

GERMAN COLONISTS FROM BESSARABIA IN RUSSIAN HISTORICAL LITERATURE OF THE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

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Abstract. *The article analyses the Russian historiographical heritage of German settlers in Bessarabia in the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, the least researched period in Russian history. The historical Bessarabia territory is currently part of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Despite using the same documents, the studies on the Germans of Bessarabia reach different conclusions because they depended on the political conjuncture in which the papers were written. Russian authors of the 19th - the first decades of the 20th centuries viewed German settlers' ethnic, confessional and agricultural development in Bessarabia from different angles, often guided by their subjective impressions. The researchers covering this period relied exclusively on the recollections of contemporaries of German ancestors who had been living in Bessarabia since the beginning of the 19th century. Often, the authors used unverified propaganda information. In this paper, printed sources from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were used to create a coherent image of the German population in Bessarabia and reflect the attitudes of Russian scientists and authorities regarding this ethnical group of immigrants who endured great hardship.*

Keywords: *Germans, historiography, Bessarabia, population, authorities, migration.*

Rezumat. *Coloniștii germani din Basarabia în lucrările de istorie rusești din secolul al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX. Articolul analizează patrimoniul istoriografic de limbă rusă privitor la coloniștii germani din Basarabia în secolul al XIX-lea și primele decenii ale secolului al XX-lea, în perioada cel mai slab cercetată din istoria Rusiei. În prezent, teritoriul Basarabiei istorice face parte din Republica Moldova și Ucraina. În ciuda faptului că folosesc aceleași izvoare, studiile privind germanii din Basarabia ajung la concluzii diferite, deoarece au depins de conjunctura politică în care s-au redactat lucrările. Autorii*

ruși din secolul al XIX-lea și din primele decenii ale secolului XX au privit evoluția etnică, confesională și agrară a coloniștilor germani din Basarabia din unghiuri diferite, ghidându-se adesea de impresiile lor subiective. Cercetătorii acestei perioade s-au bazat exclusiv pe memoriile contemporanilor strămoșilor germani care s-au așezat în Basarabia încă de la începutul secolului al XIX-lea. Adeseori, autorii au folosit informații de propagandă neverificate. În studiul de față, sursele tipărite din secolul al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX au fost folosite pentru a schița o imagine coerentă a populației germane din Basarabia, precum și pentru a reflecta atitudinile oamenilor de știință și ale autorităților ruse față de acest grup etnic de imigranți care a avut de îndurat mari greutăți.

INTRODUCTION

Bessarabia was, in the 19th century, a gateway to the Balkans. It was evident when this territory became a space of confrontation between empires. The region's peculiarity is that all life activities closely interact between the autochthonous population and immigrants. One of the understudied ethnic groups was the German colonists. They arrived in Bessarabia in the 19th century and nearly vanished entirely because of a decision made by the Stalinist administration in 1940. German colonists represented a different governmental initiative for recovering vacant areas, and a small portion of the Swiss and French joined them. They were also called "Warsaw settlers", although there were very few Poles among them. They left Poland and went to Bessarabia. By the mid-nineteenth century, they were around 26 thousand people.¹ They all lived mainly in the region's south in the Akkerman uyezd². By the beginning of the 20th century, the German population had already been living in 75 villages in Bessarabia³. Many

¹ *Spiski naseennyh mest Rossijskoj imperii, sostavlennye i izdavaemye central'nyh statisticheskim komitetom ministerstva vnutrennih del. III Bessarabskoj oblast'* [Lists of the Russian Empire localities, compiled and published by the Central Statistical Committee of the Ministry of the Interior. III Bessarabia region], Sankt-Peterburg, 1861, p. XXIV.

² Pompei N. Batyushkov, *Bessarabiya. Istoricheskoe opisanie* [Bessarabia. Historical description], Sankt-Peterburg, 1892, s. 144; I. F. Lagorio, *Statisticheskie svedeniya o bessarabskih nemetskih koloniyah v 1861-1862 gg.* [Statistical information about the Bessarabian German colonies in 1861-1862], in "Zapiski Bessarabskogo oblastnogo statisticheskogo komiteta", t. I, Kishinev, 1864, p. 73.

³ Valentin S. Zelenchuk, *Naselenie Bessarabii i Podnestrov'ya v XIX v. (Etnicheskie i social'no-demograficheskie processy)* [The Population of the Bessarabia and Transnistria in the 19th century (Ethnic and Social-Demographical processes)], Kishinev, 1979, p. 212.

German colonies created subsidiary settlements to preserve land capital.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

The article focuses on German migration to Bessarabia and their impact and development of the Bessarabian land. During the interwar period, the Romanian sociologist Anton Golopenția, a Romanian sociologist, was interested in the German population of Bessarabia. He dedicated his research in the Bug⁴ Region to statistics, particularly those affecting the German people. Before the Second World War, the theme of German settlers comes up with renewed vigour in Germany⁵ and the USSR. Moreover, in the Soviet Union, a steadily negative attitude towards the German population began to take shape in the late 20s (A. Reimarus = David Penner⁶, Viktor Schirmunski⁷, Aleksandr Klibanov⁸).

