

Evacuation, Repression And The Fate Of European Migrants In Kazakhstan (First Half Of The 20th Century)

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Abstract: Migration to foreign countries, both voluntary, as in the case of emigrants and immigrants, became one of the most complex and controversial issues in the history of the twentieth century. The main objective of this article is to reconstruct the historical narrative of European migrants in Kazakhstan during the first half of the twentieth century. It distinguishes political émigrés and temporary labor immigrants from the broader mass of migrants, thereby addressing significant gaps in the historiography of European migration processes. Materials and Methods. The distinctive feature of this study lies in its reliance almost exclusively on archival documents introduced into scholarly circulation for the first time. The article examines the specific historical and empirical question of why European political émigrés and labor migrants chose the USSR, particularly Kazakhstan, and the consequences of that choice for them. Results. The study analyzes the preconditions for the settlement of various categories of European migrants in Kazakhstan and identifies key narratives reflecting the lives and activities of evacuated and repressed migrants. It also concludes the misconceptions held by many European migrants who viewed the USSR as a refuge for the oppressed and a society founded on social justice.

Keywords: evacuation, immigrants, migration process, political émigrés, repression.

I. INTRODUCTION

During the first half of the twentieth century, several migration waves of differing character occurred in the USSR. In the 1920s–1930s, political emigration to the Soviet Union predominated, coinciding with unsuccessful revolutionary uprisings in Germany, Hungary, and other European countries. One of the events accompanying the end of the First World War (WWI) in November 1918 was the revolution in Austria-Hungary, triggered not only by military defeats but also by crop failure and economic crisis. The revolution resulted in the collapse of the state and the removal of the Habsburg dynasty from power. In October–November 1918, the Hungarian parliament dissolved its union with Austria and proclaimed a republic. However, the new government proved unable to resolve the country's economic crisis, the social consequences of the war, or to formulate a coherent foreign policy strategy.

On March 21, 1919, Hungarian communists led by Béla Kun proclaimed the Hungarian Soviet Republic, which lasted only 133 days before collapsing under the occupation of Budapest by Romanian troops. Another wave of revolutionary activity occurred in Germany during the Hamburg Uprising (October 23–25, 1923), when workers' detachments led by Ernst Thälmann attempted to seize power but were suppressed. By 1923, no revolutionary or communist governments remained in Central and Eastern Europe except for the USSR, and communist parties were banned. This period also saw a significant influx of European migrants into the Soviet Union. Many of these political émigrés were regarded by Soviet authorities as among the most loyal and reliable members of the international communist movement and were actively engaged in promoting communist ideology.

From the late 1920s onward, the character of migration changed. With the launch of large-scale industrialization, the USSR required thousands of foreign skilled workers proficient in handling newly imported equipment. Although European states were gradually

recovering from WWI, economic instability, unemployment, and rising living costs severely affected workers, making employment opportunities in the rapidly industrializing Soviet Union highly attractive.

By the mid-1930s, migration patterns shifted once more. The rise of Nazism in Germany intensified political emigration to the USSR. With the outbreak of war, political émigrés living in Moscow and other parts of European Russia were evacuated to the eastern Soviet republics, with the majority resettled in Kazakhstan. In addition, repressed foreign nationals were sent to labor camps and special settlements within Kazakhstan.

The history of European political émigrés, labor migrants, and the repression of foreigners in the USSR has been extensively studied in Russia, where the main archival sources are held [1,2,3,4,5]. Following the collapse of the USSR, foreign scholars gained access to post-Soviet archives and began conducting in-depth research on both forced and voluntary European migration. The book by Béla Želicki and Csilla Želicki analyzes mass emigration processes in Hungary across different historical periods. It analyzes a large body of materials on political and labor emigration to various countries, including the USSR, providing a comprehensive understanding of these complex processes [6]. However, the history of European migrants in Kazakhstan remains insufficiently studied. Some aspects of this issue were addressed in monographs and articles on the fate of European migrants in the USSR [7, 8]. The first researchers to study the history of European migrants in Kazakhstan were Galina Ya. Tarle and Abu S. Takenov. Galina Ya. Tarle examined European labor migration in the USSR [9], while Abu S. Takenov, in his book on the international connections of Kazakhstan, highlighted the participation of European émigrés in the Civil War in Kazakhstan and the history of labor migration from European countries [10]. Due to the limited accessibility of archival sources, these authors were unable to trace the subsequent fate of European immigrants, most of whom were later repressed.

