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The German population in Mexico City

Maintenance of German culture and
integration into Mexican society

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Abstract

The Germans in Mexico City – their history reaches far back into the past. German merchants who immigrated to former New Spain almost 200 years ago left their marks and many of their descendents still live in Mexico today. However, this thesis does not only deal with the past, but it is mainly concerned with the situation of the German population in Mexico City today. The main focus is placed on the integration of the Germans into the Mexican culture and on the question of whether the German culture and its customs are also preserved. In order to obtain an answer to these questions which is not only current but also based on first-hand information, a survey questioning the Germans and people of German origin living in Mexico City was conducted. Its evaluation is the base for the interesting results of this thesis.

Resumen

Los alemanes en la Ciudad de México – su historia diversa se remonta siglos atrás. Comerciantes alemanes que inmigraron a Nueva España unos 200 años atrás dejaron su huella y muchos de sus descendientes viven en México hoy en día. El presente trabajo no trata solamente el pasado, sino se dedica principalmente a desarrollar la situación actual de la población alemana en la Ciudad de México. Los objetivos principales son, por una parte, la integración de los alemanes en la cultura mexicana y por otro lado la pregunta, si la cultura alemana y sus costumbres también se han preservado. Para recibir una respuesta a estas preguntas que no sea sólo actual, sino que proceda también de primera mano, se desarrolló un cuestionario entre los alemanes y la gente de origen alemán, cuya evaluación y análisis sirve como base de los interesantes resultados de este trabajo.

Kurzbeschreibung

Die Deutschen in Mexiko-Stadt – ihre abwechslungsreiche Geschichte reicht Jahrhunderte zurück. Deutsche Kaufleute, die vor knapp 200 Jahren in das damalige Neu-Spanien auswanderten, hinterließen ihre Spuren und viele ihrer Nachfahren leben noch heute in Mexiko. Die vorliegende Arbeit behandelt aber nicht nur die Vergangenheit, sondern sie beschäftigt sich hauptsächlich mit der heutigen Situation der deutschen Bevölkerung in Mexiko-Stadt. Dabei liegt das Hauptaugenmerk auf der Integration der Deutschen in die mexikanische Kultur und der Frage, ob auch die deutsche Kultur und ihre Bräuche noch erhalten sind. Um eine Antwort auf diese Fragen zu erhalten, die nicht nur aktuell ist, sondern auch aus erster Hand stammt, wurde eine Umfrage unter den in Mexiko-Stadt lebenden Deutschen und Deutschstämmigen vorgenommen, auf dessen Auswertung die interessanten Resultate dieser Arbeit beruhen.

Table of Contents

List of abbreviations	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
1. FROM ACCULTURATION TO TRANSCULTURATION – EXAMINATION OF TECHNICAL TERMS OF RELEVANCE	4
1.1. Minority	4
1.2. “Cultural” terms	6
1.2.1. Culture	6
1.2.2. Acculturation	7
1.2.2.1. The four acculturation strategies by John Berry	8
1.2.3. Multiculturalism	10
1.2.4. Interculturalism and transculturation	10
1.3. Evaluation	12
2. THE HISTORY OF THE GERMANS’ LIFE IN MEXICO FROM THE BEGINNING UNTIL TODAY	14
2.1. The first Germans in “New Spain”	14
2.1.1. Alexander von Humboldt	15
2.1.2. The first major groups of Germans in Mexico	16
2.1.3. The cultural life of the Germans in Mexico in the 19 th Century	17
2.1.4. “Deutsches Haus”	18
2.1.5. The situation until the turn of the Century	18
2.2. The situation during the Porfiriato, the Mexican revolution and the National Socialism in Mexico	20
2.2.1. The Porfiriato	20
2.2.2. The Mexican revolution	21
2.2.3. The National Socialism	22
2.3. The development from the end of World War II until today	23
2.4. Evaluation	25
3. BETWEEN SEPARATION, INTEGRATION AND ASSIMILATION – THE RECENT SITUATION OF THE GERMANS IN MEXICO CITY	27
3.1. German and Mexican-German facilities in Mexico City	27

3.1.1.	The oldest German institution in Mexico: the German School	27
3.1.2.	The Evangelic and the Catholic Churches of German language	29
3.1.3.	The AASCA and the German senior citizen home	30
3.1.4.	“El club alemán”	31
3.1.5.	The Goethe Institute and the DAAD	31
3.2.	The role of the Media	32
3.2.1.	The importance of the media	33
3.2.2.	The German media in Mexico City	34
3.3.	Evaluation	35
4.	<i>QUANTITATIVE SURVEY (2009): INTEGRATION OF THE GERMAN POPULATION INTO THE MEXICAN CULTURE</i>	37
4.1.	Research objective and cognitive interest	37
4.1.1.	The past	38
4.1.2.	Language and the German School	38
4.1.3.	Culture and everyday life	38
4.2.	Conception and research method	39
4.2.1.	The items	39
4.2.2.	The group of participants	46
4.2.3.	The standardized quantitative interrogation	47
4.3.	Pretest and main interrogation	47
4.4.	Evaluation method	48
4.5.	Evaluation of the survey	49
4.5.1.	“The past”	49
4.5.2.	“Language and the German School”	55
4.5.3.	“Cultural and everyday life”	59
4.6.	Summary and subsumption into the research context	67
	CONCLUSION	70
	Works cited	74
	Appendix I	I
	Appendix II	V
	Appendix III	IX

Abbreviations:

- AASCA Asociación de Ayuda Social de la Comunidad Alemana
- approx. approximately
- BFD Bewegung Freies Deutschland
- C1 Category N°1 (Germans and Mexico-Germans who do not have any time limit regarding their stay in Mexico City)
- C2 Category N°2 (Germans who stay in Mexico for a limited time period, in most cases four years)
- c.e. closed-ended question
- DAAD Deutscher akademischer Austauschdienst
- et al. (lat. et alii) and others
- etc (lat. et cetera) and so on
- f. ~ and the following page
- ff. ~ and the following pages
- GDR German Democratic Republic
- h.o.e. half open-ended question
- ibid. (lat. ibidem) “the same place” ~ the same source as the previous one
- i.e. (lat. in exemplum) for example
- IfA Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen
- IMH Internationale Medienhilfe
- IOM International Organization of Migration
- N° number
- n.d. no date
- n. p. no publisher
- n.s. not specified
- NSDAP Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
- o.e. open-ended question
- p. person
- SRE Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

INTRODUCTION

Migration [lat. migrare] – although the imprint and the use of the term may be rather modern, in the world's history people have always been in motion. The movement from one village, city or country to another can be caused by many different reasons and those reasons changed significantly throughout the years. Nevertheless, migration was and is always accompanied by the same process: the adaptation to a new environment. Depending on the initial point and the destination of migrants, differences in climate, language, religion, customs etc can constitute a challenge or even cause serious problems. On the other hand they can be regarded as a personal gain.

In this thesis the focus will be placed on the migration of Germans¹ to the United Mexican States². Although exact indications are not available – due to the integration of Germans into Mexican society and the adoption of their Nationality over the decades and centuries – the German embassy in Mexico City reports an estimated number of 15.000 Germans and 75.000 people of German origin living in Mexico (“Deutschland”).

The main focus of the thesis is laid on the cultural and social development of the German population group in Mexico. The object of investigation is the process of integration and the presumed erosion of the German culture. When did the process of integration start, how was it realized and did it provoke the decline of the German culture among the German population in Mexico? To what extent are the Germans integrated into Mexican society? Do they preserve and live their own culture?

In order to find a condign and up-to-date answer to these questions, a survey directed at the Germans and to the people of German origin in Mexico will constitute the main part of this thesis. The preceding chapters will serve as an introduction and as a framework, which are indispensable in order to highlight the topic in a perspicuous way.

The first chapter will consist of the explanation and distinction of technical terms of importance. Especially during the last century, linguists invented and shaped

¹ In this case inhabitants of today's Germany as well as of the former German states

² “United Mexican States” is the official term for the country. However, the short form “Mexico” is the common abbreviation and will be used in the course of this thesis.

a multitude of concepts referring to the different ways of adapting to a foreign culture. The field of application of those terms regarding the topic of the thesis will also be pointed out.

The second chapter will be dedicated to the history of the German migration to Mexico. Long before the German scientist Alexander von Humboldt traveled to “New Spain”³ and returned with stories of new discoveries and data of immense interest for the Europeans, the first Germans, mainly tradesmen, made their way to the “New Continent” and “New Spain”. The history of their life in Mexico is of immediate importance for the response to the thesis’ research question. The influence of the Mexican culture eliminated old and created new customs; it preserved some German habits and let the German community grow together even stronger in the beginning, but it also made them forget others over the years.

After underlining of the historical background, the situation of the Germans and people of German origin today in Mexico will be described in the third part. Numerous organizations, foundations and educational constitutions help to encourage and preserve the use and the maintenance of the German culture in Mexico City and encourage the contact between Mexicans and Germans. Furthermore, the presence of German media in Mexico will also be revealed since the media usually reflect the importance of a certain topic within a distinguished group of people and they influence people in their perception and opinions. The analysis of the constitutions and the media will help to reveal whether the aim, the preservation of the German culture, is reached and if so, to what extent.

The sources used for the first three parts consist of literature in the form of books, articles from journals and newspapers and of information retrieved from websites. They are necessary to describe the technical terms, the history of the Germans in Mexico and their lives in Mexico nowadays and a first analysis of the situation today can be established. Nevertheless, in order to receive an insight into their personal reception of integration into Mexican society and their preservation of their own culture, it is very important to have direct contact with the people. Therefore the last part of the thesis will consist of a survey addressing the German population in Mexico City⁴. After an introduction to the chosen methodology, the

³ “New Spain” was the name of today’s Mexico before its independence.

⁴ The limitation of participants to people in Mexico City has two reasons: Firstly, it is the place with most Germans in Mexico, all living in the same environment under similar conditions and is therefore

choice and objective of every question will be explained as well as the chosen group of surveyed Germans. The analysis of the respondents' answers will then be written up and steadily compared to the results that the previous chapters have provided. The survey is able to highlight the personal opinion of the population of German origin from a closer point of view than the literature-based.

The aim is therefore to construct a coherent picture from theoretical research, historical sources and first-hand experience. This will not only produce results on the effects of migration on the culture of the migrants in Mexico but can also lead to more generalised conclusions in this field of research.

better comparable. Secondly, the author lived in Mexico City for three months and was in direct contact with a relatively big part of the participants of the survey.

1. *FROM ACCULTURATION TO TRANSCULTURATION – EXAMINATION OF TECHNICAL TERMS OF RELEVANCE*

When a certain topic is investigated by specialists, a multitude of technical terms is usually used. However, these expressions are not always clearly defined; they are sometimes applied with different connotations and are steadily modified.

In the case of this thesis, many of the terms referring to the contact between two cultures are rather modern inventions. Although – as already mentioned in the introduction – people were also moving in the past, the scientific investigation of migration and of the process of a society's integration into a new culture started in the 20th Century. Hence, the technical terms used to describe certain phenomena were coined from then on.

The main reason for this development is in all likelihood the technical progress that took place in the last decades. It simplified and even encouraged the movement of people; working i.e. in two different countries and moving constantly from one to the other is no longer extraordinary for many employees and employers. Because of this development and the fact that it affects more and more people all over the world, the process of integration into a new culture – and especially its difficulties – has become an important and intensely investigated topic during the last century.

Terms like acculturation and transculturation appear constantly when experts write or talk about the contact between cultures. In order to distinguish the most relevant technical terms regarding the topic of this thesis, they will now be investigated more closely and the concepts will be elaborated. However, there is an immense amount of (partly very controversial) literature referring to these terms, so that the following chapter should be seen as a rather brief illustration of the current state of discussion. A detailed investigation would clearly go beyond the scope of this thesis.

1.1. Minority

At first glance it might seem strange that “minority” is the first term that will be investigated, since it is usually not regarded as a complicated word that needs a detailed explanation. Nevertheless, regarding the thesis' topic, the question whether or not the German population can be regarded as a minority is of interest.

If the term refers to a group of people, it normally denominates a smaller group existing within a bigger group, the majority. According to the Oxford Dictionary, minorities are “a relatively small group of people differing from the majority in race, religion, language, etc.” (“minority”). If a group differs from the majority because of its race, it is denominated as “ethnic minority”. An ethnic minority are i.e. the Sinti and Roma in Germany (den Hertog, 27). A linguistic minority that is not an ethnic minority is i.e. the French speaking population of Canada. Religious minorities can be found in many countries; the Protestants in Poland, France or Spain are minorities, just like the Catholics in Great Britain.

Another common notion is “national minority”. The term “national minority” is often used as a collective term for minorities in general, although it originally denominates the juridical status of a minority which was defined in the “Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities” (“Framework”). In this convention, a number of rights are granted to the national minorities in the European Union. The Sinti and Roma are i.e. – besides being an ethnic minority – also a national minority in Germany (den Hertog, 27).

What is the German population in Mexico? Can it be denominated as a minority? The thesis’ title does not contain the word minority, although the Germans in Mexico are a small group of people living within a majority. But do they differ from the majority in any of the aforementioned aspects? This is part of the object of investigation of the thesis: To discover whether the Germans in Mexico can (still) be classified as a minority differing in race, cultural habits and/or religion by analysing their situation and their level of integration.

In its latest report on minorities the secretariat on foreign relations in Mexico (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE)) classifies the different minorities into national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. Although the foreigners living in Mexico (406,000 people⁵ (SRE, 1)) are denominated as national minorities, the emphasis of the report is laid on the religious, ethnic and linguistic minorities that consist almost exclusively of the indigenous peoples of Mexico. They constitute an important and relatively big part of the population (10,2 Million approx.) and belong to an immense variety of minority groups (62 peoples, 364 linguistic varieties) (“Cuestiones”, 2-4). The national minorities are divided into continents, the majority

⁵ Children under the age of five were not taken into account.

coming from North America (63%) and the second biggest group being Europeans (12%) (“Cuestiones”, 1). However, these numbers comprise only the people born abroad, so that the descendants of German immigrants are not included. The fact that the different nationalities of the foreigners living in Mexico are not even listed shows that the emphasis is rather laid on the other types of minorities.

It becomes obvious that the term minority in Mexico is mainly associated with the indigenous peoples and that it is rather improbable that the German population this thesis refers to is regarded as a “typical” minority in Mexico. Nevertheless, the applicability of the term as it was described before (a group differing in race, religion etc.) will be investigated in the course of the thesis.

1.2. “Cultural” terms

During the last century a variety of “cultural” terms has been invented and coined. The most common ones are acculturation, multiculturalism, interculturalism and transculturation. Although their dissociation from each other is not easy since each of them can be (and is) interpreted in different ways, the following subchapter will try to illuminate the terms.

1.2.1. Culture

In order to understand the following composed “cultural” terms, it will be helpful to have some background knowledge about the word “culture” itself.

The term had already been used before the 17th Century, but merely for individual human activities. In 1684 Samuel von Pufendorf first used “culture” as a word for all human expressions of life. One hundred years later, Johann Gottfried Herder described the different cultures as “balls or autonomous islands that should in each case correspond to the territorial region and the linguistic expansion of a people”⁶. He put three characteristics to the term “culture”: ethnic foundation; social homogenisation and delimitation towards “the others” (Welsch 1995, 1).

The meaning of the word “culture” has definitely been changing from those times until today. None of the three characteristics that were – according to Herder – part of the concept of culture can be applied today. Herder’s concept is not only

⁶ German original: „Kugeln oder autonome Inseln, die jeweils dem territorialen Bereich und der sprachlichen Extension eines Volkes entsprechen sollten.”

untenable, but it can even be dangerous: “The imagination of balls and the purity requirements pave the way for political conflicts and war.”⁷ (ibid.)

In the 20th Century, a variety of terms ending in “-culturality”, “-culturation” or “-culturalism”⁸ has been coined in order to not only achieve a more modern determination of the old term’s meaning but also to develop new strategies for a peaceful living together in today’s world. These attempts will now be investigated.

1.2.2. Acculturation

When searching for a definition for the term acculturation, a variety of different results can be found. It was already used in 1880, but the probably most known and also most cited description was set in 1936 by the anthropologists Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton and Melville Herskovits: “Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups” (Redfield et al., 149).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) stated in 2004 that acculturation is “the progressive adoption of elements of a foreign culture (ideas, words, values, norms, behaviours, institutions) by persons, groups or classes of a given culture” (Sam, 11).

The definition by the IOM seems to have a rather positive connotation; it mentions a progressive adoption of a culture without mentioning that exactly that adoption can lead to a variety of problems amongst both cultures. Furthermore, both definitions do not differentiate between the two cultures being involved, although the usage of the term acculturation mostly refers to a minority group living amongst a majority group.

When having a look at the origin of the word, one will find its roots in the Latin language. It consists of the prefix “ad” and the noun “cultura”, “ad” meaning “to” in the sense of “moving towards something” and “cultura” meaning “culture”.⁹ Thus, the creator of the word supposedly meant the approach of – at least – one culture towards another one.

⁷ German original: Die Kugelvorstellung und das Reinheitsgebot bereiten politischen Konflikten und Kriegen den Boden.”

⁸ Sometimes one word can also have different endings (i.e. “transculturality” and “transculturation”). If this is the case, the more current expression is used.

⁹ As a result of the connection of prefix and noun, the prefix “ad-” changes into “ac-”.

Taking the two definitions and the Latin origin into consideration, a general description could be the following: Acculturation is the process that occurs when one culture influences another culture. Mostly the minority will change their habits and customs more than the majority.

Berry stresses that acculturation is not only a cultural process; it can include biological, physical, psychological, economical, political and/or social changes (Berry 1991, 191). Besides, it should not be used as a synonym for assimilation¹⁰, since it can also involve the stimulation of new cultural forms or lead to reactions like resistance to change among both groups (Berry 1997, 6). Berry is, furthermore, famous for his model of different acculturation strategies which will now be revealed in detail, since it provides a logical and reasonable division into the distinct states of acculturation.

1.2.2.1. The four acculturation strategies by John Berry

According to Berry, two main questions stand in the foreground if a group of people undergoes the process of acculturation. These are: “to what extent are cultural identity and characteristics considered to be important, and their maintenance strived for?” and “to what extent should they become involved in other cultural groups, or remain primarily among themselves?” (Berry 1997, 9). If these two issues are answered simultaneously with either “yes” or “no”, there will be four possible combinations of answers, as can be seen in the following figure:

		Is it considered to be of value to maintain one’s identity and characteristics?	
		YES	NO
Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with larger society?	YES	Integration	Assimilation
	NO	Separation / Segregation	Marginalisation

¹⁰ The term assimilation will be defined in the following subchapter.

Assimilation is the result when an individual or a group does not have any interest of maintaining their own culture, but it wants to interact with the majority. This process can either be chosen by the minority group or also be enforced by the majority. Berry uses the term “melting pot” if people want to assimilate and “pressure cooker” if they are forced to do so (Berry 1997, 10).

