

Famine in Kazakhstan and Changes in Ethnic Structure in the First half of the 20th Century: a Study of Population Censuses

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Ismailzade Saida Jafar¹

Ph.D., Assoc. Prof., <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2877-8944>, saida.ismailzade@gmail.com

Zhengis Zhomart Zhengisuly^{2 3}

Leading Researcher, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7556-6939>, zhzhzhengis@gmail.com

Oshan Zhanymkhan^{2 3}

Leading Researcher, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5767-2794>, oshanzhanymkhan@gmail.com

Dauletkhanov Alimgazy²

Ph.D., Honorary Professor, Leading Research Officer, Section on the History of Ancient and Medieval Kazakhstan and Neighboring Countries, <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-9491-6814>, dauletkhan1943@gmail.com

Dauletkhanova Assiya Alimgazievna⁴

Ph.D., Assoc. Prof., Department of Medical Law and Ethics, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1309-3560>, asiyada@gmail.com

¹*Ganja State University (Ganja, Azerbaijan)*

²*Ch. Ch. Valikhanov Institute of History and Ethnology (Almaty, Kazakhstan)*

³*Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan (Almaty, Kazakhstan)*

⁴*NAO «Astana Medical University» (Astana, Kazakhstan)*

Abstract

The study examines demographic changes in Kazakhstan in the first half of the 20th century caused by the effects of famine, collectivization, deportations and military operations. The relevance of the work lies in the analysis of the transformation of the ethnic structure of the region's population and the long-term consequences of these changes. The purpose of the study is to identify the dynamics of ethnic changes based on data from population censuses conducted during this period, as well as to analyze the impact of Soviet policy on ethnodemographic processes. The object of the study is the demographic processes that took place in Kazakhstan, and the subject is their impact on the ethnic structure of the region. The work uses quantitative methods of analyzing official population census data, as well as a historical and demographic approach to identify the relationship between political events and changes in population size and composition. The data from the USSR censuses of 1897, 1926, 1939 and 1959, archival materials and statistical reports, as well as data on population migration, including forced resettlement, were used. The results of the study show that the massive famine of the 1930s caused by forced collectivization led to a reduction in the number of indigenous people. Deportations of various peoples and military losses significantly changed the ethnic map of the region. These processes contributed to the formation of the multinational composition of the population of Kazakhstan. The results obtained are confirmed by archival data and censuses. The work contributes to understanding the long-term demographic consequences of political decisions made at the specified time, and may be useful for further research in the field of ethnodemography and social history of Kazakhstan.

Keywords: Famine, Kazakhstan, ethnic structure, population censuses, demographic changes, forced migration, deportations

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Голод у Казахстані та зміни етнічної структури в першій половині 20 століття: дослідження переписів населення

**Ісмаїлзаде Саїда Джафар¹, Женгіс Жомарт Женгісулі^{2 3}, Ошан Жанимхан^{2 3},
Даулетханов Алімгазі², Даулетханова Асія Алімгазіївна⁴**

¹*Гянджінський державний університет (Гянджа, Азербайджан)*

²*Інститут історії та етнології імені Ч.Ч. Валіханова (Алмати, Казахстан)*

³*Міністерство освіти і науки Казахстану (Алмати, Казахстан)*

⁴*НАО «Медичний університет Астани» (Астана, Казахстан)*

Анотація

У дослідженні розглядаються демографічні зміни в Казахстані в першій половині 20 століття, викликані наслідками голоду, колективізації, депортацій і військових дій. Актуальність роботи полягає в аналізі трансформації етнічної структури населення регіону та віддалених наслідків цих змін. Мета дослідження – виявити динаміку етнічних змін на основі даних переписів населення, проведених у цей період, а також проаналізувати вплив радянської політики на етнодемографічні процеси. Об'єктом дослідження є демографічні процеси, що відбувалися в Казахстані, а предметом – їх вплив на етнічну структуру регіону. У роботі використовуються кількісні методи аналізу офіційних даних перепису населення, а також історико-демографічний підхід для виявлення зв'язку між політичними подіями та змінами чисельності і складу населення. Використано дані переписів населення СРСР 1897, 1926, 1939 і 1959 років, архівні матеріали та статистичні звіти, а також дані про міграцію населення, у тому числі вимушене переселення. Результати дослідження показують, що масовий голод 1930-х років, викликаний примусовою колективізацією, призвів до скорочення чисельності корінного населення. Депортації різних народів і військові втрати істотно змінили етнічну карту краю. Ці процеси сприяли формуванню багатонаціонального складу населення Казахстану. Отримані результати підтверджені архівними даними та переписами. Робота сприяє розумінню довгострокових демографічних наслідків політичних рішень, прийнятих у зазначений час, і може бути корисною для подальших досліджень у галузі етнодемографії та соціальної історії Казахстану.

