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Political aspects of repatriation: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan. A comparative analysis

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This paper is based on a study which compares repatriation policies of Germany, Russia, and Kazakhstan. The choice of cases is based on a "most similar case design." The Russian case results in unsuccessful and unsustainable repatriation, the German case exhibits a change from sustainable repatriation to a slow termination of the program, while the case of Kazakhstan is one of sustainable and relatively successful repatriation. The main argument of the paper is that in order for a repatriation program to be sustainable, the program must contain both a practical component and an ideological component. If a repatriation program lacks ideological backing which permeates other aspects of political life in a state, then the repatriation program grinds to a halt. If a repatriation program has ideological backing, but is rendered impractical and does not meet the economic, demographic and labor market needs of a state, then the further development of the program stops. The findings of this study merit further reflection on issues of changing national identities, on transnational migration pathways, and on the "post-Soviet condition" which has set the stage for all of the aforementioned processes and transformations.

Keywords: international migration; repatriation; return migration; co-ethnic migration; return ethnic migration; post-Soviet migration; German resettlement; Aussiedler; Russian compatriots; Kazakhstan oralmans

Repatriation and studies of repatriation

Repatriation is defined most broadly as the process of return to one's "place of origin." Sometimes called "migrations of ethnic affinity," repatriation flows are controlled by receiving states which have special provisions for this in their immigration and citizenship policies (Brubaker 1996, 55). In international law, repatriation policy is referred to as the manifestation of a "right of return," or the right granted to every person to relocate to the country they deem to be their home country, codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.[1] In many cases, post-conflict countries implement repatriation programs for refugees or prisoners of war. Additionally, however, many countries that are not currently experiencing periods of unrest have included repatriation programs in their broader migration policy agendas. There are approximately 40 countries that can be considered to have implemented repatriation legislation or programs. Such countries include Germany, Greece, France, Armenia, Ireland, Poland, Russia, Kazakhstan, Israel, Turkey, and India, among others.

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Most of the time, these policies apply to the titular ethnic group[2] and encourage the return of emigrants "back" to their "countries of origin."

Repatriation challenges traditional notions of ethnicity, belonging, citizenship, integration, national divides, and cultural difference. Although repatriates are often given citizenship of the country they "return to" based on blood ties and ethnic relations, studies show that they often encounter difficulties with integration into the societies of their country of origin and are perceived by the local population as foreign or as a migrant group (Heß 2011; Skrentny et al. 2007, 104; 810).

Repatriation as a form of migration was largely ignored by social scientists until the late 1970s, when the one-way permanent migration paradigm began to make way for more nuanced attention toward complex migrant pathways (Gmelch 1980, 135). Work on repatriation over the past several decades has not resulted in the emergence of more integrated or systematic approaches to the topic. Not all states use the same terminology to refer to this phenomenon, and the terminology in academic literature varies across disciplines. Repatriation can be called "co-ethnic migration" (Muenz and Ohlinger 2003) "return migration" (Cassarino 2004, 253), and "ethnic return migration" (de Tinguy 2003, 113). Scholars also disagree on whether a concrete set of policies in a given state constitute a repatriation program or simply allow for "privileged migration" – a debate that has arisen, for example, with regard to the Russian case (de Tinguy 2003, 112). Scholars studying repatriation tend to agree that repatriation is "not a unidirectional, homogenous movement," but rather a process of "disjointed cultural and physical reconstruction" of models of belonging in which multiple actors participate (Flynn 2003, 185).

Ethnic return migration has been mostly studied in isolated cases pertaining to particular nation-states. The most prominent works on German return migration include studies by Dietz and Hilkes (1993), Bade and Oltmer (2003), Irina Mukhina (2007), Luchterhandt and Eisfeld (2008), and, most recently, by Radenbach and Rosenthal (2011, 2012). The case of Kazakhstani return migration has been addressed in the works of Natsuko Oka (2013), Kalshabaeva and Seisenbayeva (2013), Barcus and Werner (2010), and Bonnenfant (2012), among others. The Russian case of return migration is usually addressed within the literature on migration policies of Russia at large or in studies pertaining to policies toward compatriots residing abroad (Flynn 2003; Heleniak 2008; Shevel 2011; de Tinguy 2003).

Despite increasing interest toward return migration in migration literature, there have been few attempts to situate repatriation policies in comparative perspective. Existing works include an ambitious study by Skrentny et al. (2007) which compares repatriation policies through the prism of "Western" repatriation (as practiced by states in Europe) and "Eastern" repatriation (as practiced by states in Asia), concluding that European states use rhetoric of "symbolic ties" with repatriates, while Asian states implement repatriation policies to reach economic goals. In another comparative work, Christin Heß (2011) analyzed the German and Greek repatriation policies and argued that changes in repatriation policy reflect changes in national idioms of receiving states. A recent volume entitled "Diasporic Homecomings: Ethnic Return Migration in Comparative Perspective," edited by Takeyuki Tsuda (2009), presents several chapters on repatriation specifically in comparative perspective, including a comparison of Germany and Israel by Christian Joppke and Zeev Rosenhek and a study across Europe and East Asia conducted by Skrentny et al. which expanded upon the conclusions of their 2007 work. The book's unifying focus lies on marginalization of repatriates in their "homelands" upon their return, as the works included in the volume stress the multiple dislocations characteristic of today's migration pathways. This paper will contribute to efforts to situate repatriation in comparative historical perspective across nation-states, and will, for the first time in

repatriation scholarship, use a temporal and conceptual framework of post-Soviet migration. This paper also attempts to formulate the conditions under which a repatriation policy can be successful.

Several scholars have addressed repatriation flows in the context of post-Soviet nation-building processes. In his paper on migration in the post-Soviet space, Timothy Heleniak characterizes the Soviet Union as "a complex system of ethnic homelands," which set the stage for post-Soviet migration patterns dominated by flows of migrants "returning home" to states both within and external to the former Soviet Union (2008, 31). This resulted in rising "titular shares" in the populations of the former Soviet states (Heleniak 2008, 54).[3] Moya Flynn, in her study on return migration to Russia, makes the argument that post-Soviet migration flows, especially in their repatriation dimension, "cut across, rather than fit within, established theoretical boundaries" (2003, 173). These flows were set into motion not only by economic factors and familial ties, but also by migration policies formulated by the newly independent states. Hilary Pilkington, in her book "Migration, Displacement and Identity in Post-Soviet Russia," notes that the study of these policy formulations in the wake of the collapse of the USSR provides fertile ground for the study of primordial conceptions of nation and homeland (1998, 186).