Integration is the option when the minority wants to maintain both their own cultural identity and also relationships with the larger society. However, integration can only be successful if the majority wants the minority to become integrated.

Separation is the refusal of interaction with the majority on the part of the minority. The minority wants to hold on to its own identity, though. If the larger group requires this option, it is named *segregation*.

Marginalisation is the result when the minority does not maintain any relationship with the majority (often because of discrimination) and at the same time it is not interested in their own identity. Thus, marginalisation is always at least partly enforced by the majority (Berry 1997, 9f.).

Berry’s explanation of this conceptual framework obviously goes far more into detail. However, this brief summary of the four strategies is adequate for the purpose of this thesis: To investigate how the German population in Mexico fits into these concepts. Regarding the four options, integration seems to be the best one for a satisfactory long-term relationship between minority and majority society. In the ideal integration, the minority can stick to their culture and they do not have to give up their customs. At the same time they do not feel excluded since they also get to know the majority’s culture, adopt parts of it and (after a certain period) live within the new culture without losing their own. The majority, in turn, does not have the feeling that a foreign culture tries to displace their own identity since the foreigners adopt themselves to the majority’s culture. Nevertheless, the majority will also get acquainted with the foreign culture and – in the ideal case – they can adopt parts of it and thus broaden their own culture. Regarding these acculturation strategies it is of importance to remember always that the process depends on both, the minority as well as the majority. “The beliefs of all the communities interact and shape the acculturation process. The wishes of the minorities and the expectations of the majorities set the scene for acculturation to take place.” (Chrysochoou, xxvii)

In the course of the next chapters the possible correlation of the Germans in Mexico to one or several of the concepts will be assessed.

1.2.3. Multiculturalism

The term multiculturalism was coined by the German-Jewish migrant Horace Kallen in the United States of America in 1924 in his book “Culture and Democracy in the United States” (Demorgon and Kordes, 28). The Latin word “multi” means “many”; thus, the term multiculturalism also deals with at least two cultures. Nevertheless, instead of the approach of one culture towards the other(s), multiculturalism is the denotation for different cultures living amongst each other without giving up their own traditions. The ideal form of multiculturalism could be described as the coexistence of different cultures on the same territory (Demorgon and Kordes, 29).

Charles Taylor underlines in his book “Multikulturalismus und Politik der Anerkennung” the importance of the appreciation of the others’ culture and their right to also show and live their culture outside their private sphere. Consequently, the “evolution of plurality and freedom” is seen as a general principle that should be followed by everyone (Taylor cited in Demorgon and Kordes, 29).

Although this description of “multiculturalism” appears to be very positive, the concept seems to hold also disadvantages. Wolfgang Welsch states that the different cultures are still regarded as balls or islands; with the difference that they exist within one community (i.e. within one country) now. In the ideal case tolerance, understanding and acceptance would exist between these cultures. On the other hand, the concept of multiculturalism accepts barriers between cultures which can lead to an increase of avocation on these barriers and on a cultural identity. Consequently, cultural fundamentalism and ghettoisation can be provoked (Welsch 1995, 2). The corroboration of collective ideas can also boost discrimination and arouse fights between different cultures (Demorgon and Kordes, 30f.).

1.2.4. Interculturalism and transculturation

When investigating the two last terms, “interculturalism” and “transculturation”, it becomes clearly visible that authors and scientists do neither agree on the interpretation of the words, nor on the answer to the question which of the concepts is the “better” one. Obviously, both terms and the ideas connected to them can be regarded as the ideal – or at least as a positive – concept, depending on the interpretation. The dispute will now be examined on the basis of the statements of Welsch on the one hand and Demorgon and Kordes on the other hand, all three experts regarding the topic.

Although there is no special inventor of the term “intercultural” or “interculturalism”, in 1924 an organization was founded in the USA called “Bureau of Intercultural Education”. Its job was to replace the “old” acculturation policy of assimilation (Demorgon and Kordes, 33). Welsch states that the concept of “interculturalism” is only an addition to the traditional concept of “culture”. The different cultures are still balls or islands which now – within the intercultural concept – try to communicate with each other. But in Welsch’s opinion this communication will not work out since the concept does not try to change the problem of the islands itself. The communication between the cultures will be very difficult if not impossible because of the separated character of the cultures (Welsch 1995, 1f.).

Transculturation¹¹, on the other hand, is Welsch’s favourite concept for a balanced and peaceful way of living together. The term transculturation was first used by Fernando Ortiz Fernández in 1947 in order to denominate the mix of cultures. Ortiz used the word to entitle the process happening to the different cultures within Cuba. According to him, transculturation would finally let them grow together to a stable national culture (Hildebrandt, 351).

Welsch, in turn, states that “Cultures are internally characterised by a pluralisation of possible identities and they externally possess transnational outlines”¹² (Welsch 1995, 3f.). In his opinion, modern cultures are completely interlaced with each other. This interdependence does not only take place between and within cultures, but also among individuals; Welsch denominates today’s human beings as “cultural hybrids”. His main attributes to describe transculturation are “entanglement, intermixing and commonness” (Welsch 1999, 205). He compares his point of view with Wittgenstein’s “pragmatically-based concept of culture, which is free of ethnic consolidation and unreasonable demands for homogeneity (...). Culture is at hand wherever practices in life are shared” (Welsch 1999, 202). Every human being should “be transcultural” towards the others. Only if every individual discovers and accepts their transcultural interior, they can get along with the – already existing – transculturation in society.

¹¹ Welsch’s German term “Transkulturalität” is translated into „transculturality“. Nevertheless, in the thesis the term “transculturation” will be used because it is more current and it has a more flexible and less stark connotation.

¹² German original: „Kulturen sind intern durch eine Pluralisierung möglicher Identitäten gekennzeichnet und weisen extern grenzüberschreitende Konturen auf.“

However, Demorgon and Kordes' opinions on the two terms interculturalism and transculturation could hardly be more different. To them, transculturation is a positive and progressive concept, but only in theory. From tolerance to relativization to solidarity – this (idealized) idea of transculturation is, according to Demorgon and Kordes, difficult to achieve. They describe i.e. France as a country that stresses its transcultural principle of laicism. They state, however, that relatively small countries like France do not have a chance to resist the Anglo-Saxon multiculturalism, which is spreading over the world's society in a way that it is becoming a transcultural world force, mainly because of the worldwide used English language (Demorgon and Kordes, 32f.). The resulting world domination will rather produce a division into inclusion and exclusion zones (depending on whether or not a people or a territory can keep up with the world's capitalism) than a cultural unification. Eventually, transculturation could – just like multiculturalism – produce “a global racism without races and space” (Demorgon and Kordes, 33).

The difference between interculturalism and the other concepts, multiculturalism and transculturation, is the complexity and sensibility the intercultural concept shows. While transculturation deals with similarities between cultures and multiculturalism analyses differences, interculturalism is about interferences, mutual dependences and reciprocal penetration of contacts and borders (Demorgon and Kordes, 34). Furthermore, interculturalism contains the complete relation between cultural, social and the world's reality, while the other concepts are (only) dedicated to the connection between politics and culture (multiculturalism) and to the relation between society and individuals (transculturation). “Intercultural theory and praxis is not about mixing everything with each other, but about using everything for the creation of a historical margin and interspace.”¹³ (Demorgon and Kordes, 35)

1.3. Evaluation

As already mentioned at the beginning of the first chapter, the explanation of all the technical terms is diverse, in many cases one notion is interpreted in different ways. However, the examination of them is of importance – not only since they will appear

¹³ German original: „Es geht in interkultureller Theorie und Praxis nicht darum, alles mit allem zu vermischen, sondern alles für die Schaffung eines geschichtlichen Spiel- und Zwischenraums zu nutzen“

consistently in the course of the next chapters, but mainly because their revelation helps to work on the object of investigation of the thesis.

With respect to the controversial statements on “transculturation”, it becomes obvious that a precise definition of the terms is not possible – but it does actually not seem to be very necessary either. In fact, much more important than the “title” they have is how the concepts are perceived and interpreted and actually applied in praxis. The description of transculturation by Welsch and the one of interculturalism by Demorgon and Kordes could be interpreted in a similar way, since they both stress that the contact between different societies is the important point. Welsch calls it “entanglement” while Demorgon and Kordes talk about a “penetration of borders”. However, the main difference between the two concepts lies exactly in these notions. Entanglement could be perceived as self-abandonment; in order to contain as much commonness as possible, the societies can lose their own cultural values. The conservation of the own culture is, in turn, precisely what Welsch criticises about the intercultural concept: The maintenance of the ball or island principle. As a result, depending on how one interprets the two concepts, the intercultural or the transcultural concept can appear more logical and attractive.

The question whether the German population can be denominated as a minority in Mexico will be investigated in chapter 4. Nevertheless, it is also of interest how the German group was organized in the past and if it influenced their situation today, which will be revealed in chapter 2 and 3. In equal measure the four acculturation strategies will be considered during the following chapters. The Germans in the 19th Century in Mexico had a different social behaviour than nowadays, the contact with the majority population was not as normal as now. Today, integration is generally regarded as the best concept of acculturation; maintaining one’s cultural identity while absorbing and connecting to the majority’s culture is seen as the ideal solution. Chapter 3 will investigate whether the Germans in Mexico reached this ideal – and the survey in chapter 4 will shed light on the situation from the point of view of the Germans themselves.

2. THE HISTORY OF THE GERMANS' LIFE IN MEXICO FROM THE BEGINNING UNTIL TODAY

In order to understand the process of integration and to investigate the possible maintenance of the German culture among the emigrants, an insight into history is indispensable. It is of importance to mention that the very diverse history of Mexico and of the famous Mexico-Germans¹⁴ is too voluminous to be revealed completely. Consequently, this chapter will concentrate on the events and people that had an influence on the development of the Germans' cultural life.

The arrival of the first major groups of Germans in Mexico dates back to the early nineteenth Century.¹⁵ Even before the independence, when Mexico still was the "New Spain", Germans were already travelling to Mexico, among them the famous scientist Alexander von Humboldt. After the independence of Mexico, more and more Germans came to the country in order to work. Since many brought their families with them, there was soon a German community to be found, first in Mexico City and later also in other cities.

In the following chapters the history of the Germans in Mexico from the beginning until today will be revealed. A special emphasis will be laid on the development of the cultural life of the Germans. Although the history of the Germans does naturally not consist of self-contained periods, for a clearer overview it will be examined in three parts: the arrival of the first (major) German groups (until the late 18th Century approx.), the situation during the Porfiriato, the Mexican revolution and the National Socialism in Germany, and the time after World War II until today. Finally, the evaluation will summarize the happenings and rate them.

2.1. The first Germans in „New Spain“

When the German emigration to New Spain began, their main motive was to work in the mines. Although reports on the first ample groups of Germans arriving to today's Mexico refer to the beginning of the 19th Century as a starting date of German immigration, Winberry states that 1536 is the year of arrival of the first German

¹⁴ The term "Mexico-Germans" which is used by several authors will be used as synonym for "people of German origin" in the course of the thesis.

¹⁵ The German Mennonites, a religious group that came to Mexico at the beginning of the 20th Century after having migrated to Canada and the United States of America centuries ago, are not considered in any investigation of this work, since their inclusion would go beyond the scope of the thesis.

miners to “New Spain” (Winberry, 62). Supposedly the Germans introduced a certain technique building log houses in Sultepec. Although it is not proved that the technique is of German origin, according to Winberry and Kießling their presence in “New Spain” is documented (Winberry, 64 and Kießling, 32). One group of Saxons left Europe in 1788 in order to work in the silver mines in Guanajuato and Taxco. One of them, Friedrich Sonnenschmidt, wrote three reports about mining, which were published in Germany after his return at the beginning of the new Century. The majority of those German groups having arrived before the 19th Century did not leave their mark in history, though (Kießling, 32).

2.1.1. Alexander von Humboldt

At the beginning of the 19th Century, the visit of a famous German to entailed an increased interest in “New Spain” among the Germans and other Europeans. The famous person was Alexander von Humboldt. He arrived to Acapulco in March 1803 (Kießling, 11). Although Alexander was primarily a scientist and his brother, Wilhelm von Humboldt was the one being more interested in cultural sciences, linguistics and philosophy, both shared an important conviction: “the appreciation of the empiric pluralism of cultures and of the self-determination of the peoples”¹⁶ (Bernecker, 108).

Alexander von Humboldt stayed in Mexico for almost one year. He travelled to a variety of different cities, villages, regions and volcanoes, always continuing with scientific examinations such as taking measurements, levelling, collecting rock cuttings and afterwards drawing exact maps of distinctive parts of Mexico (Kießling, 21, 22). Everything he saw and found out was precisely documented in his diary.

Besides his scientific work Humboldt also observed the Mexican way of life. He was delighted when he became aware of the quasi non-existence of slavery in Mexico, especially compared to the United States of America which he had already visited before. He hardly saw African slaves and even the existing slaves were treated humanely (Kießling, 16, 25). However, this positive advancement did not count for the indigenous population. When he visited and examined a huge drainage system close to Mexico City, he was impressed by its size and technique, but even more shocked by the violent way the indigenous workers were treated. Before Humboldt

¹⁶ Spanish original: “el reconocimiento del pluralismo empírico de las culturas y de la autodeterminación cultural de los pueblos.”

left New Spain, he advised the vice king during an excursion to the drainage system of the situation that he described as inhuman and unbearable (Kießling, 17, 26).

When Alexander von Humboldt finally left New Spain in March 1804, he was very popular with the Mexican population. Back in Europe he started to write and publish extensive and detailed reports on his experiences and on the scientific discoveries he had made. He kept contact with the Mexicans and even considered to migrate to Mexico in order to open an academy of science (Kießling, 28). Although he did not put this plan into effect, he continued to be worshiped by the Mexicans. At his 100th birthday in 1869 he was given the title “second Columbus”. Several monuments remind on his stay until today and a variety of streets, parks, squares etc. were named after him. He is said to be the founder of the Mexican-German friendship (Kießling, 29ff.).

2.1.2. The first major groups of Germans in Mexico

Although it is difficult to measure to what extent von Humboldt’s investigations and reports influenced other Germans in order to deal with the idea to migrate to Mexico, the first major groups of Germans arrived to Mexico in the second decade of the 19th Century. They were mainly from the Harz region and from Saxony (Von Mentz, 1999, 12). This movement can in all likelihood be attributed to publications of von Humboldt’s works (Bernecker, 108), as well as to Mexico’s independence in 1810 and the resulting abolishment of the until 1810 existing general interdiction of entry for foreigners (Kießling, 32).

About ten years after the declaration of independence the trade relations between Mexico and the rest of world started. Hamburg and Bremen with their big and important harbours became important German commercial cities for the Mexicans (Bernecker, 108). Among the Germans that arrived during the second decade of the 19th Century were – besides a small amount of miners – mainly people with trading interests. Several trade companies were founded. One of the first ones was the “Compañia de las Indias Occidentales”, the “Company of the West Indies”, which was funded by German textile and ironware exporters (Von Mentz 1999, 12). The number of shops and stores possessed and led by Germans amounted to a total of 206 in 1854 (von Mentz 1982 “Casas”, 89).

2.1.3. The cultural life of the Germans in Mexico in the 19th Century

The Germans had come to Mexico almost exclusively because of economic reasons. They were no refugees, but their main objective was to enrich themselves as fast as possible and later return to their home country (Buchenau, 279). The general attitude among the majority of the Germans towards their host country involved certain arrogance and a feeling of superiority (von Mentz 1982, 334, 347). Germans favouring the equal treating of all races were an exception. This attitude was even supported and increased by the Mexican upper class, since they adored the white, civilized people and were also dependent on the Europeans and the trade with them. The daughters of the upper class strived for marriages with white Europeans, more than with their compatriots (von Mentz 1982, 350, 356). Mexican newspapers, obviously possessed by the upper class, even stated that the immigration of Europeans is indispensable, not only because of economic reasons but also in order to guarantee the further existence of the white race (Turner 371).

The majority of the Germans that arrived were not married. Some of them lived with Mexican women in a “concubinage”, since it was practically impossible for the protestant Germans to marry a catholic Mexican (Bernecker, 111). Others married upper class Mexicans, while the vast majority did not want to be in contact with the Mexicans at all. Obtaining the Mexican citizenship was not desirable from their part. They mostly lived in the houses of their employers, ate and slept in one room with the other workers and also spent their spare time together (von Mentz 1982, 355). However, it is probable that the poorer Germans who could not afford the others’ leisure activities did have contact with Mexican society and their form of cultural life. Some of the Germans living in rural areas adapted to Mexican life and lost contact to the German society. However, this was a rare exception (von Mentz, 352f.)

During the following decades, more and more Germans arrived in Mexico and a growing German community could be found in the country. In 1842 a choral society called “Liedertafel” was founded; it was the first social association of Germans in Mexico. It was in all likelihood the German revolution of 1848 that made the Germans search for more possibilities to contact other Germans and discuss their thoughts with their compatriots. This need of interchange of ideas among the Germans led to the foundation of the “Deutsches Haus”, the German House, in the same year (Kießling, 38).

2.1.4. “Deutsches Haus”

The “Deutsches Haus”, the German House or German Casino¹⁷, was founded at Whitsunday in 1848, after eleven men had made the following public appeal: “The common German association in Mexico intends to give the present Germans an opportunity via social meetings in a locality destined to this use to come closer together by the exchange of their dispositions and to relax and to converse with each other with allowed amusements.”¹⁸ (Kießling, 39)

It was used for leisure activities such as singing, playing billiard, having discussion rounds, dinners etc. (Von Mentz, 1999, 15). Besides the condition to be a German speaker, the members had to pay several fees, so that a membership was unaffordable for the poorer Germans. Furthermore, only men were allowed to enter the German House. Their wives stayed at home and kept the house, and they were also excluded from all nocturnal activities. However, this was the normal situation in the 19th Century, in Mexico as well as in Europe (von Mentz 1982, 352).

The members of the German House were mainly part of the conservative group; the democratic dispositions faded and gave way to national arrogance. Instead of using the locality as a meeting point for democrats – like its original law of incorporation indicated – it became the centre of anti-democrats. The liberal proponents of democracy left the association. In 1891, 100 members separated from the German House and founded the even more conservative “Deutscher Verein”, the German Association. The German House served mainly as a base for National Socialists during World War II and was closed in 1942 by the Mexican Government (Kießling 40,100).

2.1.5. The situation until the turn of the Century

The separation between progressive democrats and conservative nationalists that took place in the German House was a reflection of the situation among the Germans in Mexico in general. It emerged in the second half of the 19th Century as a result of oppositional points of view regarding the political situation (Kießling, 79, 100).

¹⁷ Niblo translates the Spanish version of “Deutsches Haus” “Casino Alemán” with “German Casino” (Niblo, 357). However, “House” seems to be more appropriate.

¹⁸ German original: “Der zu bildende allgemeine deutsche Verein in Mexico bezweckt den daselbst anwesenden Deutschen durch gesellige Versammlungen in einem eigens dazu bestimmten Locale Gelegenheit zu geben, sich durch Austausch ihrer Gesinnungen näher aneinander zu schließen und durch erlaubte Vergnügungen sich zu erholen und zu unterhalten.”