The history of Austrian migrants in Kazakhstan is addressed in the book by Josef Vogl [11], and the lives and experiences of Spaniards in Kazakhstan have been studied by Kokebayeva and Zakarya [12].

The main goal of this study is to provide a historical analysis of the narrative of European émigrés' presence in Kazakhstan during the first half of the 20th century and to examine the challenges of their adaptation to the socio-economic and political conditions of Soviet society.

Materials and Methods. This study uses documentary sources that we examined in the archives of Kazakhstan and Russia. Migration is a complex and multifaceted process; therefore, in this article, European emigration and labor migration to Kazakhstan are considered only from the perspective of migration structures, regions of movement and reasons for migration. The article does not address the outcomes of migration, such as migrants' adaptation to Kazakh society or the formation of diasporas. Instead, it focuses on a specific historical and empirical question: why did European political émigrés and labor migrants choose the USSR, including Kazakhstan, and what were the consequences of that choice? The guiding method is the principle of historicism, which involves studying the fate of European émigrés in the context of the historical realities of migration processes in the first half of the 20th century.

II. LABOR MIGRATION FROM EUROPE TO KAZAKHSTAN

The first European migrants in Soviet Kazakhstan consisted of two groups of foreigners. The first group included workers who came to contribute to agriculture and industry, supporting the construction of socialism in the workers' and peasants' state. The second group comprised individuals evacuated to Kazakhstan at the outset of WWII and repressed political émigrés exiled to Kazakh labor camps and special settlements. In the

aftermath of enormous human losses from WW I and the Russian Civil War, the new Soviet state faced a severe labor shortage. With the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP), attracting foreign specialists became a crucial condition for the country's economic development. Permission to settle in the USSR was granted to collectives of artels or communes that brought money and mechanical equipment with them. In 1923, a group of Austrian workers decided to relocate to the city of Uralsk to establish a workshop serving technical equipment for agriculture. The group consisted of highly skilled workers who brought a significant amount of equipment with them [13; 10, p.103]. On November 22, 1928, the Permanent Commission of the Council of Labor and Defense of the RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic) was established to regulate agricultural and industrial immigration. One of its tasks was to attract agricultural and industrial immigrant groups and assist them during the organization of their work by providing credit, necessary materials, and various benefits [14, pp. 69–70]. Foreigners engaged in farming or livestock activities in the Kazakh ASSR were exempt from the unified agricultural tax for five years. In the USSR, European immigrants established 22 agricultural communes, three of which were in Kazakhstan: Voskhozhdeniye Solntsa Sibiri and Vostok in the Semipalatinsk region, and Ulfeld in the Kyzylorda region. The largest agricultural enterprise was the commune Ulfeld, founded by Austrian immigrants in Kyzylorda (State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan [15]). In 1924, members of the "Austrian Association of Former Participants and Victims of the War" developed a plan to create an agricultural and industrial colony for Austrian immigrants in the USSR. Many were willing to move to the USSR; most had been prisoners in Russian camps during WWI and spoke Russian. It was decided to send 600 Austrian immigrants to the USSR [11, p.14]. In February–March 1925, the Austrians' petition was considered at a session of the Permanent Commission of the Council of Labor and Defense, with representatives from Kazakhstan participating. The USSR's plenipotentiary representation in Austria familiarized the leaders of the future Austrian commune with the conditions of immigration for foreigners in the USSR. Two locations were offered: the settlement of Ozinki near Saratov (Russia) and a large land area in Sabalak, eight kilometers from the Kazakh city of Kyzylorda. The Austrians chose Kyzylorda, as it had recently become the capital of the Kazakh Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, and the city's growing population promised good demand for agricultural products.