Ключові слова: голод, Казахстан, етнічна структура, переписи населення, демографічні зміни, вимушена міграція, депортації

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Introduction.

The demographic processes of Kazakhstan in the 20th century have undergone significant changes due not only to natural and economic conditions, but also to global historical events. In the first half of the 20th century, Kazakhstan experienced profound ethnic changes that determined its historical development and modern demography (Saparbekova, Kocourkova, & Kučera, 2014). The lands of the steppes and mountains, vast and diverse, have become the scene of social transformations, political reforms, economic disasters and the displacement of peoples. It was a period of rapid change, from the resettlement policy of the Russian Empire to the forced deportations and collectivization of the Soviet era, each of which left its mark on the ethnic landscape of Kazakhstan (Yensenov et al., 2020). The relevance of this study lies in the fact that the analysis of demographic changes in Kazakhstan makes it possible to identify key socio-economic and political factors that influenced the ethnodemographic structure of the region in the 20th century. The population censuses of that time became not just statistical data, but a mirror of change, reflecting every wave of migration and political pressure (Tolesh, 2012). Against the background of global historical events, the ethnic structure of Kazakhstan has changed dramatically: The population was rapidly increasing due to migrants, the traditional nomadic lifestyle was being displaced, and wars, famine, and repression were reshaping society itself (Pianciola, 2019). The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of migration processes and political events on the ethnodemographic structure of Kazakhstan in the first half of the 20th century, as well as to identify patterns that determined changes in the number of Kazakhs and other ethnic groups during this period. The study will examine the socio-economic and political factors that influenced these processes, including mass deportations and their impact on the transformation of the ethnic composition of the region (Dauletova, 2022). The research methods include historical and demographic analysis, analysis of population censuses and migration flows, as well as comparative analysis of data on socio-economic and political processes that affected Kazakhstan during the period under review. The article is based on a wide range of sources, including publications from recent years, which allows us to provide the most up-to-date data for understanding the changes that have taken place (Sharmanov, n.d.; Kudaibergenova et al., 2017). In conclusion of the introduction, the article covers several aspects of the demographic transition, including the impact of deportations and collectivization on ethnic structure, changes in the social and economic life of the population, as well as prospects for further research in this area.

Literature Review.

Historical context and causes of famine: Hunger in Kazakhstan in the early 20th century is studied in several works. Aldazhumanov (1997) analyzes collectivization

and its socio-economic consequences. The Central Asian Analytical Portal (2022) and Kornilov (2022) explore new approaches to the 1930-1933 famine. Kondrashin (2021; 2022) reviews Western studies on the topic. The I-SNG publication addresses mythologizing hunger in information policy, and the issue of famine as genocide or ethnocide is discussed on E-history.kz. Pyanchol (2019) explores the impact of the nomadic lifestyle in Soviet Kazakhstan.

Demographic changes and ethnic transformation:

Baypakov and Nurpeyisov (2010) study demographic processes using census data. The Kazakhstan Center for Statistics and the Committee on Statistics provide official demographic data. Kudaibergenova et al. (2017) examine migration's impact on ethnicity, while Saparbekova, Kotsurkova, and Kucher (2014) analyze mass migration waves. Shakhmatov (N.D.) examines industrialization's ethnic impact, and Shokamanov et al. (2024) discuss demographic transitions. Saparbayev (2023) reviews demographic research issues in Kazakhstan.

Migration processes and urbanization: Baitureeva and Saparbaev (2014) and Masanov et al. (2000) focus on resettlement processes and their consequences. Dauletova (n.d.) discusses Kazakhstan's urbanization in a global context, while Dauranova and Ruzanova (2023) study the regulation of demographic processes. Tolesh (2012) offers a historical analysis of Kazakhstan's population, considering demographic changes and migration waves. Conclusion: The studies demonstrate that the famine of 1930-1933 was caused by collectivization, resettlement policies, and political repression, resulting in significant demographic changes and ethnic transformation. Further research should combine historical, demographic, and socio-economic analysis.