One of the few Germans who actively tried to fight this development was Isidoro Epstein. He arrived to Mexico in 1951 and due to his skills in drawing maps, writing, publishing and editing he soon got in contact with the Mexican leaders in politics, economics, education etc. (Krause, 476&482). His political position was contradictory; on the one hand “he was a German national enthusiastic about the successful achievement of a unified Germany”, on the other hand “he was a devoted liberal” (Krause, 485). Furthermore, he was a Jew who never tried to deny his religion. He was the publisher of the first German newspaper in Mexico, “Vorwärts” (“Forward”), and of the more influential “Germania”, which could both not persist among the mostly conservative German population. Epstein and his determined but finally unsuccessful fight for liberalism reflect the strong affiliation to the conservative ideology of the majority of Germans in Mexico and even of the upper Mexican class. It can even be regarded as a sign for first anti-Semitic lineaments among the people.

Although the political changes in Mexico play only a marginal roll in this thesis (since they are very diverse and too voluminous to be dealt with), one event should be mentioned at this point: the proclamation of the Habsburg Maximilian I. as the Emperor of Mexico by the French Emperor Napoléon III. in 1864. France had temporarily invaded Mexico and Napoléon’s plan was to erect an empire similar to the French. However, Maximilian’s political viewpoint between monarchy and democracy was neither favoured by the conservative nor by the liberal Mexicans. Hence, he and his forces were beaten by president Juárez and he was finally executed in 1867. His stay in Mexico did not have any major impact on the Germans in the country.

Toward the end of the 19th Century, a relatively big part of the German population of Mexico became even more conservative than their compatriots in Germany (von Mentz 1982, 349). They disassociated themselves completely from the Mexican culture, having their own German pastors, doctors, teachers and colleagues. They regarded themselves as superior, while on the Mexican side there was a certain jealousy towards the economic success of the Germans (Bernecker, 115-116). Consequently – and with very few exceptions only –, no efforts were made by the Germans in the 19th Century to integrate themselves into Mexican life or at least get in touch with the Mexican culture and traditions.

2.2. The situation during the Porfiriato, the Mexican revolution and the National Socialism in Mexico

2.2.1. The Porfiriato

The so-called Porfiriato, the regime under Porfirio Díaz that would turn into a violent dictatorship soon, had begun in 1876. However, the beginning was characterized by an advanced form of ruling by Díaz; railways and highways were built and the country experienced an enormous economic revival (Kießling, 86). The Porfiriato turned into a brutal regime at the very end of the Century and the beginning of the 20th Century. When suddenly the price for silver sank rapidly at the beginning of the new century and thousands of people lost their jobs, the situation led into the Mexican revolution.

During the first period of the Porfiriato at the end of the 19th Century, Porfirio Díaz gave large amounts of lands in Chiapas to foreigners in order to turn them into coffee plantations. The majority of these plantations were owned by Germans who had arrived with their families (Bernecker, 115-116). Many of the families that arrived during the Porfiriato did not consider a return to Germany – like many of their compatriots who had come to Mexico earlier had done or at least planned. The Germans in Mexico

In the year 1900, 2564 Germans or Mexicans with German origin were living in Mexico, 2000 of them in Mexico City. They belonged to the elite; their shops and stores and their wisdom regarding trade had become well-known and indispensable in Mexico. In 1910 the number had risen to 3827 and in 1930 about 6500 Germans could be found in Mexico (Kießling, 98). The majority of those Germans were – as mentioned in the last subchapter – conservative. Paul Elle, a liberal German emigrant, described the Germans as conservative tradesmen without interest in the liberty movement, human rights and the situation of the indigenous population and solely anxious about their own benefits (Kießling, 100). The feeling of superiority can be observed in Heinrich Lemcke's book, where he expressed the importance for the German population in Mexico to "necessarily conserve themselves in their cultural integrity, otherwise they would degenerate and sink to the low cultural level of the host country"¹⁹ (Lemcke, 188). Another document of German nationalism and

¹⁹ German original: „...unbedingt in ihrer kulturellen Integrität bewahren, sonst entarten sie und sinken herab auf die niedrige kulturelle Stufe des Gastlandes“

conservative thinking is the “Deutsche Zeitung von Mexiko”, a German newspaper that appeared three times weekly from 1882 until 1942 (Kießling, 100f.).

In 1894, the first German school was founded in Mexico City²⁰ (“Historia”). The school is said to also have taught rather conservative political perceptions. According to Kießling, it was more a boundary between Germans and Mexicans than a possibility to get in contact with each other (Kießling, 101). Until the opening of the German school, the Germans had sent their children to Europe in order to obtain a higher education; Mexican schools had never been taken into consideration (von Mentz 1982, 359f.). “The foundation of the school constituted the most important moment in the transition from loose diaspora to ethnic enclave.” (Buchenau, 283)

2.2.2. The Mexican Revolution

The Mexican Revolution started in November 1910 with an armed rebellion by the liberals. Half a year later Porfirio Díaz was dispossessed. The revolution lasted ten years, armed conflicts and fights were almost daily occurrences. In 1917 the new Constitution of Mexico was adopted. Although the realization of social reforms could not be achieved by the revolutionists, the government and the form of government was suppressed and later replaced (Kießling, 89f., 101).

In the first decade of the 20th Century, Germany became aware of the possibility of using Mexico for its political benefits. Until then, the most important relation between the two states had been the economic trade. Díaz underlined the friendship between Mexico and Germany and showed interest in the German form of handling its military. Hence, the German army prestige rose, albeit not enough to be able to seriously have an influence on the happenings in Mexico (Schiff 1959, 570, 579).

The political perception among Mexico’s Germans was still separated into a more conservative and a more liberal way of thinking; the group of liberals was by far smaller than the one of conservatives, though. In 1919, the liberal Germans tried to resist the ideas of the conservatives by publishing the weekly newspaper “Neu-Deutschland”. The newspaper stood for a republican-democratic attitude. It favoured the result of the German revolution as well as the Mexican revolution’s outcome. After its twelfth and last issue, the German liberals founded the “Vereinigung

²⁰ The German school will be described in detail in the third chapter.

Deutscher Republikaner”, the association of German republicans which lasted until 1933 (Kießling, 105f.).

2.2.3. The National Socialism

The relation between Germany and Mexico during the National Socialism was diversified. In the beginning, both countries set value on the maintenance of the economic and diplomatic relations. These relations were seriously damaged for the first time in 1936 because of “Germany’s pro-fascist intervention in the Spanish Civil War” (Schiff 1980, 116). In 1939 they were interrupted completely with the outbreak of World War II. While Mexico at the beginning of the war still stated that it was neutral, it finally declared war to the Axis Powers in 1942 after the attacks on two Mexican submarines by the Germans (Radkau, “Tercer Reich” 71ff., 99)

The German community in Mexico was now completely split into two parts – into Germans against and Germans in favour of the ideas of Adolf Hitler. Several groupings emerged from the conservative part of the Germans. One of them was the “Community of the German people” which was founded in 1931 and would later become the Mexican equivalent of the NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei) (Radkau “Nacionalsocialistas”, 144ff.). Although the number of supporters of democracy among the Germans was lower than the one of the fascists at first, the majority of the Germans arriving in Mexico during National Socialism were political and ethnic refugees, so that the group being against the ideas of the National Socialism began to grow. In 1938 the “Liga Pro-Cultura Alemana” (the pro-German Culture League) was founded, followed by the “Bewegung Freies Deutschland (BFD)” in 1942. Their aim was to point out that not all Germans were in favour of Hitler’s ideology and that it was worth trying to resist the Nazis (Kießling 234ff.).

The objective of “Community of the German people” was the diffusion of the National Socialist ideology. Together with the NSDAP it spread its propaganda in Mexico – also in Spanish on the radio (Radkau “Nacionalsocialistas, 162) – and of course particularly in German establishments in Mexico like the German School (Bernecker, 119). Consequently, the German and other anti-Fascists sent their children to other schools (Von Hanffstengel-Pohlenz, 41f.).

After Mexico’s declaration of war to the Axis Powers, the “Community of the German people” disbanded in order to not become a target for possible affronts

(Radkau “Tercer Reich”, 110). The German Newspaper “Deutsche Zeitung in Mexiko” was prohibited in the same year.

From 1943 on, the German Jews and anti-Fascists, first rather separated from each other because of different religious values and social backgrounds, converged step by step (Kießling, 383).

Although the fascist Germans living in Mexico were less affected by the war than the ones in other countries, several hundred were imprisoned, among them leaders of former groupings with Nazi ideology (Radkau “Nacionalsocialismo”, 177). In Chiapas the given lands were taken away from the German coffee planters. However, after the war many of the Germans regained their plantations (Bernecker, 121). The majority of the German salesmen lost their stores and shops, but many were also able to regain them from the Mexican government (Radkau “Nacionalsocialistas”, 179). The German anti-Fascist emigrants kept their right to work, to join political and cultural associations and to freely express their opinion.”²¹ (Kießling, 341)

The 3000 German refugees that arrived in Mexico because of World War II formed an important group. The majority of the supporters of the Nazis vanished or pretended to have changed their position. The German anti-Fascist and Jewish refugees are said to have paved the way for the first real cultural relations between the Mexican and the German culture (Bernecker, 123).

2.3. The development from the end of World War II until today

After the end of World War II, the situation between Mexico and Germany improved step by step. The BFD’s new aim was now to prepare for Democracy in Germany. The political refugees wanted to return to Germany in order to help with the reconstruction. The Jewish refugees whose relatives had mostly been killed did not plan to go back to Europe (Kießling, 389). In 1946 a group of anti-Fascists who were still living in Mexico founded the Committee for Mexican-German Cultural Exchange in order to improve the relation between Mexico and the future democratic Germany (Kießling, 402).

Commerce and diplomacy between Mexico and Germany started again in 1950 and 1952; bilateral contracts were made in the areas of culture, education,

²¹ German original: “Die deutschen Antifaschisten behielten das Recht auf Arbeit, der politischen und kulturellen Vereinigung und der ungehinderten Meinungsäußerung.”

economy, technology and taxes. Before Germany's reunification in 1990, Mexico also maintained diplomatic relations with the German Democratic Republic (GDR) (Bernecker, 124).

Regarding the Germans' private situation and their cultural life in Mexico after World War II until today, after 1945 the different groups among the German speaking population in Mexico started a new approach towards each other which also included Austrians. An important meeting point in those times were the International Library, the German school and from 1958 also the "Club Alemán", the German Club²² (von Hanffstengel-Pohlenz, 43). The Mexican and the German society began to grow together. A Mexican middle class was formed with the help of the industrialisation and more and more Mexican families sent their children to the German School and other foreign schools (Buchenau, 293). The young Mexican generation became aware of their nationality and began to feel proud of being Mexican. Consequently, the perception of the Mexicans by the Germans changed extremely; seeing their Mexican class- and playmates, the German adolescents "discovered that it was "hip" to be Mexican." (Buchenau, 294) The development of the mass media helped to spread the new perception of Mexican society; the growth of Mexico City marginalized the German enclave more and more and Spanish became the first language among Germans and German born Mexicans. Within the last 30 years the number of marriages between Mexicans and Germans has been rising constantly (Buchenau, 294).

The Germans who arrived to Mexico during the last decades (17,000 between 1960 and 1990) mostly came on the basis of three- to five-year contracts for one of the major German or multinational companies (Buchenau, 296). According to Buchenau, these newcomers do not have much contact to the former German enclave and they are also not very interested in the Mexican culture. But even the former enclave holds on to the German culture and since many of them are considered foreigners because of their hair and eye colour, "many German-Mexicans continue to feel privileged by their ethnicity, and some of them still treat Mexicans with disdain." (Buchenau, 296f.)

On the contrary, Renata von Hanffstengel-Pohlenz, an author who belongs to the Mexico-Germans, indicates that she does not have the perception of an existing

²² The German Club will be dealt with in detail in the third chapter.

German community in today's Mexico. This development should, according to her, be regarded positively:

“I think that the disintegration of the core was healthy, it opened the community and liberated its members from the ties and prejudices that a closed community uses to impose. (...) It is a fruitful process that both parts benefit from, the host country converted into home country as well as the immigrant or the refugee who arrived in order to stay.”²³

(von Hanffstengel-Pohlenz, 47)

2.4. Evaluation

The history of the Germans in Mexico is diverse and turbulent. At the beginning of the 19th Century it was, first and foremost, economic reasons that made Germans migrate to Mexico. Most of them did not consider staying there longer than necessary. In the course of the years, more and more Germans arrived and many of them brought their families or started a family, so that after a while a German community was formed. A tendency to a conservative political position emerged and strengthened; many Germans felt superior to the indigenous population. The liberals were outnumbered by the conservatives by far; nevertheless, they always tried to show Mexico that not all Germans have the same political and ethnic perception. These two groups of Germans stayed basically separated until the end of World War II.

With few exceptions, the Germans had not tried to integrate into Mexican society by then. Since they regarded the Mexican culture derogatively as inferior, it was important for them to not get into too much contact with it and to preserve their own customs. Referring to Berry's acculturation strategies, the Germans' life in Mexico until World War II was a classical case of *separation*. Buchenau denominates the Germans' attitude as “self-segregation” which is also an appropriate term (Buchenau, 286). Since “segregation” seems to have a stronger connotation in the sense of separating someone from someone else than “separation”, “self-segregation” is suitable to describe the Germans' position. The Germans who married Mexican upper class women cannot even be regarded as an exception, since those women of

²³ “Creo que la desintegración del núcleo fue sano, abrió la comunidad y liberó a sus integrantes de las ataduras y los prejuicios que una comunidad cerrada suele imponer. (...) Es un proceso fructífero que beneficia a ambas partes, tanto al país huésped convertido en patria, como al inmigrante o exiliado que llegó para quedarse.” (Von Hanffstengel-Pohlenz, 47)

the Mexican upper class admired the white Europeans and also disprized the indigenous population.

The National Socialism had even intensified the situation of separation or self-segregation. Before the Nazi ideology came up, the Germans had been an ethnical enclave among others. When Hitler came to power, “the war drew a line between the German speakers on the one hand, and the British, French, and U.S. colonies on the other hand.” (Buchenau, 286)

The development of the cultural life of the Germans in Mexico and of their form of acculturation from the war until now shows a high intensity of integration or even assimilation. Nevertheless, Jürgen Buchenau, whose opinion is based on interviews with Mexico-Germans, states that the newcomers, the Germans who have temporary contracts in Mexico, do normally not integrate into Mexican society. Furthermore, he holds the opinion that even some of the “old” Germans, members and descendants of the former enclave, feel superior towards the Mexicans. Renata von Hanffstengel-Pohlenz, on the other hand, does not confirm the existence of a German community.

In order to analyse the discrepancy between these two statements and to investigate how the Germans in Mexico regard the situation today, the following chapter will first give an introduction into the German’s cultural life by describing the German facilities in Mexico. Subsequently, the survey directed to the Germans and Mexico-Germans will be presented in the 4. chapter will and its evaluation will provide a direct insight into their personal opinion and experiences.

3. BETWEEN SEPARATION, INTEGRATION AND ASSIMILATION – THE RECENT SITUATION OF THE GERMANS IN MEXICO CITY

The German embassy in Mexico estimates that 15,000 Germans and 75,000 people of German origin live in Mexico today. The 75,000 people with German ancestors are mostly descendants of the old-established German group, the former enclave. Regarding the 15,000 newcomers, the majority of them stay in Mexico for a certain period in order to work and they usually return to Germany after three to five years.

In the previous chapter the controversial perception of the integration of the Germans into the Mexican society became obvious. Before the following chapter will finally investigate the attitudes and viewpoints of the Germans by evaluating the survey, this chapter will introduce the biggest German and German-Mexican facilities in order to have an overview over the Germans' life in Mexico City. They are of relevance since they serve as direct meeting places for Germans and/or for Germans and Mexicans. After that, the German media in Mexico City will be investigated and the importance of the media in general will be pointed out. The media usually have an enormous impact on people's opinions and lives. The survey, prepared for this thesis and used to interrogate the Germans in Mexico, will be presented in detail in the fourth chapter

3.1. German and Mexican-German facilities in Mexico City

The facilities that will be introduced in this subchapter have one aspect in common. They facilitate and simplify the contact between Germans and they also bring Germans and Mexicans together. To what extent they eventually influence the integration of the Germans into the Mexican culture will be investigated with the aid of the survey.

3.1.1. The oldest German institution in Mexico: the German School

The German School in Mexico City, "Colegio Alemán Alexander von Humboldt A.C.", was founded in 1894. Its first name was "Schule der Deutschen Kolonie zu Mexiko" (School of the German colony in Mexico) (von Mentz, 1988, 199). Initially, it included only the first six grades, but soon the students also received secondary school education and from 1922 they could absolve the German final exam ("Abitur"). "The *Colegio Alemán* pursued a threefold mission: to educate German

children in the tradition of their ancestors, to teach Germans what they needed to know about Mexico, and to acquaint Mexicans with German culture (Buchenau, 283). Since not enough German children visited the school, it opened its doors for other nationalities soon. Buchenau points out that – with an exception during World War II – from 1904 until today the number of students in the Mexican track has always been higher than the one in the German track (Buchenau, 284).

During the National Socialism the school was used as an instrument for the Nazi propaganda. When Mexico entered World War II in 1942, the Mexican government took over the school and forbid the use of the German language. In 1948, it was re-privatised, but the Spanish language had already prevailed over German. About 75% percent of the students were children of Mexican families by that time. Several attempts to regain German as the first language among the children and adolescents failed. Although in the 1970's the school's reputation lost some of its prestige because of its cooperation with overpaid, not very qualified "Hippie teachers", the Mexican upper class still sent their children to the Colegio Alemán "Wealthy Mexicans still believed that knowledge of German culture improved the moral fabric of their children"(Buchenau, 295).

From its opening until today the school had to expand several times because of the growing number of pupils. Today it consists of three campuses; the vast majority of the pupils are Mexicans. The school's distinctiveness is, according to its website, the trilingual and bicultural education and a great emphasis is put on the peaceful cooperation of different cultural backgrounds ("Ideario").

It offers various student exchanges with German speaking countries for the pupils and it also helps them to prepare themselves for studies at a German university ("Länderinformationen"). 3,400 students visit the German School today and they are taught by 300 teachers. Special programs for non-German speaking children and adolescents who want to transfer from another school to the German School facilitate their access ("Programa"). A wide range of extracurricular activities enhances the contact between the multinational students. Two more German schools are situated in Puebla and Guadalajara ("Länderinformationen").

Since the information on the German School is mainly retrieved from the school's own website, it is evident that the description is consistently positive. However, the German ambassador also described the school in a very favourable way

as a “bridge between the two Nations” (Wagner, 11).²⁴ The head of the economic department of the embassy stated that “it is enjoyable to work in a country with such good relations with Germany, since it allows us to dedicate ourselves to the truly important things like education” (Wagner, 11).²⁵

In order to investigate to what extent the school genuinely makes a contribution to the contact between the two cultures and the integration of Germans into Mexican society, the survey involves precise questions concerning the German school.