This paper will argue that the collapse of the Soviet Union had implications for migration flows and nation-building processes not only within the borders of the former Soviet Union, but also beyond them. This paper looks specifically at the cases of Russia, Germany, and Kazakhstan.

Repatriation in comparative perspective: most similar cases

This study compares the repatriation and citizenship policies of Germany, Russia, and Kazakhstan.[4] My choice is based on a "most similar case design" and thus aims to select cases which are comparable, but have led to varying outcomes.

The similarity of these three cases lies in the presence of national repatriation programs in the greater context of their migration policies and in the programs' structural features. All programs offer a simplified immigration path for repatriates over other immigrants (repatriates are free from entry visas), all programs include the promise of either citizenship or a simplified track to citizenship, and all programs provide some form of social and monetary aid for repatriates upon arrival, including housing allowances, requalification courses, help in finding a job, and a start-up stipend.

The three cases are "most similar" despite the fact that they are situated in differing historical contexts. Germany implemented its repatriation policy in 1954, while Russia and Kazakhstan formalized their repatriation policies after the breakup of the Soviet Union (in 2006 and 1998, respectively). There are several factors that make the cases comparable despite the temporal gaps: first, the political system in place at the moment of repatriation policy implementation, in all the three cases, was claimed to be democratic by state leaders. Second, all the three states, at the time of repatriation policy implementation, had experienced a change of borders which resulted in a large diaspora living abroad. Finally, all the three cases are situated in a context of post-Soviet migration flows, since the greatest inflow of repatriates to Germany occurred in the 1990s. In this vein, all the three states' policies were influenced by the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The varying "outcomes" in this context have proven to be varying sustainability and success of repatriation policies. The Russian case results in unsuccessful and unsustainable repatriation, the German case exhibits a change from sustainable repatriation to a slow termination of the program, while the case of Kazakhstan is one of sustainable and relatively

successful repatriation. Variations between the cases can reveal variables that lead to the sustainability and success of repatriation programs.

The main argument of this paper is that in order for a repatriation program to be sustainable, the program must contain both a practical component and an ideological component. If a repatriation program lacks ideological backing, then the repatriation program grinds to a halt. If a repatriation program has ideological backing, but is rendered impractical and does not meet the economic, demographic, and labor market needs of a state, then the further development of the program stops. In this case, "ideological backing" refers to ancillary policies, declarations, and legislation in a state with which repatriation is coherent.

In this discussion, "sustainability" of a repatriation program implies its persistence over time, and its relative "effectiveness." Effectiveness in this context is measured by the numbers of people who partake in the program (as well as whether these numbers meet expected magnitudes) on one hand, and the extent of political integration of the repatriates into the receiving nation-state (in the form of naturalization) on the other. Political integration in the nation-state is considered as a factor of effectiveness of repatriation policies for two reasons: first, political rhetoric surrounding repatriation programs of the countries examined in the paper all assert that potential repatriates are potentially members of the receiving nation-state. Second, repatriation policies in place in the cases examined guarantee eventual citizenship to repatriates.

The stopping of a repatriation program's development is defined as either the negligible inflow of repatriates to the country or as a termination of the laws and regulations that enable such migration. The "ideological component" of a repatriation program is an abstract set of political premises and ideas which permeate many levels of the political life of a state. The "practical component" of a repatriation program is the strategic relevance of an inflow of repatriates to a country's demographic, economic, and labor market needs.

As repatriation flows are formed by states, this paper begins with state-centric frame of analysis. Following Rogers Brubaker (1994), this study treats repatriation policy as a category of practice of nationhood. Importantly, the three states analyzed in this paper underwent border and population changes in the early 1990s, and thus the three respective political leaders faced the task of "filling [the new borders] out with national content, bringing population, territory, culture and polity into the close congruence that defines a fully realized nation-state" (Brubaker 2011, 1786). While the presence of repatriation policies in a state's migration framework can reveal tendencies towards ethnic conceptions of nationhood, repatriation is nonetheless not treated as a direct indicator of ethnic nationalism. The Russian policy does not strictly assert that a repatriate must be ethnically Russian, nor did the policy have explicit provisions for naturalization of repatriates until 2013. This means that Russia seemingly has a non-ethnic understanding of nation, yet practices repatriation. In Germany, repatriation policies were explicitly ethnic and based on every German's right to live in a German nation. In this case, the legislative complex of regulations relating to repatriation policy made it clear that German ethnicity was synonymous with membership in the German nation-state. In the case of Kazakhstan, repatriation policy reflected at least a partially ethnic understanding of nation-state due to the automatic granting of Kazakhstani citizenship to Kazakh repatriates, and this ethnically oriented trend was visible in other spheres of state policy (in the constitution, in cadre politics, and in language policy). However, President Nursultan Nazarbayev and his administration have also taken pains to advance civic conceptions of nationhood in parallel with the ethnic Kazakhification trends, making the Kazakh case a case of "nationalizing" state-building rather than explicitly "ethnic" state-building.[5]

republics.[9] These migrants were driven mostly by economic motives, hoping to find work and improve their quality of life. They spoke Russian as their first language and had difficulty finding work in Germany. Given the unprecedented numbers of migrants flowing to the borders of Germany during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the program took a large toll on government and municipal budgets.

In the early 1990s, the German government passed a series of laws which would restrict and monitor the acceptance of Russian–German immigrants into Germany (Skrentny et al. 2007, 810). This reduced the number of Russian–Germans that Germany would accept as immigrants and citizens. In 1990, the German government amended the Federal Expellees Act to include a German language test, and to enable a shift of responsibilities for determining eligibility for immigration to the specific Soviet republics from which Russian–Germans would be applying for German citizenship.[10] In 1992, under the chancellery of Helmut Kohl of the Christian Democratic Union, the German legislature replaced the Federal Expellees Act with the Law on Resolving the Consequences of World War II (*Kriegsfolgenbereinigungsgesetz*).[11] The new set of laws was drafted by the Christian Democratic Union with the aim of minimizing the inflow of allegedly unfounded asylum-seekers into Germany, a stance harshly criticized by the Social Democrats (Howard 2008, 45). The new regulations specified that people born after 1992 would no longer be eligible for German citizenship on ethnic grounds after 2010 (though they may enter as family members) and limited the breadth of family members that could receive resettler status (spouses of children were no longer eligible, for example). Finally, the revision of the legal framework included the introduction of an upper limit of 225,000 immigrants per year that could be considered "resettlers" as of 1 January 1993.[12] This series of changes in law ultimately divorced the notion of German ethnic background from a status of being eligible for German citizenship.