Under the agreement signed on December 4, 1925, between the Austrian immigrant leaders and the Kyzylorda City Executive Committee, the Ulfeld commune received a 2,500-desyatina plot in Sabalak (the commune's name combines the leader's surname, Ul, and the German word for field, Feld). The commune's work plan included irrigation, vegetable cultivation, dairy farming, orchard establishment with a nursery, and other agricultural projects. The agreement emphasized that the commune should establish close ties with the local population, familiarizing peasants with techniques and farming practices.

The commune's funds came from members' contributions, unemployment benefits paid by the Austrian government and the Vienna magistrate, which were used to purchase machinery, equipment, and tools. On March 4, the first group of immigrants left Vienna in 32 compartments, 24 of which were filled with machinery and equipment [11, p.30]. According to the Kyzylorda regional newspaper *Leninsky Put'*, the first group of 226 people arrived in early April 1926, and another 148 people arrived by autumn [16]. The commune members brought property and materials valued at about 61,500 rubles, as well as 2,800 rubles in cash. However, these funds were insufficient for proper settlement, and according to archival documents, the commune largely survived with the support of the Kazakh government. The Kazakh authorities provided 154,500 rubles in financial aid, and some private individuals contributed money and food [17].

To provide drinking water, the Kazakh government issued a loan of 30,000 rubles and granted additional privileges: three years' exemption from rent, agricultural taxes, customs duties, and transport costs for materials and equipment by rail [18].

From the very beginning, the Ulfeld commune faced difficulties related to the professional composition of Austrian immigrants, many of whom were engineers or other specialists with higher education and were unwilling to perform agricultural labor [19]. Unlike political émigrés, labor migrants had a real alternative: return home or stay. Some of the first group returned to Austria, requiring additional resources. Medical services for commune members were also insufficient. The land plot allocated was in a dry region with a hot climate, so irrigation was necessary, but the commune lacked sufficient pumps and funds to purchase new ones. Soviet soil surveys also indicated that parts of the land were saline and unsuitable for growing vegetables and grains [11, p.68]. Some imported Austrian machinery remained idle because it was designed for larger fields, unsuitable for the commune's small plots [20]. In March 1927, a general meeting decided to dissolve the commune. The Kazakh government assisted members with employment in cities. Thirteen remaining members in Kyzylorda formed the Solidarity artel, engaging in construction and installation work [21]. Despite challenges, commune members built the main irrigation canal, established a pumping station, cleared and plowed 210 desyatinas of land, constructed a brick factory, six residential buildings, a bakery, and workshops for shoemaking and other trades.

III. REPRESSED EUROPEAN MIGRANTS IN KAZAKHSTAN

The reception and accommodation of arriving political émigrés, as well as the organization of their provision, medical care, and employment, were managed by "the Society for Mutual Assistance to Political Émigrés" and "the Office of the Commissioner for Political Émigrés" under the All-Union Central Executive Committee. On November 30, 1922, the Fourth World Congress of the Communist International adopted a resolution establishing the International Organization for Aid to Revolutionary Fighters (MOPR). MOPR was a non-party organization whose primary purpose was to provide legal, moral, and material assistance to victims of political persecution in various countries. In early January 1923, at the initiative of the All-Union Central Executive Committee, the Society for Mutual Assistance to Political Émigrés was established in the USSR. It called upon Soviet workers to assist political émigrés arriving in the country by providing financial support, basic necessities, and employment. Between February and July 1923, the Society provided housing for more than 400 political émigrés and their families, arranged medical treatment for 165 individuals, and secured employment for approximately 500 émigrés [22]. In December 1923, the Society was dissolved, and its functions were fully transferred to MOPR.

With the outbreak of WWII, political émigrés residing in Moscow and the European part of the USSR were evacuated eastward. By 1943, 404 political émigrés were living in Kazakhstan (764 including family members), including 106 Germans, 49 Spaniards, 12 Hungarians, 25 Czechs and Sudeten Germans, 10 Poles, 2 Romanians, and others from Eastern countries [23].

Almost all émigrés and refugees who arrived in Kazakhstan in July–August 1941 sought to relocate to the republic's capital, Almaty, and remain there. Of the 764 political émigrés, 98 lived in the city of Almaty and 118 in Almaty region [24]. However, food supply shortages and the need to accommodate prominent cultural and scientific figures evacuated from the western regions of the USSR forced authorities to prohibit émigrés from residing or registering in Almaty. In September–October 1941, all political émigrés from Germany were relocated to Karaganda region, where they were settled in rural areas and prohibited from living in cities [25].