3.1.2 The Protestant and the Catholic Churches of German language

The in Mexico domiciled German Lutherans had already had gatherings in religious as well as in nonreligious buildings in Mexico City since 1861 (Buchenau, 284). In 1923 the German community was founded and since 1927 it received a pastor delegated from Germany. The church building and the parsonages were erected in 1957 and 1958 (“Geschichte”).

The Protestant Church of German language usually celebrates services every Sunday at 10 o’clock, the last service of each month being held in Spanish and the rest in German. After the service the people can stay for a discussion round with coffee and cake. Furthermore, the community offers children’s services, confirmation classes, the arrangement of baptisms and marriage ceremonies, further discussion rounds including a literature circle and from time to time special events like speeches and lectures (“Gottesdienste”, “Gruppen”).

A parish newsletter appears every two months and can also be downloaded from the website of the church. The newsletter is mainly written in German and deals with current topics concerning Germany as well as Mexico (i.e. the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall and the reunification of Germany in the current issue for February and March 2010). It naturally also includes announcements for the respective time period (“Gemeinderief”). The website of the Protestant church is available in German and Spanish.

The German Catholics did not feel the urge to have a church for their own as early as the German Protestants since they had a variety of Mexican Catholic

²⁴ Spanish original: “puente entre las dos naciones”

²⁵ Spanish original: “Da gusto trabajar en un país con tan buenas relaciones con Alemania, que permite dedicarse a las cosas verdaderamente importantes como la educación.”

churches they could use for their worshipping. When they wanted to found a church of German language in 1910, the revolutionary state's attack on the organized church did not allow the foundation of a German Catholic Church (Buchenau, 284).

Today the St. Thomas Morus Church is the centre for a big German and Mexican community. Services are held in German every Sunday at 10.30 o'clock; followed by a discussion round once a month. Furthermore, a variety of Spanish services is celebrated throughout the week (at least twice a day, on Sunday four times) ("Gottesdienst"). Besides baptisms and marriages the church offers children's services, First Communions and Confirmations. The newsletter that appears every two months involves – just like the Protestant newsletter – current topics, announcements, poems etc. Great importance is attached to the contact between the members of the community, to the search for new members and to the encouragement to get and stay in contact with the inhabitants of the German senior citizen home.²⁶ The church shall constitute a meeting point for Germans and for different cultures (Kirchenvorstand, 21). The newsletter and the website are exclusively written in German.²⁷

3.1.3. The AASCA and the German senior citizen home

The "Asociación de Ayuda Social de la Comunidad Alemana" ("Social aid organisation of the German community") is the biggest facility of this kind of the Germans in Mexico (IMH). Its senior citizen home in the South of Mexico City is open for everybody from 65 years; the Nationality is irrelevant ("Ingreso"). The AASCA is funded by donations and by charity performances such as the proceeds of the traditional Christmas market and of the selling of old books. Furthermore, the Mexican-German magazine "mitt"²⁸ is published by the AASCA, so that revenues by advertisements in this magazine serve to fund the Association and, above all, the senior citizen home.

²⁶ The German senior citizen home will be described in the following subchapter.

²⁷ The Protestant and the Catholic Church of German language are of great importance for the contact between the Mexican and the German culture since people do not only go to the service in order to pray, but in order to meet other people and to spend time with them. The discussion rounds after the services were used to get in contact with the Germans and the people of German origin and to hand out the questionnaires to them, which resulted in a variety of very interesting conversations.

²⁸ The magazine "Mitteilungsblatt" will be investigated in chapter 3.2.2.

3.1.4. “El club alemán”

The “Club alemán de México”, the German club of Mexico, was founded in 1958. According to its website the initiators were “an enthusiastic group of members of the Mexico-German community, with a clearly defined mission and vision”²⁹ (“Quiénes somos”). Their mission is “to be a club of excellence, leader and avant-garde”³⁰, their vision “to provide a space of excellence which facilitates the integral involvement of the member with their community by doing sports and cultural and social activities within a healthy Mexican-German environment”³¹ and their values are “honesty, discipline, respect, education, loyalty, compromise and teamwork”³² (“Quiénes somos”).

These statements have a rather conservative connotation. The description of its mission to be of excellence and avant-garde could be interpreted as an addressing exclusively to people belonging to the social and/or economic upper-class. Nevertheless, the club offers various activities and organizes events that can be accessed by everybody, such as the yearly celebrated “Oktoberfest”. To its members it offers a huge variety of different sports and cultural activities such as a choir, reading workshops, classes of German and French and movies for children and adults. Members as well as non-members can also rent rooms for seminars and other events (“Quiénes somos”). The website of the German club is exclusively available in Spanish. The offered German classes and the fact that the website was not translated into Spanish allow the assumption that the majority of the club’s members are Mexicans.

3.1.5. The Goethe Institute and the DAAD

The Goethe Institute is Germany’s biggest institution for lessons of German and German culture. Founded in 1951, today it involves schools in 80 countries and 127 cities in the world. The main aim is the promotion of the German language; therefore the institute offers German language courses for all levels, preparation courses for official language certificates and the accomplishment of these certificates. However,

²⁹ Spanish original: “un entusiasta grupo de miembros de la comunidad México-Alemana, con una misión y visión claramente definida”.

³⁰ Spanish original: “Ser un Club de excelencia, líder y de vanguardia”

³¹ Spanish original: “Proporcionar un espacio de excelencia que promueva el desarrollo integral del Socio con su comunidad a través del deporte, actividades culturales y sociales, dentro de un ambiente cultural mexicano-alemán sano”

³² Spanish original: “Honestidad, disciplina, respeto, educación, lealtad, compromiso y trabajo en equipo”

the Goethe Institute points out two more aims: “the care of the international cultural cooperation”³³ and “the procurement of a capacious image of Germany by dispersing information on the cultural, social and political life”³⁴ (“Wer wir sind”).

The Goethe Institute in Mexico City was founded in 1966. A variety of cultural events such as arts expositions, movie nights and workshops is offered permanently (“Veranstaltungen”). The library of the institute holds a big supply of German books, newspapers, magazines, CD’s, DVD’s and German books translated into Spanish (“Bibliothek”).

A second Goethe Institute in Mexico opened in Guadalajara. Furthermore, two German-Mexican Cultural Centres with similar cultural offers as the Goethe Institutes are situated in Monterrey and San Luis Potosí (“Länderinformationen”).

The Goethe Institute collaborates closely with the German Embassy in Mexico, which also offers a wide perspective of cultural events.

An institution which offers the possibility for Mexican students to go to Germany is the “Deutscher akademischer Austauschdienst”, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). It opened a branch office in Mexico City in 2001 and helps 160 Mexican students to realize their master or doctoral studies in Germany every year. Vice versa, the DAAD also enables German students to study and work abroad; it is Germany’s biggest distributor of scholarships. In order to strengthen the relation between Mexican and German students the sixth European Higher Education Fair EuroPosgrados was organized by the DAAD in 2009. “This fair is becoming increasingly important as a platform for exchange with Mexico in master’s and doctoral programmes (in 2008, over 10,000 professional visitors in Mexico City alone)” (“Länderinformationen”).

3.2. The role of the media

In the world as it is today the media play an extremely important role for many people. We are exposed to the media consistently, in our private as well as in our professional lives. Thus, the media can exert influence on people, on our perception

³³ German original: „die Pflege der internationalen kulturellen Zusammenarbeit“

³⁴ German original: „die Vermittlung eines umfassenden Deutschlandbildes durch Informationen über das kulturelle, gesellschaftliche und politische Leben“

and on our actions. This subchapter will first explain the importance of the media in our world and then investigate the German media in Mexico.

3.2.1. The importance of the media

The media of today can be divided into two groups. Mass media are those driven by institutions, transmitting information to a broad audience. They include television, cinema, radio, press, literature and parts of the internet. Interpersonal media serve as a possibility of communication between two people or two groups of people and they involve telephones, text messages (SMS), e-mails and chat (Schmitz, 12).

The majority of the western civilisation cannot imagine a life without media. We access media every day. Not only in our private life we use newspapers, internet, phones and television, but many people are reliant on media like e-mails and conversations via mobile phones and video conferences in their professional environment as well. Schmitz expresses today's situation as follows: "Modern societies organise the reciprocal perception, the role allocation and the intercourse of their members primarily by the use of the media. The importance and the tasks of their media increase to the same extent as the societies become bigger, broader and more complex."³⁵ (Schmitz, 14)

The spectrum of communicative possibilities is almost endless and it works independently of distances. However, it holds the risk of isolation: „The media grow fond of the society. They often do not serve as an instrument for the communication about a first world outside of these media, but they are their immediate component or even vice versa."³⁶ (Schmitz, 20)

One cultural aspect which is heavily influenced by the media is the language of the recipients. Schmitz states that "By broadening and directing the horizon of the individual in otherwise unimaginable areas, the media also broaden, differentiate and

³⁵ German original: "Vornehmlich über Medien organisieren moderne Gesellschaften die gegenseitige Wahrnehmung, Rollenverteilung und den Verkehr ihrer Mitglieder untereinander. In dem Maße, wie Gesellschaften größer, weiträumiger und komplexer werden, wachsen Bedeutung und Aufgaben ihrer Medien."

³⁶ German original: "Medien wachsen immer enger ans Herz der Gesellschaft. Oft dienen sie nicht mehr als Werkzeug zur Verständigung über eine erste Welt außerhalb dieser Medien, sondern sind deren unmittelbarer Bestandteil oder gar umgekehrt."

channel at least the passive handling of the language and, consequently, probably also the active one.”³⁷ (Schmitz, 29)

The importance of the media is clearly visible. How can it be connected to the topic of the thesis? As already stated before – and confirmed by Schmitz’ statements –, the media influence people. In many cases, this influence happens subconsciously. People read something in the newspaper or hear it on the radio and take it for granted without querying it. Similar processes may apply to the language used in the media. Since we – and the Germans in Mexico – are constantly exposed to the media, we always encounter the language of these media as well. The Germans in Mexico are in all likelihood mainly in contact with Mexican media since the offer of German media is not very large. Nevertheless, the German media that exists is of importance if it is used by a broad public. Thus, it will be investigated now. In the survey a special emphasis is laid on the use of German and Mexican media by the Germans in order to investigate if they are influenced by it and to what extent.

3.2.2. The German media in Mexico City

As already mentioned, the German media in Mexico City are not voluminous. However, the majority of the mass media of today can be easily accessed from other countries than their origin. German television channels can be received via cable television, German radio channels can be listened to via their respective websites. Well-known German newspapers (i.e. “Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung”, “Süddeutsche Zeitung”, “die Welt”, “Bild” et al.) and magazines (i.e. „Focus“, „der Spiegel“) can be bought in several stores in Mexico City³⁸. Thus, the urge for German media produced in Mexico City is probably marginal.

However, one German magazine in Mexico which appears monthly is “mitt”. “mitt” is a short form for “Mitteilungsblatt” (“Newsletter”), which was the magazine’s name when it was founded in 1932. In the 1990’s it emerged as a bilingual monthly journal and changed its name into “mitt”. Since 2006 it is also sold in major German airports and train stations. The IMH (Internationale Medienhilfe) estimates that it is consumed by 25,000 readers monthly approx. (IMH, “MITT”).

³⁷ German original: „Indem sie den Horizont des Einzelnen in sonst unvorstellbare Bereiche ausdehnen und lenken, erweitern, differenzieren und kanalisieren sie zumindest auch seinen passiven Umgang mit Sprache und in der Folge wohl auch den aktiven.“

³⁸ Personal experience of the author; to be confirmed by the polled Germans.

The magazine “mitt” informs its readers on current political, economic, scientific and cultural topics. Each issue includes two lists, one of (German speaking) doctors and another one of German/Austrian/Swiss cuisine in Mexico. Activities organized by the German facilities in Mexico are also advertised. The magazine has a size of 30 pages approx. per issue and is consistently written in Spanish and German to the same extent. It is remarkable that even the greeting of the editor Otto Wagner is composed in German and Spanish alternately.³⁹

A very important part of the media is the internet. It is part of almost everybody’s life today. A variety of newspapers and journals can be read online. This naturally decreases the importance of print media – a development that has to be considered while investigating the people’s use of print and web media. Furthermore, it offers a huge variety of possibilities for an exchange between Germans and between Germans and Mexicans. The most important ones will be introduced briefly.

Treff3 is a website that serves as a meeting point for everyone interested in Mexico and the German speaking countries Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The offer includes a list of hotels in Mexico, a job exchange and information on cultural events. It can be accessed in Spanish and in German.

The websites “mexico-info” and “mexweb” provide information on Mexican culture, arts, the people and the country and also indicate Mexican markets, restaurants, brands and franchise chains that can be found in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Another website that serves exclusively as a forum for people with questions concerning Mexico or Germany is the “Mexico-Community”.

“Das deutsche Netz” (“the German net”) constitutes a page of information for Germans, Austrians and Swiss in Mexico focusing on real estate. It serves as a sales platform (<http://www.dasdeutschenetz.info/>).

3.3. Evaluation

The amount of German and German-Mexican facilities in Mexico City is numerous. While the existence of the Goethe Institute and the German Embassy and their effort to represent the German culture are, of course, self-evident (especially in a capital like Mexico City), further institutions testify that the Germans in Mexico have a long

³⁹ The data in this paragraph are the result of a brief investigation of five issues of the journal published in February, August, September, October and November 2009.

history. It is noticeable that all German facilities cooperate with and support each other (i.e. by mutual advertisements or cooperative events). Whether these institutions are used by many Germans and how they are perceived will be examined with the help of the survey. The German School with its long and diverse past will be evaluated by the polled Germans and Mexico-Germans as well.

Regarding the media, the internet plays an outstanding role nowadays. As already aforementioned, the importance of conventional print (newspapers, journals, magazines) and audio-visual media (radio and television) has been decreasing since the invention and the dispersal of the internet. The choice of German-Mexican websites and thus the possibility for cultural exchanges on the internet is broad. Whether the websites are regarded as useful and to what extent they are used by the Germans in Mexico will be investigated in the survey. The usage of Mexican and German media by the interrogated people will also be revealed, as well as the importance of the “mitt” journal and of the offer of German newspapers and magazines from Germany.

4. *QUANTITATIVE SURVEY (2009): INTEGRATION OF THE GERMAN POPULATION INTO THE MEXICAN CULTURE*

The quantitative survey which deals with the integration of the German population in Mexico is the main part of the thesis. Regarding the previous chapters, it is apparent that the Germans are more integrated or assimilated to Mexican life than before World War II and that there is no closed German colony anymore. Still, several questions remain unanswered. Do some Germans in Mexico still have a feeling of superiority? Do they want to maintain their customs and if so, how important is this maintenance and how can it be realized? Is the integration and absorption of the Mexican culture important for the majority?

These questions will be dealt with by the evaluation of the survey. First, the research objective of the thesis will be connected to the cognitive interest of the survey. In the next subchapter the conception and the research method will be explained. After that, the pretest, the execution of the main interrogation and its evaluation will be revealed.

4.1. Research objective and cognitive interest

The previous chapters of this thesis served as a theoretic framework and as an introduction to the main part, which consists of the quantitative survey. With the help of the interrogation, the research objective of the thesis will now be investigated by evaluating the statements and opinions of the polled Germans. In order to achieve a logical and structured questionnaire, it is divided into three major parts which represent different areas of research. The entity of responses to these three dimensions of research is to give information about the cultural and social development of the German population in Mexico. It will investigate the level of integration of the Germans into Mexican society as well as the presumable loss of their customs. In order to reveal the cognitive interest in the three different areas of research more precisely, they will be described one by one in the following subchapters.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ The description and explanation of the single questions and their intention will be revealed in chapter 4.2., “conception and research method”.

4.1.1. The past

The first field of research refers to the Germans' way to Mexico. The questions are designed to give information about the motives of the Germans for their migration to Mexico and about their roots. Furthermore, it provides information on the length of the stay in Mexico of every polled person, which is very important for the evaluation of the survey. Thus, this first part's task is the query on personal data of the Germans as well as a first insight into their minds referring to their family's integration and their connection to Germany.

4.1.2. Language and the German School

The questions in the second area of research deal with the language skills and the use of both, Spanish and German. Furthermore, they are to gain information on the German School. The responses to these questions shall partly shed light on the use and the reputation of the German School. As already described in the second chapter, the school has not always constituted a connection between cultures and the information about the school how it is nowadays was mainly retrieved from their website. Thus, this part will try to investigate if it has really changed into a bridge between Mexicans and Germans and how it is regarded today. Furthermore, the research on the use and preference of languages will be able to give information on the integration of the Germans.

4.1.3. Culture and everyday life

The last and most voluminous field of research includes questions regarding the Germans everyday life. By answering these questions, the respondents will help to shed light on their situation today. With reference to their answers it will be possible to find out whether they are integrated and/or assimilated and whether some Germans still live in a state of self-segregation. Furthermore, the importance of clinging to the German traditions and customs will be revealed.

The next subchapter will now illustrate the conception of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the different questions (items)⁴¹ are to be related to the three fields of research.

⁴¹ The term "Item" designates a directed question together with an amount of relevant response options (Borg, 79).

4.2. Conception and method of investigation

In order to interrogate the Germans in Mexico City, a standardized questionnaire of three Din A4 pages which covers the aforementioned three areas of research was designed.⁴² Another page is located before the three pages with the items. It includes a short letter written by the interrogator in order to explain the reason why the Germans are polled. However, it does not precisely state the research question of the thesis because this could lead to a falsification of the result. If the respondents knew exactly and from the beginning that the objective deals with their integration into Mexican society, a “pro-integration” result is more presumable since integration is frequently regarded as an aim, something positive that should be reached. According to Pratzner, it is of importance that the introduction letter is written in an easy understandable style and that the purpose and details like the approximate duration are included (Pratzner, “Aufbau”). Besides the maximal duration of 15 minutes⁴³ and the warranted anonymity, name, origin and occupation of the interrogator are mentioned as well in order to gain the respondents’ trust. Before the main part of the questionnaire begins with listing the items, a brief and easily written introduction into the technique of answering the questions is given and the reader is granted the possibility to skip a question if they do not want to answer it.

The questionnaire was prepared in German and in Spanish in order to include the people of German origin whose ancestors arrived in Mexico long ago and who possibly do not speak (enough) German to answer the survey in German.⁴⁴

4.2.1. The items

All in all, the survey contains 31 items. According to Mayer, special emphasis should always be laid on the first question since it should motivate the respondents to continue. It should be relevant and comprehensible and it should definitely arouse the interest of the polled persons (Pratzner, “Erste Frage”). Furthermore, the first item should serve as a so-called “icebreaker”, a question which is easy to answer and which leads the respondent directly into the matter (Scholl, 89). Nevertheless, it should not “scare” the participants in any sense, so that they are willed to continue the

⁴² The questionnaires are located in the appendix (N°I in German; N°II in Spanish)

⁴³ The detection of the duration of completing the survey will be explained in subchapter 4.3.

