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**FORMATION AND ACTIVITY OF POLTAVA SOCIETY
OF THE GERMANS «VIEDERGEURT» («REVIVAL»)**

Summary. *The purpose of the article is the formation analysis process, functioning of Poltava society of the Germans «Revival»; to reveal and to illustrate the society achievements in the consolidation process of the German nationality people. The methodology of the research is based on the principles of historicism, objectivity and systemicity. During the study, the following specific historical methods have been used: historical-genetic, historical-systemic, problem chronological and historical-biographical, as well as the interdisciplinary methods (content analysis, chronological). The scientific novelty consists in the fact that on the basis of the published and unpublished sources (the private archives documents, the interviews) and the scientific investigations the formation process and the development of Poltava Society of the Germans «Viedergeburt» («Revival») have been analyzed; the pe-*

cularities of its functioning have been determined; the role of the head of the society and its members' activities have been determined, as well as the main directions of its work have been investigated and the international relations of the society have been traced. **Conclusions.** Consequently, the post-war generation of the Germans still remembers the terrible conditions of the GULAGs of Siberia or Kazakhstan (Reabilitovani istoriieiu, 1992; 2005) in which they, their parents or family members were, but under those terrible conditions most of them remained loyal to their people, were honest, hard-working, preserved the culture and customs of their people. Nowadays they have equal political, economic, social, civil rights with all citizens of an independent Ukraine. This is guaranteed by the «Declaration of the Rights of Nationalities of Ukraine». The indication of this is the activity of Poltava Regional Society of the Germans «Viedergeburt» («Revival»), around which people with German roots gather. At the various events of the society, much attention is paid to the study of the German language and culture, traditions, to incite young people to study the history of their ancestors, to be proud of them, to establish contacts with Germany, where they can search for their relatives. The society «Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt» opened a library with books, published in German. Recently, one of the priorities of the society is the attraction of attention to Poltava streets revival of their historical names, where in the past German colonists lived (in particular, Fabrykantska Street and Colonial Street in the historical center of the city). Poltava Germans' society «Revival» maintains close contacts with other regional organizations and the Council of the Germans of Ukraine, it participates in many international projects and events. The activity of the society includes: social, youth, ethno-cultural, informational work which contributes to the preservation of German mentality in the Ukrainian society.

Key words: The Germans, national minorities, Poltava society «Viedergeburt» («Revival»), self-identification, international relations.

СТВОРЕННЯ І ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ ПОЛТАВСЬКОГО ТОВАРИСТВА НІМЦІВ «ВІДЕРГЕБУРТ» («ВІДРОДЖЕННЯ»)

Анотація. Метою даної статті є аналіз процесу створення та функціонування полтавського товариства німців «Відродження», виявити і показати його досягнення у процесі згуртування людей німецької національності. **Методологія дослідження** спирається на принципи історизму, об'єктивності та системності. У ході дослідження застосовувалися такі конкретно-історичні методи: історико-генетичний, історико-системний, проблемно-хронологічний та історико-біографічний, а також міждисциплінарні (контент-аналіз, хронологічний). **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що на основі опублікованих та неопублікованих джерел (документів приватних архівів, інтерв'ю) й наукових розвідок проаналізовано процес становлення і розвитку полтавського товариства німців «Відергебурт» («Відродження»), з'ясовано особливості його функціонування, визначено роль керівників та членів у його діяльності, а також досліджено основні напрями його роботи, проаналізовано міжнародні зв'язки. **Висновки.** Люди німецької національності, у радянські часи позбавлені прав, тепер мають рівні політичні, економічні, соціальні, громадянські права з усіма громадянами незалежної України. Це гарантується «Декларацією прав національностей України». Засвідчує сказане, зокрема, діяльність Полтавського обласного товариства німців «Відродження», навколо якого згуртовуються люди з німецьким корінням. Значна увага товариства зосереджена навколо вивчення німецької мови і культури, традицій, щоб прищепити молоді потреби вивчати історію своїх пращурів, пишатися ними, налагодити контакти з Німеччиною, де можна проводити пошуки своїх родичів. Товариство «Полтавський центр німецької культури «Відергебурт» відкрило бібліотеку з книгами, виданими німецькою мовою. Останнім часом одним із пріоритетних завдань товариства стало повернення уваги до повернення деяким полтавським вулицям історичних назв, де в минулому проживали німецькі колоністи (зокрема, вулиця Фабрикантська і Колонійська в історичному центрі міста). Полтавське товариство німців «Відродження» підтримує тісні контакти з іншими обласними організаціями та Радою німців України, бере участь у багатьох міжнародних проектах та заходах. Діяльність товариства включає: соціальну, молодіжну, етнокультурну, інформаційну роботу, що сприяє збереженню німецької ментальності в українському соціумі.