Hermann Aubin, one of the authors of the theory of “cultural province,” attempted to explain how the German people’s cultural area took shape, regardless of state and temporary borders⁹. According to the theory, the colonists played an essential role in expanding the ecumene of the Germanic ethnos. Many experts supported this theory, including Heinrich Brunner, Joachim Schulz¹⁰, and others.

The period of 1940-1944 was a period of active spread of Romanian values. This process also affected German settlers who survived after repatriation in 1940. Particular attention was paid to the situation in the Transnistria of the Dniester region. It is worth mentioning the works of Ion Nistor¹¹, I. A. Nestorescu¹², and others.

⁴ Anton Golopenția, *Românii de la est de Bug* [Romanians from the East of the Bug River], Vol. 1, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2006, p. 33.

⁵ Georg Leibbrandt, *Die deutschen Kolonien in Cherson und Bessarabien: Berichte der Gemeindeämter über Entstehung und Entwicklung der lutherischen Kolonien in der 1. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart, Ausland und Heimat-Verl.-Aktienges., 1926.

⁶ A. Reimarus, *Mennonity (kratkiy ocherk)* [Mennonites (Brief Essay)], Moskva, Bezbozhnik, 1930.

⁷ Viktor Schirmunski, *Die deutschen Kolonisten in der Ukraine. Geschichte, Mundarten, Volkslied, Volkskunde*, Charkow, Zentral-Völker-Verlag, 1928.

⁸ A. Klibanov, *Menonity* [Mennonites], Moskva-Leningrad, 1931.

⁹ Hermann Aubin, *Die Jahrtausendfeier der Rheinlande und die Ostmark*, in *Festschrift zur Jahrtausendfeier der Rheinländer in Danzig*, Danzig, 1925, S. 9–15.

¹⁰ Joachim Schulz, *Die deutschen Volksgruppen in Südosteuropa*, Leipzig – Berlin, Teubner, 1940.

¹¹ Ion Nistor, *Aspecte geopolitice și culturale din Transnistria* [Geopolitical and cultural aspects of Transnistria], București, 1942.

¹² I. A. Nestorescu, *Transnistria noastră* [Our Transnistria], Buzău, 1942.

The following period focuses on Soviet Moldova. The scholars practically did not study the German population. Separate studies in the field of ethnic demographics only partially touched upon certain aspects of the history and culture of the German settlers' everyday life (Valentin S. Zelenchuk¹³ and the book of Vladimir M. Kabuzan¹⁴). The data on the German population of the region's cities is partly reflected in the works of Nikolai V. Babilunga¹⁵ and Stepanida F. Kustr'yabova¹⁶. The monographs of well-known historians of the time, Yakim S. Grosul¹⁷, Il'ya G. Budak¹⁸ and Ivan I. Meshcheryuk¹⁹ present aspects of the socio-economic life of the German population in the region. The studies of Elena I. Druzhinina, who investigated the general situation in southern Ukraine in the 19th century, including the condition of the German colonies²⁰, are worth mentioning.

¹³ Valentin S. Zelenchuk, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Vladimir M. Kabuzan, *Narodonaselenie Bessarabskoi oblasti i levoberezhnykh raionov Pridnestrov'ya (konec XVIII – pervaya polovina XIX vv.)* [The population of the Bessarabian region and the left-bank regions of Transnistria (the end of the 18th – the first half of the 19th centuries)], Kishinev, "Shtiintsa", 1974.

¹⁵ Nikolai V. Babilunga, *Natsional'nyj sostav gorodskogo naseleniya Bessarabii v epohu imperializma* [The national composition of the urban population of Bessarabia in the era of imperialism], in "Izvestiya AN MSSR: Seriya obshchestvennykh nauk", 1979, № 3, p. 24-33; Idem, *Dinamika gorodskogo naseleniya Bessarabii v epohu imperializma* [Dynamics of the urban population of Bessarabia in the era of imperialism], in "Izvestiya AN MSSR: Seriya obshchestvennykh nauk", 1981, № 2, p. 53-61.

¹⁶ Stepanida F. Kustr'yabova, *Polozhenie trudyashchihsya i demograficheskie protsessy v gorodakh Bessarabii (1918–1940)* [The situation of workers and demographic processes in the cities of Bessarabia (1918–1940)], Kishinev, "Shtiintsa", 1977.

¹⁷ Yakim S. Grosul, *Krest'yane Bessarabii (1812-1861)* [Peasants of Bessarabia (1812-1861)], Kishinev, Gosud. Izdatel'stvo Moldavii, 1956.

¹⁸ Yakim S. Grosul, Il'ya G. Budak, *Krest'yanskaya reforma 60-70 gg. XIX veka v Bessarabii* [Peasant reform 60-70s of 19th century in Bessarabia], Kishinev, Gosud. Izdatel'stvo Moldavii, 1956; Yakim S. Grosul, Il'ya G. Budak, *Ocherki istorii narodnogo hozyaistva Bessarabii (1812-1861 gg.)* [Essays on the history of the national economy of Bessarabia (1812-1861)], Kishinev, Kartia moldoveniaske, 1967.