The increased restrictiveness of German immigration policy in the early 1990s came hand in hand with other global historical changes: the unification of East and West Germany on 3 October 1990, and the liberalization and subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union and East European communist regimes. With German unification having taken place and all East Germans automatically having become citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany, the goal of the Federal Republic to achieve unification defined by common descent and nationhood was met (Wolff 2003, 92). With the fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, a repatriation policy based on allowing Germans to escape prosecution also lost its validity and relevance. The German state needed to seek new ways of defining its identity, as well as its immigration and citizenship policies.

The reconsideration of German repatriation legislation was followed in the year 2000 by a revision of the German citizenship law under the Gerhard Schröder Social Democrat-Green coalition government (with the support from the side of the Free Democrats); after repatriation legislation became more restrictive (with the efforts from the Christian Democrats), citizenship legislation became more inclusive (with the efforts from the Social Democrats) (Howard 2008, 45). Until the year 2000, the German citizenship law was based on a 1913 principle of a "community of descent" with little regard for birthplace and residence.[13] In 2000, this law underwent significant changes with pressures from left-leaning political elites in Germany: the new law states that children born on German soil could automatically become German citizens in the event that at least one of the parents had a legal residence person for eight years or an unlimited residence permit for three years. In practice, this law denies the acquisition of German citizenship to as many as 60% of the children born in German since the law has come into effect (Green 2001, 926). On a conceptual level, however, the amendment represents a symbolic step toward

the liberalization of German citizenship policy. For nearly a century, German citizenship had been one of the most clearly *jus sanguinis*-oriented systems in the world (citizenship by blood), and only with the latest change were *jus soli* elements introduced to the legislation (citizenship by territory of birth). This revision, in combination with the stricter legislation on acceptance of Russian–Germans, symbolizes a gradual movement away from an ethnically defined conception of German citizenship.

Repatriation to Kazakhstan

Repatriation is currently one of the main pillars of the migration policy of Kazakhstan. President Nursultan Nazarbayev stood at the forefront of developing relations with Kazakh diaspora and subsequently formulating repatriation policies (Bonnenfant 2012, 33). The Kazakh repatriation program is for ethnic Kazakhs who live outside of Kazakhstan's borders, mainly those Kazakhs and their descendants who left the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s, escaping collectivization and political persecution. Repatriation policies in Kazakhstan were aimed at compensating for large emigration numbers and at helping to make up for the demographic drop due to falling birthrates.[14] The policies also reflected the government's aspirations to increase the percentage of ethnic Kazakhs in Kazakhstan as a part of the nation-building agenda of the newly independent state.

At the time of the Soviet Union's collapse, Kazakhstan had a diverse ethnic composition, with around 40% of the population made up by ethnic Kazakhs and 38% made up by ethnic Russians (Khazanov 1995, 244). Throughout the 1990s, many Russians left Kazakhstan. Rhetoric of subjugation of Kazakh identity in the Soviet Union began to surface in statements by political and cultural elites, and Nazarbayev's administration voiced political will to "reinstate" Kazakh culture and traditions as defining features of the new state (Bonnenfant 2012, 33). The Nazarbayev administration took legislative steps toward so-called "Kazakhification" of Kazakhstan: the new citizenship law was based largely on ethnicity, the Kazakh language was proclaimed as the official language while Russian was downgraded to a language of inter-ethnic communication, and tests of Kazakh were introduced for all bureaucrats and political office holders, thus promoting Kazakh cadres. These measures were justified as "stability-enhancing mechanisms" (Schatz 2000, 450).

While some authors argue these policies reflected an ethnic-oriented tendency in Kazakhstani nation-building processes (Brubaker 2011; Davenel 2012; Hale 2009; Jin 2006; Sarsembayev 1999), others point out that President Nazarbayev has followed "strategic ambiguity" between ethnic and civic nationalism in the post-Soviet period, carefully balancing between ethnic rhetoric and civic policies by showing declarative and legislative support for Kazakhification, but not taking practical measures to see Kazakhification through (Ó Beacháin and Kevlihan 2013; Surucu 2002). In fact, Nazarbayev's reluctance to quickly implement the Kazakhification policies he speaks of can be interpreted as a strategy of catering to minorities and containing both Kazakh and Russian nationalism (Danzer 2009, 1559). In this way, Kazakhstan, like most other states, exhibits a "profound dualism" in its civic-ethnic nationalism balance (Ó Beacháin and Kevlihan 2013). Rogers Brubaker's concept of "nationalizing state" is useful for an understanding of the path which post-Soviet Kazakhstan has followed: Brubaker argues that as a "nationalizing state," Kazakhstani elites may not argue for an explicitly ethnic understanding of nationhood, but its elites discursively and legislatively support the idea that there is an ethnocultural "core nationality" to which the state belongs, and that this "core nationality" is in a weak position and should be strengthened to redress previous discrimination (Brubaker 2011, 1786). The Citizenship

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, passed in December 1991, states that Kazakhstani citizens are those who reside permanently in Kazakhstan at the moment of the passing of this law, or those who were born in Kazakhstan, or were naturalized according to further articles of this law; additionally, the Republic of Kazakhstan makes it possible for the *return* of persons or descendants of persons who were forced to leave the country during periods of repression or collectivization, as well as enabling the return of Kazakhs who reside outside of Kazakhstan's borders. In the context of citizenship legislation, this implies that ethnic Kazakhs outside of Kazakhstan are by default considered eligible for citizenship in the event that they wish to move to Kazakhstan. In 1992, President Nazarbayev held a speech in which he made the inclusion of Kazakhs living abroad in the Kazakhstani state explicit: "For those who had to leave their homeland once and now wish to come back, the arms of independent Kazakhstan are wide open for you."[15]

The year 1998 marked the beginning of a systematized approach to repatriation of "oralmans," or ethnic Kazakhs living outside the country, to Kazakhstan. The decree of the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan from 16 September 1998 outlines the framework of Kazakhstan's repatriation policy in a single document dedicated to this policy sphere. The document reiterates the right of return of all ethnic Kazakhs to their historic homeland. The document prescribes for the establishment of a special organization which would help with the adaptation of ethnic Kazakhs in their historic homeland.[16] The document also stipulates that ethnic Kazakhs who have repatriated to their historic homeland will be accepted into the citizenship of Kazakhstan regardless of how long they have lived on the territory of Kazakhstan.

