same.

NUMBER OF TOTAL GERMANS IN WESTERN CANADA ⁴²	
PROVINCES	1921
Manitoba.....	19,444
Saskatchewan.....	68,202
Alberta.....	35,333
British Columbia.....	7,273
TOTAL.....	<u>130,252</u>

⁴¹ Dillingham, op. cit., p. 59.

⁴² Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I, Population, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, Ottawa, 1924, Table 24.

In reality the total number of Germans must have been higher as many Germans from Eastern Europe (especially Germans from Russia) have definitely confused racial origin and nationality and have stated their nationality rather than racial origin in the Census. Heinz Lehmann, who made the first survey of all Germans in Canada, claimed that of the total Germans in Western Canada before World War I the German from Russia comprised the greatest proportion. On the basis of available material in regard to the origin of the German pre-war immigrants, he arrived at the composition as stated below.

ORIGIN OF GERMANS IN WESTERN CANADA⁴³

Germans from Russia.....	44%
Germans from Romania.....	6%
Germans from Austro-Hungary.....	18%
Germans from Germany.....	12%
Germans from the U.S.A.....	18%
Germans from Ontario, and other countries.....	2%

The preceding presentation of colonies and their statistics is by no means complete, neither are the settlements exclusively founded by the people mentioned. Presented are rather the colonies predominantly founded by either the one or the other group, such as by Catholics from the Black Sea or by Wolhynia Germans who are of Lutheran faith. The difficulty in tracing the settlers origin as well as the

⁴³ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 93.

definite group who had founded the colony, is created by the fact that a colony was usually settled by people of the same faith but who had come from different countries. In this manner we have the colony of Vibank, Saskatchewan, which was first settled by Black Sea Germans. However in the same year Catholics from Banat, Romania also settled there. Exactly the same phenomenon occurred with the Lutheran settlers - such as in the colony of Edenwold we find Germans from Bukovina, Dobrudsha, South Russia and many other places. In spite of the various origins of the settlers, their common language, faith and equal cultural niveau was sufficient to shape a unified community.

III. SECOND IMMIGRATION 1920-1934

The outbreak of World War I ceased the immigration of Russian-Germans into Canada. An exception were 2,000 Hutterites who immigrated from the U.S. during the war. Not believing in supporting a war, they conflicted with the U.S. authorities, which resulted in their emigration.⁴⁴

The conditions amongst the colonists in Russia following World War I and the Revolution have already been

⁴⁴ The Hutterites, as the Mennonites, have found their origin in the Anabaptist Movement of the 16th century. They are named after the founder of the sect, Jacob Huter, who was burned at the stake in 1536 in Insbruck. Persecuted, they emigrated to Bohemia and later into Russia. As military service became obligatory in Russia, they emigrated to the U.S. in 1874. They differ from the Mennonites only in their communal possessions.

discussed in Chapter III. The political and economical reasons that led to their emigration before the war, were now even more forceful. The devastation of the colonies during the civil war, which led to the great famine of 1921, coupled with the attitude toward the new regime incited every one to emigration. Later in the 1920's this urge was strengthened by increased taxes as well as the practical execution of the collectivization policy in the U.S.S.R.

As in previous times the Mennonites were again the only efficient group to undertake an organized emigration. They had already sent a delegation to Canada in 1920 in order to investigate immigration opportunities.⁴⁵ The Catholics and Lutherans were disorganized and lacked leadership at the very moment when matters of immigration became most complicated in Russia. The immigration into Canada was further complicated as Canadian immigration adjusted itself to the economic cycle. In addition Russia was one of the "non-preferred" countries from where the number of immigrants was to be limited.

In view of the fact that an extensive number of farmers in Saskatchewan were of German descent, coming from Russia, Poland, Romania, Germany proper, etc., the German Canadian Society of Saskatchewan asked in a memorandum to have preference given to German immigrants, irregardless of

⁴⁵ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 114.

origin. This petition was to be applicable to immigrants who otherwise fulfilled the immigration requirements. The memorandum was supported by all German organizations and as such was presented for consideration to the Royal Commission of Colonization and Settlement in Saskatchewan.⁴⁶ It is not known to what extent this exceptional document influenced further immigration of Germans from Eastern Europe. However, the Canadian government came to an agreement with the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways to bring in a number of agriculturalists from Russia. Strict medical as well as civil inspection was to be carried out. No financial assistance was offered to this movement by the Canadian government.⁴⁷

The required valid passport by the Canadian government, created further difficulties for the Russian-Germans.

On and after the 15th February, 1923, it shall be necessary as a condition to permission to land in Canada, that every immigrant shall be in possession of a valid passport issued in and by the Government of the country of which such person is a subject or citizen, such passport to be presented within one year of the date of its issue.⁴⁸

Meanwhile the urge to emigrate amongst the colonists, had

⁴⁶ "Auslanddeutschtum", Der Auslanddeutsche, Jahrg. 13, No. 7, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 230-231.

⁴⁷ England, op. cit., pp. 83-85.

⁴⁸ England, Robert, The Central European Immigrant in Canada, The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd., Toronto, 1929, p. 23.

grown stronger for the New Economic Policy period was over and they faced collectivization at the end of the 1920's.⁴⁹ The U.S.S.R., however, was not too eager to lose its subjects. To curtail this sudden urge to leave the country, the Russian government demanded a fee of 200 rubles from every adult person that received a passport.⁵⁰

In the hope to achieve a solution to their problem, there began an instinctive movement without leadership to Moscow. They were represented from all parts of Russia. The main movement reached catastrophic measures by September of 1929, for nearly thirteen thousand colonists had gathered in Moscow.⁵¹ They were weeks and months awaiting their emigration documents.⁵² A direct immigration from Moscow to Canada was not permitted by Canadian authorities in spite of the urgent request of the religious organizations. A long negotiation between German and U.S.S.R. authorities resulted finally in the immigration of 5,700 persons to Germany. Settlement in over populated Germany was excluded right from the start. The accommodation offered in the three camps of Prenzlau,

49 Quiring, op. cit., p. 108.

50 Schoeneich, Hans, Die ihr Heimatland verliessen, Verlag von Philipp Reclam jun., Leipzig, 1932, p. 75.

51 No official number of the assembled colonists in Moscow was ever published. Schoeneich, op. cit., p. 75, speaks of 10,000, Quiring, op. cit., p. 114, of 13,000, and Der Aus-landdeutsche, of 20,000.

52 Quiring, op. cit., p. 114.

Hammerstein and Moelln was to be temporary until immigration to an overseas country was secured. The religious composition of persons in these camps was 3,885 Mennonites, 1,260 Lutherans, 468 Catholics, and 7 Adventists.⁵³

The expenses of the refugees were partly carried by the German government and the organization "Brueder in Not" (Brothers in Need). This organization was initiated by President von Hindenburg, for the purpose of defraying the expenses for the refugees. More than 900,000 Marks were collected. A considerable amount was repaid by the German religious organizations in North America.⁵⁴

When finally in 1930 emigration from Russia became an impossibility, the colonists turned to other methods of escaping from Russia. As early as 1928, individuals crossed the border into Manchuria. But when in 1930 collectivization was also obvious in Siberia, the number of refugees increased. Walter Quiring speaks of a dramatic escape of a whole village across the Amur river into Manchuria. By night the entire settlement of Schumanovka near the Amur⁵⁵ crossed the

⁵³ "Russlanddeutsche Bauern auf der Wanderung", Der Auslandsdeutsche, Jahrg. 13, No. 3, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 76-77.

⁵⁴ "Russlanddeutsche Bauern auf der Wanderung", Der Auslandsdeutsche, Jahrg. 13, No. 23, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 810-811.

⁵⁵ It shall be remembered that several German colonies were founded near the Amur and Ussuri rivers.

frozen river. Safely with fifty-six fully packed sledges, they arrived in Manchuria. Similar escapes were also recorded from Turkestan into China. In such a manner 1,066 refugees had gathered in Harbin, Manchuria, by the fall of 1931. Amongst these refugees were 550 Mennonites, 405 Lutherans, 50 Catholics, 44 Baptists and 7 others.⁵⁶

With a few exceptions these refugees emigrated via Marseille to South America, as did the Lutheran group, or arrived in Germany. By the fall of 1930, a total of 6,313 Russian-German refugees had assembled in Germany. According to religious denomination, these were - 4,300 Mennonites, 1,466 Lutherans, 483 Catholics, 51 Baptists, and 13 Adventists.

Since the majority of the refugees were of the Mennonite faith, Bishop David Toews of Rosthern, Saskatchewan, became the spokesman of all the refugees. However due to the rising unemployment in 1929, Premier Andersen of Saskatchewan as well as the Premier of Alberta declined immigration of the entire group. An agreement was reached whereby only relatives of well established citizens were to be permitted entrance into Canada.⁵⁷ As a result, 2,617 immigrated to Brazil, 1,576 to Paraguay, and 1,344 to Canada. From among the

⁵⁶ Quiring, op. cit., pp. 151-159.

⁵⁷ "Russlanddeutsche Bauern auf der Wanderung", Der Auslandsdeutsche, Jahrg. 13, No. 9, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 292-294.

1,344 there were only about 200 Lutherans and Catholics. A further group of 500 who did not satisfy the medical officers, remained in Germany and were settled in the Province of Mecklenburg.⁵⁸

Included in the total of the Russian-German immigrants into Canada between the World Wars were over 20,000 Mennonites.⁵⁹ The number of Catholics and Lutherans had considerably decreased in comparison to their pre-war immigration. In spite of the interest and effort by the Lutheran and Catholic Immigration Societies, who have done good work in linking up the new comers with communities of the same faith, they were unable to bring into Canada more than 10,000 Catholics and Lutherans.⁶⁰ Outstanding in devoting their efforts to the Catholic and Lutheran immigration, were Father C. A. Kierdorf, O. M. I., who travelled to Europe twice for this purpose,⁶¹ and Director Harms of the Lutheran College in Saskatoon. Alone their effort was not sufficient, for a unified organization amongst the Catholics and Lutherans in Russia was missing and on the whole, however, they did not

58 Quiring, op. cit., p. 115.

59 "Wanderungswesen", Der Auslanddeutsche, Jahrg. 15, No. 13/14, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1932, p. 391.

60 Lehmann, op. cit., p. 118.

61 "Rundschau", Der Auslanddeutsche, Jahrg. 11, No. 16, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1928, pp. 512-513.

utilize the emigration opportunities before the U.S.S.R. restricted it to nil. Most of them deceived themselves when the New Economic Policy (NEP) was introduced in 1921 in regard to the free enterprise that was allowed. Later when they realized that this was only for a transitional period, it was too late. The Russian restrictions of emigration coincided with the coming of the depression in Canada when immigration was reduced to an insignificant number.

Table V presents the increase and decline of immigration from Russia. It will be noted that until 1926 the Canadian statistics did not make any distinction between racial origin and country of birth. The statistics of Germans of racial origin would have no relation to the proper number of Russian-Germans since that would include Germans from Eastern Europe and Germany proper, therefore they are not presented. The figures given are the total number of immigrants born in Russia, which definitely includes the Germans. From these subtract the figures of the Russians by racial origin, which then would leave the estimated number of immigrants of German origin. However, we must again include Germans in the figure given for Russian nationality and racial origin as the Germans have confused their racial origin with their nationality. This figure is the closest estimation which can be made from official statistics available.

New colonies were not founded by Russian-Germans between the wars as some of the immigrants were directed to the

TABLE V

IMMIGRATION FROM RUSSIA FOR THE YEARS 1920-1929

This Table has been compiled according to Canadian Census figures for the years of 1920 to 1929 from The Canada Year Books, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, King's Printer and Controller of Stationary, Ottawa, of the following years: 1920 - p. 121, 1924 - p. 170, 1926 - pp. 170-183, 1927-28 - pp. 192-195, and 1929 - p. 187.