¹⁹ Ivan I. Meshcheryuk, *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe razvitie bolgarskih i gagauzskih siol v yuzhnoi Bessarabii (1808–1856)* [Socio-economic development of the Bulgarian and Gagauz villages in southern Bessarabia (1808-1856)], Kishinev, Redaktsionno-izdatel'skij otdel AN MSSR, 1970.

²⁰ Elena I. Druzhinina, *Yuzhnaya Ukraina 1800-1825 gg* [Southern Ukraine 1800-1825], Moskva, "Nauka", 1970; Eadem, *Yuzhnaya Ukraina v period krizisa feodalizma. 1825–1860 gg.* [Southern Ukraine in the period of feudalism crisis. 1825–1860], Moskva, "Nauka", 1981.

As for the Soviet period, Ol'ga V. Shcherbinina²¹ wrote about bourgeois falsifications, including the theme of German settlers. In the second half of the 20th century, German scholars published works devoted to various aspects of the past of the German colonists in Bessarabia (Alfred Ziebart²², Jakob Becker²³, etc.). Some authors who wrote about the German colonists themselves were their descendants (Alexander Suga²⁴).

The study of German issues became increasingly important in the post-Soviet period, in both the Republic of Moldova and elsewhere. Valentina Chirtoagă's work stands out among Moldovan specialists. She wrote the first dissertation research devoted to the study of various aspects of the lives of German colonists in Bessarabia²⁵. Two researchers from Germany, descendants of the Bessarabian Germans, Luminița Fassel²⁶ and Ute Schmidt²⁷, and a native of Russia, Viktor Disendorf,²⁸ attempted to summarise information about the Germans of Bessarabia.

²¹ Ol'ga V. Shcherbinina, *Kritika sovremennoi zapadnogeranskoi burzhuznoi istoriografii istorii Moldavii* [Criticism of modern West German bourgeois historiography of the history of Moldova], Kishinev, "Shtiintsa", 1984.

²² Alfred Ziebart, *Arzis, Bessarabien. Blick auf 150 Jahre Kolonistenleben und -schicksal 1816-1966*, Ludwigsburg, Eigenverlag des Verfassers, 1971.

²³ Jakob Becker, *Bessarabien und sein Deutschtum*, Bietigheim – Württemberg, Krug, 1966.

²⁴ Alexander Suga, *Die völkerrechtliche Lage Bessarabiens in der geschichtlichen Entwicklung des Landes*, Bonn, 1958.

²⁵ Valentina Chirtoagă, *Etnicii germani din Basarabia: evoluție demografică, social-economică și cultural-spirituală (1814-1917)*. Teză de doctor în istorie [The German ethnic groups in Bessarabia: demographic, socio-economic and cultural-spiritual evolution (1814-1917). The Doctoral Thesis in History], Chișinău, 2018.

²⁶ Luminița Fassel, *Das deutsche Schulwesen in Bessarabien (1812-1940). Eine komparativ-historische und sozio-kulturelle Untersuchung*, München, Verlag Südostdeutsches Kulturwerk, 2000.

²⁷ Ute Schmidt, *Die Deutschen aus Bessarabien. Eine Minderheit aus Südosteuropa (1814 bis heute)*, 2 durchgesehene Auflage. Köln – Weimar – Wien, Böhlau Verlag 2004; Eadem, *Bessarabien. Deutsche Kolonisten am Schwarzen Meer*, Potsdam, Deutsches Kulturforum Östliches Europa, 2008; Eadem, *Bessarabiya. Nemeckie kolonisty Prichernomor'ya: ocherki* [Bessarabia. German colonists of the Black Sea region: essays], Odessa, Optimum, 2015.

²⁸ Viktor Disendorf, *Istoricheskaya demografiya nemetskogo naseleniya Rossiii SSSR (XVIII – nachalo XXI vv.)* [Historical demography of the German population of Russia and the USSR (18th – the beginning of the 21st centuries)], Rottenburg, 2010, http://wolgadeutsche.net/diesendorf/Ist_demograf.pdf (Accessed on 25.01.2022).

A series of doctoral thesis from Ukraine demonstrates the surge of interest in the history of German settlements in modern Ukrainian historiography. These works touch upon various aspects of the history and culture of the German colonists in Ukraine, and some cover the border areas of the Republic of Moldova.²⁹

Sergei Kretinin³⁰, a modern researcher from Russia, made several advances in examining German colonists' history. In his articles, Sergei V. Kapustin³¹ addressed ethnography and the history of the Bessarabian Germans.

Although the German presence in Bessarabia has been explored, issues still need to be addressed. One of them is connected with the history of personalities of German colonists, which is insufficiently covered. The traditional daily lifestyle of this ethnic-social segment of the Bessarabian population remains understudied.

The purpose of this study has been to focus briefly on the examination of 19th-century Russian works about German colonists in Bessarabia.

DYNAMICS OF SCIENTIFIC INTEREST IN THE HISTORICAL FATE OF THE GERMAN COLONISTS IN THE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

The historiography of the 19th century and early 20th century, devoted to the German settlers' historical destiny and everyday culture in Bessarabia, can be divided into several stages.