Kazakh repatriates can theoretically apply to repatriate to any province of Kazakhstan, but their settlement is regulated by regional quotas which are determined on an annual basis by a presidential decree and reflect population, economic, and budgetary considerations specific to each region of the country.[17] Repatriates who apply for immigration can indicate their first choice for the province they wish to resettle to, yet local regional committees then accept or reject the applicants based on their own annual immigration quotas. Applicants who were rejected by regional committees can either reapply the following year or choose to move as regular immigrants, thus foregoing some of the benefits repatriates who arrive within the quota can receive.[18] The quota system results in a situation where there are two groups of repatriates in Kazakhstan: those who resettle within the yearly quota, and those who resettle outside of the yearly quota. The latter group receives lower financial support.[19] Both groups are eligible for applying for citizenship, though only repatriates within the quota can undergo fast-track citizenship "restoration" through a simplified procedure. Repatriates who enter the country outside of the quota can apply for quota status de-facto from within Kazakhstan and obtain all the privileges of quota repatriates at a later date.

Even if ethnic nationalism is not an all-encompassing ideology nor the only ideology put forth by Nazarbayev and his administration in their nation-building agenda (Hale 2009, 24), it is nonetheless part of Kazakhstan's "nationalizing" agenda and is clearly seen in the legislation in multiple spheres of political life (cadre policy, the constitution, the linguistic policy agenda), and it is a trend with which repatriation policy is coherent.

Repatriation to Russia

Russian repatriation policies, formalized by President Vladimir Putin in 2006, are aimed at a broadly defined group of people, which includes Russian citizens who reside outside of Russia, former citizens of the USSR, or those who emigrated from Russia or the USSR (and

their descendants), with the exception of descendants of those who belong to "titular nation-alities" of other countries. This is a *non-ethnic* approach to repatriation.

The Russian repatriation program is part of a larger policy of upholding ties with former Soviet citizens and Russian citizens who live outside of Russia's borders, who are referred to officially as "compatriots" (*соотечественники*) in the legal framework and by political elites in Russia. Already in the early 1990s, Yeltsin used the category "compatriots,"[20] but the term was legally defined only in 1999 in the Federal Law on State Policy of the Russian Federation Toward Compatriots Abroad under the late Yeltsin administration (Zevelev 2008).[21] According to this law, the term "compatriot" refers to a person living outside of Russia's borders, who identifies him or herself with Russia, and due to historical, linguistic, or cultural links has a desire to maintain a connection with Russia. He/she can be a current citizen of Russia, a former citizen of Russia, and includes all former Soviet citizens, or citizens of former Soviet Socialist Republics.[22] This means that the term can be applied to a citizen *or* non-citizen of Russia and may include nearly everyone on the post-Soviet space, encompassing over 30 million people around the world, 1.7 of whom live on the post-Soviet space.[23] Importantly, the category applies only to those who voluntarily choose to identify themselves as such.[24] The broad and ambig-uous nature of this category was a result of the complexity of Russia's post-Soviet legacy, which subsequently laid the foundations for a vague and ineffective repatriation program in Russia.

In 2006, under the first Putin administration, the first step was taken to institutionalize a program for encouraging the resettlement of compatriots to Russia. The "state program for assistance for voluntary resettlement of compatriots residing abroad to the Russian Federa-tion" was launched with a presidential decree on 22 June 2006.[25] The target group of the program included all "compatriots" defined in the 1999 law on state policy toward compa-triots abroad. This decree was the first document to mention an agenda for spreading infor-mation to compatriots abroad about opportunities for resettlement to Russia. The text of the program described in the decree placed the repatriation measures in a larger context of socio-economic development, as a building block of a set of measures to improve the demographic situation in Russia (stimulating birth rates, lowering death rates, and stabiliz-ing the population of Russia), and one of the main aims of the program was specified as "combining the potential of compatriots residing abroad with the development needs of Russian regions."[26] The document stressed the need to balance the interests of the reset-tlers, the Russian Federation at large, the regions, and the local municipal formations. The document also stipulated that compatriots are the most desirable migrants to meet such needs because they were "brought up in the traditions of Russian culture, have command of the language and do not wish to lose their connection with Russia," which, according to the logic of the document, implies that they are the most "able to adapt and quickly integrate into a system of positive social connections with the receiving community."[27]

Since the Russian government launched the program, most resettlers have come from former Soviet countries. Nearly one-third have come from Kazakhstan. Other source countries of repatriates to Russia continue to be poorer countries of the former Soviet Union. These resettlers usually move to Russia in search of jobs and a higher standard of living.

The document prescribing the repatriation program in Russia stipulated that the regions of the Russian Federation must develop their own programs for taking in resettlers, and the programs would subsequently be approved at the federal level. Each region is responsible for providing general support in "adaptation and integration of resettlers" and for setting up

institutions to assist repatriates with finding housing and work, for providing occupational retraining for repatriates, and for providing legal assistance in doing paperwork for job contracts and medical and social insurance.[28]

Despite proclamations from the side of Vladimir Putin about the importance of the program, lawmakers in Russia were reluctant for many years to grant repatriates substantive benefits over other immigrants to Russia (Shevel 2011, 196). Although officials have declared that resettlers to Russia can obtain citizenship through a simplified procedure, in practice, since the 2002 citizenship amendment and until 2013, resettlers did not obtain Russian citizenship in a more simple way than any other foreign immigrant. A repatriate *must* be a compatriot, but can be a citizen or a non-citizen. In 2011, for example, out of a total of 12,389 repatriates to Russia, 127 had Russian citizenship (presumably all of them had obtained citizenship through the 1991 Citizenship Law), while 11,948 did not (the remaining 314 were stateless persons).[29]

The conceptual link between Russian citizenship and repatriation to Russia was explicitly written into the law only in January 2013, seven years after the repatriation program was launched. In 2013, the State Duma accepted a set of amendments aimed at simplifying the procedure of acquiring citizenship for resettlers.[30] The new version of the law allows resettlers to obtain citizenship without the previously required five-year period of uninterrupted residency on Russian soil, without the previously required permanent residence permit, without proof of income, and without proof of Russian language skills. The 2013 amendments have thus created a legal framework, which explicitly integrates resettlers *politically* into the Russian state.