YEAR	IMMIGRANT ARRIVALS BORN IN RUSSIA	IMMIGRANT ARRIVALS OF RUSSIAN RACIAL ORIGIN
1920.....		51
1921.....		1,077
1922.....		321
1923.....		222
1924.....		3,058
1925.....		5,411
1926.....	7,382.....	1,092
1927.....	6,935.....	1,296
1928.....	2,563.....	1,132
1929.....	1,901.....	1,193

established communities. Only a limited number found their way to the newly opened territory of the Peace River. Although the majority of the new comers were farmers, only a few of them became rural dwellers for it was British subjects and those who had resided in Canada for five years, who were allowed to buy government lands.⁶² This resulted in an extensive settlement of the new comers in the cities where they became engaged in seasonal work.

IV THIRD IMMIGRATION INTO CANADA - AFTER WORLD WAR II

The third and perhaps the last immigration period of Russian-Germans into Canada started in 1947 and has continued until the present time. It had been mentioned already that their refuge from the Warthegau during the winter of 1944-45 to Western Germany was an individual private task. Unorganized, they arrived in Western Germany from where their forefathers had emigrated to Russia one hundred and fifty years ago. Their arrival marked the end of the history of the Russian-Germans for they no longer form a unified group or community. Dispersed, without contact with each other, they were to be found in every corner of Germany.

The position of the Russian-Germans in post-war Germany can only be understood in conjunction with the general refugee situation. The staggering number and the sudden

⁶² "Wanderungswesen", Der Auslanddeutsche, Jahrg. 14, No. 2, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1931, p. 67.

influx of uprooted refugees from the Eastern Provinces of Germany had an unsettling effect on the natives of Western Germany. The lack of accommodation for all of them constituted the most pressing and at the same time the most complex problem of post-war Germany. The natives looked upon the impoverished refugees as undesirable intruders, especially upon those who came from outside of Germany. Coupled with the attitude of the natives was the mass unemployment, which was at its height, and made an indefinite stay in Germany for them unendurable. A return to Russia, where they expected to be branded as traitors, was excluded. Nevertheless the deep disappointment in Germany, the uncertain future, caused some to contact the Russian Repatriation Commission in Western Germany, which functioned until 1949. Their desire to return to their former homes, which they expected, only remained a hope. Repatriation in occupied Russian territory of Russian-Germans, who were de jure still U.S.S.R. citizens, was unquestionably carried out to the fullest extent. As the Volga Germans, they too were transported to Siberia and Central Asia.

Being accustomed to deprivation, the remainder of the Russian-Germans did overcome the depressing first two years of post-war Germany easier than those refugees of Eastern Germany, who were used to a secure and well established existence. Many were employed as farm helpers and in other employment, awaiting anxiously the contact with their relatives in America. And relatives they all had, for at some

time or another a relative had immigrated to an overseas country. It was again the economic insecurity and the desire for one's home that caused the universal urge to immigrate to America.

An official statement of the numbers of Russian-Germans in Western Germany was never issued by the German authorities. Nor was there an organization of Russian-Germans that kept close statistics of their numbers. There remains to mention, however, the aiding offices which were founded for the purpose of distribution of carritas gifts donated by their kinsmen abroad. Of the 350,000 Russian-Germans repatriated, an estimated number of 100,000 resided in West Germany before immigration started to Canada.

By 1947 most of them had established contact with their relatives in America and had already improved their material position as they received generous gifts from abroad. An immediate emigration to overseas countries was however not yet possible. Being refugees of German descent, they did not fall under the status of Displaced Persons and were thus excluded from any material assistance by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).

At the foundation of the UNRRA, the function of which is mere material assistance to refugees, a difference of opinion occurred as to what countries and people assistance should be given. The viewpoint of the U.S.A. was that

any assistance should be denied to people who were members of the German nation as far as they were not victims of the Nationalist Socialist regime. This decision was of importance as the succeeding organization of the International Refugee Organization (IRO) pursued then the same policy. According to the statute of the IRO, it in the main distinguished two groups of refugees - a) those refugees whose nations were members of the United Nations and b) those refugees who were of German racial origin, who were usually members of German minority groups from Eastern European countries. The latter group did not fall under the jurisdiction of the IRO.⁶³ It shall be noted that in addition to material assistance the IRO offered protective service as well as assistance for immigration to overseas countries.

Since however, the majority of the German refugees had relatives in Canada who were most willing to defray the immigration expenses, the Canadian Christian Council for Resettlement of Refugees was founded in 1947. The organization's task was to aid in locating and processing overseas, approved immigrants who were refugees in occupied territories of Austria and Germany, but who did not come within the mandate of the IRO. The group concerned with, as said, were all German refugees from Eastern European countries, who because of events could not return to their former countries. Canada

⁶³ Institut fuer Besatzungsfragen, Das DP - Problem, Verlag J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tuebingen, 1950, p. 164.

was thus not only the first country to grant admittance to Displaced Persons but also the first country to bring in German refugees. The CCCRR was a voluntary organization and consisted of the following members; The Catholic Immigration Aid Society, The Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization, The German Baptist Colonization and Immigration Society, The Canadian Lutheran Relief, The Suedeten Committee, and The Latvian Relief Fund of Canada.⁶⁴

The work of the Council was handled in exactly the same manner as for approved immigrants coming within the mandate of the IRO. For this purpose a screening camp was established in Hanover. The screening in this camp was restricted to German nationals. The prospective immigrant not only had to satisfy the usual immigrant requirements but in addition had to have close relatives in Canada who were able to secure accommodation and employment for at least one year. Further, the immigrant had to be an agriculturalist. Thus only rural dwellers in Canada were enabled to bring their relatives to Canada. Later in 1950 an Order-in-Council was passed (as already indicated), which enabled others who had no relatives in Canada to immigrate to this country. There is, however, a group of Russian-Germans in Germany who are either people in good position or unfit for immigration for reasons of health and age.

⁶⁴ The Canada Year Book, 1950, op. cit., p. 183.

According to the Canadian Census of 1950, Canada granted admission to 98,057 Displaced Persons between April, 1947, and March, 1950. This number included 55,075 immigrants who had close relatives living in Canada and 41,700 immigrants were admitted under the general Displaced Person movement. The German immigrants were also included in the Canadian statistics as Displaced Persons. Among them were 10,651 of German racial origin.⁶⁵ The number, however, seems to be too low for we receive a different composition according to Table VI when attempting to compile the number of Russian-German immigrants. It must be kept in mind when calculating, that the confusion of racial origin and nationality was still apparent amongst the Russian-Germans.

We thus have in Table VI a total of 19,075 immigrants born in Russia as compared to 6,738 immigrants of Russian racial origin. In the total of racial origin we can with certainty assume that there are a substantial number of Germans included. To derive at an approximate number of Russian-German immigrants, we subtract the total of racial origin from the total born in Russia and allow a few thousand for others born in Russia such as the Ukrainians, the remainder undoubtedly comprises the number of Russian-German immigrants in Canada. This number would then be somewhat over 10,000.

⁶⁵ The Canada Year Book, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, King's Printer and Controller of Stationary, Ottawa, 1951, p. 141.

As all the immigrants had to be farmers their place of destination was usually a rural district, however they never fully settled there. They lacked the means to obtain their own farm and the city offered better opportunities in seasonal work. As a consequence the majority settled in the cities.

TABLE VI

TOTAL IMMIGRATION FROM RUSSIA ACCORDING
TO COUNTRY OF BIRTH AND RACIAL ORIGIN

Table compiled from The Canada Year Books, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, King's Printer and Controller of Stationary, Ottawa, of the years, 1951 - pp. 145-147, 1952-53 - pp. 169-170, and 1954 - p. 162.

YEAR	IMMIGRANT ARRIVALS BORN IN RUSSIA	IMMIGRANT ARRIVALS OF RUSSIAN RACIAL ORIGIN
1947.....	870.....	293
1948.....	5,503.....	1,441
1949.....	3,401.....	937
1950.....	2,043.....	653
1951.....	4,489.....	2,305
1952.....	2,769.....	1,109
TOTAL.....	<u>19,075</u>	<u>6,738</u>

CHAPTER VI

STATISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION OF RUSSIAN-GERMANS IN CANADA

I STATISTICS OF RUSSIAN-GERMANS IN CANADA

The difficulty in compiling the exact number of Russian-Germans in Canada has been mentioned in several cases. It shall be mentioned once more in greater detail, for it is important to know why the official number, calculated from the Canadian Census, is far below their actual number.

Since 1871 the Canadian Census lists the Canadian residents according to racial origin, as such the person has to state the racial origin of the ancestors, i.e. that of the ancestral immigrant to Canada. (A statement such as "Canadian" or "American" is not acceptable for racial origin). Theoretically then we should be able to compile the exact number of any minority group in Canada - whether assimilated or not. In reality we receive a different picture. Only there where racial origin and country of birth and with it nationality coincide, such as among German immigrants from Germany proper, can we exactly state their statistics.¹

¹ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 130.

The statistics for other minority groups, such as the Russian-Germans, can never be fully calculated. The Russian-Germans as well as other Germans from Eastern-European countries have for reasons as stated below often not distinguished racial origin and nationality. This phenomenon occurred either unconsciously due to confusion of racial origin and nationality or intentionally due to the attitude prevalent toward the German nationals during the World Wars.

This fact is manifested in the drastic example of the Mennonites from Russia of whom 3,639 are listed under Russian racial origin in the Census of 1941.² This occurrence was not only prevalent amongst the Mennonites but just the same amongst the Catholics and Lutherans, for the Census of 1941 states that 83,708 persons were of Russian racial origin³ and 46,302 persons spoke Russian as their mother tongue.⁴ The great difference between the preceding two figures can be explained in the following manner. It is unlikely that the difference of 37,406 had been fully assimilated. Instead we subtract from the difference the 3,639 Mennonites listed under Russian racial origin, allow a few thousand for assimilated Russians and Ukrainians born in Russia, the

2 Census of Canada, 1941, Vol. 6, Population, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, Ottawa, 1946, Table 5, pp. 56-57.

3 Ibid, Table 1, pp. 2-3.

4 Ibid, Table 14, p. 214.

remainder would then undoubtedly comprise German Catholics and Lutherans from Russia that stated nationality rather than racial origin. This argument is actually applicable as stated above to any minority group in Canada whose racial origin does not coincide with their former nationality.

Since the 1920's the Canadian Census lists the Canadian residents under mother tongue in addition to the previous listing of racial origin, country of birth, and nationality. Canada and South Africa are the only two non-European countries that list their population according to such detailed information.⁵ Due to this detail and especially the listing of mother tongue, one should be able to derive at a better judgement of a minority group in Canada in respect to the number of the group as well as their extent of assimilation. Due to the transitional period in the assimilation process, the reliability of the figure for mother tongue is questionable. In a group as the Russian-Germans who are definitely in the process of assimilation, we find several categories from a point of view of language:

1. Those who still speak their mother tongue fluently and speak very little English.
2. Those who speak German and English equally well.
3. Those who still understand but do not speak German anymore.

⁵ Kloss, Heinz, and Reimann, Katherine, Statistisches Handbuch der Volksdeutschen in Uebersee, Vertrauliche Schriftenreihe Uebersee, Publikationsstelle Stuttgart-Hamburg, Stuttgart, 1943, pp. 14-15.

This fact is further complicated as German appears in two forms - Standard German and the Dialectic German. So that many who do only speak a dialect do not state it but rather state English as their mother tongue. From the above, one can see that a person falling in one of the categories is often confused as to what to state as their mother tongue.