Ключові слова: німці, національні меншини, полтавське товариство «Відергебурт» («Відродження»), самоідентифікація, міжнародні зв'язки.

The problem statement. Ukraine is a polyethnic state, in which more than 100 different nationalities live. The fate of these people is closely connected with the history of Ukraine, its traditions, customs and culture. The representatives of the German nationality played an important role in the history of our state. They were talented statesmen, the representatives of the scientific, technical, cultural and artistic intelligentsia. In particular, the Archimandrite of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra I. Gisel, M. Schiller – the founder of Kyiv Physical Medical Society, G. Pfeiffer – the academician of the National Academy of Sciences, the mathematician, R. Vogel – the director of Kyiv Observatory, the astronomer, T. Bushe – the chemist, I. Shmalgauzen – the academician, O. Eikhelman – the lawyer, the economist M. Bushe, E. Stern – the archaeologist, F. Falts-Fein – the founder of the Askania Nova reserve, S. Richter – the pianist, O. Burhgard (Yuri Klen) – a well-known Ukrainian poet and a literary critic. All the above-mentioned personalities had the German roots.

The destiny of many Germans was tragic. Many of them were repressed, deported, displaced from their settlements. They suffered from a special pressure during the Soviet period. The famine of 1921 – 1924 and the Holodomor of 1932 – 1933 affected the German families painfully; the years of collectivization and *rozkurkulyuvannya* (when men-colonists, who were not shot immediately, then were deported to the Far North and Siberia); the mass repressions of 1937 – 1938 (when the plan of repressions on each settlement was arranged by the upper authorities, and the local party workers chose freely, first of all, people with German roots, who spoke the foreign German language; there were cases that some people received the letters from abroad, because they had relatives there. This fact caused the Germans to be declared the enemies of the people and be accused of espionage and counterrevolution); the total repressions at the beginning of the Second World War, namely: the deportation of the German population from the regions of the Ukrainian SSR and the Crimea to the East; the brutal, forcible expulsion of people of German nationality from their native lands to Siberia and Kazakhstan.

The processes that took place in the post-Soviet territory during the so-called Gorbachev's «*perebudova*» and the adoption of the Declaration on State Sovereignty of Ukraine (July 16, 1990), led to the increase of the self-awareness of the population. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the descendants of the former colonists began appealing to the newspapers and television editors asking for helping them in the search of persons of the German nationality or those, who have German roots and live on the territory of Poltava region in order to establish some contact with them.

The analysis of recent researches and publications. The fate of people of German nationality has already been in the field of a scientific study by the scientists, but specifically the activity of Poltava regional society «Revival» has not been the subject of a separate scientific analysis. In particular, the well-known Poltava historian Vira Zhuk devoted her monograph to the study of the history of German colonists in Poltava region, in which she analyzed thoroughly the fate of their descendants (Zhuk, 2006). The scientist devoted a number of studies to the analysis of the history of Poltava Germans (Zhuk, 1997; Zhuk, 2004). Iryna Petrenko, a historian, devoted her studies to the analysis of the German nationality representatives as victims of a totalitarian regime in Poltava region (based on the materials of the scientific and documentary series of books «Rehabilitated by the history of Poltava region») (Petrenko, 2009). The researcher from Kyiv Ihor Vynnychenko published the handbook on extraordinary disjointed persons of the German origin, whose life and activities were related to Ukraine (Vynnychenko, 2011). Laryssa Ritter, the head of the public