Stage I – the first half of the 19th century until the 1860s was characterised by episodic information about the Germans in this region. Territorial features, such as the positioning of German settlers on the periphery, also impacted this. However, it was precisely because of this fact that the

²⁹ Kateryna S. Lyah, *Nimets'komovni kolonisty Pivdnya Ukrainy v mul'tinatsional'nomu otochenni: problema vzaemodiy kul'tur (XIX – pochatok XX st.)* [German-speaking colonists of Southern Ukraine in a multinational environment: the problem of cultural interaction (19th – early 20th centuries)], Donetsk, 2005.

³⁰ Sergei V. Kretinin, *Bessarabskie nemtsy: poslednie kolonisty Rossiiskoj imperii* [Bessarabian Germans: the Last Colonists of the Russian Empire], in "Rossiya – Germaniya", 2013, No 2(6), p. 65–69.

³¹ Sergei V. Kapustin, *Etnografiya Bessarabii glazami issledovatelej nemetskogo proiskhozhdeniya* [Ethnography of Bessarabia through the eyes of researchers of German origin] in the «Uchenye zapiski Orlovskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta», 2017, no. 3(76), p. 23–28; Idem, *Coverage of the history and culture of life support of the German settlers of Bessarabia and the left bank of the Dniester in the late 20th - early decades of the 21st century in the printed scientific literature of Germany*, in "ABYSS", 2019, № 1(07), http://abyss.su/_media/abyss_issue/7/kapustin_statja_na_anglijskom.pdf (Accessed on 22.01.2022).

Bessarabian outskirts of the Russian Empire were recorded and explored in the 19th century on behalf of various government departments.³²

Pavel P. Svinyin's description of Bessarabia was one of the first published materials approached. It mentioned that "in addition to several Austrian subjects, scattered in the cities and villages of Bessarabian for various trades, 1743 families were resettled here from the Duchy of Warsaw in 1814; they were all of the Lutheran confession, except 121 Catholic families"³³.

The privileges granted to the Warsaw colonists encouraged the influx of German settlers for nearly the entire 19th century. If the region had 33,501 Germans in 1861, there were 42,681 in 1891 and 59,998 people in 1897³⁴. The German colonists' special status, long-term benefits, and the ban against dividing land plots contributed to the accumulation of land property³⁵. Subsequently, German colonists were labelled as the prosperous but closed and uncommunicative representatives of a foreign ethnic environment.³⁶

Stepan Kornilovich, who wrote about the region in the twenties of the 19th century, confirmed the words of Svinyin and noted that "several families from foreign lands were resettled to the region for agriculture and cultivation of vineyards; they were mostly from the Duchy of Warsaw, the Bavarian and Wertemberg kingdoms and Switzerland"³⁷. Kornilovich named several families of

³² Vyacheslav P. Stepanov, *Trudy po etnografii naseleniya Bessarabii XIX – nachala XX vv. Ocherki istorii etnograficheskogo izucheniya bessarabskih ukraintsev* [Works on the ethnography of the population of Bessarabia in the 19th – early 20th centuries. Essays on the history of the ethnographic study of Bessarabian Ukrainians], Kishinev, 2001, p. 69.

³³ *Opisanie Bessarabskoi oblasti. Sostavleno vedomstva gosudarstvennoi kollegii inostrannykh del nadvornym sovetnikom Pavlom Svinyinyim, 1816 goda* [Description of the Bessarabian region. Compiled by the department of the State Collegium of Foreign Affairs by court adviser Pavel Svinyin, 1816], in "Zapiski Odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei", vol. VI, 1867, p. 206.

³⁴ Valentin S. Zelenchuk, *op. cit.*, p. 211. More accurate is the figure given by Sergei Sulyak – 60,206 inhabitants of German origin. See: Sergei G. Sulyak, *Naselenie Bessarabii v XIX v.: chislennost', natsional'nyi sostav, religioznaya prinalozhnost' (Po materialam dorevolutsionnykh issledovaniy)* [The population of Bessarabia in the 19th century: size, ethnic composition, religious affiliation (based on pre-revolutionary studies)], in *Trudy Ob'edinennogo nauchnogo soveta po gumanitarnym problemam i istoriko-kul'turnomu naslediyu. 2009*, Sankt-Peterburg, 2010, p. 61.

³⁵ Valentin S. Zelenchuk, *op. cit.*, p. 211–212.

³⁶ Nikolai D. Zabotkin, *Mirnoe zavoevanie nemtsami Yuzhnoi Bessarabii* [Peaceful conquest of southern Bessarabia by the Germans], Akkerman, 1910, p. 3.

³⁷ Stepan Kornilovich, *Statisticheskoe opisanie Bessarabii sobstvenno tak nazyvaemoi, ili*

German settlers in 1971: there were 4848 men and 4522 women.³⁸ The author also focused on the German occupations, listing all of the German colonies and presenting their economic characteristics³⁹. There are only positive reviews on the German farming tradition of the Germans near Daragan.