⁴⁴ The relation between surveys answered in Spanish and German will be explained in subchapter 4.5.2.

completion. With reference to the present questionnaire, the first question is the following:

Do you regard yourself as Mexican (M), German (G) or both (B)?

The question had first been placed in a rear part of the questionnaire, since it could be perceived as rather personal and, thus, would not constitute an ideal first question with the task to gain the respondent's trust. However, it also seemed to be "catchy" and appropriate to attract the people's interest. Thus, after the performance of a pretest⁴⁵ and the ensuing discussion with the participants of the survey whether or not to use it as icebreaker, it was finally placed in the beginning. The majority agreed on the statement that its attraction of interest was higher than a possible evocation of anxiety or distrust. Moreover, living within or between two cultures, it is likely that the Germans and Mexico-Germans have posed themselves the same question more than once.

The aforementioned item belongs to the category of closed-ended questions. Two other types of questions are open-ended and half open-ended⁴⁶ questions (Mayer, 90). While a close-ended question offers different answering possibilities from which can be chosen (i.e. "yes/no" or different scales), the open-ended question does not provide any pre-assembled answers but leaves space for a free response. The half open-ended question can either be an item with different answering possibilities whose last possibility is to make a free comment or an open-ended question which requires a very short answer (one or very few words) (Mayer, 92).

The closed-ended questions have two main advantages. They are easier and faster to answer by the respondents and their evaluation is also less complicated. Therefore, 17 of the 31 questions are closed-ended. Five items are open-ended and the remaining nine are half open-ended. These other two forms of questions offer, although being more complicated to answer and to evaluate, a deeper insight into people's opinions and characters.

Sensitive questions (i.e. questions including personal data or topics like sexuality or crime) can be regarded as deterrent by the respondents and have to be dealt with in a delicate way. It is usually regarded as smart to place them at the end of the survey since the participant has almost finished the completion and does not mind

⁴⁵ For more details referring to the pretest see subchapter 4.3.

⁴⁶ Mayer uses the German term "halboffene Frage", which was translated with "half open-ended question" by the author. The terms open-ended and closed-ended question are common notions in English.

to answer one or two more items (Borg, 99). Referring to this questionnaire, the majority of the personal data is not being asked for. Merely the date and country of birth are of relevance for the evaluation of the survey. Since it is also of importance to prepare a structured and clearly arranged questionnaire, the question asking for the place and date of birth is placed at the beginning. In order to have a better overlook, the items of the first area of research, “the past”, will now be investigated.

1. Do you regard yourself as Mexican, German or both? (3 response options, closed-ended (c.e.))
 2. When and where were you born and which Nationality do you have? (half open-ended (h.o.e.))
 - 3a. **If born in Mexico:** When did your ancestors arrive in Mexico? (h.o.e.)
 - 4a. Why did your ancestors come to Mexico? (4 options, last open, h.o.e.)
 - 3b. **If not born in Mexico:** When did you arrive in Mexico? (h.o.e.)
 - 4b. Why did you come to Mexico? (4 options, last open, h.o.e.)
- Questions 5-8 do not have to be answered if the respondent was not born in Mexico.*
- Did you also live in Germany for a certain period? (2 options, c.e.) If so, how long and why? (3 options, h.o.e.)
6. Do you still have family in Germany? (3 options, c.e.)
 7. Do you have friends in Germany? (3 options, c.e.)
 8. (For the ones whose families migrated to Mexico before World War II) How did your family (your parents/grandparents) experience the war here in Mexico? (open-ended (o.e.))
 9. Do you want to return to Germany some day? (3 options, c.e.)
 10. When and how did your family start to integrate themselves into Mexican culture? (o.e.)

The German headline for the first part is “*Ihr Leben in Mexiko*” (“your life in Mexico”). It was chosen because it directly addresses the participant and is likely to catch their attention. The first question, as already mentioned, is mainly placed in the beginning in order to gain the people’s interest. It is clear that Germans who live in Mexico only for a limited period will state that they regard themselves as Germans. However, the answers of the Germans born in Mexico or at least living here for several decades are difficult to estimate. Their response to the first item will show

how they feel inside, without referring to their official Nationality. The questions N°2-4 are mainly posed in order to evaluate people who stay in Mexico only for a certain period separately from the ones who do not have this kind of limit. In chapter 2.3. the difference between the newcomers with contracts for i.e. four years and the descendents of the old colony had been described; supposedly they are not in contact with each other and the newcomers do not show much interest in the Mexicans and their society. However, the survey will try to find out whether Buchenau was right with his statements and whether these are still applicable now, in 2010. To simplify matters, the Germans who are not here on the base of a limited contract will be referred to as category N°1 (C1) and the ones who are in possession of such a contract and know that they will return to Germany after a while will be named category N°2 (C2). Regarding the type of the first four items, they consist of closed-ended and half open-ended questions. The respondents can answer them quickly and do not lose interest in continuing with the survey. N°4 is a so-called screening question. Respondents who were not born in Mexico do not have to answer the next four questions. The screening question helps to retain the respondents' interest in continuing with the survey by skipping items which are not of importance for one part of the participants (Mayer, 96).

The items N°5-8 are only to be answered by the Germans born in Mexico. N°5-7 are related to the Germans' connection to Germany. The answers of each respondent to these questions can later probably be connected to the answers of the other parts. It is likely that Germans who still have a (strong) connection to Germany handle the German language better and are more interested in keeping the German culture alive. Question N°6 and 7 are closed-ended questions which can be answered with "yes" or "no". Furthermore, the response possibility "don't know" is given. According to Mayer and Pratzner, this is an important pre-formulated answer, since the risk that people mark any answer only in order to continue and without really knowing it is minimized (Mayer, 92f; Pratzner, "keine Angaben"). Item N°8 is the first open-ended question. The aim of the question is to gain an insight into people's opinion and perception of World War II as they experienced it in Mexico. However, it is likely that it will not be answered by a high percentage of participants, since some will not remember and others maybe do not want to answer to the question.

Question N°9 ("Do you want to return to Germany some day?") was first included in the part only to be answered by the participants born in Mexico. However,

during the pretest one German who belonged to C2 answered the question with “no”. The surprising response made the interrogator pose the question to all Germans. Item N°10 is the next open-ended question and the first dealing directly with the integration of the family.

The second field of research deals with the language and the German School. These two topics were put together since they both have to do with education in a sense. Furthermore, the transfer from the language to the school is smooth because the questions of both topics refer to the children/grandchildren of the respondent. These are the seven items of the second part:

11. How do you evaluate your Spanish skills on a scale from 0 to 5? (scale, c. e.)
a. Writing // b. Speaking // c. Understanding // d. Reading
12. How do you evaluate your German skills on a scale from 0 to 5? (scale, c. e.)
a. Writing // b. Speaking // c. Understanding // d. Reading
13. Which language do you use more? (2 options, c. e.)
a. At work // b. with friends // c. with the family
14. Do your children speak German? (c.e.) On a scale from 0 to 5, how important is it for you that your children and grandchildren continue to speak German? (scale, c. e.)
15. Do your children speak Spanish? (c. e.) On a scale from 0 to 5, how important is it for you that your children and grandchildren continue to speak Spanish? (scale, c. e.)
16. Did you and/or you family go to the German school? (2 options, c. e.)
How would you evaluate it (on a scale from 0 to 5)? (scale, c. e.)
17. Which experiences have you made (i.e. quality of the courses, bilingualism, contact between Germans and Mexicans)? (o.e.)

The items N°11-12 are put into a so-called rating scale form; the participants have to evaluate their language skills on a scale from 0 to 5. The preference of a language is closely connected to the level of integration of a person. Very low skills in Spanish could be a sign for self-segregation, while a low knowledge of German could indicate a state of assimilation of the person. N°13 is designed to indicate the situation in which the respondent uses one language or the other. The following two items should provide an indication on the importance of the maintenance of the German and the Spanish language. N°14 refers rather to the children of participants belonging to C1,

since it is likely that they are more integrated and maybe at risk to lose their German skills. N°15, on the other hand, should shed light on the state of the Spanish language among both categories. It is probable that the persons of C1 attach great importance to the Spanish skills of their descendents. However, the responses of C2 will presumably be more diverse. The items 16 and 17 refer to the German school. While N°16 is designed to obtain an evaluation between 0 and 5, N°17 is an open-ended question.

The third part, “culture and everyday life”, concentrates on the use of the media, on the relation between Mexicans and Germans and on the preservation of the German culture. The 14 items of this area of research are:

18. How often do you consume German media?
a. Radio // b. TV // c. Newspapers // d. Journals // e. websites (4 options, c. e.)
19. How often do you consume Mexican media?
a. Radio // b. TV // c. Newspapers // d. Journals // e. websites (4 options, c. e.)
20. Which German newspapers/journals do you read? (h.o.e.)
21. Do you use German-Mexican websites? (c.e.) If so, which ones (if you can remember the title)? (h.o.e.)
22. Are you a member of the German Club / another German grouping? (c. e.)
23. How often do you take part in German events, visit German exhibitions etc.? (4 options, c. e.) Which events are those? (h. o. e.)
24. How often do you go to church services? (3 options, c. e.)
How often do you take part in the evangelic or the catholic service in German? (3 options, c. e.)
25. Where do you know other Germans in Mexico from? (o. e.)
26. On a scale from 0 to 5, how important is for you to maintain the German culture in your everyday life? (scale, c. e.)
27. How important is the contact to Mexicans for you? (scale, c. e.)
28. How important is the integration into Mexican the culture for you? (scale, c. e.)
As how integrated to you regard yourself? (scale, c. e.)
29. Have you ever had the feeling that the Germans regard themselves as superior to the Mexicans and that they look down on them? (o. e.)

And, finally, your opinion regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the cultures:

30. What do you like more about the Mexican culture (than about the German?) (o. e.)

31. What do you like more about the German culture (than about the Mexican)? (o. e.)

The first four items, N° 18-21, deal with the consumption of Mexican and German media. As revealed in chapter 3.2., the media can exert great influence on people. Thus, the consumption of Mexican media would be a sign for the integration of the participant, while the use of German media indicates a connection to the German culture. Question 20 was designed to investigate whether the Germans in Mexico buy German newspapers and journals and it can research the use of the Mexican German journal “mitt”. The items N° 22-25 are about the German associations, events etc. As revealed in chapter 3.1., the offer of facilities and organized events is broad – thus, it is of interest to find out what relevance they have in the lives of the respondents. N° 25, another open-ended question, is of importance since it indicates where the Germans meet each other. Depending on the location, contact with Mexicans could be rather likely or not. The questions N° 26-28 refer all directly to the importance of the German and of the Mexican culture and the integration of the Germans into the Mexican culture. All four items include rating scales and are closed-ended.

Item N°29 directly deals with the Germans’ feeling of superiority towards the Mexican. This question was first left out, but during the discussion that followed the pretest the relevance became obvious. It is an open-ended question although it can be easily answered with “yes” or “no”. The reason for not putting the responses into a closed-ended question is that now the respondents have the liberty to write down something more than merely “yes” or “no”.

Before the last two items, which are both open-ended as well, the respondents are animated to continue with a short sentence. It was placed at this point because the participants just answered a sensitive question before which can produce scepticism regarding the following items. The last two questions, N°32 and 33, are to receive an insight into the Germans’ opinion about the advantages of the different cultures / ways of life. At the end of the survey, a short sentence expresses the gratitude towards the participants.

4.2.2. The group of participants

The survey is directed to the Germans and the people of German origin who live in Mexico City. There are no exact numbers available concerning the size of this population group, but it should approximately amount to a number between 15,000 and 20,000 persons.⁴⁷ In order to gain a result which reflects the attitude and opinion, importance should be attached to the choice of the participants, the so-called sample (Mayer, 59f.) Depending on the objective of the survey, a variety of different methods of how to choose the sample can usually be applied. However, in this case there is hardly any information about the entire group of potential participants available. In order to receive a useful result anyway, it was of importance to obtain a preferably heterogeneous sample. The survey should be completed by a sample consisting of Germans as well as of people with German roots. No minimum future duration of stay of the participants was obligatory.⁴⁸ However, in order to exclusively interrogate people who are already settled in and are possibly acquainted with the Mexican culture, a minimum duration of stay before completing the survey was necessary. Thus, the respondents should have been living in Mexico for at least two years. Exchange students who lived in Mexico only for a semester or a year were excluded, as well as interns of German companies whose stay usually lasts between two months and one year.

The survey was handed to people in different occasions and locations that will be described in the following subchapter. By interrogating Germans in preferably many different places and situations, a heterogeneous sample was to be chosen. If the survey had been exclusively given to one group of Germans or people of German origin (i.e. during the discussion round after a German service), the results would reflect only the statements of this group. However, in order to gain an interesting and useful outcome, a heterogeneous sample is preferred to a homogenous group.

All in all, 94 completed questionnaires were returned to the interrogator. The people who do not have a limited contract of employment (category N°1, consisting of 52 people) and the ones who do have such a contract (category N°2, consisting of 42 people) will in most cases be evaluated separately, since their attitudes and

⁴⁷ Mexico has 110 Mio. inhabitants approx., about 20 Mio. live in the capital and its Metropolitan Area. This is a little bit less than one-fifth. Subsequently, one-fifth of the 90,000 Germans and Mexico-Germans in Mexico amount to 18,000 in the Mexico City. This is, of course, merely estimation.

⁴⁸ The personal experience of the interrogator prior to the construction of the survey showed that most Germans who were in Mexico City for a limited period had limited contracts of employment (usually four years) with a German company.

perceptions will most likely differ from each other and a separated investigation will be more illuminative. Still, they will be compared to each other continuously.

A disadvantage of the procedure could be seen in the sparse contact to Mexicans of German origin whose ancestors arrived in Mexico a century or more time ago. Some of these people are very integrated or assimilated to Mexican society. Nevertheless, the interrogator was in contact with three Mexicans of German origin whose families have been living in Mexico for more than 150 years. Several members of the families completed the survey, so that a certain percentage of the answers is based on their perceptions and attitudes.⁴⁹

4.2.3. The standardized quantitative interrogation

The interrogation was mainly realised in the form of a standardized quantitative questionnaire. The disadvantage of such a method is, according to Pratzner, the low motivation of the respondents (Pratzner, “Methodenmix”). A qualitative interrogation in the form of an interview stimulates the interest of the respondents more than paper sheets that have to be filled out. Furthermore, the absence of the interrogator can lead to a completion of the survey without thinking about the answers or even to the commitment of mistakes (Scholl, 49). However, while the respondents answered to the present survey, the interrogator was present during the first interrogations in order to answer remaining dubieties on the part of the participants regarding the questionnaire. The majority of the participants did not need any help, though. In addition, the presence of the interrogator during the first interrogations had the advantage that almost all participants completed the survey and handed it back. Hence, the problem of a very low return – which is another disadvantage of the standardized quantitative interrogation – rate was minimized in those cases.

4.3. Pretest and main interrogation

According to Scholl, a pretest before the main interrogation is indispensable in order to control the effect of the survey (Scholl, 192). The pretest was executed on 22nd November 2009 during a conversation round after the service in the Evangelic Church of German language. While two of the present Germans did not show interest in participating, eight people perceived the investigation as very interesting and they were keen to complete the questionnaires. Three of them belonged to C2 and they needed between 10 and 13 minutes to answer the items. The other five participants,

⁴⁹ Full particulars will be given in the evaluation.

all part of C1, replied to the questions within 15 minutes except one person.⁵⁰ When everybody had returned the survey, the participants were asked about their opinion concerning the questionnaires and the single items and response possibilities. The respondents were mainly satisfied; the only major change was the relocation of the item which is now N°1. Referring to the length of the survey, it was perceived as voluminous, but not too long. Finally, they were asked if they had felt queasy in any moment while answering the questions, which was generally negated.

The main interrogation was executed from 22nd November 2009 until 28th January 2010. As already mentioned, the first surveys were dispersed in the presence of the interrogator. The completion took place in several locations, including the conversation rounds of the two Churches of German language and events organized by the German Embassy and the German School. During these interrogations the letter which is located before the questionnaire was not provided to the participants, but the situation was explained by the interrogator. After the interrogations many participants provided the interrogator with their e-mail addresses and several surveys were sent to friends and acquaintances of the first group of directly interrogated people. The return rate was relatively high. 63 of the 94 completed questionnaires had been filled out in the presence of the interrogator. Another 66 surveys had been sent by e-mail, of which 31 were completed and sent back. The high return rate is in all likelihood originated in the relation between the recipients of the e-mails and the directly interrogated participants. Since the recipients knew that their friends and acquaintances had completed the questionnaire – a fact that was emphasised in the correspondence by the interrogator –, they may have felt motivated or even constrained to also complete them. Furthermore, about one third of the e-mails sent by the participants contained a brief letter expressing the respondents' interest in the topic.

4.4. Evaluation method

Since the questionnaires include not only closed-ended but also a variety of half open-ended and open-ended items, the evaluation cannot be elaborated by merely typing all obtained data into a scale. Thus, it will consist of different methods which will be described now.

⁵⁰ The mentioned person answered every open-ended question in a very detailed way and, thus, needed 24 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

31 items have been answered by the participants; several items covering more than one subquestion. Hence, not every item will be dealt with in detail, but compatible questions will be subsumed and investigated together. Some of the individual items which contain several response options or rating scales will be presented with the help of charts and graphs.⁵¹ The answers to the open-ended questions will be investigated individually and very frequent responses – as well as interesting and/or surprising responses – will be highlighted.

In the majority of the cases it is of importance which person has given which answer. To quote an example, the majority of the older generation is not very acquainted with relatively new technology like the internet; hence, they may not answer the questions referring to the internet. Thus, in most cases it is indispensable to consider a person's data like their age or belonging to C1 or C2 when evaluating the answers.

4.5. Evaluation of the survey

All in all, 94 completed surveys were handed in. 52 were filled out by category N°1 (C1), 42 by category N°2 (C2). During the major part of the evaluation, the two categories will be dealt with separately. 14 of the 94 questionnaires were completed in Spanish; their respondents belong to C1. In order to have an overview over the responses, appendix N°3 contains a questionnaire with all answers given to the closed-ended questions. The responses are separated into C1 and C2 and the number of people who gave the same answer is indicated as well as the respective percentage (of the group). The following three subchapters will now chart and interpret the responses of the Germans and the Mexico-Germans.

4.5.1 The past

The first part of the questionnaire covered the past of the participants, their way to Mexico and several personal data such as year and place of birth and their Nationality. In order to gain the respondents' interest, the first item questioned their self-perception. As expected, the 42 participants that belong to C2 regard themselves as Germans. They know that they will in all likelihood leave Mexico after the end of their contracts and their duration of stay (usually four years) does not make them see

⁵¹ All charts in the evaluation were created by the author.

themselves as Mexicans. The participants who belong to C1 answered in a less similar way: 42% regard themselves as Germans, 23% state that they are Mexicans and 35% see themselves as Germans and Mexicans. This mixed spectrum reflects the diversity among the Germans and people of German origin living in Mexico City. Furthermore, it can possibly even be regarded as a reflection of the different states the people are in: The ones who see themselves as Germans could live in a self-segregation, the ones regarding themselves as Mexicans could have assimilated themselves and the rest could have passed the process of integration in a way that they still maintain their roots (feel like Germans) and have also absorbed the Mexican culture (feel like Mexicans). Whether this assumption is correct will be investigated in the course of this evaluation.