Political integration of repatriates

From the point of view of all three states at hand, full legal integration of a repatriate into their country of repatriation culminates in securing their citizenship. This can be gathered from the political rhetoric surrounding repatriation programs of the countries and from the fact that in each case there are policies in place which either guarantee or simplify naturalization for repatriates. As is evident from the table below, repatriation policies of Germany line up with German citizenship policies most closely, resulting in a situation when all repatriates receive German citizenship. In Kazakhstan, the conception of repatriation lining up with eligibility for citizenship holds true (as in Germany), yet bureaucratic hurdles such as registration at permanent place of residence and inclusion in the Kazakh repatriates quota slow this process, creating a lag between the time that an "oralman" repatriates and the time they can acquire full citizenship. At the moment, the statistics presented in the table below were gathered by the UNDP, where 76% of repatriates to Kazakhstan had acquired citizenship while 21% were awaiting confirmation or had applied for citizenship.[31]

As illustrated in the far right column of Table 1 ("Percentage of those who are eligible for citizenship who successfully obtained citizenship"), the conceptual and legal link between repatriation and citizenship is weakest in the case of Russian repatriation policy. Both legal hurdles and bureaucratic lags exist, resulting in a situation where 41.7% of repatriates who did not already have Russian citizenship upon resettlement do *not* have Russian citizenship though they reside in Russia. The new 2013 law simplifying the citizenship procedure for resettlers to Russia is meant to close this gap. That said, unlike the cases of Germany and Kazakhstan, 5.5% of repatriates to Russia already have Russian citizenship upon arrival, obtained most often through the provisions of the "compatriots residing abroad" program.[32] This difference is a result of Russian tolerance for dual citizenship

and of Russian policies toward "compatriots" throughout the 1990s, which resulted in many people acquiring Russian citizenship while residing outside of Russia's borders. This situation stands out in stark contrast to German and Kazakh policies of disallowing dual citizenship (with few exceptions).

The table also shows that repatriation policy has made the greatest demographic difference in the case of Germany. The highest proportion of those who could immigrate to Germany as repatriates acted upon this right. In Kazakhstan, the repatriation trend is still continuing, and families are continuing to immigrate at a rapid pace. Russia has experienced the least demographic impact of repatriation policy.

On one hand, this is a result of the short amount of time that has passed since repatriation became an institutionalized policy sphere. On the other hand, virtually anyone from all over the world who has roots in the former Soviet Union, with the exception of people who belong to "titular nations" of the former Soviet republics, can be eligible for this program. This creates a much broader base of potential repatriates which is not tied to ethnic conceptions of belonging. This should result in a much wider appeal of the Russian program to varied groups. Yet statistics show that the appeal is very limited, especially given the sheer relative size of Russia's population and the numbers of migrants needed against this backdrop to make any significant demographic difference.

In this paper and particularly in this section, I have looked at integration on the level of the nation-state (i.e. integration in the form of naturalization) as a measure of effectiveness of a program. Yet integration at the societal level also merits discussion. Despite their favored treatment as compared to other groups of migrants in processes of naturalization, repatriates in Russia, Germany, and Kazakhstan have faced similar problems of societal integration upon resettlement, including difficulties in the spheres of socialization, labor market integration, language, education, bureaucratic hurdles, housing, and naturalization. The more cultural aspects of integration, such as language and socialization, as well as integration of children into school systems, have been proven very difficult in the German and Kazakh cases. Yet in questions of bureaucratic hurdles, housing, and even labor market integration, deep problems plague all three states. In this context, the very concept of political integration of repatriates into the receiving nation-state as a part of repatriation can be problematized. Broadening the definition of effectiveness to include societal integration would reveal a more textured picture of migrants and their place in receiving nation-states, yet such an expansion of the terms of discussion would run the risk of conflating "nation-state" with "society" (Chernilo 2010, 93), or "the polity" with "the people." This paper seeks to stay on the level of the polity and state-formulated political agendas in the sphere of migration; for this reason, the question of societal integration of repatriates should be the focus of other studies which view repatriation in a context of transnational migrant flows.

Conclusions and implications

Repatriation policies are not what they seem. This section offers several sets of conclusions in four parts. The first part of the section operationalizes the conditions under which repatriation programs can be sustained. The second part briefly traces evolution of national identity definitions in each of the three states in question based on the evolution of their citizenship and repatriation policies. The third brings to the fore the transnational essence of the migration patterns analyzed in this paper. Finally, all of these processes are contextualized in the last section as elements of a greater "post-Soviet condition."

Table 1. Statistical results of repatriation programs and naturalization.[a]

	Population of the receiving country (average for the years of the program)	Approximate number of people living outside of the country who are eligible for repatriation at the start of the program (including family members)	Number of people who repatriated (including family members)[b]	Repatriates as % of total population	Average number of repatriates per year	Percentage of those who are eligible for citizenship who successfully obtained citizenship
Germany	78.1 million (1954–2008 average)	~ 4 million	1954–2008: 2 350 179	~ 3.01%	42 730	100%
Kazakhstan	15.03 million (1998–2004 average)	~ 4.3 million	1998–2004: 67 500	~ 0.45%	9 642	76%
Russia	140.9 million (2008–2010 average)	~ 35 million[c]	2008–2010: 28 086	~ 0.02%	9 362	58.3%

[a]Accessed January 15, 2013. http://mifis.ru/monitoring.pdf; Accessed January 15, 2013. http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b11_107/Main.htm; Accessed January 15, 2013. http://rus.ruvr.ru/radio_broadcast/no_program/49430348.html; Accessed January 15, 2013. http://www.bmi.bund.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/876734/publicationFile/55172/Migrationsbericht_2008_de.pdf
[b]The time frames are chosen based on the years of implementation of the program and adjusted for the availability of the most reliable statistical sources.
[c]This estimate encompasses all compatriots residing abroad. This includes a broad range of people who can trace their roots to the former Soviet Union and who wish to label themselves as "compatriots." The estimate given in the table was voiced by Alaxander Chepurin, the Director of the Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for working with compatriots residing abroad.