organization «Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt», devoted her thesis to the analysis of the society achievements over the last few years and analyzed the contribution of Poltava Germans to the culture of the region (Rytter, 2013). The member of the German society, Viktor Ritter, devoted his theses to the research of the tragic fate of Poltava Germans (Rytter, 2013). Olha Pravdenko, the researcher from Poltava, devoted her research to the analysis of the geographical location of the German colony in the city (Pravdenko, 2013). In 2017, the book «The History of the Germans of Ukraine» was published on the initiative of the «International Society of the Germans of Ukraine – «Viedergeburt» on the results of an all-Ukrainian scientific conference «The History of the Germans of Ukraine», held on March 3, 2017, at the Institute of Political and Ethnic Studies I. F. Kuras National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Istoriia nimitsiv Ukrainy, 2017). The collection contains the articles on the history of people of the German nationality, the repression against them and the revival of the regional societies after 1991.

The source basis in the preparation of the article is the interview of the historian Vira Zhuk (1928 – 2008), who devoted the part of her scientific studies to the analysis of the history of people of the German nationality in Poltava region and was a member of the «Revival» (Interv'iu z Viroiu Zhuk, 2007) and Larysa Ritter, the head of Poltava society of the Germans «Revival» during 2007 – 2016 (Interv'iu z Larysoiu Ritter, 2018, 2019). One of the sources of the study was the Statute of the civil organization «Poltava Society of the Germans «Viedergeburt» (2017). In addition, a series of the historical documentary books (collections) «Rehabilitated by History» (Reabilitovani istoriieiu, 1992, 2005).

The purpose of the article is the formation analysis process, functioning of Poltava society of the Germans «Revival»; to reveal and to illustrate the society achievements in the consolidation process of the German nationality people.

Statement of the basic material. After the collapse of the USSR, the Germans had the opportunity to consolidate, to create their own city, district, region associations, which became the centers for studying their history, language and culture and etc. At the beginning of February 1991, three people with the German roots assembled on their own initiative: the head of the Department of Foreign Languages of V. H. Korolenko Poltava State Pedagogical Institute (now V. H. Korolenko Poltava National Pedagogical University) Stepan Oleksiyenko, whose mother was a descendant of the German colonists from Chernihiv region; Agnesa Zyagun, a pensioner, a former economist of Poltava Regional State Administration, and Volodymyr (Voldemar) Volmer, a military servant, retired. A bit later Edmund Grabo, Stepan Lytvynchuk (his mother was a German), Irma Lukas joined Stepan Oleksiyenko, Agnesa Zyagun, Volodymyr Volmer. All of them were from Poltava and Mariya Fedorchuk with her husband were from the village of Machuhy, Poltava district. This gathering was the beginning of the formation of the Society «Viedergeburt» (hereinafter referred to as the «Revival» in the text). This meeting and further discussion of the plans were the beginning of the creation of the city society «Revival» (Zhuk, 2006, pp. 119–120).

The second meeting took place at the beginning of March 1991 in the premises of Poltava T. Shevchenko Ukrainian Society «Prosvita». 10 people attended the meeting. This meeting was considered as a regional conference, at which a wide range of issues was considered related to the educational work, the revival of the customs and traditions, the national culture of the Ukrainian Germans, the creation of the circles in their compact living for the study of their mother tongue, and the others. Volodymyr (Voldemar) Volmer was elected the first Head of Poltava city society of the Germans, «Revival» (Protokol № 1 vid 4 bereznia 1991 roku, p. 1).

The next meeting was held at the Department of Foreign Languages of Poltava V. H. Korolenko State Pedagogical Institute. It was conducted by Stepan Oleksiyenko. Using the slides, video and tape recordings, he introduced the audience to German historical, cultural and architectural monuments, the customs and traditions of the Germans. The members of the society began to study German (Interv'iu z Viroiu Zhuk, 2007).