To derive, however, at an approximate number of Russian-German Lutherans and Catholics in Western Canada, one may best calculate this figure from the statistics on religious denominations.

GERMAN CATHOLICS AND LUTHERANS IN WESTERN CANADA ⁶		
PROVINCES	LUTHERANS	CATHOLICS
Manitoba.....	19,426.....	5,065
Saskatchewan.....	41,585.....	54,691
Alberta.....	27,234.....	14,062
British Columbia.....	<u>5,460</u>	<u>5,411</u>
TOTAL.....	93,705.....	79,229

One may safely apply Heinz Lehmann's estimated percentage, which is that 44% of the total number of Germans in Western Canada are Russian-Germans,⁷ to the total number of German Lutherans and Catholics in Western Canada. This then would result in the approximate number of 41,230 Russian-German Lutherans and 34,860 Russian-German Catholics in Western

⁶ Census of Canada, 1941, op. cit., Table 5, pp. 64-71.

⁷ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 93.

Canada. In conclusion, neither official statements nor private estimates such as Heinz Lehmann's or George Wagner's,⁸ who estimated the Russian-Germans in Canada at 200,000,⁹ give an exact number of the Russian-Germans in Canada for reasons as stated above.

II DISTRIBUTION OF THE RUSSIAN-GERMANS IN CANADA

It shall be remembered that the colonists settled in Russia according to religious denomination, forming at the same time a solid block of closed settlements averaging from one thousand to five thousand people in a colony. Upon arrival of the Russian-Germans in North America, this system of settlement was only maintained by the Mennonites in Manitoba. But even they have abandoned this system at present. Another attempt to form regular closed settlements after the pattern of the old settlements in Russia was further tried by the Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas, and by Volga Germans in Kansas. Richard Sallet also mentions that even the weekly markets, as they practiced in Russia, had temporarily become a custom.

An attempt by Lutherans and Catholics to settle in Western Canada according to the pattern of settlement in Russia is not known. Due to the system of homesteads this

⁸ Wagner, Georg and Mai, Richard, op. cit., p. 281.

⁹ This includes all religious denominations.

pattern had to be abandoned. There was however a tendency to acquire a homestead adjacent to a kinsman. Nevertheless the decisive measure to take up a homestead in a farm district was again determined, as previously in Russia, by religious denomination. In this manner several farm districts were founded - an example of which is the St. Peter's Colony, a large area east of Saskatoon, which is almost exclusively settled by Catholics. Because religion played the decisive role in settlement, a clear-cut picture as to the country of origin of the settlers was not maintained.

The first settlements assumed a form of the so-called "scattered" settlements, which resulted from the homestead system. The homesteaders usually followed the railway lines or where the tracks were expected to be laid in the near future. The name of the nearest Post Office or Railway Station was ordinarily applied to the entire farm district. Where such were not present, the name of a colony in Russia, from where part of the settlers came, was adopted. Several colonies populated by Russian-Germans had undergone changes of name notably during World War I. Examples were Eiginheim changed to Young, Katherinental to Kronau, Schultz to Prelate, and Speyer to Leader - all located in Saskatchewan. Little Volga was changed to Sundence in Alberta.

Only later were the numerous prairie towns founded close to a railway station. The beginning of such a town

started with the building of a school and church which played a dominant role in the early settlements. At the same time a general store was built in the town that became the supply center of the entire district. The activities of the district were concentrated around the town. The population increased as farmers retired, leaving their farms to the children, and settling themselves in the town. (In reading the remainder of this Chapter, please consult Map III.)

A Province of Manitoba - Lutheran Settlements

Besides the colonies of the Mennonites which were founded between 1874 and 1879 east of the Red River, there were only Lutheran settlements founded by Russian-Germans in Manitoba. Rural Catholic settlements were never founded in this province. An insignificant number of Catholics from Russia settled in Winnipeg and belong to the St. Joseph's Parrish there, which is served by the Oblate Fathers. Lutherans have settled in the area of Beausejour, Green Bay and Golden Bay, which are east of Winnipeg. Further settlements were founded north-east of Winnipeg in Brokenhead, Gruenwald, Thalberg and Fish Lake. Other Lutherans have settled east of Winnipeg and south of the Winnipeg River in Whitemouth, Oldenburg, and Winnipeg Falls. The settlement of these colonies was started by Wolhynia Germans in 1896. Later, Lutherans from other areas in Russia, settled in these colonies too.¹⁰

¹⁰ Lehmann, op. cit., pp. 159-160.

North-west of Winnipeg, German Lutherans have settled in Moose Horn, Neuheim and Grahamdale along the railway line leading to Gypsumville. The settlement began in 1911 and lasted until World War I. The settlers were again predominantly from Wolhynia. Other Wolhynia Germans have settled in the vicinity west of the Manitoba Lake and have founded several German farm districts. The first settlers however came from Galicia in 1891. Only in 1896 have Lutherans from Russia settled in the area.

Close to the Saskatchewan border a German farm district was founded in 1913 by the name of Friedfeld on the railway line of Dauphin. The settlers were again immigrants predominantly from Wolhynia. Near Grandview another settlement was founded at the turn of the century by Black Sea Germans from the area of Molotchna and by Wolhynia Germans.¹¹

The city of Winnipeg had 12,170 persons of German racial origin according to the Census of 1941,¹² of which 9,166 still gave German as their mother tongue.¹³ Half of the 12,170 could be classified as Russian-Germans. In 1884 a German Society (Deutsche Vereinigung) was already founded for the purpose of assisting and advising the entire German

11 Lehmann, op. cit., pp. 161-162.

12 Census of Canada, 1941, op. cit., Table 22, p. 266.

13 Ibid.

immigrant population.¹⁴ The various religious immigration aid societies had their headquarters in Winnipeg after the war and still do at the present time. But their first strong organization, as it was in the rural districts, was the Church. In 1889, Pastor H. C. Schmieder arrived in Winnipeg and founded the first German Lutheran community in Western Canada - the still-present "Evangelischluthraschen Dreieinigkeitskirche".¹⁵ The Catholics, that are fewer in numbers, are members of the St. Joseph's Church which was founded in 1904-1905, and are attended by the Order of the Oblate Fathers. The number of Russian-German Catholics in the Parrish however are limited. On the whole the Germans in Winnipeg have taken up their residence in the north end of the city.

B Province of Saskatchewan

1 Catholic Settlements

The oldest Catholic settlement area in Saskatchewan founded by Russian-Germans is located east and south-east of Regina. The area is populated by approximately 5,000 Germans and comprises the colonies of Balgoni, Qu'Appelle, Kronau (St. Peter's community), Vibank, Odessa, Kendal, and Sedley.

¹⁴ Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture, 1885, No. 8, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, Ottawa, 1886, p. 44.

¹⁵ Ruccius, M., "Deutsch Evangelische Arbeit in Kanada", Der Auslanddeutsche, Jahrg. 13, No. 18, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 647-649.

The oldest settlement is the colony of Josephstal east of Regina. The settlement started in 1896 near Balgoni and was named after a colony in Russia, from where part of the settlers came. The colony was first mentioned in the Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1886.

This colony has a population of ninety-five souls, with the exception of one Russian family they are all Germans and speak the German language.¹⁶

In 1888 another smaller colony east of Josephstal was founded near South Qu'Appelle. In the Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the year 1906 we read:

This colony was started in 1888 and has steadily increased on account of nearness of a railway station. There are probably three hundred families, eighteen hundred souls in the district. Five schools have been established and the district is generally successful, many of them increasing their holdings in land by purchase.¹⁷

In 1890-1891 the first settlers arrived in Davin and Kronau. The latter colony was named after a settlement in the Black Sea area from where part of the settlers originated. In 1890 three other colonies were founded by Catholics from the Black Sea, south of Balgoni, between the Davin and Kronau stations. The colonies Katherinental, Rastadt,

¹⁶ Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture, 1886, No. 12, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, Ottawa, 1887, p. 75.

¹⁷ Annual Report of the Department of the Interior, 1906, Part II, No. 25, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, Ottawa, 1907, p. 82.

and Speyer recall names in the Black Sea area from where the settlers came. They are comprised into the St. Peter's community. Rev. H. Metzger presents a detailed account of the settlement of this area in his pamphlet which was written in 1930 in honor of the 40th anniversary of the first settlers. In 1903 the construction of the new church in Rastadt was undertaken, which was completed in 1912. The first school district was established in Rastadt in 1897 which resulted in the construction of a school in 1899. However, by 1912, the same was too small and was replaced by a new school which was constructed close to the church. In the same manner school districts were established in the other two colonies at the turn of the century.¹⁸

South-east of the St. Peter's community farm district on the Many Bone Creek, the St. Paul's community of Vibank was founded in 1891 by Germans from the Black Sea area. At the same time, however, Catholics from the Banat and Galicia have settled in the area. The information about the settlement and development of the Vibank district is obtained from a pamphlet written for the 25th Jubilee of the foundation of the St. Paul's Parrish. By 1907 the area around Vibank had established seven school districts. The economic progress of this area was favorable especially after the railway station was completed in 1907. It is then that the

¹⁸ Metzger, op. cit., p. 49.

town of Vibank¹⁹ began its development. Several stores, which were the supply center for the entire district were founded in the following years. In 1912 the school and church were transferred from the open prairie into the newly founded town. In course of time Vibank has further increased in respect to business activities as well as construction of new homes for retired farmers. The most notable construction in the town was that of the Holy Family Convent of the Ursuline Order in 1923, which houses approximately forty sisters. The sisters are extensively of Russian-German descent and are engaged in teaching.²⁰

At the turn of the century the settlement area east of Vibank was further expanded and resulted in the foundation of the colonies of Odessa and Kendal. The latter colony was again named after the colony in South Russia. The settlers came predominantly from Russia but had settled first in the U.S.A. before they moved to Canada in 1901. In a recent publication by Rev. F. Gerein, D.D., commemorating the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the first settlers and the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Holy Family Parrish, we

19 The name of the town of Vibank has no bearing to the origin of its settlers. The name is derived from the German word "Viehbank" meaning a cattle market place. As the term "Viehbank" without "eh" produces in English, as well as in German, the same sound the two letters were dropped and resulted in the present spelling of "Vibank".

20 Abele, op. cit., p. 22.

have an intensive account of the settlement and history of Odessa.

The first settlers of the Odessa district arrived in 1901. However, the peak of settlement was reached in 1903 and 1904, when about sixty families had taken up homesteads in the area. South of Odessa a small Catholic mission was founded under the name of Blumenfeld. However owing to its location and size the members were assigned to the parishes of Odessa, Sedley and Vibank.

The development of the town of Odessa started only after the completion of the Regina-Brandon railway - as it was with the town of Vibank. In 1911 a new school district was established in the town in addition to the three districts already existing in the area. The present school in Odessa is served by the Ursuline Sisters. The most notable event in the town is the recent completion of the Holy Family Church under the energetic leadership of the present pastor, Rev. F. Gerein, D.D. The name of the district of Odessa has undergone some interesting changes. Until 1907 the district was known as Sibel Plains after the first school in the area. In 1907 it assumed the name of the newly founded Post Office, Magna. In some circles the district was also known as Moser Valley. Finally in 1911 the present name of Odessa was given to the town.²¹

21 Gerein, op. cit., p. 8.

The above described settlement districts, east of Regina, are divided into seven Catholic parishes which are members of the Regina Archdiocese. They are all served by diocesan priests. In these parishes a number of Lutherans from south Russia have established themselves - notably in Kronau, Davin and Vibank.

North-west of Langenburg, the Catholic community of Landshut was founded in the 1880's. The settlers came predominantly from south Russia and Bavaria. In the south of Saskatchewan the colony of Maryland was founded by Catholics from the Banat. However, they were soon joined by Catholics from the south of Russia. The settlers were from the colony of Landau in the Black Sea area. A smaller colony by the name of Landau was founded south of Maryland.