The data surveyed in item N°2 reveal that the average age of C1 is much higher than within C2.

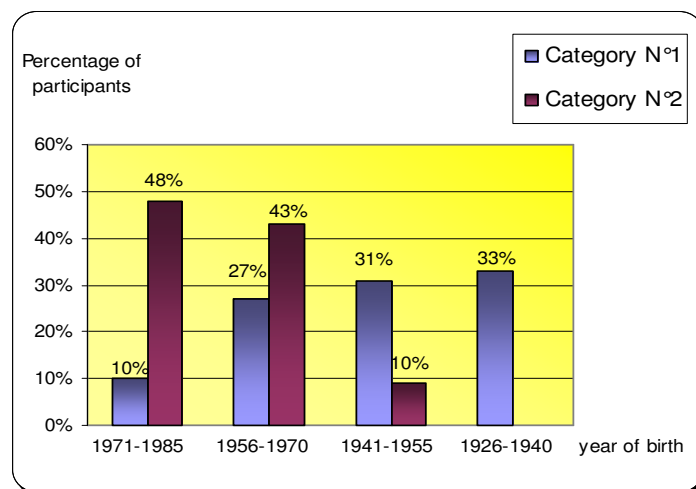


Chart N°1

While the persons born between 1955 and 1926 (the oldest respondent's age) constitute 64 % of C1, the majority of the members of C2 (91%) were born between 1956 and 1985. The oldest participant of C2 was born in 1949. This distribution was expected, since the respondents who belong to C2 are in Mexico City because of labour contracts. Thus, none of the members of C2 has reached the retirement age yet. Furthermore, the decision to go to a Latin American Country for a certain period is often connected with the desire for adventures; consequently, most of the C2 participants are between 25 and 39 years old.

40 C2 respondents (95%) were born in Germany, the remaining two saw the light of day in Russia and Poland. All 42 persons have the German Nationality. 33 of the C1 participants (63%) were born in Mexico and the rest, 19 persons, in Germany. These 19 persons have the German Nationality, while 26 of the 33 in Mexico born participants own the Mexican Nationality and the remaining 7 are in the possession of both, the German and the Mexican Nationality.

The following two items dealt with the arrival of the participants or the participants' ancestors in Mexico and its motivation and, thus, treated the persons born in Mexico (33) separately from the ones not born in Mexico (61). The ancestors of the respondents born in Mexico migrated there, very dispersed, between 1826 and 1980.⁵² The majority of the participants who were not born in Mexico arrived within the last 9 years (47 persons, 77%). 42 of them belong, of course, to C2. The remaining 13 persons came to Mexico between 2000 and 1937, also distributed over the years.⁵³ The reasons for their migration to Mexico will be presented in the following charts:

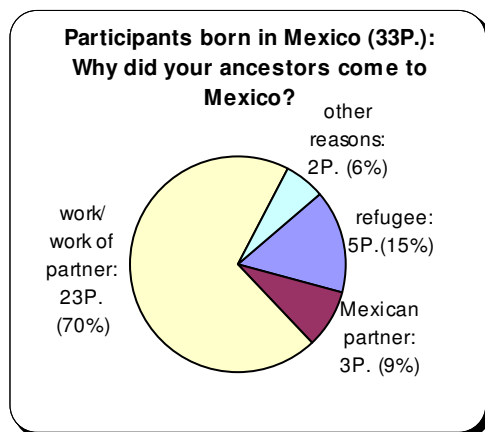


Chart N°2

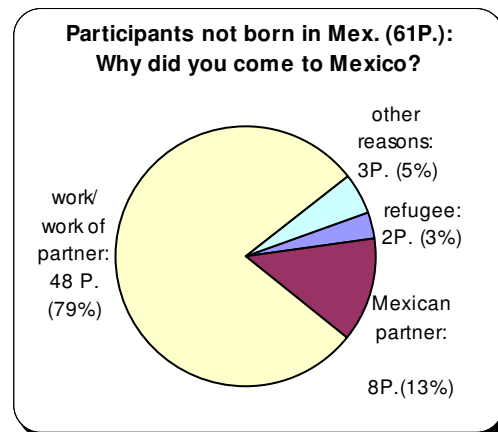


Chart N°3

Regarding the two charts, it becomes visible that the reason “work” has always been and still is the most frequent motivation for the participants to migrate to Mexico. 15% (5 persons) of the respondents born in Mexico stated that their ancestors had been refugees, as well as 2 (3%) of the participants not born in Mexico. Those 2 were born in 1926 and 1935; thus, they most probably escaped the National Socialism.

⁵² Fore more detailed information see appendix III, item 3a.

⁵³ Fore more detailed information see appendix III, item 3b.

That applies, in all likelihood, also to the ancestors of the 5 persons born in Mexico who came as refugees.

It is of importance to not forget that 42 of the participants not born in Mexico are part of C2 and, thus, all came because of work. That means that the majority of the remaining 19 persons who were not born in Mexico but also do not have a limited labour contract came because of their Mexican partners. In order to gain a better visualisation, the following chart was designed:

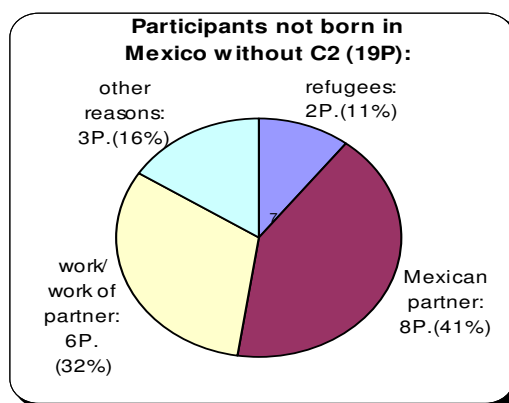


Chart N°4

The fact that their Mexican partner is the most common reason for the participants' migration to Mexico can be regarded as an indication for the increased movement of people nowadays which was already mentioned in the introduction of the thesis. It is easier and cheaper to move around the world; thus, relationships between people from different countries occur more frequently as well.

The next four items exclusively concerned the 33 participants who were born in Mexico. Their objective was to find out whether the respondents still have contact to Germany.⁵⁴ 15 (45%) of the 33 persons lived in Germany for a certain period, the majority of them in order to study at a German school or university (8 persons who all stayed in Germany between one and seven years). Three persons worked in Germany (with a duration between six months and four years) and the remaining four marked "other reasons", which they all specified writing that they wanted to (or had to since their parents wanted them to) become more familiar with the German culture and language (staying in Germany between three months and 2 years). This perception underlines the importance of the home country and its roots for one part of the participants. The 15 respondents who had spent some time in Germany all stated that

⁵⁴ For the detailed percentages see appendix III, items 5-8.

they still have friends there, too.⁵⁵ 17 persons answered the item with “no” and the remaining one marked “don’t know”. However, 70% (23 persons) state that they still have family in Germany. Two respondents did not know whether they have and 8 persons marked that they have no family member left in Germany. Regarding these results, a connection between them and the participants’ interest in the maintenance of the German culture may be expected. That is to say that the participants who appear not to have much contact to Germany and/or their German family will in all likelihood be less interested in preserving their roots.

Item N°8 involved the first open-ended question; it referred to their experience with World War II in Mexico. It was answered by 11 out of the 33 participants born in Mexico. 5 of these 11 persons were the ones who had stated that their ancestors came to Mexico as refugees. They wrote that the escape from Germany had most probably saved their and / or their parents’ lives, since they had been haunted by the National Socialists. Referring to their experience in Mexico, two participants stated that they remember (or were told by their parents) that the German School was a very conservative institution teaching the ideology of the Nazis. Three respondents recall a divided German colony during those times, split up into proponents and opponents of the National Socialism. One person mentioned a “certain support of the Nazi ideology on the part of the upper Mexican class”⁵⁶, while two others remember the “breakdown of the collaboration between Germans and Mexico at the beginning of the war”.⁵⁷ All these statements conform to the history of the Germans in Mexico described in chapter 2. However, none of the 11 participants who answered item N°8 mentioned their affiliation to the National Socialists, although the historical part of the thesis revealed that one (rather big) part of the Germans in Mexico supported the Nazi ideology. If any of the 33 persons who were asked to answer the items 5 to 8 (or their ancestors) had this attitude, they did not write it. This is, of course, logical, since the correlation with the supporters of National Socialism is not preferable for the waste majority of Germans.

⁵⁵ See appendix III, item 7.

⁵⁶ Original statement in the questionnaire, item 8: “die reichen Mexikaner waren nicht gegen die Nazis, oftmals unterstützten sie sie.”

⁵⁷ Original statement in the questionnaire, item 8: “als der Krieg richtig anfing, waren die Mexikaner bald nicht mehr auf der Seite der Deutschen.”

Item N°9 was first designed for being answered exclusively by the participants born in Mexico.⁵⁸ Hence, the response of three Germans who belong to C2 was surprising: One stated that he does not want to return to Germany and two marked “don’t know”. Since the participants came to Mexico only for a limited time period, they might be somehow disappointed by their lives in Germany or simply appreciate the Mexican life style more than the German. The majority of the respondents of C1 does not want to return to Germany (33 persons, 63%). 29 of these 33 persons belong to the group of participants born in Mexico. The other 4 in Mexico born respondents marked “don’t know”, which means that they could imagine living in Germany without having grown up there. At this point, it is of interest that these four persons have all lived in Germany for a certain period in order to study. Hence, their stay in Germany must have been satisfactory. The six persons who responded with “yes” were all born in Germany. Another 7 in Germany born participants do not know whether they want to return some day and 4 do not want to return. These seem to be very integrated into Mexican society although they were not born there. The eight participants who came to Mexico because of their partners did all mark “don’t know” or “no”. The answers to this question will later be connected to the answers of the items referring directly to the integration of the Germans.

The second open-ended question, item N°10, is one of the questions referring directly to the integration of the Germans. It was answered by 19 respondents belonging to C1 and by 13 participants of C2. Six members of C1 remember that the process of integration started right after their arrival to Mexico because of their Mexican partners. These six participants had stated their Mexican partners the reason why they migrated to Mexico. Being in a relationship with a Mexican and having decided to live in their partner’s country, they must have been keen to integrate into Mexico’s society. Three other participants of C1 and seven of C2 stated that they integrated themselves and their children by sending them to the German School and, thus, being in contact with German as well as with Mexican parents and children. Eight of the C1 participants who answered belong to the ones born in Mexico; they all used the Spanish exemplar of the questionnaire. Five persons wrote that they cannot remember because they were integrated since they were born and the other

⁵⁸ See subchapter 4.2.1.

two stated that they “are Mexicans and thus did not have to become integrated”.⁵⁹ The families of these two participants arrived in Mexico more than 150 years ago. Three C2 participants wrote that they do not have the intention to become integrated since they will leave the country after a while anyway. The rest of the participants responded that the integration took place (and is still taking place) step by step, by talking to neighbours, meeting Mexicans at work or relating with their children’s friends’ parents. The very diverse answers to this item lead one to assume that the polled sample has very different perceptions and attitudes. Thus, the consideration of a given answer when evaluating another response given by the same person (as it was done with a variety of items so far) is of importance.

4.5.2. Language and German School

The second area of research dealt with the language skills of the respondents and the use of the languages, and it also included questions referring to the German School. Regarding the language skills it is important to mention in advance that 14 of 94 participants completed their survey in Spanish. This does not necessarily mean that they do not have any German skills, but they definitely feel more comfortable filling the questionnaire in Spanish.

Item N°11 and 12 asked the participants to evaluate their Spanish and German skills on a scale from 0 to 5 (5=best) in the categories writing, speaking, understanding and reading.

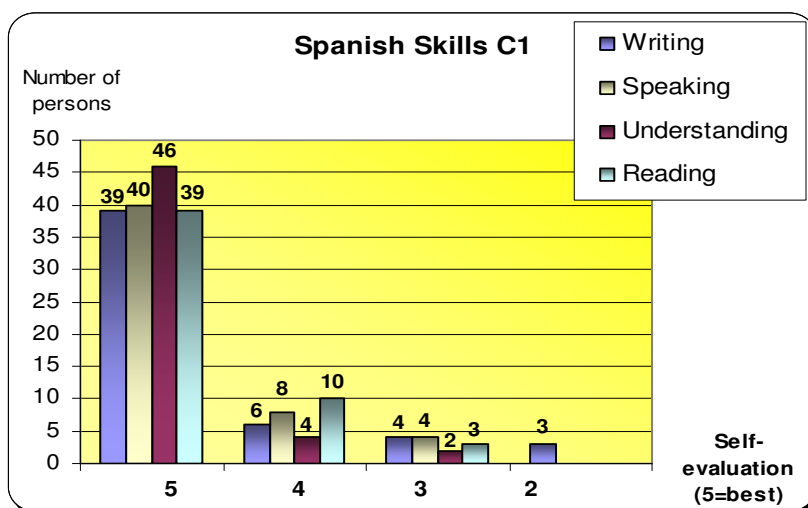


Chart N°5

⁵⁹ One of the original statements in Spanish: “No hace falta que me integre, porque soy Mexicana, mis padres lo son y mis abuelos lo eran.”

It is visible that almost all members of C1 evaluate their Spanish skills on a very high level. Nobody chose the numbers 0 or 1 for their self-evaluation; only three persons chose a “2” for writing. These three rated their reading skills with “3”, although they have been living in Mexico more than ten years already. Hence, they probably use the Spanish language almost exclusively orally.⁶⁰ Only six participants did not estimate their skills in understanding Spanish with “5”. All in all, 39 of the 52 respondents chose “5” for all four categories.

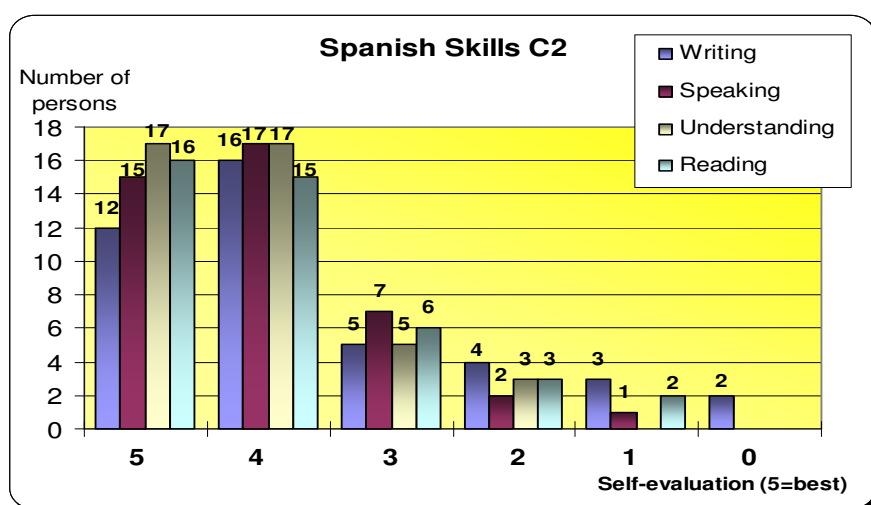


Chart N°6

The Spanish skills of the members C2 were also evaluated on a rather high level. 12 persons rated themselves with “5” in all four categories; another 15 respondents marked exclusively “4” and “5” in all categories. “0” was only used by two participants for writing skills. Those two respondents evaluated the remaining categories with “1” and “2” as well and regarding their later statements, they both pointed out that they are neither interested in being integrated into Mexican society nor in being in contact with Mexicans.⁶¹ All in all, the result is somewhat surprising since almost all members of C2 have been living in Mexico for two to four years only. It seems that it is of enormous importance for the majority of them to possess high skills in Spanish and that many participants already came to Mexico with a solid

⁶⁰ To be investigated further when considering the questions referring to the use of print media.

⁶¹ Items 27 and 28 ask for an evaluation of the importance of being integrated and having contact to Mexicans. Both items were answered with “0” by the same two persons.

knowledge of the language. The two aforementioned respondents without any interest in the Mexican society and with very low skills are an exception.

The German skills of the participants belonging to C1 are also evaluated on a rather high level.⁶² 29 of 52 participants state their skills with “5” in all categories. These 29 persons include all 19 participants who were born in Germany and, furthermore, 10 of the 33 respondents born in Mexico. Those 10 persons, in turn, had all stated before that they had passed a certain period in Germany. Only two persons assured to not have any German skills by marking “0” in all categories and one person marked three times “0” and once “1”, in the category referring to understanding German. These three participants are the ones who had explicitly stated that they are Mexicans and thus do not have to become integrated. All 42 respondents belonging to C2 rated their skills in German with “5” in all categories.

The question which language is used more by the participants brought, especially among C1, interesting results. At work, 87% of C1 use more Spanish than German. When communicating with their friends, 30 persons (58%) talk more in Spanish and 22 (42%) use the German language more often. This result could show a high integration of C1. However, when it comes to the use of Spanish and German within the family, only 16 persons (31%) speak more Spanish, while 36 persons (69%) mainly talk to each other in German. Hence, although the majority of C1 uses Spanish outside (at work and with friends), more than two thirds do still speak German within the family; half of them (17 persons) born in Mexico. This indicates a strong maintenance to the language and thus to the German culture on the part of the participants and their respective families.

The majority of the C2 respondents use mainly German in all three given situations. Only three persons stated that they speak more Spanish at work. These three estimated their Spanish skills on “5” in all four categories; they probably work for an institution that needs German native speakers who have perfect Spanish skills. Six participants wrote that they talk more in Spanish with their friends than in German. The three who use more Spanish at work did not mark Spanish here; hence, the six participants must be very integrated if they have more Mexican or other Spanish speaking friends than German speakers.

⁶² For detailed percentages see appendix N°III, item 12.

The items 14 and 15 are related to the importance of the languages in the future. 63% of C1 answered the question whether their children speak German with “yes”, 27% marked “no”. 10% do not have children. The maintenance of their children’s German skills is of high importance for the majority of C1 (two thirds marked “4” and “5” on the scale).⁶³ This naturally indicates a strong affiliation to the German language and thus confirms the speculation that the German culture is of importance for the respondents. Regarding C2, the significance of the maintenance of their native languages is obvious: Although only 22 of the 42 persons belonging to C2 actually have children, 39 C2 participants marked “5” when the importance of the maintenance of German among their children was to be evaluated.