Stage II, the 1860s - 1880s. In the second half of the 19th century, a considerable amount of statistical literature included information about the German settlers. Outlying territories were specially studied, which explains the authorities' attention to their development. The comprehensive works of General Staff officer Aleksandr Zashchuk, which contain information about the German colonists, are evidence of this.⁴⁰

In 1862, historian E. Busch published a study⁴¹ that provided information on the number of German settlers in Russia. According to V. Disendorf, E. Busch's information was underestimated for Novorossia (which included Bessarabia) by 16.6%. Inaccuracies, in his opinion, are explained by the fact that Busch used the archives of the Evangelical Church, which did not consider the Germans of other faiths.⁴²

Friedrich Matthäi's book was published a few years later. A separate section is devoted to the German colonists of Bessarabia⁴³. A sombre work written in 1875

Budzhaka, s prilozheniem general'nogo plana ego kraya, sostavlennoe pri grazhdanskoj s'emke Bessarabii, proizvodivshej po vysochajshemu poveleniyu razmezhevanie zemel' onoi na uchastki s 1822 po 1828-i god [Statistical description of the so-called Bessarabia proper, or Budjak, with the application of the general plan of its region, compiled during the civil survey of Bessarabia, which, by the highest command, delimited its lands into sections from 1822 to 1828], Akkerman, 1899, p. 23.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 188–220.

⁴⁰ Aleksandr I. Zashchuk, *Materialy dlya geografii i statistiki Rossii, sobrannye ofitserami General'nogo shtaba. Bessarabskaya oblast'* [Materials for the geography and statistics of Russia, collected by officers of the General Staff. Bessarabia region], Sankt-Peterburg, 1862, ch. 1-2; Idem, *Etnografiya Bessarabskoj oblasti* [Ethnography of the Bessarabian region], in "Zapiski Odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei", T. 5, Odessa, 1863, p. 491–589.

⁴¹ E. H. Busch, *Materialien zur Geschichte und Statistik des Kirchen- und Schulwesens der Ev.-Luth. Gemeinden in Russland*, St. Petersburg, Commissionsverlag von G. Haessel, 1862.

⁴² Viktor Disendorf, *op. cit.*

⁴³ Friedrich Matthäi, *Die deutschen Ansiedlungen in Rußland. Ihre Geschichte und ihre volkswirtschaftliche Bedeutung für die Vergangenheit und Zukunft. Studien über das russische Kolonisationswesen und über die Herbeiziehung fremder Kulturkräfte nach Rußland*, Leipzig, Hermann Fries, 1866, p. 37–67.

by General Staff Officer, a member of the Russian Geographical Society, Aleksandr F. Rittikh,⁴⁴ was a reaction of the military department to universal military service, introduced in the state in 1874. I. Logario⁴⁵ presented certain statistical information about the German settlers of the region. Academician Peter von Köppen, a well-known Russian statistician, made substantial contributions to the study of southern ethnography, detailing the areas of settlement, the number, and occupation of the Germans.⁴⁶

When discussing the later decades of the twentieth century, it is essential to mention Dmitrii I. Bagalei's historical study, dedicated to the colonisation of Novorossia. The whole section was devoted to foreign settlers, and German colonists were separately studied. The author emphasised that they differed from each other by their religious identity⁴⁷.

Stage III, between the 1890s and 1918, was the time of generalisation of the accumulated knowledge, the publication of several comprehensive works on the region's history and ethnography, and the creation of local scientific centres.

Pompei Batyushkov's book *Bessarabia...* was published towards the end of the 19th century; it was an example of Russian patriotic work.⁴⁸ Batyushkov's attitude toward German presence in Russia reflects the views of the Slavophile intelligentsia, which advocated depriving the German population of special privileges in the post-

⁴⁴ Alekandr F. Rittikh, *Plemennoi sostav kontingentov russkoi armii i muzhskago naseleniya Evropeiskoi Rossii* [The tribal composition of the contingents of the Russian army and the male population of European Russia], St. Petersburg, 1875; Idem, *Etnograficheskaya karta Evropeiskoi Rossii* [Ethnographic map of European Russia], Sankt-Peterburg, 1875.

⁴⁵ I. F. Lagorio, *Statisticheskie svedeniya o Bessarabskikh nemetskih koloniyah v 1861-1862 gg.* [Statistical information about the Bessarabian German colonies in 1861-1862], in "Zapiski Bessarabskogo oblastnogo statisticheskogo komiteta", T. I, Kishinev, 1864, p. 73-77.

⁴⁶ Peter I. Köppen, *Hronologicheskii ukazatel' materialov dlya istorii inorodtsev Evropeiskoi Rossii* [Chronological index of materials for the history of foreigners in European Russia], Sankt-Peterburg, 1861.

⁴⁷ Dmitrii I. Bagalei, *Kolonizatsiya Novorossiiskogo kraya i pervye shagi ego po puti kul'tury. Istoricheskii etyud* [Colonization of the Novorossiysk District territory and its first steps along the path of culture. Historical sketch], Kiev, 1889, p. 77-99.