In 1902 the colony of Marienthal was founded close to the American border. The settlers came from Russia, the U.S. and Romania. Further west of Marienthal, homesteads were taken up by Germans, which led to the foundation of Jakobsberg in 1916. Still further west, the colony of Bergfeld was founded by Germans from the Black Sea. A larger settlement, the colony of Claybank, was founded in the south of the province in 1904 by Germans from the Azov Sea.²² Germans from other countries have settled in the area after the war. The settlers of German origin number about six hundred

22 Lehmann, op. cit., pp. 188-192.

persons. Their school is served by Ursaline sisters.

North-west of Regina, the colony of Holdfast was founded between 1904 and 1908. The settlers again came predominantly from the Black Sea area in Russia. Germans from Banat have also settled in the area. The first church was constructed in 1910 for the close to one thousand persons of the colony. Late in 1920-1921 a larger church was built close to the station.

South-east of Saskatoon, two other colonies were founded close to the railway station of Allan. The settlers arrived predominantly from the U.S. and the south of Russia. The farm districts of Allen and Selz have a population of approximately one thousand settlers. Selz is named after a colony in the south of Russia from where the settlers originated. The religious service is received from the Oblate Fathers. The economic development in the two farm districts was extremely favorable in the first years of settlement and it is reflected in the construction of three churches, several schools, and two recreation halls. Here too, the Ursaline sisters served as teachers.

South of the South Saskatchewan River another large settlement area called Happyland was founded by Black Sea Germans. The influx into this area, which is partly dry belt, started in 1908-1909. Part of the settlers had resided in Dobrudscha (Romania) for several years without fully settling

there. Bessarabian Germans have settled near by and founded the community of Krasna. Further colonies were founded in this area by Black Sea and Dobrudscha Germans. These colonies are Prelate, Leader, Lancer, Josephtal, New London, Rosenthal, Rastadt, Richmond, Blumenfeld, Speyer and Liebenthal. The area was generally not as successful as others owing to drought and many moved to British Columbia. Spiritually the settlers are looked after by the Oblate Fathers. Ursaline Sisters teach in the schools. At one time as many as five hundred families lived in this area.²³

In 1910-1912, German Catholics from the area of Odessa in Russia founded the colony of Billimun in the dry belt of Saskatchewan. This colony had an extremely difficult start as it was more than fifty miles away from the nearest railway station.

* * * * *

At the turn of the century the St. Peter's colony, the most solid closed German Catholic community, was founded east of Saskatoon. The colony comprises fifty townships settled by Catholics. There are only a few Lutherans scattered in the cities of the colony. The origin of this larger colony was due to the immigration and colonization policy of the Catholic clergy. When the stream of settlers poured across

23 Lehmann, op. cit., p. 194.

the border to settle in Canada, the Benedictine Fathers²⁴ became aware of a new mission. Their aim was to direct the Catholic settlers into one farm area as a solid block of Catholics to maintain their faith. It was Prior Bruno Doerfler, O.S.B., who set out to seek for new land for the German settlers in 1902. It was the present St. Peter's colony that was selected. More than 9,000 German farmers had settled in this area and were comprised into twenty-six parishes.²⁵ The name of the parish applied to the whole farm district - notably; St. Oswald, St. Gregor, St. Anthony, Engelsfeld, St. Anna, St. George, St. Bernard, St. Joseph, St. John, St. Augustine, St. Scholastica, St. Michael, St. Leo, Lady of Mt. Carmel, St. Bruno, and St. Boniface.²⁶

The settlement started in 1902 by Germans from the U.S., who were generally settlers of some means. Later, Germans from Russia also settled in the area. The "Catholic Settlement Society" was founded under the presidency of Mr. Lange in order to promote colonization into the colony.

²⁴ When Boniface Wimmer, O.S.B., landed in America in September of 1846, he had only a few students and a strong will to transplant the Benedictine Order into the new world. Ten years later the Abbey of St. Vinzenz in Pennsylvania was founded and became so strong that the new Abbey of St. John was founded near St. Cloud on the Mississippi as well as the monastery at Cluny, Illinois. It was the monastery at Cluny, that was transplanted to the St. Peter's colony in Saskatchewan, and undertook the spiritual guidance of the colony.

²⁵ Wagner, Georg and Mai, Richard, op. cit., pp. 270-271.

²⁶ "Rundschau", op. cit., pp. 512-513.

At the same time the German American Land Company was founded which entered into an agreement whereby a block of land amounting to fifty townships was reserved. Other land was bought from the government and in turn sold to the new settlers. By 1906 all free homesteads had been settled.²⁷

After the usual drawbacks of a new settlement, prosperity came to the colony. As in previous settlements, here too, the "scattered" settlement form prevailed. Concentrated settlements were found only around the churches and later in the various towns founded near the railway stations. As everywhere, the railway became the impulse to all economical progress. In this manner the city of Humboldt became the economic center of the colony because of its function as a railway divisional point.

It has a population of 1,899 persons and ranks fifth among the towns of Saskatchewan. An imposing town hall, a new \$15,000 skating-rink, 3 schools, 4 churches, a large hospital, and a courthouse are the outstanding buildings in the community. Seventy-five business units draw trade within a radius of 20 miles.²⁸

Out of the seventy-five business units, eighteen are operated by Germans. This proportion holds true throughout the colony.

Muenster, six miles east of Humboldt, is the ecclesiastical center of the colony. The small monastery of Cluny,

27 Dawson, op. cit., pp. 286-287.

28 Ibid., pp. 294-295.

Illinois was transplanted to Muenster by the Benedictine Order and there they built a Cathedral as well as a College. But, Muenster never fulfilled the expectations of the Order to become the commercial as well as religious center. Humboldt, as mentioned, became the undisputed commercial center.²⁹

The religious guidance of the entire colony was laid upon the Benedictine Order by a papal declaration. The monastery grew with the colony and was elevated to an Abbey in 1911. It was further elevated to an "abbatia nullius" in 1921 and received bishopric rights.³⁰ We have here an example of a German Diocese in Canada and in the Benedictine Fathers a true example of the followers of the Orders of Cisterciensium and Praemonstratensis, who were outstanding in the colonization of Eastern Germany in the 12th and 13th centuries.

* * * * *

The colonization of another large area by German Catholics was started in 1904. This colony, known as St. Joseph's Colony, was located east of Saskatoon comprising seventy-seven townships, but, it was not solid Catholic as was St. Peter's Colony.

Before all the land was settled in St. Peter's colony, Mr. Lange, President of the "Catholic Settlement Society"

²⁹ Dawson, op. cit., p. 295.

³⁰ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 178.

had explored for land for another colony.³¹ This time the Order of the Oblate Fathers became interested in this colonization and the "Catholic Colonization Society" was founded for the purpose of settling the area. The first settlers arrived in 1905. The largest part of the settlers came from the south of Russia and from the Volga area. Many of them had previously settled in the U.S.A.

A large settlement of Germans from the States has been located in the Tramping Lake district. It is expected their numbers will be augmented this fall by a thousand families, and as they have sold their land in the U.S. they come equipped with money, good knowledge of the modern ways of farming and are inclined to be thrifty and industrious.³²

Germans from Germany proper and from the Banat also settled there. The Russian-Germans arrived predominantly in 1908-1910 and settled in the western part of the colony.³³

The economic development in this colony was not as favorable as in St. Peter's. The development of trade centers shows the same trend of change as in St. Peter's colony, that is from church village to commercial railway center. But as none of the main railway lines ran through the colony, the colony has not developed a center like Humboldt. The

31 Dawson, op. cit., p. 287.

32 Annual Report on Immigration of the Department of the Interior, 1905, Part II, Government Printing Bureau, Ottawa, 1906, p. 107.

33 Dawson, op. cit., p. 288.

commercial centers of this colony are Kerrobert, Wilkie, Biggar and Macklin. These centers are all located on the borders of the colony.³⁴

The settlers are spiritually guided by the Oblate Fathers and reside in the following communities; Leipzig, Handel, Revenue, Tramping Lake, Scott, Kerrobert, Salvador, Denzil, Grosswarder, St. Peter, and Macklin. The Sisters of the Notre Dame Order teach in the highschools of Leipzig, Revenue, Tramping Lake, and Macklin. There are some Lutheran communities within St. Joseph's colony and are located in Luseland and Wilkie.³⁵ Since 1930, owing to crop failure, many settlers of the St. Joseph's colony have migrated to British Columbia.

2 Lutheran Settlements

In 1889, the oldest Russian-German Lutheran settlement was founded in Landshut near Langenberg. Lutherans from other countries also settled there simultaneously with the Black Sea Germans. Hoffnungstal was founded by Germans from Bessarabia and Galicia. Beresina was also founded in 1889 by Bessarabian and Wolhynian Germans.

The colonies of Runnymede and Togo were founded in 1904 and 1919 respectively by Volga Germans. These colonies

³⁴ Dawson, op. cit., p. 298.

³⁵ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 184.

are located east of Yorkton and close to the Manitoba border - with a settlement of close to three hundred persons. The settlers of Togo had for some time resided in the U.S. and Winnipeg before finally settling in Togo.

In 1904 the first Germans arrived in Melville from Bessarabia. By World War I this district had been settled by a substantial group of German Lutherans. Wolhynia Germans settled in Lipton in 1907. In 1905 Wolhynia Germans settled near Gansen, Volga Germans in Prairie Rose, and others in Kandahar, south of Quill Lake. The three colonies form one Lutheran parish.³⁶

In 1905, at the same time when the Catholic colonies of Allan and Selz were founded, the Lutheran colony of Eigenheim (Young) was settled by Black Sea Germans.³⁷ The Lutheran colony of Luseland, located in the center of the Catholic community of St. Joseph's colony, began its settlement in 1908 by Lutherans from the U.S. as well as Volga Germans.

North-west of the Mennonite settlement of Rosthern, the first settlement of Silvergrove began in 1904 by settlers who came from Germany proper. However, in 1911-1917, the main settlement was started by Black Sea Germans and by Germans from the Wolhynia.

³⁶ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 210.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 212.

Lutherans have settled and founded a few colonies in the south-east part of the province. Neu-Norka was founded by Volga Germans - which fact is manifested by the colony's name. The settlers began to arrive as early as 1899. Yellow Grass was founded south-east of Regina by Wolhynia Germans. The first settlers arrived in 1900 and immediately before World War I the greatest bulk of immigrants had arrived in the area. The first Lutherans settled in Flowing Wells in 1906 and they came from the Volga area in Russia. Just prior to World War I about thirty families settled in the area and they too were Volga Germans. In 1908-1910 Volga Germans as well as Wolhynia Germans settled east of Herbert and other Volga Germans settled near the railway station of Morse between 1908-1912.³⁸

3 The City of Regina

The Germans in the city of Regina have settled predominantly in the eastern section of the town. The majority of them are Catholics and are members of either St. Mary's parish or the Little Flower parish. Those of Lutheran faith mostly belong to the "Lutherischen Dreieingkeitsgemeinde". Since 1906, the community is a member of the American-Lutheran Church. Others also belong to the "Gnadengemeinde", which is the Missouri Synod. According to the Census of 1941, Regina had 7,428 Germans, of whom 4,830 stated their mother

³⁸ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 217.

tongue as German.³⁹ Half of the 7,428 are Russian-Germans. The number of Germans in the city increases as the farmers retire and settle in the city.