On November 1, 1991, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the «Declaration of the Rights of Nationalities of Ukraine» (Deklaratsiia prav natsionalnostei Ukrainy, 1991). On November 16–17, 1991, the First All-Ukrainian International Congress was held in Odesa, attended by two delegates from Poltava and two from Kremenichuk. The Congress emphasized the need to solve a number of problems: allocating premises to all national-cultural societies, financing their activities at the expense of the state budget, exempting from paying taxes, returning religious structures, creating the conditions for the development of their native languages, publishing newspapers, opening national libraries, radio and television programs and etc.

Being guided by the above-mentioned document, the Germans of Poltava decided to establish their society officially, to approve its statute and to register it at local authorities.

On February 8, 1992, at the Society meeting (29 people were present), under the chairmanship of Stanislav Kushnirenko, the members discussed and approved the statute of Poltava city society of the Germans «Revival». On March 18, 1992, the charter was registered by the executive committee of Poltava City Council of People's Deputies. The statute states that the purpose of the partnership is to uphold a full rehabilitation and equality of the citizens of German nationality; to promote the formation of the regional areas of a compact residence of the Germans, to revive German culture, language, religion; to provide assistance in protecting the civil rights of German nationality people; to promote a progressive development (Statut Poltavskoho miskoho tovarystva nimtsiv «Vidrodzhennia», 1992).

On May 30, 1992, a regional conference of the regional organization of the Germans took place in Kremenichuk. Philippe Pfeiffer, a member of the council of Poltava city society, was elected the chairman (Zhuk, 2006, p. 126).

At the end of 1992, the Lutheran community was formed as a part of Poltava city society of the Germans. A significant role in its formation was played by a preacher Ivan Hack. He preached, held talks with religious believers on religious and moral issues, took care of replenishing the library, organized the meetings with pastors from Germany and other cities of Ukraine.

Later on the question arose about the formation of an educational center. Thus, on March 3, 1993, the German Sunday School started functioning on the basis of Poltava secondary school № 5 and its council was elected. Poltava city department of public education took responsibility for funding.

In the summer of 1993, the group of members of Poltava City Society visited the historic homeland of Germany and established friendly relations with some citizens, with the members of the German Lutheran communities.

In 1994, there were 104 members of Poltava Society of the Germans «Revival»; a library was created with books in German, which were sent from the twin brother cities of the Federal Republic of Germany; Sunday school functioned; the contacts were established with other German societies of Ukraine (Interv'iu z Larysoiu Ritter, 2018 – 2019).

With the acquisition of the premises Poltava Germans-Lutherans, every Sunday the

members of «Revival» society gathered in the community building in Kotsyubynskyi Street, 54. They listened to the sermons conducted by Ivan Hack, met with newcomers pastors.

In the 1990-ies, many German families went abroad because of the material hardships. Ukraine has lost many qualified, competent, hard-working specialists who, despite the German roots, were more Ukrainian than the Germans, because several generations of their families were born and brought up in Ukrainian lands. For the «indigenous» Poltava Germans, the descendants of the colonists, Poltava land has long been a «small Fatherland». I. Lukas, I. Hack, N. Gerhardt, F. Pfeifer and the others left for Germany (Zhuk, 2006, p. 131).

In early 1996, the All-Ukrainian Society of the Germans began preparations for the 1st Congress of the Germans of Ukraine. In this regard, Poltava Regional Association created three territorial commissions: Poltava, Kremenchuk and Komsomolsk (now Horinshni Plavni).

In 1997, in the «Revival» societies in the regional centers of Ukraine (such societies were created in all regions of the state), the public organizations were founded – German cultural centers, whose task was to study the German language and culture, as well as establishing the close contacts between the members of the society community. The newly formed Poltava Center for German Culture was located in Poltava Library for Children No. 13. Its head was Elvira Stelmashenko (Interv'iu z Viroiu Zhuk, 2007).