⁴⁸ Batyushkov's book was perceived differently in scientific circles. A. I. Yatsimirsky, the modern Moldavian researcher Olga S. Lukyanets, criticized it for tendentiousness. See: Olga S. Lukyanets, *Russkie issledovateli i moldavskaya etnograficheskaya nauka v XIX - nachale XX v.* [Russian researchers and Moldovan ethnographic science in the 19th - early 20th centuries], Kishinev, 1986, p. 70.

reform period (late 70-80s of the 19th century). V. S. Zelenchuk gave another example of such an approach, which intensified in connection with Russia's accumulated socio-economic contradictions before World War I. For instance, Nikolai D. Zobotkin wrote in 1910 that "German colonisation in the Akkerman uyezd threatens with a complete collapse of the economy of other agricultural elements and is aimed at their displacement and enslavement."⁴⁹

Contemporary Moldavian historians have ambivalent attitudes toward Pavel A. Krushevan's personality. He is associated with Russian "imperial" nationalists, strong Russian state supporters⁵⁰, and bright, creative characters.⁵¹ However, P. Krushevan was undoubtedly a very talented person, endowed with numerous virtues and a man of his time – an odious monarchist. The detailed description of the German population of the region given in the almanack "Bessarabets", in a separate paper "Bessarabia", edited by P. A. Krushevan, is very indicative: "Hardworking workers, excellent agronomists and cattle breeders, the Germans live clean, even in wealth. Their long-standing resettlement on the steppes of Budjak did not in the least change their patriarchal Germanic habits at the end of the 18th century. They do not have a broad Russian prowess, capable of adopting everything and applying it to everything. The German peasant rarely looks beyond the boundary of his plot and knows only himself and the society of his village. Given this, their skill and diligence remain with them and are not instilled in the native population."⁵²

Vladimir N. Butovich is connected to the German settlers' topic, emphasising aspects and potential opportunities for cohabitation of numerous

⁴⁹ Valentin S. Zelenchuk, *op. cit.*, c. 212. With reference to Nikolai Zobotkin, *Mirnoe zavoevanie nemtsami Yuzhnoi Bessarabii* [Peaceful conquest of southern Bessarabia by the Germans,], Akkerman, Ekon. tip. I.A. Kara-Fedorova, 1911, p. 2.

⁵⁰ Igor P. Shornikov, *Obshchestvenno-politicheskaya i literaturnaya deyatel'nost' P. A. Krushevana* [Socio-political and literary activities of P. A. Krushevan]. Avtoreferat dissertatsii na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni kandidata istoricheskikh nauk. Special'nost' 07.00.02 – Otechestvennaya istoriya. Moskva, 2011, p. 33.

⁵¹ Irina Izhboldina, *"Zhivaya starina" v proizvedeniyah russkikh literatorov Bessarabii kontsa XIX - nachala XX vv.: issledovaniya i materialy* ["Zhivaya starina" in the works of Russian writers of Bessarabia in the late 19th – early 20th centuries: research and materials], Kishinev, 2012, p. 13.

⁵² *Bessarabiya. Graficheskii, istoricheskii, statisticheskii, ekonomicheskii, etnograficheskii, literaturnyi i spravochnyi sbornik. Izdanie gazety "Bessarabets" pod red. P. A. Krushevana* [Bessarabia. Graphic, historical, statistical, economic, ethnographic, literary and reference collection. Edition of the newspaper "Bessarabets" published by P. A. Krushevan], Moskva, 1903, p. 183.

ethnonational colonies on the territory of Bessarabia⁵³. These studies can also include the later work of Jakob Stach⁵⁴. Among the works of contemporaries of that period, which covered the history and culture of everyday life of the German colonists in southern Russia, reference must be made to the work of Jacob Prinz, published in German in Moscow in 1898.⁵⁵

Not only the Germans were interested in their compatriots – the works of Ivan Sergeev,⁵⁶ Petr Tkachev,⁵⁷ Andrei Fadeev,⁵⁸ and Grigorii Pisarevskii⁵⁹, which chronicled the history and culture of the Germans in Russia, were published in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The *Memoirs* of Andrei Fadeev presents a description of the German colonies, located, among other things, in Transnistria and further in Novorossia.⁶⁰ An interesting observation found in his memoirs leads to the conclusion that the influx of German colonists to Russia and, in particular, to Bessarabia was associated with the mystical hobbies of Emperor Alexander I: “The reason for this was the petition of Mrs Krüdener and other mystics addressed to Emperor Alexander, who often travelled abroad. They greatly influenced the Tsar and requested him to allow many inhabitants of all countries of Germany, consisting mainly of pietists, to move to Russia. They also asked him to provide them with special protection.”⁶¹ The information presented above cannot be considered an unequivocal description of the reasons for the migration of the German colonists to Russia. Nevertheless, it makes one wonder how much the fate of an entire ethnic-social community may depend on a subjective factor.

⁵³ Vladimir Butovich, *Materialy dlya etnograficheskoi karty Bessarabskoi gubernii* [Materials for the ethnographic map of the Bessarabian province], Kiev, 1916.

⁵⁴ Jakob Stach, *Ocherki iz istorii i sovremennoi zhizni yuzhnorusskikh kolonii* [Essays on the history and modern life of the South Russian colonies], Moskva, 1916.