Sustained repatriation: a combination of ideological backing and practicality

Repatriation programs have two crucial components: ideological backing and practicality. In order for a repatriation program to be sustainable, *both* components must be present. If a repatriation program lacks ideological backing which permeates other aspects of political life in a state, the repatriation program grinds to a halt. If a repatriation program has ideological backing, but is rendered impractical and does not meet the economic, demographic and labor market needs of a state, then the further development of the program is arrested.

The German repatriation program was in place for over four decades until its dissolution due to the fact of German unification and the fall of the communist bloc, which signaled the fall of the ideological pillars holding up Germany's repatriation concept. Russian repatriation policy is relatively new, but has already shown very low rates of success due to the absence of any sort of ideological component of this exclusively pragmatic program. Kazakhstan's repatriation program continues to function and reflects a balance of ideological considerations and pragmatism from the side of the state.

In the case of Germany, the ideological component of the repatriation concept was manifested in the West German insistence that the only legitimate state for Germans was the West German state, and that all Germans had the right to automatically become members of this state upon arrival at its borders. This informed both the citizenship and repatriation policies of Germany from the 1950s to the early 1990s. This ideology was framed by iron curtain divisions between an "unfree communist 'East'" and a "free, democratic 'West.'" This division set the stage for the positioning of any German who immigrated to West Germany as "living proof" of the undemocratic nature of states east of the iron curtain. In this way, the West German state cultivated an ideology of delegitimizing communist regimes by denying their ability to guarantee their citizens (first and foremost, ethnic Germans) basic rights. This ideological foundation was supplemented by the practical need for labor migrants to fill up the German labor market. Integration programs for repatriates were aimed at effective and painless insertion of repatriate migrants into the economy and into the society of Germany, and laws prescribing the settlement of repatriates in specific regions of Germany also reflected a strategic approach to utilizing these migrant flows.

In the German case, repatriation policy functioned until German unification took place and until the communist bloc disintegrated. This signaled the end of the ideological backing to German repatriation policy, and thus over the course of the 1990s, German repatriation legislation became ever more restrictive. The dissolution of the very premise upon which repatriation to Germany was based (the premise of ethnic Germanness) culminated in the amendment of the German citizenship law in the year 2000, which signaled a permanent departure from an ethnically defined conception of German citizenship.

In the case of Kazakhstan, the ideological component of citizenship and repatriation laws was manifested in the nation-building agenda of Kazakhstan as a newly independent state. An ethno-cultural Kazakh identity was cultivated by political elites through education reform, language policy focusing on Kazakh language promotion, preferences for ethnic Kazakh cadres, and, most importantly, in the citizenship and repatriation policies of Kazakhstan, forming a "nationalizing" agenda at the level of state rhetoric and legislation. The breadth and scope of Kazakhstan's repatriation policy for ethnic Kazakhs, as well as the political discourses that linked the unity of all Kazakhs to Kazakhstan's national identity and stability (e.g., in the text of the migration program itself), point to a pronounced emphasis on "nationalizing" conceptualizations of the nation. The processes taking place on the

political arena of a newly independent Kazakhstan, including processes of migration, thus reveal the link between Kazakhstani *national* identity and *ethnic* Kazakh identity.

The practical foundations of Kazakhstan's repatriation policy are most clearly manifested in Kazakhstan's quota system for repatriates. Each province of Kazakhstan sets a quota for the numbers of repatriates it is ready to receive, and this quota is revised every year based on the economic and demographic needs of each region. The quota system does not result in discrimination against ethnic Kazakhs who wish to immigrate to Kazakhstan but who do not make it into the quota, for they can still resettle to the country and receive a fixed set of repatriate benefits, reapplying for inclusion in the quota at a later date. Repatriates within the quota simply receive additional benefits. This quota policy strikes a fine balance between inclusion and exclusion of ethnic Kazakhs; formally, all ethnic Kazakhs can repatriate and become citizens, but there is financial motivation for repatriates to immigrate within the set quota, thus catering to the practical needs of the regions they move to. The quota system thus balances the cultivation of a nationalizing (and thus partially ethnic) definition of the nation on the one hand (an ideological component of national identity) with the demographic and labor market needs of each separate province (a practical component of migration and economic policy).

In the case of Russia, the legislation that defines individuals who are eligible for the status of "compatriot" (and subsequently eligible for repatriation to Russia) grew out of an ad hoc set of laws passed in the immediate wake of Soviet disintegration. These measures, chaotically devised and implemented in the 1990s, were a means of regulating the massive migration flows across the post-Soviet space that took place as a result of the emergence of new national borders on the territory of the former USSR. The documents which describe the conceptualization of Russian repatriation policy are striking in their complete lack of ideological considerations regarding common identity, descent, and in their lack of references Russian or Soviet cultural or political legacies at large. The goal of the program is explicitly stated in official documents as improvement of the demographic and labor force situations across less populated regions of the Russian Federation. The needs and the motivations of the candidates for repatriation are addressed exclusively in the context of the "need to balance the needs of Russia and the needs of repatriates." All the documents which relate to the repatriation program are entirely pragmatic in nature and in tone. The absence of an abstract or ideological foundation for the program from the very start resulted in the gap between repatriation policy in the sense of *physical resettlement* and repatriation policy in the sense of *inclusion in the nation-state* (as manifested in granting citizenship); this deep conceptual gap was only taken care of in the legislation seven years after the program began, which only underscored the ad hoc nature in which repatriation and citizenship laws were conceptualized from the start in Russia. This set of characteristics of the Russian program resulted in negligible numbers of compatriots willing to repatriate, and in political stagnation with regard to program development.