C. The Province of Alberta

1. Catholic Settlements

From the previous section one can see that the Catholics have settled predominantly in the province of Saskatchewan. Only very few colonies of Catholics from Russia were founded in Alberta. The colony of Friedensthal in the Peace River district was settled by Germans from Germany proper and by Black Sea Germans. A number of Catholic colonies were founded in 1908 near Grassy Lake by Black Sea Germans. These colonies never had a German priest and so are at present almost completely assimilated.

The colony of Rosenheim, which is a sister colony or rather a continuation of Saskatchewan's St. Joseph's colony, was settled in 1911. There were many Russian-Germans amongst the settlers. The colony is named after a colony on the Volga River in Russia.

A number of Lutherans and Catholics from the Black Sea area settled in the dry belt area north-east of Medicine Hat prior to 1910. In this area the original Catholic colony

³⁹ Census of Canada, 1941, op. cit., Table 15, pp. 254-255.

of Schuler is to be found. The colony consisted of forty families. In the early years the colony did not have a priest and so it has in course of time been converted to the various religious sects which are predominantly found in the area.

2 Lutheran Settlements

In 1889 a German colony was founded south of Dunmore in the south-east of the province. The settlers moved further north in 1890-1891 due to repeated drought. The Russian-Germans amongst these settlers founded a colony in the Rabbit Hills by name of Heimthal, which was west of the railway station of Nisku. The colony of Lutherort was founded by Wolhynia Germans in 1892-1893 north of Nisku.

Russian-Germans settled west of Wetaskiwin in 1897. These settlers came from the colony of Alt-Schwedendorf in the south of Russia.⁴⁰ Wolhynia Germans settled south-east of Wetaskiwin and founded the colony of Bashaw. In 1909 Russian-Germans from the Black Sea area, previously residing in the U.S., immigrated to the colony of Freudental near Drumheller. The colony is named after the settlement in Russia.

3 The Cities of Edmonton and Calgary

The Germans in Edmonton are predominantly of the Lutheran faith. Religiously they belong to the Missouri Synod

⁴⁰ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 229.

and the majority of them are engaged as laborers. The Census of 1941 lists 4,658 Germans in the city of Edmonton, of whom 2,180 stated their mother tongue as German.⁴¹ As mentioned before, Volga Germans settled in Calgary in 1893 in the section of Bouville. They have founded the Riverside community. The Census of 1941 shows the German population of Calgary to be 3,014, of whom 1,245 gave their mother tongue as German.⁴²

D The Province of British Columbia

The Germans in British Columbia are very few compared to the numbers of them in the prairie provinces. Between the World Wars, many Germans from the prairie provinces moved to British Columbia due to crop failures. They settled notably in the Okanagan Valley - Rutland and Kelowna - and are predominantly of the Catholic faith. Further, Russian-Germans of Lutheran faith have settled in Summerland. However solid settlements as in the prairies, were never founded. Direct immigration to British Columbia before World War I and during the depression was very seldom the case. This has only occurred since World War II. In Vancouver there are at present two Lutheran communities and one Catholic community which have a substantial number of Russian-Germans as members.

⁴¹ Census of Canada, 1941, op. cit., Table 15, p.243.

⁴² Ibid, p. 241.

CHAPTER VII

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The presentation of these aspects in this chapter are not exclusively applicable to Russian-Germans. A distinguishable difference in regard to economic, social, and cultural development between Russian-Germans and other Eastern European Germans cannot always be effected as they were all at one cultural level. They had to undergo similar forces and were faced with the same barriers in the early days of settlement. The only difference that may be pointed out was their origin of country or the dialect spoken. But their common faith and cultural niveau was stronger and brought about a unified community already in the early days. Thus whatever is said is applicable also to other or rather to the entire community, unless special mention is made.

I ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The largest proportion of Russian-German immigrants in Canada were farmers. This profession was generally maintained upon settlement for to gain land was one of the primary causes for their immigration. The majority of the arrivals were poor. The little money they had received for their

property in Russia was mostly consumed by their travelling expenses. The Russian-Germans, who had resided in the U.S. for sometime and migrated into the Canadian Prairies at the turn of the century, possessed large sums of money. In addition they were familiar with the North American farming methods. Their start was thus considerably easier than of those who had come directly from Russia.

The land acquired at a cheap rate by the early settlers was in many cases at a great distance from the railway lines. They settled there because of the fertility of the soil and in the hope of receiving a railway station in the near future. It was the long distance from the railway station that provided the greatest difficulty to the settlers. For days they were on the road to and from the railway station with their supplies which consisted of construction materials, provisions, farm implements, and household goods. Their first necessary farm implements were mostly acquired through credit that was readily provided by the railway companies.

An example that holds true for all pioneering in the prairie provinces is the information of the Russian-German, Mrs. Ullrich, about the beginning of the settlement of Young (Eigenheim):

With how much great hope we left our old homeland and how much disappointment we had to experience.....vast unpopulated areas only bushland.....The majority built huts made of earth, grass, and water. (A method used extensively in the south of Russia

where lumber was not readily available.) Shingles for the roof had to be obtained 60 miles further north. A few men undertook this journey, following the marks of the surveyors as there were no roads yet.¹

The first yields of the farmers were often so low that the farmers had to look for additional income. This additional income was obtained either by working on another farm or by working on the railway section.

To earn a little cash money they cut and hauled hay to Indian Head, Qu'Appelle and even to Regina.....Some of the younger men hired out to farmers who had settled earlier near the main line of the C.P.R. at wages of about seventy-five cents a day.²

The difficulties of the earlier settlers were further complicated by the climatic conditions of the prairie provinces. The prairie blizzards in the winter which often lasted for several days, were unbearable obstacles. Often the little cottage which was half built into the ground was snowed in and had to be dug out by the neighbor. In the summer the extreme hot weather provided equal difficulties, as prairie fires were not a rare event.

To overcome all these obstacles and make an existence possible in the early days, a strong character of immeasurable endurance was demanded by the prairie. The type of people were to demand little in cultural nourishment. It

1 Lehmann, op. cit., p. 249.

2 Gerein, op. cit., p. 8.

was thus the Eastern European, or their ancestors before, who had been well versed in colonization and therefore more readily suited for the Canadian Prairies than the Western European. The higher the cultural standard the greater were his difficulties to adopt the land as his new home. As pointed out it was mostly the land-hungry Eastern European that selected the prairie and has become successful in the course of time.

Justifiably we may attribute to them their share in exploring and cultivating the vast areas of Western Canada. Each settler in his own way by overcoming the obstacles as presented, fulfilled his task as a pioneer. The settlement according to their faith, kinship, and the assistance they gave one another, made the beginning considerably easier - in fact only the early community life, primitive and simple as it was, made it possible to endure conditions.

No matter how strong the desire was to return to their former homes amongst the pioneers, the realization of this dream was seldom carried out. The great distance and the lack of means excluded the desired journey. They became reconciled with their destiny of being pioneers. After about one to two years of settlement they began with the foundation of a church around which the community life was to be centered. Simultaneously with the church, the school found its origin, which received the nature of a "Church school" as the pastor acted as the only teacher. With the completion of these two institutions, the community was fully established.

and a greater sense of security and importance prevailed amongst the settlers.

The primitive conditions of living, however, remained unchanged for several years to come. Only after five to six years of settlement were the settlers abandoning their first accommodations, i.e. the huts, and were constructing their first wooden and more elaborate homes.

The dispensation of their first years was accepted for the hope of a better future. Real prosperity and economic expansion in general came with the completion of the various railway lines. We can safely say that the history of Western Canada is also the history of the prairie farmers in Canada. The crop failure to which the farmers had to submit affected the whole of Western Canada. They were usually caused by the dry summers and early frosts and snow before the harvest was completed. Crop failures were further often caused by the lack of knowledge of the farming methods of North America and the pursuance of European methods of husbandry.

Their efforts were first really rewarded during World War I when the prairie farmer recorded a miraculous yield. This enabled them to defray their debts and improve their farm implements as well as the expansion of their land possessions. Relative prosperity was continued until 1929. During this time the farmers began to speculate with their land - each one was to expand on credit. This phenomena found its end in the

collapse of the stock market in 1929.

The period after World War I, as we have seen, marked the second immigration of Russian-Germans. Homesteads, however, were by that time only available in the north of the prairies where transportation was still inadequate. It was therefore preferred to obtain land in the older colonies mostly on credit. Successive crop failures coupled with the low prices of wheat prevented these people from fulfilling their obligations and as expected they lost their possessions. Later immigrants in the 1930's were never able to obtain land. They started out as farm helpers and as many farmers, they, too, joined the great influx into the cities at the height of the depression where they had to depend on relief. This period also caused an extensive migration to British Columbia where they settled in the Okanagan Valley and other areas. Others sought a better future in the U.S.

In many cases it was only with the assistance of the government and the generous help from other eastern provinces of Canada that the farmers were able to remain on their farms. Although the information obtained by Rev. F. Gerein in his History of Odessa refers only to conditions of the period in Odessa, it may be safely applied to many other areas.

.....other communities especially in Ontario, shipped carloads of vegetables, fruits, fish and numberless bundles of clothes for distribution here. Fortunately, the Governments and railways cooperated for transportation, for the local people could not have paid it..

...Feed for the stock, clothes for the children, food for the family, - everything had to be sought from Government relief officials.³

The coming of World War II, that created greater employment possibilities and raised the prices of farm products, revived prosperity again in the communities. Prosperity continued until 1949 when the prairies again were haunted by successive crop failures. However the extent of these failures are by no means a parallel to previous times. The farmers still consider themselves prosperous and well-to-do citizens. The early years of suffering and deprivation were well rewarded.

The Canadian immigration policy after World War II directed the settlers to the rural districts of Western Canada. The immigrant had to be a farmer by profession and remain on the farm for at least one year before migrating to other places. At present, none of these immigrants have remained on the farm. A survey in the vicinity of Regina where many Russian-Germans had arrived after World War II, has shown that they took permanent residence in the larger cities where they are engaged predominantly in seasonal work. Their beginning in Canada was by far more favorable than that of their relatives who had immigrated before and after World War I. Due to post-war expansion they were able to obtain well-paid jobs. Being accustomed to a well economized household

³ Gerein, op. cit., p. 17.

that is prevalent amongst the Russian-Germans, they were able to save large sums of money that would serve as a down-payment for their own home. The "newcomers" that have settled in Regina, for example, have at present, with the exception of a few single individuals, fully paid for the newly acquired houses or are close to the completion of their payments. It is due to this great opportunity to acquire one's own home within a short period, that the newcomer often does not understand the hardship the early settlers had to encounter.

II RELIGION

The invariable importance of religion in the history of the Russian-Germans has been referred to on previous occasions. As in Russia so in Canada, religion received the greatest consideration by the immigrants in selecting their place of settlement. In Canada, too, the church remained the only organization of the Russian-Germans in the early years.

Even prior to the turn of the century, the importance of religion was recognized by Canadian immigration authorities, for a list of arriving immigrants classified by their religious beliefs and their destinations was furnished to the head of any religious denomination if the same was requested.⁴ Such church officials were thus enabled to notify church authorities in different localities of the arrival of such

⁴ See Chapter V for direct quotation, supra.

immigrants. Indeed not long after the arrival of a group of German immigrants, church officials, usually German-speaking, became frequent visitors. Religious services were held in primitive conditions in the home of one of the settlers. The appointment of a permanent pastor to a farm district after about one to two years of settlement resulted in the foundation of a parish as well as the construction of a church building. Due to the homestead system the existence of a solid populated settlement was absent. As a consequence, the church was to be located in the middle of the district, i.e. often in the middle of the open prairie. When possible, the nearest railway station was preferred. Later at the turn of the century, which marked the foundation of numerous prairie towns,⁵ the church was moved into town.⁶

With the foundation of a parish, the establishment of a community was completed for the church choir and church school were simultaneously inaugurated. As the pastors were German, the service, the church administration and school were all maintained in German. Thus, the pastors became, as they did in Russia, the strongholds in preserving the German language. The Fathers of the Benedictine and Oblate Orders were still born in Germany as were the Pastors of the Lutheran groups; the American Lutheran Church and the Manitoba Synod.