⁵⁵ Jakob Prinz, *Die Kolonien der Brüdergemeinde. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonien Südrusslands*, Moskva, 1898.

⁵⁶ Ivan I. Sergeev, *Mirnoe zavoevanie Rossii nemtsami* [Peaceful conquest of Russia by the Germans], Peterburg, 1915.

⁵⁷ Petr N. Tkachev, *Nemetskie idealisty i filistery* [German idealists and philistines], in “Delo”, Sankt-Peterburg, 1867, No 12, p. 1–27.

⁵⁸ Andrei M. Fadeev, *Vospominaniya Andreya Mihajlovicha Fadeeva. 1790-1867 gg.* [Memoirs of Andrei Mikhailovich Fadeev. 1790-1867], Odessa, 1897, in 2 parts.

⁵⁹ Grigorii G. Pisarevskii, *Iz istorii inostrannoi kolonizatsii v Rossii v XVIII veke (po neizvestnym arhivnym materialam)* [From the history of foreign colonization in Russia in the 18th century (According to unknown archival materials)], Moskva, 1909.

⁶⁰ Andrej M. Fadeev, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 47.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

On top of the “anti-German wave” during the First World War, the question of the loyalty of the Bessarabian Germans and the Germans in Russia became particularly relevant. Then the restrictions on their rights signed by Nicholas II came out.⁶² A series of anti-German sentiments swept through the ministries and departments and among the adherents of the country’s regime.⁶³

On February 2, 1915, the Emperor signed the Law “On the Restriction of Land Ownership and Land Use of Enemy Subjects”, which also applied to the Bessarabian Germans. During the war, radical approaches prevailed. The government focused on eradicating the German ethnic community in Russia, although at the expense of the agricultural economy.⁶⁴ This liquidation policy was especially active in the front-line zones, although it had little impact. Therefore, Karl Lindemann⁶⁵ emphasised that the Bessarabian Germans never thought their land could be taken from them.

It would be incorrect to claim that only extreme opinions against the German settlers in Russia were expressed in the literature of the time. There were

⁶² Natal'ya V. Savinova, *Rossiiskii natsionalizm i nemetskie pogromy v Rossii v gody Pervoi mirovoi voyny: 1914-1917 gg.* [Russian nationalism and German pogroms in Russia during the First World War: 1914-1917]. Avtoreferat dissertacii na soiskanie uchenoj stepeni kandidata istoricheskikh nauk. Special'nost': 07.00.02 – Otechestvennaya istoriya; <http://www.dissercat.com/content/rossiiskii-natsionalizm-i-nemetskie-pogromy-v-rossii-v-gody-pervoi-mirovoi-voyny-1914-1917-g> [Accessed: 25.12.2021]; Svetlana V. Obolenskaya, “Nemeckii vopros” i predstavleniya v Rossii o nemtsah v gody Pervoi mirovoi vojny [The “German question” and ideas in Russia about the Germans during the First World War], in “Rossiya i Germaniya”, Moskva, vyp. 2, 2001, p. 189.

⁶³ Nikolai Varadinov, *Istoriya Ministerstva vnutrennih del* [History of the Ministry of the Interior], Sankt-Peterburg, 1858, P. III, T. 1, p. 501 – 503; Ivan Sobolev, *Bor'ba s “nemetskim zasil'em” v Rossii v gody Pervoi mirovoi vojny* [The fight against “German dominance” in Russia during the First World War]. Avtoreferat dissertacii na soiskanie uchenoj stepeni kandidata istoricheskikh nauk. Special'nost': 07.00.02 – Otechestvennaya istoriya. Sankt-Peterburg, 1998; Sergei P. Sheluhin, *Nemetskaya kolonizatsiya na yuge Rossii* [German colonization in southern Russia], Odessa, 1915.

⁶⁴ Aleksandra Yu. Bahturina, “Luchshe pust' nemtsy razoryatsya, chem budut shpionit'”: nemtsy-kolonisty i rossiiskoe obshchestvo v gody “germanskoi” vojny [“Better let the Germans go bankrupt than spy”: German colonists and Russian society during the “German” war], p. 10, in <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/luchshe-pust-nemtsy-razoryatsya-chem-budut-shpionit-nemtsy-kolonisty-i-rossiyskoe-obschestvo-v-gody-germanskoy-voyny/viewer> [Accessed on 04.01.2022].

⁶⁵ Karl E. Lindemann, *Prekrashchenie zemlevladieniya i zemlepol'zovaniya poselyan-sobstvennikov* [Termination of land ownership and land use of village owners], Moskva, Tipografiya K. L. Men'shova, 1917.

additional publications that took a more honest approach to the phenomena of German colonial presence in Russia. The works of Grigorii Pisarevskii⁶⁶, Semion Bondar'⁶⁷ and Karl E. Lindemann⁶⁸ are among them. However, because of the political climate and the previously prevailing public attitude, their voice was weak and had little impact on the overall situation.