Referring to the Spanish language, three C1 participants stated that their children do not speak Spanish. This first seemed to be strange since the children of members of C1 most probably grow up in Mexico City and thus in a Spanish speaking surrounding. But the three mentioned persons are all rather young; hence, they are likely to have very small children who do not go to school and have not learned Spanish yet. The three participants had stated that they use German more than Spanish within the family and with friends. 81% of the C1 respondents regard the maintenance of Spanish as very important. The Germans belonging to C2 also put emphasis on the maintenance of Spanish. With the exception of one person, the 22 participants with children expressed the importance of maintaining their children’s Spanish skills. Five participants marked “1” and “0”; thus, they are not interested in the maintenance of their children’s language skills. However, four of these five persons gave hypothetic responses since they do not have children.

Item 16 and 17 referred to the German School in Mexico City. 75% of C1 and 45% of C2 know the school because it was attended by them or their children or other family members. In the case of C2, all participants who have children send them to the German school except three. These three have either children being too young to go to school or they chose other schools for them. The evaluation of the school by both groups, C1 and C2, turns out to be very positive: 100% of C2 and 95% of C1 marked “4” and “5” on the scale. The remaining two persons (5%) of C1 rated the school with “3”. In order to obtain more information about the German School, item

⁶³ For more detailed percentages see appendix N°III, item 14.

17 asked for the experiences that the people had made. This open-ended question was answered by 27 C1 participants and 15 members of C2. The responses to the item were very similar; the school was praised by almost every participant. The quality of the courses, the bilingualism and the contact between Mexicans and Germans had been listed as examples by the interrogator in order to show the participants what they could write about – and exactly these things were rated very positively. The level of education, the lessons in not only two but three languages, the activities that bring the children of different backgrounds together, the friendly and professional teachers, the possibility to graduate with the German “Abitur” – these advantages of the German School were listed by the majority of the participants. However, the three C1 respondents that had evaluated the school with “3” named three negative aspects of the school. One person remembered that it had had a bad reputation during the era of the National Socialism and that the ideology of the Nazis had been taught there. The other two respondents stated that the school separated the different cultures more than it united them, since only the very rich Mexicans could afford to send their children to the German School. These statements may apply to one part of the pupils. Hence, the emerging “school community” consists exclusively of Germans and wealthy Mexicans and this could, in turn, influence the young people in their attitude towards the rest of the Mexican population in a negative way and lead to a feeling of superiority as it was already described in chapter two. Nevertheless, the vast majority evaluates the school in an exclusively positive way.

4.5.3. Culture and everyday life

The first four items (N°18-21) of the third area of research dealt with the participants’ consumption of the media. The respondents had to indicate the frequency of their use (every day // several times a week // 1-2 times a week // seldom/never) of German as well as Mexican media, which were sectioned into radio, television, newspapers, journals and internet.⁶⁴ Regarding the responses to the use of German radio, it seems that it is used frequently neither by C1 (92% marked “seldom/never”) nor by C2 (69% marked “seldom/never”). Only two C2 participants marked “every day”. Although almost all radio stations are available online, many people probably turn the radio on while driving their cars, cleaning, cooking etc. Hence, the majority does not

⁶⁴ For more detailed percentages see appendix N°III, items 18 and 19.

think of switching the PC on in order to listen to German radio channels online. Mexican radio is used frequently by both groups, 70% of C1 and 60% of C2 listening to it daily or several times a week. Merely 3 participants of C1 (6%) and 6 of C2 (19%) marked “seldom/never”. The consumption of German television is clearly higher than the use of the radio: 52% of C1 and two thirds of C2 state that they watch German channels daily or several times a week. Only two C2 participants use German television seldom or never and one quarter of C1 does not use it frequently either. Regarding the use of Mexican television, the proportion is very similar but reversed: 52% of C2 and two thirds of C1 watch Mexican television daily or very frequently.

All in all, these results are not surprising so far. The frequent usage of German TV by more than 50% of C1 shows their interest in Germany. 8 persons of these 50% were born in Mexico and they all stated that they watch German TV more than Mexican. Since they can choose different and international TV programs from a broad repertory, the use of German TV is a sign for their affiliation to the German culture. In turn, the Germans belonging to C2 also use Mexican TV frequently. For them it constitutes a training of their Spanish skills as well as an acquaintance with the Mexican culture.

The consumption of German newspapers and journals is lower than the use of TV among both groups. Referring to the usage of newspapers, 54% of C1 marked “seldom/never” and one third of the participants reads them 1-2 times weekly. 50% of C2 specified their consumption marking “1-2 times a week”; another third reads the newspapers daily or several times weekly. Journals are read once or twice a week by 50% of both groups. While one quarter of C2 uses them several times weekly, the other half of C1 reads them seldom or never. Regarding the fact that the majority of journals is published weekly, fortnightly or monthly, these results do not imply a low usage because of disinterest. The majority of the respondents answered the open-ended item N°20 which newspapers and journals they read. Both groups listed the newspapers already mentioned in chapter 3.2.2.: Frankfurter Allgemeine, Bild and Süddeutsche Zeitung. Several persons (mainly belonging to C2) wrote down the names of regional newspapers and noted that they read them online. Regarding journals, Focus and Spiegel were the ones listed most frequently. Furthermore, 17 C1 participants added the Mexican-German journal “mitt”. Since 32 out of 52 C1 respondents answered the item, the number of 17 persons mentioning “mitt” is very high and reflects the positive reputation of the journal. Mexican newspapers and

journals are read frequently by the majority of the C1 participants (62% read newspapers daily and several times a week and 52% stated the same referring to journals). However, the C2 respondents do not use them often (60% marked “seldom/never” regarding journals and 50% do not read newspapers). This might be one of the reasons why some of the C2 participants evaluated their Spanish skills lower in the categories “reading” and “writing” than in the other two. An increased consumption of newspapers and journals in Spanish would probably help them improve their skills.

The last category referred to the usage of the internet. As mentioned in chapter 3.2.2., the age of the participants plays an important role regarding the usage of the world wide web. Thus, it is not surprising that the consumption of Mexican and German websites declines with the increasing age of the respondents. Still, Mexican websites are used more frequently than German ones by C1.⁶⁵ C2 uses both kinds, but the German websites are utilised slightly more than the Mexican. Only 7 persons stated that they frequent Mexican websites seldom or never. The high usage of the internet is definitely a result of the technical progress and hence of the changes within today’s society. People use the internet for almost everything, the majority of handlings and processes can be done online today. Thus, the last item asked the participants whether they have used any German-Mexican websites in order to investigate if people actually use these homepages. Six C1 and 9 C2 respondents answered with “yes” and 10 persons answered to the half open-ended question “which ones”. The website “Treff 3” was listed by four persons. Three participants belonging to C2 wrote that they “had tried to find houses or flats to rent in Mexico City”.⁶⁶ The last three had used German-Mexican pages in order to get acquainted with the living situation and the Mexican culture in general. However, no name of the websites was remembered except “Treff3”.

The following four items referred mainly to German facilities in Mexico City and their usage. Only eight participants belonging to C1 and two of C2 are members of the German Club or another German grouping. This result supports the assumption that the German facilities are not exclusively used by Germans nowadays, but they

⁶⁵ For more detailed percentages regarding the use of websites see appendix N°III, item 21.

⁶⁶ Original statement in German: “Mein Mann hat nach zu mietenden Häusern im Internet gesucht“

are rather frequented by Mexicans. Nevertheless, the question regarding German events documents the participants' interest in such activities:



Chart N°7



Chart N°8

Almost two thirds of C1 and more than three quarters of C2 visit German events often or at least sometimes. Only five persons of C1 answered with “never”, all five being born in Mexico.⁶⁷ The responses to the following question (Which events are those?) overlap in large part with the ones given to item N°25 (Where do you know other Germans in Mexico from?). Both questions were answered by almost the same number of persons belonging to both groups (74 participants answered N°23b, 71 responded to N°25). The most frequent answers were: events organized by the German School (Christmas market, performances of theatre group and choir, sport events), German services in church, art exhibitions of German artists, concerts of German bands, singers and orchestras, Oktoberfest and German movie nights organized regularly by the Goethe Institute. Furthermore, many Germans met their compatriots at work, by having other German friends in common and two persons even stated that they had contacted other Germans in Mexico via “facebook” and “studiverzeichnis” in order to get to know them.⁶⁸ These statements reflect the importance of German events in Mexico City. Besides their main objective they often serve as a meeting point for the German population.⁶⁹ The last item in this section referred to the church. 19 participants belonging to C1 (37%) and 13 being part of C2 (31%) stated that they usually go to church services. This seems to be a rather high percentage having in

⁶⁷ Three of these five respondents are the same ones who stated that they are Mexicans and thus do not have to become integrated and who had very low German skills

⁶⁸ Facebook is an international internet platform that serves as a meeting point for people all over the world. Studiverzeichnis is the German equivalent.

⁶⁹ Since the survey was completed during some of these events, they also served as a meeting point for her in order to meet Germans in Mexico.

mind the relatively poorly visited services in Germany. However, 12 of the 19 C1 respondents and even 10 of the 13 C2 participants who usually visit the services go to the German services in Mexico City. This result supports the aforementioned assumption that the Germans in Mexico City do not only go to church in order to pray, but also – or mainly – in order to talk to other people and be together with them.

The remaining items deal directly with the integration of the Germans into Mexico’s society and the maintenance of German customs. First, the participants had to rate the importance of maintaining the German culture in Mexico:

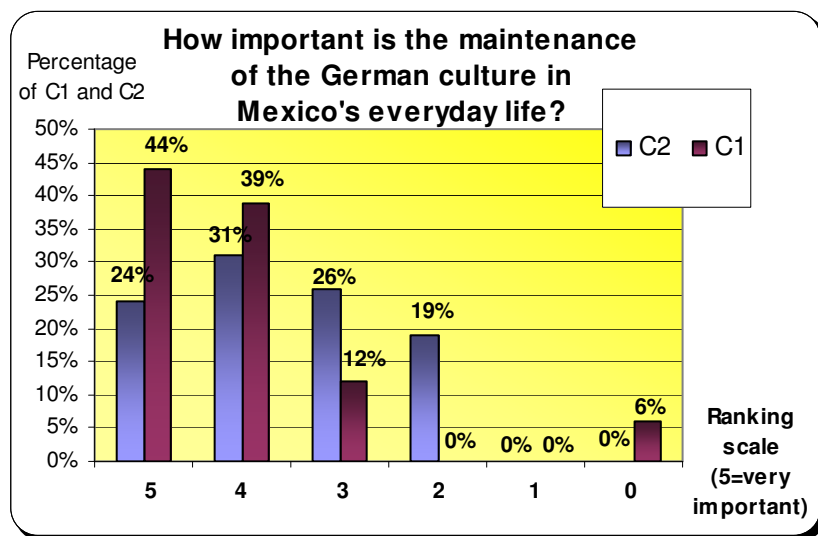


Chart N°9

This chart delivers an interesting result: For C1 it seems to be more important to maintain the German culture than for C2. Only 6% do not have interest in the preservation of German customs; 83 % marked the two highest numbers “4” and “5” on the scale. Regarding the opinion of the participants belonging to C2, more than half of them also marked the two highest numbers. However, 45% chose the numbers “2” and “3” which are positioned in the centre of the scale. An explanation for their voting may be due to their limited stay in Mexico City. Since the respondents of C2 know that they will return to Germany after a certain amount of time, they are probably not afraid of missing or even losing any of the German traditions. In turn, the respondents belonging to C1 cling much more to their customs since they either do not know whether they will live in Germany again or they even know that they will not.

Item N°27 asked about the importance of contacts to Mexican people. For group C1 these contacts are crucial (96% marked “4” and “5”). Three quarters of the participants belonging to C2 also evaluated their relation to the Mexicans as very important (with “4” and “5”). “1” was not marked at all and two persons chose “0”. Those are the same two C2 participants who already showed a lack of interest regarding their Spanish skills. It seems that they do not want to get involved with any detail concerning Mexico.

The last closed-ended item asked the participants to evaluate the importance of integration into the Mexican culture and subsequently requested them to rate their own integration. In order to gain a better comparison between the importance of integration for each group and their self-evaluation concerning their own integration, the results will be presented in two charts, one for each category of participants.

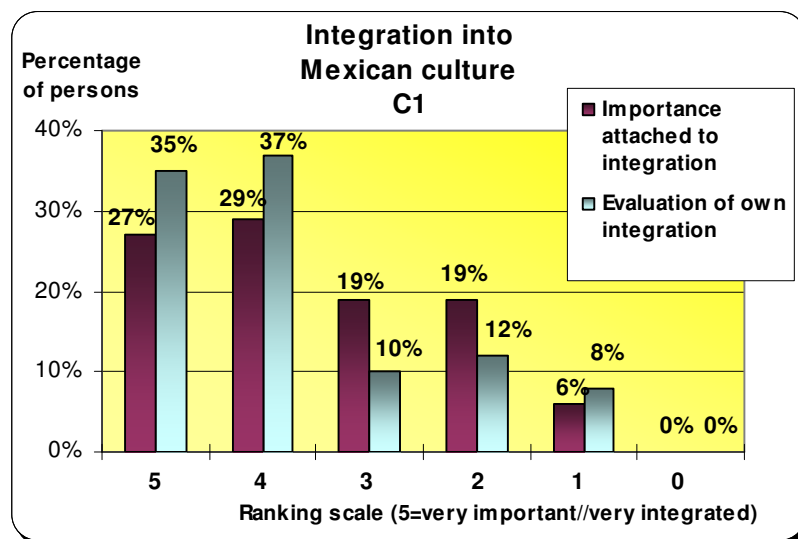


Chart N°10

C1 attaches relatively big importance to the integration into the Mexican culture. 56% of the participants ranked with “4” and “5”. Furthermore, more than one third of C1 (38%) marked the average numbers “2” and “3”. The interesting result is the self-evaluation of their integration compared to the importance. Although “only” 27% stated that it is of utmost importance to become integrated, 35% describe themselves as completely integrated. It seems as if these remaining 8% (4 persons) know that they actually are integrated and they regard this state as normal. Six persons had stated earlier in the survey that they want to return to Germany some day. They all

marked “1” or “2” referring to the importance of integration and also to their self-perception of integration.

The situation among C2 is the following:

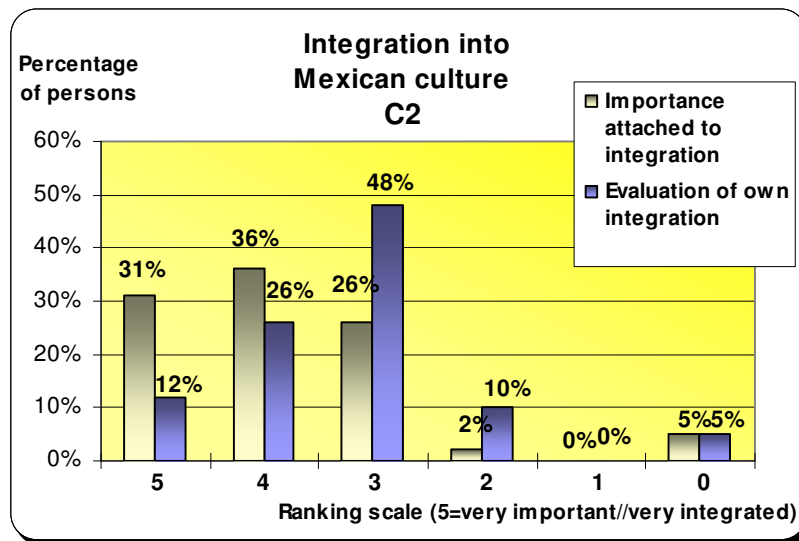


Chart N°11

C2 attached an enormous importance to the integration into Mexican cultural habits. Two thirds of C2 marked “4” and “5”, another quarter rated the importance with “3”. Only two persons (5%) wrote “0” (the same participants as in the antecedent question). However, the self-perception of their integration is remarkably lower; almost half of the group C2 evaluated it with “3”. Only 12% (5 persons) regard themselves as completely integrated. This result is of course due to their short time frame in Mexico City. A surprising detail, though, is the high importance the majority attaches to the integration. This could also be regarded as a desire by the C2 participants: They want to be integrated, but since they know that they will not stay in Mexico for a long period, their self-perception of their own integration is lower than their actual wish of integration.

The last three items are open-ended questions. Although they are placed at the end of the questionnaire, a surprisingly high number of participants answered them, albeit most of them rather shortly. Item Nr° 29, the most delicate question of the survey, asked for a feeling of superiority among the Germans towards the Mexicans. 33 persons of C1 and 23 of C2 responded to this question and the answers turned out to differ intensely from each other. 19 participants belonging to C1 and 14 respondents of C2 simply wrote “no”. Another 11 C1 participants and 7 C2 respondents answered with “yes”. One of the remaining C1 participants having

responded to the question stated that “the Nazi Germans had acted like that” and that “today this is, thank God, over”.⁷⁰ Another person wrote that that is the reason why she does not want to have relations with Germans anymore and that she is happy to be Mexican.⁷¹ One of the C2 participants gave the following example: “I noticed that two of my colleagues at work think so. Their way of talking derogatively about the Mexican mentality, their culture, food, everything... I don’t like how they act.”⁷² It seems as if the perception of a feeling of superiority among the Germans is very diverse. A falsification of the result is possible at this point, though, since it is hard to evaluate whether all participants described their real opinion and attitude. If any of the respondents had a superior self-perception, he would in all likelihood have inhibitions to express these feelings directly in a questionnaire.

Item N°30 and 31, the last two questions, were designed to gain an insight into the major stereotypes regarding the Mexican and the German culture. In order to obtain as many responses as possible, it was important to not use the terms “stereotypes” or “prejudices”. Thus, the participants were asked to list the advantages of each culture/way of life. 72 persons answered item N° 30 (the advantages of the Mexican culture) and 67 participants responded to N°31 (the advantages of the Mexican culture). While N°30 was answered by a similar quantity of participants of both groups (81% of C1 and 71% of C2), N°31 was responded to by noticeably more C1 participants. An explanation for this behaviour could be found in the fact that for many C2 participants the German culture is “normal” and they do not see the advantages of it as much as the C2 respondents. These, in turn, appreciate the advantages of their culture all the more since they are not used to having it around them. For a better overview, the advantages which were designated most are presented in the following two charts:

⁷⁰ German original: “diese Nazideutschen haben sich den Mexikanern gegenüber so verhalten. Gott sei Dank ist das heute vorbei.”

⁷¹ Spanish original: “Por eso no me gusta relacionarme con Alemanes. Soy feliz siendo Mexicana.”