In 1998, Poltava regional and city societies of the Germans were united under the name Poltava Regional Association of the Germans «Viedergeburt» («Revival»). His chair was Olexander Stro. On October 2, 1998 a new reorganized regional German society was registered by Poltava Regional Department of Justice (Zhuk, 2006, p. 131).

From 2000 till 2001, the regional society was headed by Elvira Stelmashenko, she did a lot to revitalize the society, especially the cultural center, which was replenished with a technical equipment, literature, etc. (Interv'iu z Larysoiu Ritter, 2018 – 2019).

In February 2001, due to the immigration of E. Stelmashenko to Germany, Tetiana Horobets was elected a chairman of the society. Since 1999, the building of the city library branch No. 13 a separate hall has been allocated for the German society, which houses its cultural center, the library. There were meetings, classes of various circles, activities of the family club. Interesting, meaningful lectures, conversations about the history of the German people, about culture, holidays, traditions, customs, about prominent people of a German origin were conducted by Edmund Grab, Lyubov Geyshtor and the others (Protokol № 1 vid 12 kvitnia 2018 roku, p. 1).

Tamara Folsher (Shaposhnykova) is a member of the society, a talented artist and actress of Poltava M. V. Hohol regional musical drama theater. The exhibitions of her paintings – the landscapes, the still lifes – were arranged in the premises of the German culture center of the regional society during 2001 – 2004 (Interv'iu z Viroiu Zhuk, 2007).

Gradually, the employees of the city and regional administrations became interested in the activities of the society, the contacts were established with the Department for National Minorities of the Regional State Administration. Together with Poltava City Council, the «Revival» Society hosted the delegations from Germany and the twin cities.

Tonya Sipple was the faithful friend of Poltava society for 14 years – a representative of the Evangelical Methodist Church of the city of Schwabisch Hall. She provided a great help to the elderly and the sick, and her meaningful and interesting sermons always inspired the audience.

Lidia Klein made much effort to intensify the society's activities and to establish the contacts with the twin cities of Germany. For several years, the German community of

Poltava maintained friendly ties with Erica Roveder and Gudula Erbe, the philanthropists, the members of the religious communities of Germany, who organized the humanitarian aid among their citizens, brought it to Ukraine and distributed it among low-income people of Poltava (Interv'iu z Larysoiu Ritter, 2018 – 2019).

The members of Poltava regional society and community take care of the cemetery of the German prisoners of war who died during the post-war years in the Poltava prisons for the prisoners of war.

The members of the society and the community celebrate the holidays together (Christmas, Easter, the feast of the Three Kings, the harvest feast, etc.), which are prominent for the Germans. On holidays the liturgy is served. By 1998, the religious community was headed by Pastor Ivan Hack, a man who survived the war and the Nazi captivity. With his immigration to Germany preacher was Vladimir (Voldemar) Folmer, the second preacher – Vasyl (Interv'iu z Larysoiu Ritter, 2019). Viktor Lace was the head of the community until January 2004, later on Kateryna Kyva was the head of the community (Zhuk, 2006, p. 135).

At the beginning of the 2000-s, in the structure of the community there functioned the group for children (14 people) and a youth choir (about 20 people), led by Victoria Yemets, a teacher of the choral singing department of Poltava M. V. Lysenko Music School. The exhibition-collection of the paintings «The history of the development of the world sailing fleet», produced by Edmund Grabo was of great interest (Interv'iu z Viroiu Zhuk, 2007).

In the early 2000-s, at Poltava regional society of the Germans, its cultural center, there were 5 groups for the study of the German language: 1 for children and 4 for adults, in which there were about 12–15 pupils; the primary group of up to 20 people functioned as well. The study takes place according to Goethe-Institute programme (Інтерв'ю з Ларисою Ріттер, 2019). In 2005, the delegates from Poltava region: Svitlana Dudko, Larysa Ritter took part in the work of the Third Congress of the Germans in Ukraine, held at Vorzel, Kyiv region. Larysa Ritter was elected a member of the Council of the Germans in Ukraine (Zhuk, 2006, p. 137).