In November 1941, a group of workers from a locomotive factory in Voroshilovgrad was evacuated to Kazakhstan, including 26 Spanish émigrés with their wives and children (53 individuals in total), as well as four Hungarian political émigrés. Archival materials from Kazakhstan reveal the tragic fate of Spanish families whose members were separated across multiple borders. For example, Santiago Álvarez arrived in the USSR with his wife, while his father remained in France and his children in Spain. Herrera H. Gómez fled to the USSR with his wife, but his parents and sisters remained in Madrid. The parents and sister of José Fernández were held in a concentration camp in Spain [26, 27]. Spanish political émigrés working at the Sadon lead-zinc combine were evacuated to Kazakhstan on September 18, 1942, to work at the Tekeli lead-zinc combine, which was then being established using equipment evacuated from western regions of the USSR. A total of 97 individuals arrived in Tekeli, including 28 men, 41 women, and 28 children [28]. After some time, several men were sent to the front. In 1944, all Spanish émigrés were relocated to Crimea, where jobs and housing had become available following the deportation of the Crimean population to eastern Soviet republics. Three groups of Spanish émigrés were transferred from Kazakhstan to Crimea. The first group consisted of Spaniards employed at the Heavy Machinery Plant of the People's Commissariat of Defense; the second group included Spaniards working in other cities; and the third group consisted of unemployed Spaniards. According to documents from the Kazakhstan branch of MOPR, some groups of political émigrés received better material support than others. For example, in a letter dated July 28, 1944, the chairman of the Central Committee of MOPR USSR informed the head of the Kazakhstan branch that a small group of former members of the International Brigades in Spain working at the Tekeli combine had experienced a significant deterioration in their material conditions after the relocation of Spanish émigrés to Crimea [29].

Other émigrés from Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Romania worked in state farms in the South Kazakhstan, Almaty, and Pavlodar regions, as well as in factories in Karaganda, Aktobe, and Ust-Kamenogorsk. Many of the émigrés were highly educated and professionally experienced.

For example, Gertrude Schildbach, a member of the Communist Party of Germany since 1920, emigrated to the USSR in 1933. She studied at the Universities of Berlin and Leipzig and held a doctoral degree in philosophy. In 1937, she fled to the Soviet Union; in 1940 she was exiled to Kyzylorda. From October 1941, she was permitted to reside in Almaty. In the autumn of 1942 she was again exiled, this time to Karaganda; a year later, she was recalled to Almaty and allowed to work at the Institute of Foreign Languages. Stefan Steinmetz graduated from the Higher Technical University in Hungary. After the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, he emigrated to Argentina, later moved to the USSR, and in 1942 was evacuated to Kazakhstan.

In the 1930s, millions became victims of the arbitrary actions of the Soviet totalitarian regime, facing repression on the grounds of political and religious beliefs, social origin, nationality, and other factors. Between 1935 and 1940, 1,980,635 people were arrested in the USSR on charges of anti-Soviet activity, of whom 688,503 were executed [30, p.317]. Repression targeted not only Soviet citizens but also foreign nationals residing in the USSR, members of the Communist International, political émigrés, anti-fascists, and workers and specialists from Austria, Hungary, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Finland, Estonia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Italy, Greece, and other countries.

Terror and violence emanated from the center through slogans, directives, instructions, and decrees. On March 9, 1936, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) adopted a resolution "On Measures to Protect the USSR from the Penetration of Espionage, Terrorist, and Sabotage Elements" [31, pp. 738-741]. In accordance with this resolution, entry procedures for political émigrés were tightened,