Research results.

In the first half of the 20th century, Kazakhstan experienced profound ethnic changes that determined its historical development and modern demography. Vast steppes and mountainous regions have become the scene of social transformations, political reforms, economic upheavals and large-scale migration processes. From the resettlement policy of the Russian Empire to the forced deportations and collectivization of the Soviet era, each of these transformations has left its mark on the ethnic landscape of the region. Against the background of global historical events, the ethnic structure of Kazakhstan has changed dramatically. The population increased rapidly due to migration, the traditional nomadic way of life was displaced, and wars, famine, and repression had a serious impact on society. The population censuses of that time became not just statistical summaries, but a reflection of large-scale social shifts, recording each stage of changes caused by migration and political decisions. How did the number of Kazakhs and other ethnic groups change during this period? What socio-economic and political factors have influenced the transformation of the ethnic composition of Kazakhstan? What were the reasons for

the mass deportations, and what impact did they have on the ethnodemographic structure of the region? This article analyzes these issues, revealing the complex and contradictory history of the people and the territory that became a place of intersection of different cultures and destinies in the first half of the 20th century (Committee on Statistics, n.d.).

Ethnic composition of Kazakhstan at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries: The historical development of population accounting in Kazakhstan began long before its entry into the Russian Empire. Ancient states, such as Uisuni and Kangly in the territory of modern Kazakhstan, already kept records of taxation and military units. However, regular population censuses with centralized statistical activities were introduced only with the accession to the Russian Empire. The first systematic data appeared since the time of Peter I in Russia in the XVIII century, when they began to conduct per capita censuses, which also affected some regions of Kazakhstan (Yarovoy, 1976).

Table 1.
Population dynamics of Kazakhstan
in 1830-1870

Year	The entire population	Kazakhs
1830	1,5	1,3
1850	1,7	1,5
1870	3,6	2,4

Demographic situation according to the 1897 census:

The first general population census of the Russian Empire took place on February 9, 1897, providing valuable data on the demographic situation of Kazakhstan. The census included 14 questions on gender, age, marital status, class, place of birth, religion, native language, literacy, occupation, and other aspects of life.

According to the 1897 census, the population of Kazakhstan was 4,147,800. The majority were Kazakhs (74-78%), followed by Russians (10-13%) and Ukrainians (1-2%). However, the ethnic composition varied depending on the administrative division of regions. For instance, the Omsk region, which was part of the Akmola region at the time, was not included in modern Kazakhstan, affecting the count of Kazakhs and other ethnic groups. (Kazakhstan Statistics Center, n.d., p. 45).

Table 2.
Population of Kazakhstan on February 9th 1897

nationality	Kazakhs	Russians	other	in total
population of thousands of people	3392,8	454,4	300,6	4147,8
%	81,8	11,0	7,2	100

The migration processes in Kazakhstan at the turn of the 20th century significantly impacted the ethnic composition of the region. As you mentioned, the

resettlement policies, particularly Stolypin's agrarian reform in 1906, played a key role in reshaping the demographic landscape. The arrival of approximately 1.5 million immigrants, primarily from Russia and Ukraine, during this period marked a shift in the population balance. This migration was driven not only by the search for agricultural land but also by the broader socio-political changes of the time, such as the impact of World War I and the revolutions of 1917.

The growth of the Slavic population, alongside the economic and administrative changes implemented by the Russian Empire, contributed to the decrease in the proportion of Kazakhs, the indigenous population. This trend would continue through the early 20th century, setting the stage for further ethnic transformations as Kazakhstan moved through the tumultuous decades of collectivization, industrialization, and Soviet policies.

Given your interest in the historical demographic changes, it's fascinating how the migration waves, policies, and wars intertwined to shape the ethnic composition of Kazakhstan, laying the foundation for the shifts observed in the mid-20th century (Saparbayev, 2023). During this period, the Slavic population, particularly Russians and Ukrainians, saw a significant increase, especially in the northern and eastern parts of Kazakhstan, where new settlements were established. This shift altered the region's ethnic balance: as the Kazakh population's share declined, the Russian and Ukrainian populations grew. The Stolypin reform also brought economic changes. Settlers introduced new agricultural practices that contrasted with the traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakhs. This transition to agriculture, along with the development of new lands, boosted agricultural growth and transformed Kazakhstan's ethnosocial landscape (Baipakov, & Nurpeisov, 2010).