The exclusively pragmatic nature of the Russian repatriation program in combination with its lack of initial conceptual links with Russian citizenship raises the question of whether the Russian program is a repatriation program at all. Formally, the program is based on the UN-declared "right of return" for every individual who wishes to "return to his country."[33] Yet the complexity of the Russian case lies in the non-ethnic nature of the definition of "belonging," in the idea that one can "belong" to Russia but not be a citizen (remaining a "compatriot"), and in the complex near-imperial legacies inherited by Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The emphasis of the program on

securing a place of employment prior to resettlement makes the program seem more like a selective method of importing labor. The fact that, upon close examination, the very applicability of the term "repatriation" to the Russian case comes under question, in combination with negligible numbers of resettlers, leads us to conclude that this case can hardly be called a successful or sustainable example of repatriation.

Changes in legislation and evolution of the national self

Tracing the evolution of repatriation and citizenship laws allows for us to see certain trends in the evolution of national self-definitions. The analysis of German laws has clearly revealed a move from ethnic conceptualizations of the German state to non-ethnic conceptualizations. The evolution of legislation in Kazakhstan reveals a drive for nation-building and identity-building as a "nationalizing" state in juxtaposition with the non-ethnic conceptualizations of belonging that were practiced under Soviet rule. In the case of Russia, non-ethnic conceptualizations under Soviet rule were not replaced after the disintegration of the Soviet Union with any sort of new idea about models of belonging (at least as revealed by citizenship and repatriation evolution).

Transnational formation of migrant pathways

Migrant pathways, or the settlement and resettlement patterns of transnational migrants, are formed not solely by the legislation of the receiving country, but are also informed by processes taking place in other countries. Most notably, the immigration and repatriation policies of Germany produced such far-reaching repatriation results only in combination with emigration policies of the Soviet Union, and later the dissipation of German repatriation legislation resulted from the collapse of the communist bloc. Likewise, flows of repatriates to Russia result not only from the pull-factor of Russian repatriation policies, but are also formed by the socio-economic situations of the countries from which compatriots are emigrating. For this reason, the greatest number of people repatriating to Russia come from the poorest republics of Central Asia.

The case of Russian-German migration pathways is particularly enlightening in the context of transnational processes due to its pertinence to all three countries examined in this paper. Having originally moved to the Russian Empire from Germany as far back as the eighteenth century, this group, ethnically defined and institutionally isolated in the Soviet Union, was forced to migrate to the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union under Stalin. After the liberalization of Soviet emigration policy and following the disintegration of the USSR, most of the members of this group moved to Germany, taking advantage of German repatriation laws. In this way, this group's migration paths veer in and out of all the three countries addressed in this study. Over the course of up to ten generations, a Russian–German family could have lived in Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan, and again Germany.

To further complicate the links between the three countries at hand, Russian–Germans who immigrated to Germany from Kazakhstan or Russia (or from any other former Soviet state) can automatically fall under the category of "compatriots" as defined in Russian legislation. Ironically, their resettlement to Germany makes them eligible for the resettlement program of Russia. From 2000 to 2006, 218,000 Russian–Germans repatriated to Germany, and 13,661 Russian–German repatriates left Germany and emigrated to Russia (Schmid 2009, 77). The proportion of "returnees" is not particularly large among Russian–Germans (especially as compared with other groups of immigrants to Russia),

yet these statistics deserve some reflection. And though it is too early to tell how much of an effect the Russian program for the resettlement of compatriots has had on migration flows of Russian–Germans from Germany to Russia, the case is interesting on a conceptual level. First, Russian–Germans who could make use of Russia's "compatriot" resettlement program did not always come to Germany from Russia, but instead could have migrated from Kazakhstan or other Central Asian republics, thus practicing the "Soviet" aspect of compatriot identity. Secondly, this return process makes this group repatriates "twice:" once upon their move to Germany, once upon their move to Russia. Moreover, if a Russian–German remained in Kazakhstan, they could (on a hypothetical conceptual level, if the time frames of the programs coincided) be eligible for repatriation to Russia *or* to Germany. This matrix of identity games and possibilities for repatriation pathways reveals the multifariousness and at times even irony of migration flows across the map of Eurasia.

The post-Soviet condition

Much of the historical focus of this paper has been on processes taking place in the period after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. This period has often been called the "post-communist," "post-socialist," or "post-Soviet" period. Yet the processes examined in this study are not merely situated in a post-Soviet world in terms of timing, but they are largely *formed by* the post-Soviet condition.

As we have seen, the flows of repatriates to Germany in unprecedented numbers coincided with liberalization of Soviet emigration policy and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The formulation of a new "nationalizing" identity based partially on ethnic notions of the Kazakhstani self was a result of nation-building processes in the period following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Finally, the need for a policy that would institutionalize the relationship of former Soviet citizens and Russians residing outside of Russia emerged when large numbers of those who felt a connection with Russia ended up living in new independent states once the USSR collapsed. All of these processes can be viewed as consequences of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and thus are symptomatic of the "post-Soviet condition."

The Soviet Union's complexity and internal variation set the stage for the multifaceted and variegated processes that plunged into motion in the wake of its collapse. Though it was largely an empire founded upon and driven by socialist ideology and rhetoric, it was never a space of homogenous implementation of ideologies and rhetorics. The intricate ethnic and religious configurations of the Soviet Union coexisted with an overarching Soviet identity, in turn fragmented and split to include varying groups. The communist ideology and the relative cohesiveness of the Soviet Union as a political entity receded in the early 1990s to make way for new conceptualizations of the nation, new migrant pathways, and new challenges to societies and states alike. In this context, social scientists must take great care to examine the realities of transnationalization and to make sense of new formulations of the state's position and states' identities both in world politics and on the level of society.