⁵ See Chapter VI for foundation of the prairie town, supra.

⁶ Very few of these old churches are still in use. They were replaced by larger and more elaborate churches.

Consequently, both Lutherans and Catholics brought religion to their communities in the German tongue. This practice prevailed until World War I. In communities which were not attended by German-speaking pastors, a more rapid assimilation was noticeable. Such was the case with the settlement of Grassy Lake in southern Alberta.

A Roman Catholics

The spiritual guidance and organization of the Catholic Germans in the prairies was vigorously carried out by the Order of the Oblate and Benedictine Fathers, as well as the numerous diocesan priests. The diocesan priests have at present a substantial number of Russian-German descendants in their ranks. Other religious as well as school services were rendered notably by the Ursuline Sisters and the Sisters of the "Armen Schulschwester".

A unified organization of the German Catholics was maintained in the "Volksverein fuer die deutsch-canadischen Katholiken", a society which was founded in 1909 in the St. Joseph's Church in Winnipeg. The "Volksverein..." had spread to the entire prairies and had established chapters in all the larger Catholic communities. The membership of the "Volksverein..." had reached a number of 5,000 persons prior to World War II. The society's original purpose was to promote cultural aspects in the community. Politically the "Volksverein,.." favored the Liberal party, as the Catholics

traditionally and still do. In the 1920's, however, it was attempted to exert political influence upon the provincial governments - notably in respect to the maintenance of the German tongue in schools.

In the 1930's the "Volksverein..." again resumed the nature of a cultural organization, which resulted in the famous annual gatherings known as "Katholikentagen". The nature of these gatherings manifested itself in an article of a German newspaper published in Germany, the "Kölnische Volkszeitung" of November 15th, 1929. In it the "Volksverein..." was accused of not sufficiently emphasizing the German cause:

The general "Catholic Days" in Regina missed the deeper emphasis on the cause of the German Catholics. A few points were mentioned only vaguely in the debates. ...no real desire for German subjects in schools were demanded. The meeting of the Christian School Trustees avoided the use of the German language and continued their discussion primarily in the English tongue.⁷

The "Volksverein..." was also very active in matters of immigration under the leadership of R. Kierdorf, O.M.I. In 1928, between the 27th and 29th of June, there was a general meeting of the "Volksverein..." under the presidency of F. J. Hauser in connection with the celebration of the 25th Jubilee of the foundation of the St. Peter's Colony. At this meeting it was decided that a special effort be made to assist the immigration of Russian-Germans to Canada, due to the

⁷ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 282.

conditions in Russia which became continually worse.⁸ Since the conditions were such as they were, no notable results of this effort were obtained. Matters of immigration were carried out by the Catholic Immigration Aid Society after World War II.

The coming of World War II paralyzed the activities of the "Volksverein...". The society was completely dissolved as were many other German organizations.⁹ After World War II, the "Volksverein..." was not revived nor are there any indications that such will occur in the future. The active members and leaders of the pre-war group are scattered and the younger generation are not interested in any segregated organization. The functions of the "Volksverein..." are continued in organizations such as the Holy Name Society, the Catholic Men's Club, and the Catholic Youth Organization, none of which are segregated organizations.

Due to the substantial number of German Catholics in the Province of Saskatchewan and the great number of Canadian-born German priests, it has been the constant desire of the older immigrants to see one of the German priests appointed to a higher Catholic clergy position such as Bishop. The realization of this desire was recently fulfilled when Bishop Klein, a descendant of a Russian-German Black Sea family, was

8 "Rundschau", op. cit., pp. 512-513.

9 See section on societies, infra.

appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Saskatoon. The older generation looked upon this event with sentiment and satisfaction, for in this appointment they saw the recognition of their equality with the Anglo-Canadian group.

A request for information in regard to official German parishes in the Catholic Dioceses of the prairie provinces has shown that there are no such parishes. The Catholic Church discourages national parishes (Canon 216) and prefers that they be territorial. However, bilingualism is still the most common practice in parishes where the German population is in the majority. This holds true especially in the rural districts of the prairies.¹⁰

B Lutherans

Although the Lutheran Church of Canada found its origin in Germany there are, at present, no ties with that country. Its membership, too, is not limited only to that of German nationals but also includes a substantial number of Scandinavians. We thus may no longer consider the Lutheran Church of Canada the "German National Church" as it is often called. The Lutheran Church's present relation with Germany is only in the use of the German Lutheran Bible.

The first German Lutheran community in Western Canada was founded in the "Evangelisch-lutherische Dreieinig-

¹⁰ See section on press for Catholic papers, infra.

keitskirche" in 1889 by Pastor H. C. Schmieder, who had arrived from Germany expressly for this purpose. Several other pastors followed him and in 1897 the "Evangelisch-Lutherische Synode" of Manitoba and of other provinces was founded. Later the Synods of Missouri and Ohio, separately carried out extensive missionary work in Western Canada. Among the pastors were many still born in Germany, which resulted in the presentation of the service in German. Later, pastors born in the U.S. or Canada have received their training in American Seminaries and prefer the English language in presenting their service.¹¹

The above three mentioned Synods comprise all the German Lutherans in Western Canada. Each of the Synods has its own college; the Manitoba Synod has a College in Saskatoon, Sask.; the Ohio Synod has a College in Regina, Sask.; and the Missouri Synod has a College in Edmonton, Alberta. The Manitoba Synod also has a Theological Seminary affiliated with its College. The pastors of the Ohio and Missouri Synods receive their theological training in the Seminaries in the U.S. Each of the Synods also has its own youth organization as well as a synodal church paper. Examples of the paper are the "Synodalboten" and the "Canadisch-Lutherische Kirchenblatt".¹² Due to the existence of three Synods, a certain

¹¹ Ruccius, op. cit., pp. 648-649.

¹² See section on press for Lutheran papers, infra.

rivalry amongst them is unavoidable. But, Pastor M. Ruccius sees no harm in this, for in this manner even the most distant Lutherans are included in Lutheran worship.¹³

The Lutheran Immigration Aid Society was very active in matters of immigration after World War I and World War II. Particularly active in this organization, was Director Harms of the Lutheran College in Saskatoon.¹⁴

* * * * *

While the earlier German pastors, both Lutheran and Catholic, were the preservers of the German tongue and German habits, it is the present younger generation of pastors that were born in Canada and received their training in the English tongue, that are the greatest link for assimilation. Facing reality, i.e. that the younger generation of German descent no longer speak the German tongue, the pastors themselves prefer the usage of the English tongue. Church choirs that at one time exclusively sang in German, have gradually adopted the English hymn. It is here that the pastor often meets with disagreement from the older German generation who were accustomed to the German hymn. But it is the insight of the pastor and his recognition of the fact that the community should

¹³ Ruccius, op. cit., pp. 647-649.

¹⁴ "Russlanddeutsche Bauern auf der Wanderung", op. cit., Jahrg. 13, No. 9, pp. 292-294, and Jahrg. 13, No. 23, pp. 810-811.

become fully Canadian, that makes him the undisputed leader of the community. As such, he sets the standards and directs his parishoners toward becoming fully Canadian.

III EDUCATION

According to the British North American Act, education fell under the jurisdiction of the provinces. To present a complete treatment of the educational development of every province in Western Canada, would lead us far from our present purpose. Recorded below, are only the forces that had an immediate bearing on the Germans and consequently on the Russian-Germans.

The education of the children of the Russian-German immigrants before the turn of the century in the prairies was carried out by the local pastors or by other individuals with some advanced education. In the Manitoba School Act of 1897, we read:

.....where ten of the pupils speak the French language (or any language other than English) as their native language, the teaching of such pupils shall be conducted in French (or such other language.....).¹⁵

This clause made the existence of the bilingual school possible until 1916 when the bilingual system was abolished. Many objections were raised by governmental officials in regard to

¹⁵ Sissons, G. B., Bi-Lingual Schools in Canada, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., Toronto, 1917, pp. 117-118.

the lack of properly trained teachers that were able to teach under the bilingual system. The German Lutherans and especially the Mennonites made extensive use of this system as long as it existed. The abolishment of the bilingual system during World War I caused considerable dissatisfaction particularly amongst the Mennonites as the German tongue is inseparable from and the only spoken medium for their religion.

Contrary to Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta never adopted the bilingual system. The two provinces had sufficient time to learn the defect that can be caused by the bilingual school system. Instead the two provinces permitted separate schools by law. However, the Ministry reserved the right to regulate the training and examination of the teachers of such separate institutions. Text books were also authorized by the Provincial Departments of Education. Religious instructions were confined to the last half hour of the day. A provision for private and parochial schools was also made in the two provinces. Both German Lutherans and Catholics made use of this opportunity. From amongst the Lutherans, the Missouri Synod was most active in founding private country schools. In this manner, the German schools of Stony Plain, Edmonton, and Wetaskiwin were founded. These schools, too, had to submit to an annual inspection by a regular school inspector and prove that its standards were equal to those of the public schools.

As a matter of fact many German communities established private schools rather than

public schools. Thus they were able to teach German as much as they liked in their schools and otherwise escape irksome regulations.¹⁶

The foundation of private schools had its limitations in that financially the institutions had to be supported from private sources, i.e. the parents of the pupils. At the same time, the parents were not exempt from the usual school tax. As a result of this situation, private schools were only possible where there was a solid population of the same ethnic group. This was the case in the St. Peter's colony in Saskatchewan. The bilingual schools in Manitoba were gradually dissolved as were the private schools in Alberta and Saskatchewan, leaving only a few exceptions.¹⁷

The importance of education as a medium for assimilation of the non-Anglo-Canadian group was pointed out as early as World War I by several educational authorities. Bilingual and private schools in which the mother tongue was emphasized was a direct barrier to the future assimilation of this particular group into Canadian life.

We must begin with the community and because the non-English settler is bound by customs and habits of the old country life, we must start our work with the children.¹⁸

16 Sissons, op. cit., p. 164.

17 Lehmann, op. cit., p. 344.

18 England, op. cit., p. 170.

After World War I, the public schools became the regular schools in the German populated districts. The original half hour of religious instruction in the mother tongue was finally abolished in Saskatchewan in 1929. The German Catholic newspaper "Der Katholik" of 1929, records that the Saskatchewan Provincial Government passed a law whereby religious instructions were to be taught only in the English language. The occasion for the enactment of this law was apparently due to the inquiry of a German school district as to whether religious instructions may be presented in the German tongue. During the time of the Liberal Government in Saskatchewan, matters of language usage for religious presentation remained untouched as religious instruction was not considered a part of the school curriculum. The Conservative Government which prohibited the use of the German tongue, based its authority on Paragraph 178 of the School Act which stated that English, with the exception of French, should be the only language of instruction. The Conservative Government interpreted the School Act to include religious instruction as part of the school curriculum. The "Volksverein..." was outraged and made a general appeal to all Germans to combat this arbitrary interpretation of the law.¹⁹

With the exception of the above mentioned case, English as the language of presentation in schools was peacefully

¹⁹ "Auslanddeutschtum", Der Auslanddeutsche, Jahrg. 13, No. 3, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1930, pp. 88-89.

accepted in the German districts. The parents themselves recognized the importance of the language of their adopted country and its usefulness in the future of their children as Canadians. With the adoption of English, the mother tongue became neglected. German, as spoken by the Russian-Germans, was a dialect which had not progressed with the times. Having been educated in English, the generation born in Canada no doubt recognized the limitations of their mother tongue. Thus they have become reluctant to speak the same. It is not surprising to hear so many say, "Yes, I speak German but it is what I have learned from my parents - a dialect", when asked whether they speak German. As the dialect was abandoned and English adopted, the younger generation assumed a new culture which has led to their absorption into Canadian life. After a touring priest noted some twenty years ago that in St. Peter's colony, German culture and language were disappearing, Abbot Gertken of Muenster, Saskatchewan replied, "It is natural. It must come, what of it."²⁰

The great possibility for higher education was by no means ignored. In all walks of life today, we find the Canadian-born descendants of Russian-German immigrants. The statistics in Table VII, although limited to the district of Odessa, are typical for many other Russian-German settlements, and do not differ from any other ethnic group in Canada.