and a commission was established to “purge” international organizations operating in the USSR. The resolution stated that a large number of political émigrés had “accumulated” in the USSR, some of whom were allegedly direct agents of intelligence and police bodies of capitalist states. As a result, entry permits for foreign communists were further restricted, a comprehensive re-registration of political émigrés was conducted, and a commission headed by Central Committee Secretary N. I. Yezhov was created to “cleanse” the apparatus of the Profintern, the International Organization for Aid to Revolutionary Fighters, and other international organizations of “espionage and anti-Soviet elements.” Preparations for repression against Polish communists began as early as the late 1920s. In May 1929, the delegation of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to the Executive Committee of the Comintern requested that the GPU take measures to identify provocateurs within the Communist Party of Poland. Arrests of Polish communists began in the early 1930s. On August 16, 1938, the Executive Committee of the Comintern voted to dissolve the Communist Party of Poland. Twelve members of its Central Committee who were in the USSR, along with all Polish representatives in the governing bodies of the Comintern, were arrested and executed. In 1937–1938, the Communist Party of Poland was effectively eliminated. On August 16, 1938, the Executive Committee of the Comintern voted to dissolve the Communist Party of Poland. Earlier, on August 11, 1937, the NKVD of the USSR issued an order “On the Liquidation of Polish Diversionary and Espionage Groups and Organizations of the Polish Military Organization (PMO).” According to this order, repression targeted former Polish army prisoners of war, political émigrés and defectors from Poland, as well as former members of the Polish Socialist Party and other political parties.

In total, 103,489 people were prosecuted under these cases, of whom 84,471 were sentenced to execution. On September 5, 1937 the Politburo expanded the powers of the NKVD Special Council, authorizing it to sentence Polish defectors, members of the Polish Socialist Party, and other Poles accused of anti-Soviet activity to up to ten years of imprisonment. At the same time, the order stipulated that all individuals suspected of espionage in favor of Poland should no longer be released from the camps at the end of their sentence; their cases were to be transferred to the Special Council.

The order also created a special extrajudicial body—the so-called “dvoika” (a commission composed of the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR and the Prosecutor of the USSR)—and cases were reviewed in absentia, based on lists. Fifty prominent Polish communists were executed without trial on charges of espionage. In Poland, a multi-volume Index of the Repressed has been published, with volumes 1–13 listing 78,284 names [32].

On July 25, 1937, the NKVD issued an order “On the Operation to Repress German Nationals Suspected of Espionage Against the USSR.” At that time, approximately 4,600 Germans, including workers, engineers, teachers, artists, doctors, scientists, writers, and communists, resided in the USSR [33]. Within days, arrests began. By spring 1938, 70% of the members of the German Communist Party had been arrested. Professor H. Weber of Mannheim University compiled a list of 242 German communists who were killed or went missing and 25 who survived the camps [34]. Among German state and socio-political figures, 188 perished in Hitler’s prisons, while 70 fell victim to Stalinist executioners [35]. During this period, a myth was fabricated about the existence of a fascist organization supposedly involving German youth living in Moscow and other Soviet cities. Based on this myth, the so-called “Hitler Youth case” was created, leading to the arrest of around 70 young German workers, teachers, and students of the Karl Liebknecht School. The prominent Comintern historian F. Firsov noted in an interview with *Novoye Vremya* that “terror... almost did not affect members of legally operating

communist parties" [36, p.40]. This selective repression, he explained, was due to the fact that legally recognized communist parties were backed by their home countries.

Leaders of the international communist and labor movements attempted to save communists who had become victims of arbitrary repression. They wrote to the General Secretary of the Comintern Executive Committee, G. Dimitrov. Dimitrov forwarded these letters to the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs or his deputy, attaching his own requests to clarify the circumstances of each arrest and to rehabilitate the innocent. For example, in April 1938, Dimitrov sent a letter to M. Firinovsky, Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, from Wilhelm Pieck, a member of the Presidium and Secretariat of the Comintern Executive Committee. Pieck attached a list of individuals arrested by the NKVD and asserted that "they could not have committed criminal acts against the Soviet state and had no connections with hostile anti-Soviet elements." Out of the 15 people on the list, only three were released [37].

The Report of the Commission of the Central Committee of the CPSU to the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee on the Causes of Mass Repressions (February 9, 1956) provides the following statistics concerning the repression of foreign nationals in the USSR. As of September 10, 1938, as a result of NKVD orders that effectively instituted mass terror on ethnic grounds, 106,666 Poles, 31,353 Germans, 6,292 Romanians, and 5,880 Finns had been arrested. Of these, 84,471 Poles, 24,858 Germans, 4,021 Romanians, and 5,224 Finns were sentenced to execution; 19,018 Poles, 5,750 Germans, 2,077 Romanians, and 423 Finns were sentenced to other punishments, primarily corrective labor camps. This, of course, does not represent the full scale of repression against foreign nationals [30, p.321].