Discussions.

The First World War and the revolutions of 1917 intensified migration processes in Kazakhstan, which began as part of the agrarian reform. The conscription of Kazakhs and other peoples into labor battalions reduced the number of men, and military operations led to an influx of refugees. The February and October revolutions, the Civil war, and the redistribution of land and resources caused new waves of migration. Famine and economic difficulties increased population movements, which changed the ethnodemographic picture of the region. As a result, the Russian and Ukrainian populations increased, while the proportion of Kazakhs decreased, laying the foundation for further demographic changes (Saparbekova, Kocourková, & Kučera, 2014).

The 1926 census, the first general population census in the Soviet Union, was a key data source for analyzing changes in Kazakhstan's ethnic composition since the 1897 census. Over the almost thirty-year gap, Kazakhstan experienced significant socio-political and economic changes, affecting its population structure. According to the 1926 census, the total population of Kazakhstan

increased to 6,198,467, a notable rise from the 4,147,800 recorded in 1897. However, this population growth was uneven across ethnic groups.

Between the 1897 and 1926 censuses, the ethnic composition of Kazakhstan underwent significant changes. The Kazakh population increased from 3,392,800 in 1897 to 3,627,612 in 1926, but their share of the total population decreased from 81.8% to 58.5%. This decline was primarily due to the influx of immigrants and agrarian reforms.

The Russian population grew dramatically, increasing from 454,400 in 1897 to 1,275,055 in 1926, more than a 2.8-fold increase. Their share in the population rose from 11% to 20.6%. The Ukrainian population also saw significant growth, increasing from 1-2% to 13.9%, reaching 860,201 people.

Other ethnic groups, including Germans, Tatars, and Uzbeks, also experienced population increases. The main factors driving these changes were migration processes, particularly from Stolypin's agrarian reforms and the resettlement policies of the Russian Empire. These migration waves contributed to the rise in the Slavic population, particularly in the northern and eastern parts of Kazakhstan (Population Trends, n.d.).

Revolutions and civil war: The February and October revolutions, and then the Civil War, contributed to the massive displacement of the population from the central regions of Russia to Kazakhstan, which led to an increase in the Slavic population and a decrease in the proportion of Kazakhs. The beginning of collectivization and reforms in agriculture have changed the traditional way of life of Kazakhs, forcing them to move towards settlement, which has affected the employment structure and demography of the region. The industrialization of the 1920s attracted specialists and workers from other parts of the USSR to Kazakhstan, which also changed the ethnic balance. The 1926 population Census recorded significant demographic shifts caused by political and economic processes that predetermined the further development of the ethnic structure of the region (Famine in Central Kazakhstan, n.d.). The growth of the Slavic population in connection with the resettlement policy and economic transformations significantly changed the ethnic structure of the region, which predetermined further changes in the demographic situation of Kazakhstan in subsequent years (Shakhmatov, n.d.).

The 1930s were a tumultuous period in Kazakhstan's history, marked by collectivization and Soviet economic reforms. These changes severely impacted the traditional Kazakh way of life, particularly among the rural population. Collectivization, which began in the late 1920s, aimed to consolidate individual farms into collective ones. This policy was especially devastating in Kazakhstan, where the economy was based on nomadic animal husbandry. The confiscation of livestock, the shift to settled agriculture, and the dismantling of traditional systems caused a deep agricultural crisis. By the end of 1932, over 70% of farms were collectivized, and more than half of the livestock was seized, leading to massive economic disruption. Collectivization not only resulted in economic losses but also disrupted the Kazakh way of life, causing forced relocations, depopulation, and the collapse of settlement structures.