20 Dawson, op. cit., p. 331.

TABLE VII

ODESSA VILLAGE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Taken from Gerein, Frank, History of Odessa, 1901-1954, Western Printers Association Ltd., Regina, Saskatchewan, 1954, Appendix III, p. 66.

YEAR	GRADES				
	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
1941.....	3	9	7	3	6
1942.....	7	4	8	8	5
1943.....	4	6	4	8	4
1944.....	7	3	5	4	5
1945.....	3	7	4	4	2
1946.....	4	3	4	5	2
1947.....	7	7	2	7	4
1948.....	9	7	7	3	3
1949.....	11	14	6	6	1
1950.....	3	8	13	7	4
1951.....	5	5	6	5	5
1952.....	4	7	5	4	5
1953.....	9	3	5	4	3
1954.....	11	8	2	2	2

GRADUATES FROM ODESSA SCHOOLS

Priests.....	4
Deacons.....	2
Sisters.....	9
Nurses.....	6
Student Nurses.....	3
University Degrees.....	12
Teachers.....	23

IV PRESS AND LITERARY PUBLICATIONS

Soon after the arrival of the first German settlers in Western Canada, the news-weekly "Der Nordwestern" was founded in Winnipeg in 1889. The paper also published a yearly Calendar. Before the publication of the German newspaper "Der Courier", the "Der Nordwestern" was considered the leading paper in Western Canada. It was subscribed to by both Lutherans and Catholics although it had a Lutheran flavoring. The number of its present subscribers is about 9,000.

In 1907, the German news-weekly "Der Courier" was founded in Regina, Saskatchewan. For a short duration during World War I, the weekly was issued in English. Under the energetic editorship of B. Bott, the paper gradually assumed the leading position amongst the German papers in Western Canada. A position which it still maintains. Under B. Bott, the "Der Courier" was editorially Roman Catholic. This is understandable as Bott was also editor of the Catholic paper "Der Katholik" from 1924 to 1931. The subscription list for "Der Courier" both past and present is as follows: 1928 - 9,500; 1937 - 12,000; and 1954 - 14,600. The number of subscribers has increased in recent years due to the new influx of German immigrants. As the "Der Nordwestern", the "Der Courier" is also subscribed to by both Lutherans and Catholics.

Other religiously independent newspapers were founded before World War I; "Der Deutsch-Canadier" in Calgary, Alberta

and the "Alberta Herold" in Edmonton. Due to the lack of finances, the publication of the two papers was discontinued before the outbreak of World War I. The publication of the "Alberta Herold" was resumed after World War I, however it was again unable to subsist and amalgamated with the "Der Courier".²¹

The "College Freund" was notable amongst the religious papers and was published by the Manitoba Synod Seminary in Saskatoon since 1903. It has been absorbed by the "Synodalboten" since 1923.²² The Missouri Synod has published the following since the 1920's; the "Canadisch-Lutherischen Kirchenblatt", "Unsere Kirche", and the "Der Lutherische Missionar" which was later issued as the "Der Lutherische Herold".

An exclusive Catholic paper was the "Westkanada" which was founded in 1907 and which ceased publication with the coming of World War I. The paper was considered the organ of the Order of the Oblate Fathers (OMI). Since then, the Oblate Fathers publish the "Der Marienbote" in Battleford, Saskatchewan. Its present subscribers number 1,700. According to the estimate of the editor, Bernhard von Fischbach, O.M.I., there are about 1,300 Russian-Germans on the subscription list. The "Der Katholik" which existed from 1924 to

²¹ Lehmann, op. cit., p. 332.

²² Kloss, Heinz, "Materialen zur Geschichte der Deutsch-Kanadischen Presse", Der Auslanddeutsche, Jahrg. 11, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1928, pp. 382-384.

1931 had as many as 3,200 subscribers. Another notable Catholic paper was the "St. Petersbote" published by the Order of the Benedictine Fathers (OSB), of Muenster, Saskatchewan. The first paper was published February 11th, 1904. The paper was first printed in Winnipeg, later in Muenster. Between 1918 and 1919 the paper was issued in English. In 1923 a parallel to the "St. Petersbote" the "St. Peter Messenger" appeared. Later it was changed to the "Prairie Messenger".²³ At present, only the "Prairie Messenger" is published in English.

Numberous other German papers started publication but were unable to exist for a long period of time as subscriptions were very low. The present existing German papers in Canada are exclusively read by the older generation - or recent immigrants who are not well versed in the English tongue. Although some of these papers are on a relatively high editorial level, they are weeklies and thus bring belated news.

* * * * *

Almost nothing has been published in the literary field by the entire Russian-German Lutheran and Catholic group in Canada. Their publications have been restricted to a few articles that have appeared in the "Der Courier" and the "Der Northwestern". Other publications have been historical sketches of individual colonies. The most recent and notable has

23 Kloss, op. cit., p. 384.

been that of a Russian-German descendant, Rev. Frank Gerein, D.D., entitled History of Odessa. The booklet contains a detailed description of the colony of Odessa, Saskatchewan which was founded by Russian-Germans. A. F. Wanner, a Black Sea German, published several articles and two pamphlets entitled Untergehendes Volk and Volk auf dem Wege. Both pamphlets contain a short historical review of Russian-German colonies in the Black Sea area as well as a few short stories, the settings of which are the German colonies in Russia. Aus Deutschen Kolonien im Kutschurganer Gebiet is a notable publication of Johannes Brendel. It contains a detailed description of life in the Kutchurgan German settlement and a list of the original settlers. His second work is a collection of Russian-German folksongs in the U.S.A. and Canada.

V. GERMAN SOCIETIES IN WESTERN CANADA

The first German organization in Western Canada was founded as early as 1884. The "Deutscher Vereinigung" was organized in Winnipeg for the purpose of assisting and advising newly-arrived immigrants.²⁴ Later, the "Bund Deutscher Vereine" was organized which incorporated several small organizations in Manitoba. At the turn of the century, the "Edelweiss" Society was founded in Edmonton and later the "Bund der Deutschen in Alberta". At the same time, the "Deutsch

²⁴ Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture, 1885, op. cit., p. 44.

Kanadischer Provincial Verband" was founded in Saskatchewan.²⁵ Numerous other local organizations were founded, however these predominantly represented the German elements from Germany proper. The church remained the only form of organization amongst the Russian-Germans as it had in Russia. Only after World War I, when the activities of the German societies reached their peak, did the Russian-Germans begin to be active in the same.

During World War I the organizations ceased their activities. After World War I, the organizations were again revived. The German periodical "Der Auslandsdeutsche" of 1927, reported that the "Deutsch-Kanadischer National Verband" was founded in Alberta. In Edmonton, the Canadians of German origin were united, irregardless of religious and political views, for the purpose of acting amongst the German elements and promoting participation in cultural and political life. It also undertook to urge all Germans who were qualified, to apply for their citizenship. It promoted the German tongue amongst the younger generation. In 1927, the Edmonton chapter of the "Deutsch-Kanadischer...." had 2,550 members.²⁶

In other provinces, a revival similar to that of Alberta took place after World War I. The "Deutsch-Kanadischer

25 Lehmann, op. cit., p. 293.

26 "Auslandsdeutschtum", Der Auslandsdeutsche, Jahrg. 10, No. 12, Deutsches Ausland Institut, Stuttgart, 1927, p. 428.

Bund" of Manitoba was founded and included several smaller organizations such as the "Deutsche Sprachvereinigung", "St. Josephs Verein" and the "Deutscher Hilfsverein". In Saskatchewan, the "Deutsch-Kanadischer Verband" of Saskatchewan was revived in 1928 in addition to the "Volksverein der deutsch-Kanadischen Katholiken". The Province of British Columbia also participated in the foundation of German clubs after World War I. The "Alpen Verein" has survived up to the present time. Although there was a chapter of the NSDAP in British Columbia, the remainder of the German organizations strictly adhered to their cultural and recreational purposes.

A unified organization of all the Germans in Canada was never achieved. The organizations were limited to the individual provinces. The activities were climaxed in every province by a yearly festival which was usually held in the capital of the province. The programs of such festivals, known as the "Deutsche Tage", consisted of various contests in singing and folk-dancing in their native dress.

With the onset of World War II, all German cultural activities and German organizations ceased to function. A revival of the organizations is not noticeable, although there are smaller local groups in Vancouver, Regina, and Winnipeg. These groups are concerned purely with recreation and sports activities and consist mainly of the recently arrived German immigrants, who are the most active members.

Unified political influence was never exercised by the German Lutherans and Catholics in Western Canada. The number of representatives in provincial parliaments is very low in proportion to the total number of Germans in Western Canada.²⁷ The relatively low educational standard of the German immigrant from Eastern Europe, the language difficulties and their conservative nature, have kept them away from any notable political activities. They have not even shown participation in local administration. The Russian-Germans have been especially reluctant in this respect. However, in a few cases where a solid population of Russian-Germans has been present, they have succeeded in sending their representative to the provincial parliament - for example, Anton Huck, who was M.L.A. for South Qu'Appelle in Saskatchewan.

In general, the Germans in Western Canada and for that matter the Russian-Germans have favored the Liberal Party federally. Recent inquiries in Alberta and Saskatchewan however, have shown that there is a tendency to vote for the present provincial governments.

²⁷ There have been several persons of influence, the most outstanding being Lieut. Gov. G. Uhrich and several provincial representatives. These people, however, have been German and not Russian-German.

CHAPTER VIII

ADJUSTMENT AND ASSIMILATION IN CANADA

It will be the theme in this concluding chapter to establish to what extent the Russian-German immigrants and their descendants have become adjusted to and assimilated in the Canadian way of life. Some twenty-five years ago, Robert England stated:

In the sense in which it is applied by many, there is no such thing as assimilation. If it be taken to mean sufficient similarity of mental outlook to make cooperation feasible, that is about all we can do. We can never make a German an Anglo-Saxon any more than we can make an Englishman Irish.¹

As true as this statement may be, it is also true that it is not the object of Canadian policy to make Anglo-Saxons of the immigrants. It is the object to make them and their children Canadians. Otherwise, who then would be called Canadian?

We have noted that the average Russian-Germans were a rural people, full of enormous working initiative. Their spiritual life was exhausted in religion. Religious activities were brisk. Their literature consisted of the Bible, Calendars and Hymnbooks. Their periodicals and papers were

¹ England, op. cit., p. 203.

devoted to religious purposes. The Church was the only form of organization; the clergy was their leader. Education was on a low niveau. There were scarcely any well educated people among them, thus there was no spiritual contact with their motherland, nor any deeper knowledge of its culture.² Yet in essence they were Germans in as much as they had preserved their language and fostered a culture of their own. As such they lived in Russia and continued to do so after their arrival in Canada.