The fate of many repressed foreign citizens was connected to camps located in Kazakhstan. The Karaganda Corrective Labor Camp (Karlag) was established in 1930 across three districts of Karaganda region. Its administrative center was located in the settlement of Dolinka. Karlag was the largest camp in the NKVD system and specialized in agricultural production. The Steppe Camp (Steplag) was organized in 1948 from several camps in the Dzhezkazgan region; later, its network expanded to Ekibastuz and Balkhash. Whereas Karlag was modeled on labor colonies of the tsarist period, Steplag was structured along the lines of Nazi concentration camps in Germany.

Near Atbasar, on the banks of the Irtysh River, was located the Akmolinsk Camp for Wives of Traitors to the Motherland (ALZHIR). In these camps, foreigners were imprisoned alongside Soviet citizens. One former Steplag prisoner, B. Yskakov, recounted meeting a German professor, Karl Friedrich (surname unknown). Until 1945, the professor had lived and worked in Berlin in the field of atomic physics. After Germany's capitulation, he was arrested and sent to Moscow. He worked for five years with Soviet scientists in Dubna, but in 1950 he was arrested again, sentenced to ten years, and sent to Steplag.

The book entitled "In den Fängen des NKWD: Deutsche Opfer des stalinistischen Terrors in der UdSSR", published in Berlin in 1991 presents brief biographies of 1,100 German anti-fascists who became victims of Stalinist terror in the USSR [38]. Many of them passed through camps and special settlements in Kazakhstan. For example, E. Kolbe was among the first communists arrested by the Nazis. After his release, he emigrated to the USSR, where he was arrested by the NKVD in 1938, sentenced to ten years, and sent to Karlag. F. Lenz, M. Menzel, L. Rautenberg, and other German émigrés convicted by Soviet authorities were also imprisoned in Kazakhstani camps and settlements [38, pp.41, 120, 134, 149, 180]. In this book, the phrase "fate unknown" frequently appears next to the names of émigrés. However, documents discovered in the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan have made it possible to clarify the fate of some of these individuals.

The German writer and communist Susanne Leonhard arrived in the USSR in 1935. After her arrest, her son Wolfgang Leonhard was placed in Children's Home No. 6. In 1940, he enrolled in the Moscow Institute of Foreign Languages. When the war began, he was sent to Karaganda, where he continued his studies at the Teachers' Institute. In 1942, as an outstanding student, he was assigned to Kazakh State University. However, after enrolling and beginning his studies, it was discovered that he was not permitted to leave Karaganda. He was therefore sent back to Karaganda [39, 40]. In 1955, Wolfgang Leonhard published a memoir about his life in exile; Chapter 4, "Zwangsumsiedlung nach Karaganda" ("Forced Resettlement to Karaganda"), is devoted to this period of his life [25].

Kazakhstani archives also contain information about the fate of the families of repressed European émigrés (Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan [41]). The wives and children of repressed émigrés were evacuated to Kazakhstan; many of them hoped to receive assistance from the International Organization for Aid to Revolutionary Fighters (MOPR). The organization's records contain numerous petitions requesting financial support. Regional MOPR committees sought clarification from the Central Committee regarding the legitimacy of these requests and the possibility of providing assistance. All such correspondence was marked "secret." For example, the chairman of the North Kazakhstan Regional Committee of MOPR wrote: "...Marta Möller and Margarita Velmer are wives of men who are under arrest. Therefore, we request clarification as to whether we may consider them full-fledged political émigrés and extend special care to them" [42]. Although no direct response from the central authorities has been found, the likely answer can be inferred from subsequent decisions by regional committees to deny financial assistance to Margarita Hokuin, Margarita König, Irma Nebel, and Klara Wibush, whose husbands had been repressed.