In 2006, Eugene Ritter was elected a chairman of Poltava Society of the Germans at the general election meeting. At the meetings of the society, there was discussed the issue of a closer cooperation of the «Revival» authorities with the center of German culture, which functions at the University of Ukoospilky «Poltava University of Economics and Trade»; the care of all members of the society; the implementation of the best traditions, customs, culture of the Germans.

In 2006, at the city square of Poltava near the academic regional Ukrainian M. Hohol Musical and Drama Theater, Eugene Ritter conducted «The First Festival of German Culture», in which the German folk songs and dances were represented by the artistic groups of Poltava, Kyiv, Odesa. There, in May, he organized Day of Europe, where there was presented the exhibition of works of the Germans of Poltava (Ritter, 2013, p. 39).

Celebrating German holidays (Martinstag, Weihnachten, First Poltava Festival «German fairy tale», «August 28 – Memorial Day of the German people») and organizing the German language courses, Poltava regional society of the Germans «Revival» invited Poltava citizens, interested in German culture: children, students, schoolchildren, people of the older generation. In 2015 – 2016 academic year, for example, they were the senior pupils of Poltava Lyceum №1 and the students of Poltava higher educational institutions (Interv'iu z Larysoiu Ritter, 2018 – 2019).

The public organization «Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt» «was a member of All-Ukrainian German public organizations, such as: the National Council of

the Germans of Ukraine, the Germans Association of Ukraine, the International public organizations of the Germans of Ukraine «Vidergebur».

From 2007 to 2016, Larysa Ritter was the head of the society. In 2017, the name of the society changed – now it functions as a public organization «Poltava Center of German Culture «Vidergebur». In 2017 the society was headed by Stanislav Gizbrecht. In the same year, the new Statute of the public organization Poltava society of the Germans «Viedergerbur» was adopted, which states that it is a «voluntary association of individuals, created for the implementation and protection of the human and civil rights and freedoms, the satisfaction of social, in particular, economic, social, cultural, educational and other interests of its members» (Statut hromadskoi orhanizatsii, 2017, p. 1). From April 2018 «Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergerbur» is headed by Vladyslav Kushnirov (Protokol № 1 vid 12 kvitnia 2018 roku, p. 1).

At the present stage the public organization Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergerbur» functioning is the attraction of the attention to the revival of historical names, given to Poltava streets (in particular, Fabrykantska Street and Coloniyska Street in the historic center of the city). The society members arranged interesting exhibitions of embroidery (towels, tablecloths, napkins), carpets, applications, etc. Some of these products were made at the beginning of the XXth century, or at the end of the XIXth century by hands of mothers, grandmothers, and that great-grandmothers of the society members. The representatives of their works were even friends and acquaintances of the Germans of the «Revival» (Protokol № 2 vid 19 travnia 2019 roku).

The tradition for the society members is the celebration of the Harvest feast. Enthusiasts bring nature gifts grown in cottages fields, as well as cakes, cakes, and other types of cooked dishes. They make a competition in cooking dishes, the German language contest, and then all together perform Ukrainian, Russian and German songs.

At the beginning of the XXIst century the public organization Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergerbur» has more than 50 people – the Germans and their family members – the Ukrainians, the Russians, of whom more than 50 people are members of the Lutheran community (the head – Anatoliy Kotenko, the pastor – Olexandr Schwartz). The premises for the society are kindly provided by University of Ukoopspilka «Poltava University of Economics and Trade» (Poltava, 3 Koval Street).

It is worth noting that in recent years many young people have left for work or residence in Germany – their ethnic homeland, but they continue to maintain ties with Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergerbur». The organization provides the German language courses, young people are interested in German history and culture, the meetings are organized with foreign delegations, volunteers, etc.

Since 2016, Poltava society of the Germans, «Viedergerbur», has been organizing summer language camps for Poltava children, for whom the mother tongue continues to be heard during the holidays. The language groups function: children's groups (for preschoolers and schoolchildren), an adult group and a group for elders («School for the 3rd generation»). The doors are open for Poltava citizens, who want to learn how to understand and read the works in the original, written by the Grimm Brothers.