In Canada, we have further witnessed that with economic success the formation of a social strata had started, which manifested itself in the formation of numerous prairie towns. The influx into bigger cities of those who had accumulated a certain amount of wealth and of those who had failed as farmers, was not a rare occurrence. With this influx and with the Russian-German immigrants who had remained in the city after their arrival in Canada, the nucleus of a Russian-German city group was established. In this manner, the Russian-Germans came to live side by side with full Canadians and the influence of the latter was soon apparent. The cultural value of the surrounding people and their language was learned and borrowed. As expected this process of borrowing proceeded with greater rapidity in the cities than it did in the scattered prairie settlements. In spite of this influence

2 Kuhn, op. cit., pp. 381-383.

that raised the general cultural standard of the adult Russian-German immigrant, he nevertheless only became adjusted to the Canadian way of life. He still has preserved many of his old habits and the dialect still serve him as his main language. A comparison of the newly arrived Russian-German immigrants with those of the pre-war era, reflect clearly the purely Canadian outlook of the latter. It is to this latter group to whom we may apply the above quotation by Robert England in respect to assimilation.

But it is the children of those, who had at one time exhausted their spiritual energy exclusively in religious activities, that have turned to worldly cultural aspects. Religious pamphlets become replaced by political and cultural reading. Whether in the city or out in the prairie, education and culture became elevated in the course of time. They drew rapidly from Canadian culture. The attendance of higher educational institutions by descendants of Russian-Germans is not a rare occurrence any longer. The standard demanded by those that have been born and educated in Canada does not differ in any respect from any other Canadian's. It is to these Russian-German descendants that we may safely say that they have been fully integrated and assimilated into the Canadian way of life.

A comparison of the Russian-German group in Canada to their period in Russia, exhibits that already the second

generation in Canada has with extreme rapidity undergone the process of assimilation. In Russia, where the group resided for over one hundred years, they faced assimilation only during the period of the Soviet regime. The settlements in Russia were self-contained and on the whole solidly populated by their own group, thus a preservation of habits and language was more favorable than in Canada. In Canada, the existence of scattered settlements and its greater contact with the surrounding population made a preservation of their national characteristics less possible.

However, the deeper forces of assimilation in Canada were the lack of cultural leaders of the group and the lack of national feeling especially amongst the younger generation. Their forefathers had left Germany for Russia some one hundred years ago - this even prior to their migration into Canada. Very little had been preserved that was German and that was handed down from generation to generation. A deeper knowledge of German culture was never apparent among the generation born in Canada. These socially elevated Russian-German descendants have even consciously, as pointed out in the previous chapter, abandoned their mother tongue, for it was known to them only in a dialectic form. They never felt as Germans and they had little in common with Germany. Their participation in World War II was done so without any sentiments. The success of their fathers in their newly adopted country caused an unconscious affirmation for Canada amongst

the younger generation.

Finally, this rapid and peaceful assimilation is expressed in the attitude of the Russian-Germans themselves. Its essence is expressed in the simple yet true and vitally important statement formulated by Pfeffer:

In the loss of their national characteristics, they do not see an adjustment to a foreign nation, only a stripping off of old habits of the 'old world'. They believe in doing the same as the other nationals i.e. to create out of so many national groups a real new nation. They believe in forming a new type, such as Americans, Canadians, Australians, etc. For the sake of their children's future, they became full citizens in their new homeland. Thus they are willing, with heaven and the new earth, to adopt the language of their new homeland, and forsake habits and customs that were once so dear.³

³ Pfeffer, Karl Heinz, "Deutsche Volksgruppe und Angelsächsische Buergerliche Gesellschaft", Auslanddeutsche Volksforschung, Jahrg. 1937, Bd. 1, Ferdinand Enke Verlag, Stuttgart, 1937, p. 66.

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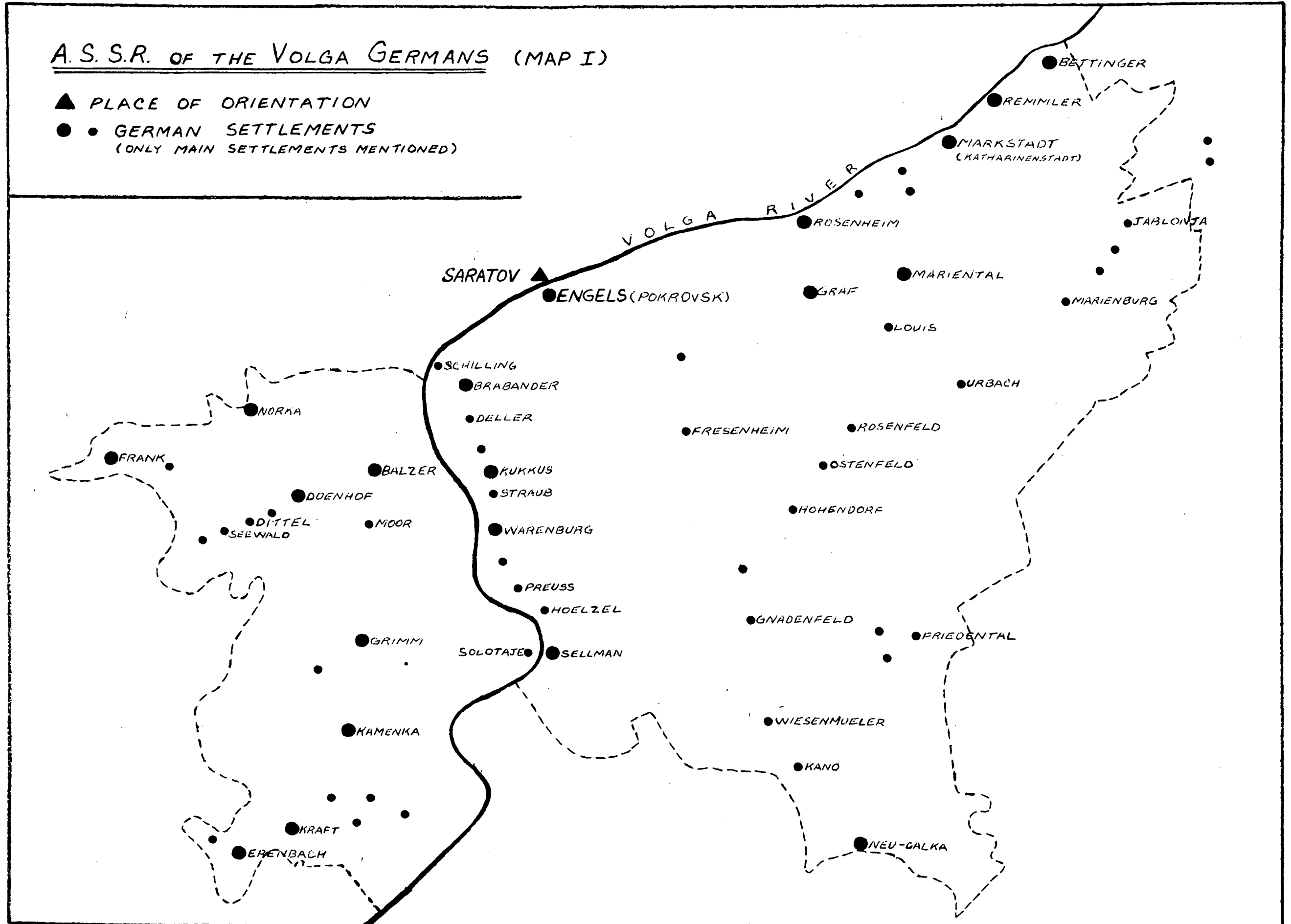
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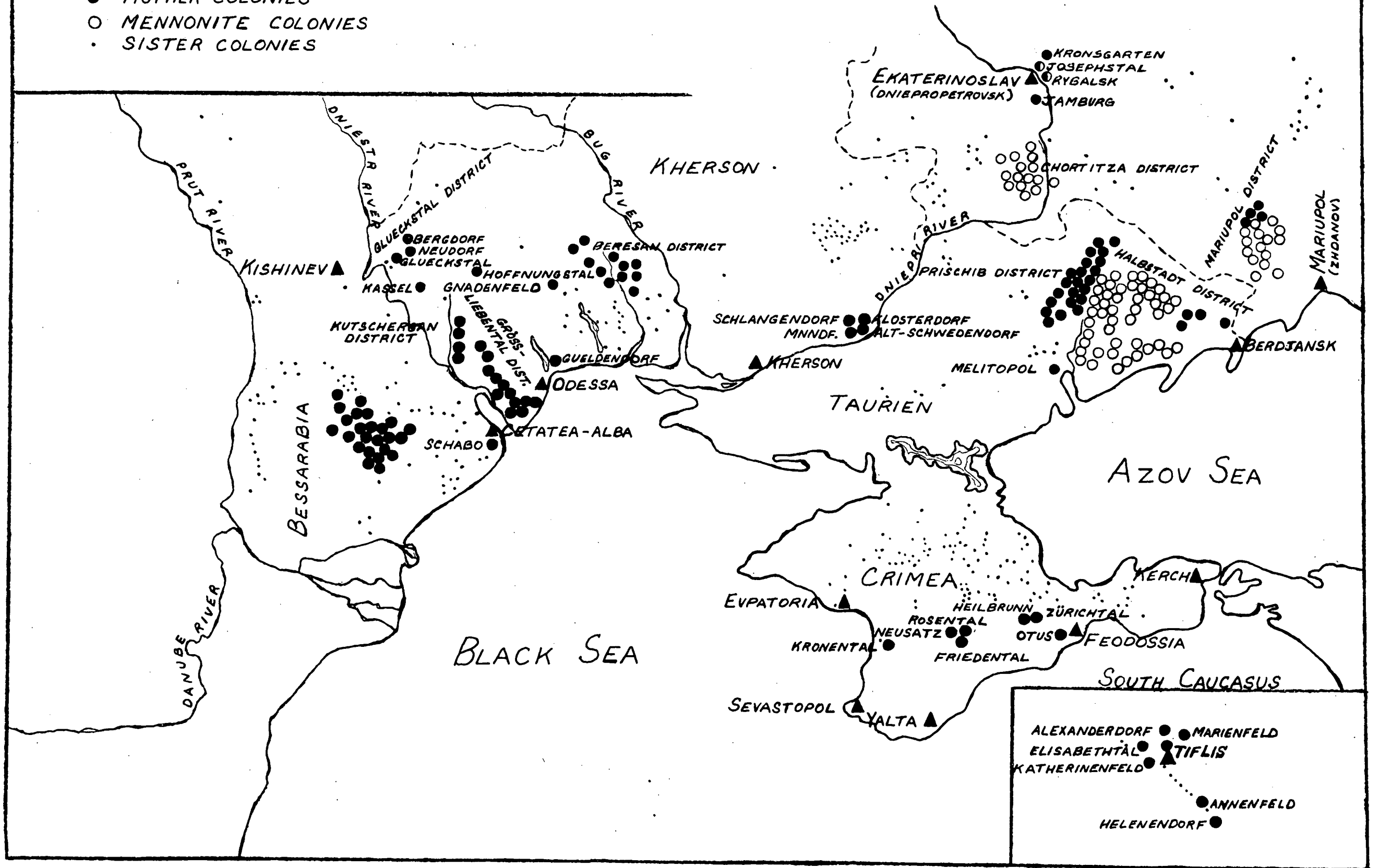
A. S. S. R. OF THE VOLGA GERMANS (MAP I)

- ▲ PLACE OF ORIENTATION
- ● GERMAN SETTLEMENTS
(ONLY MAIN SETTLEMENTS MENTIONED)



COLONIES IN THE BLACK SEA AREA (MAP II)

- ▲ PLACES OF ORIENTATION
- MOTHER COLONIES
- MENNONITE COLONIES
- SISTER COLONIES



(MAP III) RUSS.-GERMAN COLONIES IN WEST. CANADA

- ▲ PLACES OF ORIENTATION
- CATHOLIC COLONIES
- LUTHERAN COLONIES
- ◻ REFORMED COLONY