Among balanced studies, the extract from Jakob Stach's book reveals the author's attempt to uncover the cause for the German colonists' poor mastery of the Russian language and avoidance of interaction with Russian peasants: "until the time of the Crimean War, and even until the sixties of the last century, there can be no question of the attitude of the colonists towards the Russian population, because in South Russia there was almost no Russian population, and the sparsely populated Russian cities very rarely communicated with the colonies, because at that time there was no means of communication. The only exceptions were the colonies located at the nearest distance from the cities: Odessa, Yekaterinoslav, and Elizavetgrad."⁶⁹

When studying the issue concerning the situation of German settlers in the region, one cannot disregard the policy of the official authorities about the German settlement, which became more complicated during the First World War. In this regard, Karl E. Lindemann's study, which reflected the situation of the German population by the decrees of February 2 and December 13, 1915, and July 10, 15 and August 19, 1916, is eloquent. The regulations had a considerable impact on the economic status of German settlers before the Bolshevik Revolution⁷⁰, as well as the development of an unfavourable attitude concerning colonists.

The second half of the 19th century, especially the end and beginning of the next century, is marked by the publication of several encyclopaedic works containing information about the Bessarabian Germans.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Grigorii G. Pisarevskii, *op. cit.*

⁶⁷ Semion D. Bondar', *Sekta menonitov Rossii* [Russian Mennonite sect], Sankt-Peterburg, Tipografiya V. D. Smirnova, 1916.

⁶⁸ Karl E. Lindemann, *op. cit.*, p. 65-66.

⁶⁹ Jakob Stach, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁷⁰ Karl E. Lindemann, *op. cit.*

⁷¹ *Rossiia. Polnoe geograficheskoe opisanie nashego Otechestva: nastol'naya i dorozhnaya kniga dlya russkikh lyudei. Novorossiia i Krym (Bessarabskaya, Hersonskaya, Tavricheskaya i Ekaterinoslavskaya gubernii, oblasti Vojska Donskogo i Stavropol'skoi gubernii)* [Russia. A complete geographical description of our Fatherland: a desktop and travel book for Russian people. Novorossia and Crimea (Bessarabian, Kherson, Taurida and Yekaterinoslav provinces, regions of the Don Army and Stavropol province)], Sankt-

CONCLUSIONS

Bessarabia in the 19th century never formed a single ethnocultural community. There is no reason to assume that this was done on purpose. While coexisting, the multicultural communities also kept their distance from one another. Having their privileges, the Warsaw and Transdanubian colonists lived relatively closed. The Jews lived in the same “chamber” within a different ethnic environment, which is also explained by their diverse confessions and occupation (trade, usury, possession, etc.).

The territory substantially constrained the life of the Bessarabian settler, particularly in the colony, which had a specific influence on the consciousness of both the individual inhabitant and members of the ethnic-social community. According to the modern researcher Olga S. Lukyanets, the interaction between German settlers and the local population increased throughout the interwar period. By the end of the 30s, “Bessarabian Germans more often came into contact with the region’s wealthiest part of the population”.⁷² The analysed data allows concluding that the conditionally selected stage – the first half of the 19th century until the 60s – was characterised by episodic information about the Germans of the region. Despite the voluminous and multifaceted works of the authors of that time (Aleksandr Zashchuk, E. H. Busch, Aleksandr F. Rittikh, Peter von Köppen, Dmitrii Bagalei and many others), the history and everyday life of the Germans in Bessarabia were covered episodically and superficially.

The second stage, lasting 60-80 years, can be characterised as a period of heightened interest in many elements of German settlers’ lives and daily lives, followed by a rise in hostility toward their presence from liberal and Slavophile authors. Negative manifestations can also be seen in the next stage, which spans the 1890s through 1918. Authors, who emphasised the importance of German settlers to the economic growth of Russian regions, argued against such one-sided views (Semion Bondar’, Grigorii Pisarevskii, Jakob Stach, Karl Lindemann and others). Simultaneously, various publications appeared at the time in which

Peterburg, 1910, vol. 14; Lev S. Berg, *Bessarabiya. Strana. Lyudi. Hozyaistvo* [Bessarabia. Country. People. Economy], Kishinev, Universitas, 1993, p. 116.

⁷² Olga S. Lukyanets, *Kollektivnye predstavleniya narodov Bessarabii drug o druge (pervaya polovina XX v.)* [Collective ideas of the peoples of Bessarabia about each other (the first half of the 20th century)], in *Etnograficheskie issledovaniya v Respublike Moldova*, Kishinev, 2006, p. 181.

researchers attempted to perform a detailed study of the region's people, including the lifestyle of the German colonists (Lev S. Berg). Furthermore, these generalising books often featured less specific content than those expressly devoted to German colonists. At the same time, they attempted to employ a complex approach (Aleksandr I. Zashchuk laid the foundation in *Ethnography of the Bessarabian Region*) that was to be developed in the future.

It is essential to add that modern researchers from Germany (Ute Schmidt), the Republic of Moldova (Valentina Chirtoagă) and Russia (Sergei Kretinin, Sergei Kapustin) are increasingly interested in studying the German colonists of Bessarabia. It gives hope that the study of their historical fate in Bessarabia will be continued. A comprehensive historiographical survey of the German colonists of Bessarabia also awaits its time.

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