The linguistic assistants from Germany worked in Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergerbur»: in 2012 – 2013 academic year Margaret Susanne Dorothy Barrier, and Valentyn Yandt in 2015 – 2016 academic year. In the second half of 2016, in addition to the language courses, two clubs, «Children's Theater» and «German cinema» functioned at the

University of Economics and Trade Poltava University of Economics and Trade in the center of German culture.

There were 36 members of Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt» the beginning of 2016 (Protokol № 1 vid 30 sichnia 2016 roku, p. 1). The delegates from Poltava and Kremenchuk took part in the 6th Congress of the Germans of Ukraine, which took place in Kyiv at the end of 2017 (Hromadska orhanizatsiia ..., 2017).

For the first time, on Saturdays, during 2018 – 2019 academic year, the lectures on the basics of robot-techniques are conducted for the children of Poltava German minority (headed by Vladyslav Kushnirov).

Poltava Germans cooperate with public organizations of other national minorities of the region, for example, with Poltava Regional Armenian Organization «URARTU».

In May 2013, on the basis of the premises of a partner of Ukoopspilka University «Poltava University of Economics and Trade», in a close cooperation with teachers, professors Iryna Petrenko and Olena Kobzar, the first international scientific and practical conference «German settlers in the Ukrainian lands: historical and actual problems and perspectives» was held (Nimetski poselentsi na ukrainskykh zemliakh , 2013).

The public organization «Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt» has repeatedly participated in the regional» Days of Tolerance «(Project Manager – Main Department of Information and Internal Poltava Regional Policy), in the city event – «Days of Europe», the members of the public organization performed folk songs at the international Sorochynska Fair.

As to the material support of the public organization Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt», this is primarily the financing of the language courses –Kyiv Department of Goethe-Institute), which provides textbooks of various language levels, provides a methodological support. Thanks to the financing of the Foundation for Development of Society (Odesa), the office furniture and equipment were purchased. The annual social projects are being carried out: health improvement in Ukrainian health resorts for children, older people, the disabled children and adults. Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt» participates in various youth projects, carrying out various events in Poltava German Center of Meetings (on the basis of the University of Ukoopspilka «Poltava University of Economics and Trade»). At the expense of the sponsors, Larysa Ritter developed and published the «2016 – 2020 Calendar of German customs and traditional dishes» (Інтерв'ю з Ларисою Ріттер, 2018 – 2019).

Conclusions. Consequently, the post-war generation of the Germans still remembers the terrible conditions of the GULAGs of Siberia or Kazakhstan (Reabilitovani istoriieiu, 1992; 2005) in which they, their parents or family members were, but under those terrible conditions most of them remained loyal to their people, were honest, hard-working, preserved the culture and customs of their people. Nowadays they have equal political, economic, social, civil rights with all citizens of an independent Ukraine. This is guaranteed by the «Declaration of the Rights of Nationalities of Ukraine». The indication of this is the activity of Poltava Regional Society of the Germans «Viedergeburt» («Revival»), around which people with German roots gather. At the various events of the society, much attention is paid to the study of the German language and culture, traditions, to incite young people to study the history of their ancestors, to be proud of them, to establish contacts with Germany, where they can search for their relatives. The society «Poltava Center of German Culture «Viedergeburt» opened a library with books, published in German. Recently, one of the priorities of the

society is the attraction of attention to Poltava streets revival of their historical names, where in the past German colonists lived (in particular, Fabrykantska Street and Colonial Street in the historical center of the city). Poltava Germans' society «Revival» maintains close contacts with other regional organizations and the Council of the Germans of Ukraine, it participates in many international projects and events. The activity of the society includes: social, youth, ethno-cultural, informational work which contributes to the preservation of German mentality in the Ukrainian society.

The perspectives of further research on this topic may be the expansion of the source base study, which will allow a thorough analysis of the contribution of well-known people of German nationality to the development of Poltava region and Ukraine.

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