One of the most tragic consequences of the collectivization policy was the famine of 1932-1933, dubbed the "Holodomor", which became the largest humanitarian disaster in the history of Kazakhstan. As a result of forced collectivization, confiscation of livestock and grain, harsh exploitation of labor resources and administrative arbitrariness, the population was on the verge of survival. Drought and inefficient agricultural management have exacerbated the crisis (Baitureyeva, & Saparbayev, 2014). The famine of 1932-1933 led to the deaths of approximately 1.5-2 million people, which represented over 40% of the Kazakh population. This catastrophic event caused a significant population decline and altered the region's ethnic composition. Many survivors were forced to migrate to other parts of the Soviet Union or abroad in search of food and shelter, profoundly affecting the demographic landscape. Kazakhs fled to Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Russia, China, and Mongolia, which further disrupted the ethnic balance within Kazakhstan. At the same time, the influx of workers and specialists for agricultural and industrial development further diminished the Kazakh population.

Thus, the collectivization and famine became turning points, resulting in profound demographic, social, and economic changes. These events caused the collapse of the traditional nomadic economy, significant demographic losses, and mass migration, with long-lasting effects on the region's ethnic composition and social structure (Kondrashin, 2022).

In the late 1920s, the policy of collectivization in the USSR brought radical changes to Kazakhstan, a region traditionally based on a nomadic lifestyle. The forced transition to settled agriculture involved cattle rustling, the elimination of pastures, and the relocation of nomadic villages. Harsh methods of implementation sparked resistance from the population, and the mass confiscation of property caused livestock numbers to plummet by more than 80% by 1932, leading to the destruction of the traditional economy. Collectivization triggered a humanitarian crisis, with forced resettlement,

Table 3.

The population of Kazakhstan in 1897-1926

<i>nationality</i>	<i>Years 1897</i>	<i>1926</i>	<i>absolute increase</i>	<i>change in specific gravity in points</i>	<i>In%</i>
Kazakhs	3392,8	3627,6	234,8		107
In%	81,8	58,5		-23,3	
Russians	454,4	1275,1	820,7		281
In%	11,0	20,6		+9,6	
others	300,6	1293,7	903,1		430
In%	7,2	20,9		+13,7	
total	4147,8	6196,4	2048,6		49
In%	100	100			

the dismantling of established ways of life, widespread impoverishment, and mass migration. The loss of land and livestock severed familial and clan ties, and the absence of support and education contributed to a deterioration in living conditions, food shortages, and a significant decline in the population's well-being.

The famine of 1932-1933, a tragic consequence of collectivization, resulted in the death of over 1.5 million Kazakhs, about 40% of the population. The famine, caused by the destruction of the traditional economy, forced confiscation of livestock and grain, and agricultural mismanagement, led to widespread epidemics, migration, and significant demographic changes. This disaster drastically reduced the Kazakh population and had long-term effects on the region's social structure and culture.

As a result of the famine, many Kazakhs were forced to migrate, seeking refuge in other Soviet republics like Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Russia, as well as neighboring countries such as China and Mongolia. This mass migration, combined with depopulation, altered Kazakhstan's ethnic landscape. Additionally, the all-Union programs for agricultural and industrial development brought in new settlers, further reducing the Kazakh population and increasing the ethnic diversity of the region.

Thus, collectivization and the subsequent famine of 1932-1933 became a turning point in the history of Kazakhstan; it caused mass mortality, the collapse of the traditional economy and demographic changes, the consequences of which were felt throughout the 20th century (Kornilov, 2022). In the 1930s and 1940s, Kazakhstan became a place of forced resettlement of various ethnic groups as part of the repressive policies of the Soviet Union. This policy had a profound impact on the ethnic structure of the region, as the deported peoples formed new communities that significantly changed the ethnodemographic structure of Kazakhstan (Famine in 1932-1933, n.d.).

The Soviet deportation policy during this period had several objectives, with the primary goal being the ethnic and political "cleansing" of the USSR's lands. Many deportations were based on the suspicion of disloyalty, particularly during times of political tension such as World War II. Certain ethnic groups were viewed as unreliable or potential allies of enemies, leading to their forced resettlement.

In some cases, deportations were economically motivated, as Kazakhstan and other regions were seen as territories for new agricultural and industrial development. The settlement of deported populations in Kazakhstan helped blur ethnic borders, thereby strengthening central control and reducing the likelihood of separatist movements (Kornilov, 2022).