Reports of the Kazakhstan branch of MOPR have made it possible to identify several German émigrés repressed in the USSR, including Hans Tuchscherer (member of the Communist Party of Germany), Wilhelm Hokuin (member of the Communist Party of Germany), Irina Freymel (from Czechoslovakia), Robert Schenk (a Sudeten German), and Richard and Helmut König (from Germany). On March 26, 1942, the Central Committee of MOPR USSR sent a letter to the Kazakhstan branch requesting financial assistance for Hans Friedrich Tuchscherer (born 1898, member of the Communist Party of Germany since 1929, electromechanic), residing in Settlement No. 11 at Osakarovka station, Karaganda region. On April 15, 1942, MOPR Kazakhstan transferred him 200 rubles. However, on May 20, 1942, the Karaganda Regional Committee of MOPR reported that Tuchscherer had been arrested by the NKVD [43, 44, 45].

The wave of repression generated fear and confusion among political émigrés. The most vivid account of their sentiments was provided by the prominent Hungarian communist leader, People's Commissar of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, and economist Evgeny Varga in a letter addressed to Stalin: "...Instead of a proper combination of Soviet patriotism and internationalism, a one-sided and narrow nationalism is increasingly gaining ground. Hatred toward foreigners is raging. Foreigners are indiscriminately regarded as spies; foreign children at school are called fascists, and so on. (A minor symptom: for the first time this year, not a single word was published in our press about the anniversary of the founding of the Hungarian Soviet Republic.) This growing hatred toward foreigners erupted as a result of the mass arrests of foreigners... The cadres remaining at liberty in the Soviet Union have been deeply demoralized and discouraged by the mass arrests. This demoralization encompasses the majority of Comintern workers and extends even to individual members of the Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. The main cause of this demoralization is the feeling of complete helplessness in matters concerning the arrests of political émigrés. There are cases where scoundrels exploit the general distrust of foreigners and the lack of knowledge among

many new NKVD officials regarding the history of fraternal communist parties, to secure the arrest of honest revolutionaries from underground parties through false denunciations. An honest communist who is convinced of the innocence of an arrested comrade can, despite every desire, do almost nothing to clarify the misunderstanding: he does not know what crimes the arrested person is accused of, he has no access to those conducting the investigation, and so forth. Since people are not informed on what grounds their compatriots are arrested or convicted, a dangerous atmosphere of panic is spreading among foreigners in the Soviet Union. Many explain the arrests by assuming that, in the face of impending war, the Soviet government is systematically interning all foreigners. Many foreigners pack their belongings every evening in anticipation of possible arrest. Many, driven nearly insane by constant fear, are incapable of work. From these sentiments it follows that arrest is no longer perceived as it was a year earlier as a disgrace, but as a misfortune. The arrested are not despised, but pitied!" [37].

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The causes of migration, often described as "push" and "pull" factors, are closely linked to historical events occurring either globally or within individual countries. Among those who entered the USSR in the 1920s were representatives of diverse social groups and professions. Migrants differed in terms of economic status, education, religious affiliation, nationality, and age. The proclaimed goal of building a society based on equality and justice attracted workers and specialists from abroad. However, the overwhelming majority of immigrants arrived in the Soviet Union for political reasons. For many, migration was not driven by economic necessity but by sincere ideological conviction and hope for life in a state of universal social justice. The young Soviet republic offered such hope.

European labor immigration played a significant role in the economic development of the USSR during the period of Soviet modernization. Subsequently, however, the majority of these immigrants became victims of Stalinist repression. Although most European migrants left the USSR by the early 1930s, some specialists continued to work successfully in the country in later years.

Yet the society that had proclaimed the achievement of the highest ideals of social justice ultimately degenerated into a system characterized by profound injustice, terror, and lawlessness, the Stalinist model of socialism. In the 1930s, the administrative-command system of governance became firmly established, closely linked to a single party's monopoly of power. The Bolsheviks' violent seizure of power led to a deep internal split within society. The maintenance of political dominance over all spheres of social life was therefore possible only through an extensive repressive apparatus, political terror, total ideological indoctrination, and the manipulation of public consciousness.

Much is already known about the repressions of the 1930s and 1940s; however, significant "blank spots" remain in the history of the Stalinist regime and its anti-democratic policies, gaps that can only be illuminated through continued archival research.

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