Funding

Notes

1. This was passed in 1948 to help IDP's and POW's return home: Article 13, Universal Declaration of Human Rights. http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a13 [15.01.2013]; http://www.hrw.org/legacy/campaigns/israel/return/iccpr-rtr.htm#ft1 [15.01.2013]
2. "Titular nation" was a concept used in the Soviet Union to give rise to separate Socialist Republics. It referred to a dominant ethnic group in a republic. An ethnic group could be granted its own republic based on criteria such as population and density of settlement. The titular nationality of Belarus is Belorussians; in Uzbekistan the titular nationality is Uzbeks, for example. In the Law on Compatriots of the Russian Federation, a titular nation is defined as "a part of the population of a state, the nationality of which is defined by the official name of the state." Article 2, Law on Compatriots Abroad. http://www.fms.gov.ru/programs/fmsuds/legal/details/39587/ [15.01.2013]
3. From the 1989 census onwards, the titular share of all Soviet successor states rose with the exception of Russia, where the share of Russians fell. Timothy Heleniak explains this trend with the fact of rapid migration of Russians from Russia in the 1990s and the lower birthrates of Russians relative to other ethnic groups within the country (Heleniak 2008, 53).
4. This paper is based on a larger body of research which traces migration and repatriation policies in historical perspective. Sources for this research are grouped into two categories. The first category of sources informs the policy-oriented and conceptual side of the study. This category is comprised almost entirely of official documents such as texts of constitutions, laws, amendments, texts of official government programs, and presidential decrees. The second category of sources informs the part of the study that handles societal integration of repatriates. This category of sources is comprised of official statistics provided by the three governments and supplemented by results of authoritative and methodologically sound sociological studies conducted in Germany, Kazakhstan, and Russia with regard to the experiences and integration issues of repatriates in each country.
5. Importantly, the "ideology" factor which this article claims as one of the factors leading to the success of a repatriation policy, is not synonymous with an "ethnic understanding of the state:" a migration policy can reflect ethnically oriented ideologies of nation-building, but this ethnic orientation may not be reflected in other policies of the state to make it coherent with larger political trends. "Ideology" can be a complex of foreign and domestic policy measures.
6. http://www.bmi.bund.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/876734/publicationFile/55172/Migrationsbericht_2008_de.pdf [15.01.2013]
7. http://bundesrecht.juris.de/bvfg/index.html [15.01.2013]
8. Under the rule of Stalin, this group was subject to repression and deportations because their German roots were perceived by the Soviet leadership as "threatening" during World War II.
9. http://www.bundesverwaltungsamt.de/ [15.01.2013]; http://www.bmi.bund.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/876734/publicationFile/55172/Migrationsbericht_2008_de.pdf [15.01.2013]
10. http://dejure.org/dienste/vernetzung/rechtsprechung?Gericht=BVerwG&Datum=11.07.1994&Aktenzeichen=9%20B%20288.94 [15.01.2013]
11. Sometimes translated as "Law Dealing with the Clearing of War Consequences" (http://www.integration-eu.org/fileadmin/integration/images/Photos/Description_GermanRussian_BUPNET.pdf), "Law on Resolving Long-Term Effects of World War II" (http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/R4-LEG-DE.pdf), "Act Dealing with the Consequences of the War" (http://www.germanlawjournal.com/pdfs/Vol05/pdf_vol_05_no_07.pdf), "War Aftermath Compensation Law" (http://aei.pitt.edu/2288/1/002339_1.PDF), "War Consequences Conciliation Law" (Wolff, Stefan (2003): "The German Question Since 1919: An Analysis with Key Documents") [15.01.2013]
12. This figure was then revised to 100,000 in the year 2000.
13. In its 1935 version of the citizenship law (*Reichsbuergergesetz*), the Nazi government exploited the law and amended it to an extreme version of a *jus sanguinis* definition of citizenship, creating a legal basis for mass ethnically-based repressions (Brubaker, 1992: 115).
14. After Kazakhstan gained independence from the Soviet Union, the country experienced a period of massive outmigration and falling birth rates. Between 1989 and 1999, the country experienced a population drop from 16.5 million people to less than 15 million people.
15. N.Nazarbayev na III Vsemirnom Kurultae Kazakhov v Astane Pereizbran Glavoi Vsemirnoi Assotsiatsii Kazakhov, 2005. Kazakhstanskaia Pravda, 30 Sept.

16. http://www.unesco.kz/cgi-bin/library?e=d-000-00—0HRCru-akalru%2cHRCru-01-1-0–0prompt-10—4————0-1l–1-ru-50—20-about—00021-001-1-0windowsZz-1251-00&a=d&c=HRCru& cl=CL3.54&d=HASH014e8d68ba4b9bd52ce5c412.1#HASH014e8d68ba4b9bd52ce5c412.1 [15.01.2013]
17. http://www.undp.kz/library_of_publications/files/6838-29587.pdf [15.01.2013]
18. http://www.undp.kz/library_of_publications/files/6838-29587.pdf [15.01.2013]
19. "Oralmans" repatriating outside the quota can receive help in finding a job, professional retraining courses, and Russian or Kazakh language courses. Repatriates within the quota are eligible for tariff-free transfer of belongings across borders, moving expenses compensation, a one-time startup allowance determined by the state, and a simplified track to receiving citizenship. http://www.zakon.kz/64134-vozvrashhenie-oralmanov-v-kazakhstan.html [15.01.2013]
20. http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/25/world/ex-soviet-lands-rebuff-yeltsin-on-protecting-russians-abroad.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm [15.10.2013]
21. http://www.fms.gov.ru/programs/fmsuds/legal/details/39587/ [15.01.2013]
22. http://www.fms.gov.ru/programs/fmsuds/legal/details/39587/ [15.01.2013]
23. http://www.russkiymir.ru/russkiymir/ru/news/common/news6130.html [15.01.2013]
24. http://www.fms.gov.ru/programs/fmsuds/legal/details/39587/ [15.01.2013]
25. http://www.rg.ru/2006/06/28/ukaz-pereselenie.html [15.01.2013]
26. http://www.rg.ru/2006/06/28/ukaz-pereselenie.html [15.01.2013]
27. http://www.rg.ru/2006/06/28/ukaz-pereselenie.html [15.01.2013]
28. http://www.rg.ru/2006/06/28/ukaz-pereselenie.html [15.01.2013]
29. http://mifis.ru/materials/zakonodatelstvo/index.php?ID=4657[15.01.2013]
30. http://www.rg.ru/2013/01/22/grajdanstvo-site.html [22.02.2013]
31. http://www.undp.kz/library_of_publications/files/6838-29587.pdf [15.01.2013]
32. http://mifis.ru/monitoring.pdf [15.01.2013]
33. Article 13, Universal Declaration of Human Rights. http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a13 [15.01.2013]

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