Resettlement of various ethnic groups in Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan received many deported peoples, including Koreans, Germans, Chechens, Ingush, Crimean Tatars, Karachays, Kalmyks and other groups. Deportation

of Koreans (1937): One of the first major expulsions in Kazakhstan was the resettlement of the Korean population from the Far East. The Soviet government, fearing their loyalty to Japan, decided to resettle Koreans in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. As a result, more than 100,000 people were resettled, forming a significant Korean community in Kazakhstan. Deportation of Volga Germans (1941): After the outbreak of World War II, Volga Germans suspected of collaborating with Germany were deported. Most of the German population was sent to Kazakhstan and Siberia. In total, about 400,000 Germans lived in Kazakhstan, which made them one of the largest ethnic groups in the republic. Deportation of Chechens and Ingush (1944): Chechens and Ingush were deported from their historical homeland, the Caucasus, after being accused of collaborating with the German occupiers. In Kazakhstan, they made up a significant number of migrants, along with Karachays, Kalmyks and representatives of other peoples of the Cauca (Shokamanov, Iskakov, & Demesinova, 2024). The exile of Crimean Tatars, Balkars, Meskhetian Turks and other peoples was also carried out in the mid-1940s, and many were sent to Kazakhstan, where they had to establish new communities and adapt to new conditions.

The deportations of the 1930s and 1940s had a significant impact on the ethnic composition of Kazakhstan. The deported peoples created new communities and made significant changes in the ethnic structure of the republic. According to the 1939 census, 37.8% of the population of the republic were Kazakhs, 40.2% were Russians, and 22% were other peoples. Ethnic diversity became even more noticeable after the deportations in the 1940s (Famine of 1932-1933, n.d.).

By the early 1950s, Germans had become one of the largest ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, following Kazakhs and Russians. The German population had reached hundreds of thousands and played a significant role in the region. Other deported groups, such as Koreans, Chechens, and Ingush, formed stable communities that gradually integrated into Kazakhstan's social and economic life. These communities contributed to the region's cultural and economic diversity, mastering new lands and becoming an integral part of Kazakh society.

The emergence of these ethnic groups led to a more multinational society and enriched Kazakhstan's culture. Many deported peoples retained their traditions, which further contributed to the region's cultural diversity. The deportations of the 1930s and 1940s played a pivotal role in reshaping Kazakhstan's ethnic structure, fostering the formation of a multi-ethnic society with lasting impacts on the region's development.

The 1939 census became an essential statistical source, helping to analyze demographic changes and trends after the previous 1926 and 1897 censuses. This period was marked by significant socio-political transformations, including collectivization and deportations, which had a profound effect on the ethnic

composition of the population (Tolesh, 2012). Analysis of population census data According to the 1939 census, the population of Kazakhstan was 6,093,507, indicating a moderate increase compared to the 1926 census, despite demographic losses from collectivization and famine in 1932-1933. However, the analysis of the data showed significant changes in the ethnic composition of the republic (Kudaibergenova et al., 2017).

In 1939, the Kazakh population in Kazakhstan decreased to 2,313,674, making up 38% of the total population, a significant drop from 58.5% in 1926. This decline was due to the devastating demographic losses caused by famine and depopulation in the early 1930s.

The Russian population grew to 2,449,128, or 40.2% of the total population, due to migration from other parts of the Soviet Union, the development of new regions, and the influx of labor related to industrialization and agriculture.

The Ukrainian population decreased to 656,676 (10.8% of the population) in 1939, down from 13.9% in 1926, a result of the demographic shifts following collectivization and the migration of Ukrainians from the region.

Germans and other ethnic groups. The number of Germans in Kazakhstan has doubled since 1926, reaching 92,379 (1.5% of the population). This happened as a result of the resettlement of Volga Germans to Kazakhstan as part of the deportation campaigns. The number and share of other ethnic groups such as Tatars, Uzbeks, Uighurs, and Koreans have also increased in the total population due to both migration flows and deportation processes.

Comparison with previous population censuses: The 1939 census revealed significant demographic changes in Kazakhstan compared to the 1926 census. Key trends include:

- **A sharp decrease in the proportion of Kazakhs:** The share of Kazakhs fell from 58.5% in 1926 to 38% in 1939, primarily due to collectivization, famine, and forced migration.

- **Increase in the share of Russians:** The Russian population grew from 20.6% in 1926 to 40.2% in 1939. This change was a result of migration policies, settlement in new territories, and the involvement of the Russian-speaking population in industrial and agricultural development (Kondrashin, 2021).

The dynamics of the number of other ethnic groups.

The number of Germans, Tatars, Koreans and other ethnic groups has increased, many of whom were deported to Kazakhstan. In particular, the emergence of the Korean community in Kazakhstan is connected with the deportation of Koreans from the Far East in 1937.

Trends and changes: The 1939 census reflected the impacts of collectivization, industrialization, and deportations. Kazakh numbers decreased, while the Slavic population, especially Russians, grew. Forced resettlements, including Germans, Koreans, and Chechens, increased ethnic diversity. Urbanization and

Table 4.

Population dynamics of Kazakhstan in 1926;1939

nationality	1926	In %	1939	In %
the entire population	6 198 467	100	6 093 507	100
Kazakhs	3 627 612	58,5	2 313 674	38,0
Russians	1 275 055	20,6	2 449 627	40,2
Ukrainians	860 201	13,9	656 676	10,8
Germans	51 094	0,8	92 379	1,5
Tatars	79 756	1,3	106 943	1,8
Uzbeks	129 399	2,1	103 240	1,7
Belarusians	25 584	0,4	31 309	0,5
Uighurs	74 019	1,0	35 354	0,6
Koreans	42	0,0	95 903	1,6
other	86 290	1,4	208 902	3,3

industrialization led to a rising urban population, and the Great Patriotic War brought evacuees and businesses, further boosting the population. The mobilization of 1.2 million Kazakhs disrupted demographics and increased women's roles in the economy. Post-war industrialization and the development of virgin lands spurred migration, shifting the ethnic balance. By 1959, Kazakhstan's population reached 9.3 million, with Kazakhs comprising 30%. These changes shaped the region's demographic and economic development (Aldazhumanov, 1997).

Russians: Russians became the largest ethnic group, reaching 3,974,229 people (42.7%). The growth in the number of Russians was due to active migration during the period of industrialization, the evacuation of wartime and post-war campaigns for the development of virgin lands.

Other ethnic groups: Along with Russians, the number of other ethnic groups in Kazakhstan has increased. Ukrainians made up 8.2% of the population, Germans – 7.1%, Tatars – 2.1%, Uzbeks – 1.5%, Koreans – 0.8%, Uighurs – 0.6%.

The deportations of the 1930s and 1940s created large communities of Germans, Koreans, Chechens, and others in Kazakhstan, reshaping the region's ethnic structure. By 1959, Kazakhstan had become one of the USSR's most multinational republics due to migration and policies promoting ethnic mixing. The dominance of Russians and Slavs, along with deported communities, led to Russification and the decline of Kazakh language and culture. This ethnic diversity reshaped Kazakhstan's economy, culture, and social structure, with Russians and Slavs dominating industry and government, while Kazakhs sought to preserve their identity. The 1959 census highlighted the recovery of the population but also revealed lasting ethnic changes (Tursunov, n.d.).

Table 5.

Population dynamics of Kazakhstan in 1959

nationality	the number of ethnic groups	In %
the entire population	9 309 847	100
Kazakhs	2 794 966	30
Russians	3 974 229	42,7
Ukrainians	762 131	8,2
Germans	659 751	7,1
Tatars	191 925	2,1
Uzbeks	136 570	1,5
Koreans	74 019	0,8
Uighurs	59 840	0,6
other	656 416	7

Conclusions.

The first half of the 20th century turned Kazakhstan into an arena of incredible changes that forever changed its ethnic structure and demography. Tragedy and triumph, mass migrations and forced relocations, famine and wars – all these events had a powerful impact on society. The population censuses, like photographs of that time, recorded the dynamic changes in the ethnic landscape of the region. Kazakh lands have become home to many peoples: from Slavic immigrants to deported Koreans and Germans. At the same time, the traditional nomadic way of life of the Kazakhs faced the insurmountable challenges of collectivization and famine, forever

changing the face of the region. The policy of the Soviet Union on resettlement, industrial development and the development of virgin lands made Kazakhstan one of the most multinational republics of the USSR. The results of the 1959 census summarize the ethnodemographic shifts of the first half of the century. Demographic losses, the growth of multiculturalism and changes in interethnic relations have laid the foundation for today's Kazakhstan, a republic where different cultures and traditions harmoniously coexist. This story of the transformation of the ethnic composition, full of dramatic events and amazing changes, is the key to understanding the modern appearance of the country and its unique identity.

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