⁷² German original: “Ich hab’ bemerkt, dass zwei meiner Kollegen so denken. Ihre Art abfällig über die mexikanische Mentalität zu sprechen, über die Bräuche, alles.. Ich mag ihr Verhalten nicht.“

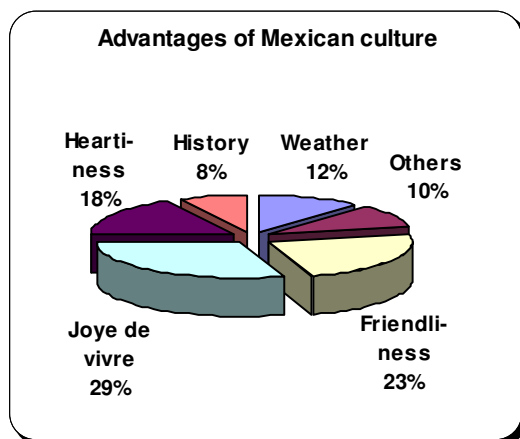


Chart N°12

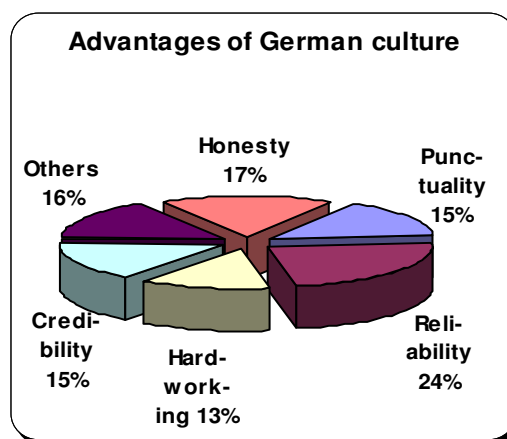


Chart N°13

According to the participants, “Joye de vivre” is the most important advantage of the Mexican culture, closely followed by “friendliness” and “heartiness”, then by “weather” and “history”.⁷³ Regarding the German culture, “reliability” was listed most. The remaining items were listed with almost the same frequency: “honesty”, “punctuality”, “credibility” and “hardworking”. Although these last items are not directly connected to the research objective, it is of interest to have an insight into their perception of the cultures. However, they cannot be evaluated and hence are to reflect the advantages and also the stereotypes attached to the Mexican and the German culture and way of life.

4.6. Summary and subsumption into the research context

Upon evaluation of the survey, it becomes obvious that the German population in Mexico City possesses very different opinions, attitudes and a different way of live. It is of enormous importance to connect the answers to each other that are given by one and the same person in order to understand their attitude towards integration into Mexican society and maintenance of German customs. When looking at the responses given to all items in the questionnaire, different “groups” of Germans living in Mexico can be elaborated.

First and foremost, there is of course an immense difference between the Germans belonging to C1 and those of C2. Thus, the separate evaluation was necessary and useful since it delivered a better possibility of comparison between the

⁷³ The French expression was used for lack of an appropriate English term. The original German and Spanish words in the questionnaires were “Lebensfreude”, “Lebenslust”, “alegría” and “alegría de vivir”. “Friendliness” was listed with “Freundlichkeit”, “heartiness” with “Herzlichkeit” and “amabilidad”.

two groups. However, the division into C1 and C2 is not the only difference between the participants. The group of 94 respondents consisted of a variety of distinct attitudes and perceptions. C2 could be split up into at least two subgroups. The majority of C2 seems to be keen to become integrated into Mexican society although they only stay in Mexico City for a limited period. Still, they are interested in the people, they do not want their children to forget the Spanish language after having left the country and they wish to become integrated into the Mexican way of life. Referring to the four acculturation strategies, this major part of C2 tries to undergo the process of integration or even of assimilation – with the knowledge that they will return to Germany after a certain period of time. Hence, they could assimilate themselves for this short period they live in Mexico, but they know that with their return they will readapt to the German way of living. It is not a real process of integration or assimilation they traverse, but an interesting, adventurous break in their “normal” life in Germany. Whether they ultimately become integrated within the short time period they spend in Mexico City is debatable and depends on each person, their character and also on the will of the people surrounding them.

Another – relatively small – part of the C2 respondents does not share this attitude. They know that they will leave the country after a certain period and do not have the urge to become a part of the Mexican society; they do not have strong command of the Spanish language and are neither interested in contacting Mexicans nor in integrating into their society. They clearly separate themselves from the Mexican society and hence undergo the process of self-segregation.

Group C1 is even more diverse than C2. One of the “subgroups” of C1 consists of the participants who identify themselves as Mexicans and who have lost every sense of belonging to the German population. They are completely assimilated – although the term “assimilation” is not appropriate in this case since they actually are Mexicans and not Germans. Their families arrived in Mexico a hundred or more years ago and the process of assimilation also took place a long time ago among those ancestors. They know that they descend from Germans, but in their minds and their souls they are Mexicans.

Another subgroup of C1 involves the respondents who expressed a certain disinterest towards the integration into the Mexican society. They have been living in Mexico City for many years and decades, but they cling strongly to German customs, speak German with family and their (mostly German) friends and they do not care

much about their integration into Mexico's culture although some of them are relatively integrated. These Germans are situated somewhere between integration and separation, depending on the individual.

The C1 participants with Mexican partners are all very integrated into Mexican society and want to be a part of it. One group states that German customs and their maintenance are of great importance to them, others are not interested in preserving them. Hence, one part of this subgroup can be denominated as integrated and the other part is on its way to assimilation or already assimilated.

All in all, the plurality of different attitudes and perceptions ensures that a general picture of the behaviour of the German population in Mexico cannot be elaborated. Thus, the term "minority" does not seem to be applicable, either. Even the previous division into several subgroups is merely an attempt to subsume the different perceptions, but it can definitely not be seen as a rule that can be applied to all Germans and people of German origin in Mexico. Every human being is different; hence, their way of absorbing a foreign culture and dealing with it is also – like their way of maintaining their own cultural habits.

5. CONCLUSION

The German population in Mexico City – the object of investigation of this thesis does not only have a very diverse history, but its present situation is also multi-faceted. The foundation for this diversity and for the division of the German community was laid in the past. When the first large groups of Germans arrived in Mexico at the beginning of the 19th Century, the main objective of the majority of them was to become wealthy. After several decades, a proper German community could be found in Mexico City. In order to spend their leisure time with their compatriots, the Germans' wish for an appropriate facility grew and led to the foundation of the German House in the middle of the 19th Century. However, instead of spending their time together peacefully, different political viewpoints among the Germans soon caused a division into two subgroups which lasted – at least – until World War II. The conservative Germans outnumbered the liberals by far and the feeling of superiority among them towards the Mexicans, which already existed since the arrival of the first Germans, increased. During National Socialism the dissension between conservatives and liberals – who had in large part turned into proponents and opponents of the Nazi ideology – intensified. Arriving refugees from Germany made the group of liberal Germans grow. After the end of World War II the situation meliorated. The Germans started an approach towards each other and also towards the Mexicans. More and more German facilities were founded and used by Mexicans as well. Nevertheless, the present of the German population in Mexico seems to be – as well as its diverse history – multi-faceted.

After having examined their past as well as the present situation, it is explicitly clear that they cannot be considered a homogeneous group of Germans in a foreign country with similar perceptions and standpoints. It is, amongst other factors, the turbulent past that made sure that the Germans in Mexico cannot be regarded as a group that stays together closely or as a “typical” minority. Another reason for their dispersion is the emergence of the current trend to go to Mexico for a certain period of time with a limited labour contract. Those Germans (who were named C2 throughout the investigation of the survey) generally have another attitude towards the Mexican culture and the preservation of their own culture than the participants of the survey belonging to C1. As already stated in the last subchapter, the groups C1 and C2 are not homogeneous, either. Hence, an answer to the research question of the

thesis that clearly applies to all Germans or at least to all members of one of the two groups does not exist. Nevertheless, the examination of the survey's results revealed the possibility of a division into different subgroups.

Many of the Germans who come to Mexico City for three to five years with a limited labour contract are looking forward to spending a certain period of their life in an "adventurous" surrounding, far away from Germany and with the certainty of returning to their home country after a while. The results of the survey indicate that the majority of those Germans want to be in contact with the Mexican population and try to become as integrated as possible. The maintenance of German customs is also rather important to them, but since their return is assured and the loss of the German culture is unimaginable, it is not crucial to explicitly maintain it during their stay in Mexico. Still, whenever German events take place in Mexico City, they visit them. Their children go to the German School because it is easier for them and the reputation of the school is very good. A temporary integration is in many cases realised.

A small percentage of the Germans with limited contracts does not show any interest in their host country nor in the inhabitants, the language and other cultural aspects. The maintenance of the German culture is of higher importance for them than for the aforementioned group. Without being displeased with the situation, these Germans live their lives in Mexico in a self-segregation. In the long run, this state can have a negative impact on the relation between the inhabitants of the host country and the people segregating themselves from them, since the border between the cultures grows stronger and conflicts can arise. However, due to their limited stay, their attitude is not likely to provoke any serious controversies.

The people who do not plan to leave Mexico or who at least do not have the end of their stay as precisely in mind as the aforementioned Germans are even harder to divide into subgroups. Some are very integrated and at the same time they also preserve their own culture, a state that could be regarded as the ideal acculturation strategy. The minority does not have to give up its traditions and customs and at the same time an approach towards the Mexican culture and a partial adaption makes sure that they do not feel excluded from the majority. The majority population, in this case the Mexicans, can also benefit from the relation with the minority, since the contact between the two cultures can – in the ideal case – enrich lives and minds of both groups.

Another part of the C1 group is not interested in the maintenance of German habits and they would not even designate themselves as Germans. These persons – or most probably their ancestors – have undergone a process of complete assimilation. However, this state does not automatically have a negative connotation, as long as the minority is satisfied with the situation. The absorption of a foreign culture and the later identification with only this culture and not with the former “own culture” is a normal process after a long duration of stay in a foreign country.

The Germans belonging to the third subgroup of C1 – albeit a smaller number – cling intensely to the German culture and are not very integrated into the Mexican society although many of them lived there their whole lives. In their case, a self-segregation has taken place. It is not very likely that the Mexicans surrounding them are also partly responsible for the process of separation, since the Germans’ answers to some of the items in the survey (i.e. only average interest in contact with Mexicans; not very strong command of the Spanish language) allowed the conclusion that the Germans actually prefer the state of self-segregation. They are constantly and almost exclusively in contact with other Germans and live in their “own world”. The life of those Germans bears resemblance to the former German colony in Mexico in the 19th Century. However, it seems that the Germans are satisfied with the situation. Whether the Mexican population also regards it with satisfaction or whether they take offense at it is not known. The investigation of the viewpoints and perception of the Mexicans would, however, constitute an interesting starting point for further research.

It is important to never forget that every human being is unique and a general rule applicable to all Germans in Mexico City does not exist. Nevertheless – and although taking into account that it is far from including the perception of all Germans in Mexico – the undertaken division into various subgroups can serve as an indication for the diversified viewpoints among the German population in Mexico.

A more detailed distinction of different types of Germans in Mexico City is not accessible with the help of a standardised quantitative survey. However, further research of this field of study using different methods could reveal more detailed results. After having used a quantitative survey in order to gain an initial insight into the perceptions and attitudes of the German population in Mexico City, a research based on rather qualitative methods such as the execution of personal interviews would in all likelihood lead to very interesting discoveries. This thesis can be

regarded as an adequate base for further investigation, focussed primarily on more personal fates and experiences.

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APPENDIX I

Liebe Deutschstämmige und Deutsche,

Mein Name ist Gretha Burchard, ich bin eine deutsche Studentin und studiere zur Zeit für ein Austauschsemester an der UNAM in Mexiko-Stadt. Da dies mein letztes Semester ist, bereite ich mich gerade auf meine Abschlussarbeit vor, die sich mit den Deutschen und Deutschstämmigen in Mexiko-Stadt beschäftigt. Es geht um ihre Geschichte und auch um die aktuelle Situation. Ein Drittel der Arbeit wird aus der Auswertung der Fragebögen bestehen, die Sie direkt hinter diesem kurzen Brief finden. Ich würde mich sehr freuen, wenn Sie diesen Fragebogen ausfüllen könnten. Es wird nicht länger als 15 Minuten dauern und er ist absolut anonym. Wenn Sie noch mehr Menschen kennen (Familie, Freundeskreis), die auch daran interessiert wären, sie auszufüllen, können Sie diese E-Mail gern an diejenigen weitersenden. Wenn Sie den Fragebogen ausgefüllt haben, schicken Sie ihn bitte zurück an diese Adresse (grekry@hotmail.com). Falls Sie irgendwelche Fragen haben oder daran interessiert sind, die fertige Arbeit hinterher zu lesen, schreiben Sie es einfach in die E-Mail mit hinein.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Hilfe!

Ihre Gretha

Fragebogen: das Leben der Deutschen in Mexiko-Stadt

Wie fülle ich den Fragebogen aus?

Bei den meisten Fragen brauchen Sie nur ein Kreuz vor der richtigen Antwort zu machen oder den auf Sie zutreffenden Buchstaben oder die Zahl auf die Linie zu schreiben. Bei einigen Fragen haben Sie keine Vorgaben und können frei antworten. Stichpunkte reichen völlig aus. Wenn Sie eine Frage nicht beantworten wollen oder können, überspringen Sie sie bitte, aber versuchen Sie nach Möglichkeit so viele wie möglich zu beantworten.

I. Teil: Ihr Leben in Mexiko

1. Betrachten Sie sich als Mexikaner/in (M), als Deutsche/n (D) oder als beides (B)? _____

2. Wann und wo sind Sie geboren und welche Nationalität(en) haben Sie (M/D/B)?

3a. Wenn in Mexiko geboren: Wann kamen Ihre Vorfahren nach Mexiko?

3b. Wenn nicht in Mexiko geboren: Seit wann leben Sie in Mexiko?

4a. Warum sind Ihre Vorfahren nach Mexiko gekommen?

- als Flüchtlinge
- wegen der Arbeit/der des Partners
- wegen des mex. Partners/Partnerin
- sonstiges: _____

4b. Warum sind Sie nach Mexiko gekommen?

- als Flüchtling
- wegen der Arbeit wenn ja: haben Sie/Ihr dt. Partner einen zeitlich begrenzten Vertrag?
O ja O nein
- wegen des mex. Partners/ Partnerin
- sonstiges: _____

Die Fragen 5 – 8 brauchen Sie nicht zu beantworten, wenn Sie nicht in Mexiko geboren wurden.

5. Haben Sie in Ihrem Leben auch in Deutschland gewohnt? O ja O nein.

Wenn ja, wie lange und warum? ____ Monate/Jahre

- Schule/Studium
- Arbeit
- Sonstiges: _____

6. Haben Sie noch Familie in Deutschland? O ja O nein O weiß nicht

7. Haben Sie Freunde in Deutschland? O ja O nein O weiß nicht

8. (Für diejenigen, deren Familien vor dem 2. Weltkrieg nach Mexiko ausgewandert sind)
Wie hat Ihre Familie (Ihre Eltern/Großeltern) den zweiten Weltkrieg hier in Mexiko erlebt?

9. Wollen Sie irgendwann nach Deutschland zurück? O ja O nein O weiß nicht

10. Wann und wie hat Ihre Familie begonnen, sich in die mexikanische Kultur zu integrieren? _____

II. Teil: Sprache und die Deutsche Schule

11. Wie gut auf einer Skala von 0 (schlecht) bis 5 (sehr gut) sind Ihre Spanischkenntnisse?

- Schreiben: _____

- Sprechen: _____

- Verstehen: _____

- Lesen: _____

12. Wie gut auf einer Skala von 0 bis 5 sind Ihre Deutschkenntnisse?

- Schreiben: _____

- Sprechen: _____

- Verstehen: _____

- Lesen: _____

13. Welche Sprache verwenden Sie mehr? (Spanisch=SP, Deutsch=D)

- auf der Arbeit _____

- mit Freunden _____

- in der Familie _____

14. Sprechen Ihre Kinder/Enkel Deutsch? ja nein ich habe keine
Wie wichtig auf einer Skala von 0 (gar nicht wichtig) bis 5 (sehr wichtig) ist es Ihnen, dass Ihre Kinder und Enkel auch weiterhin Deutsch sprechen? _____

15. Sprechen Ihre Kinder/Enkel Spanisch? ja nein ich habe keine
Wie wichtig auf einer Skala von 0 (gar nicht wichtig) bis 5 (sehr wichtig) ist es Ihnen, dass Ihre Kinder und Enkel auch weiterhin Spanisch sprechen? _____

16. Haben Sie und/oder Ihre Familie die deutsche Schule in besucht? ja nein
Wie würden Sie sie bewerten (auf einer Skala von 0 bis 5)? _____

17. Welche Erfahrungen haben Sie gemacht (z.B. Qualität des Unterrichts; Bilingualismus; Kontakt zwischen Mexikanern und Deutschen)? _____

III. Teil: Kultur und Alltag in Mexiko-Stadt

18. Wie oft konsumieren Sie deutsche Medien?

- | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| - Radio: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |
| - TV: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |
| - Zeitungen: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |
| - Zeitschriften: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |
| - Websites: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |

19. Wie oft konsumieren Sie mexikanische Medien?

- | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| - Radio: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |
| - TV: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |
| - Zeitungen: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |
| - Zeitschriften: | <input type="checkbox"/> selten/nie | <input type="checkbox"/> 1x pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> mehrmals pro Woche | <input type="checkbox"/> täglich |

- Websites: selten/nie 1x pro Woche mehrmals pro Woche täglich

20. Welche deutschen Zeitungen/Zeitschriften lesen Sie?

21. Haben Sie je deutsch-mexikanische Websites benutzt? ja nein Wenn ja, welche (falls Sie sich an die Titel erinnern)? _____

22. Sind Sie Mitglied im Club Alemán / in anderen deutschen Gruppierungen? ja nein

23. Wie oft nehmen Sie an deutschen Veranstaltungen teil, besuchen deutsche Ausstellungen etc.? häufig manchmal selten nie

Welche Veranstaltungen sind das? _____

24. Wie oft gehen Sie in die Kirche? ca. 1x pro Woche 1-2x pro Monat seltener
Wie oft gehen Sie zum evangelischen oder katholischen Gottesdienst auf Deutsch?
 ca. 1x pro Woche 1-2x pro Monat seltener

25. Woher kennen Sie andere Deutsche in Mexiko? _____

26. Auf einer Skala von 0 bis 5, wie wichtig ist es Ihnen, die deutsche Kultur in Ihrer Familie und im Alltag aufrecht zu erhalten und zu leben? _____

27. Wie wichtig ist Ihnen der Kontakt zu Mexikanern (auf einer Skala von 0 bis 5)? _____

28. Wie wichtig (auf einer Skala von 0 bis 5) ist Ihnen die Integration in die mexikanische Kultur? _____ Als wie integriert betrachten Sie sich und Ihre Familie (auf einer Skala von 0 bis 5)? _____

29. Hatten Sie schonmal das Gefühl, dass die Deutschen sich als etwas besseres betrachten und auf die Mexikaner hinabschauen?

Und zum Schluss noch Ihre Meinung über die Vor- und Nachteile der Kulturen:

30. Was gefällt Ihnen an der mexikanischen Kultur (besser als an der deutschen)?

31. Was gefällt Ihnen an der deutschen Kultur (besser als an der mexikanischen)?

VIELEN DANK FÜR IHRE HILFE!

APPENDIX II

Queridos alemanes y personas de origen alemán,

Me llamo Gretha Burchard, soy una estudiante alemana y de momento estoy estudiando un semestre en la UNAM en la Ciudad de México.

Como este es mi último semestre, estoy preparándome mi tesis final, que se dedica a los alemanes y las personas de origen alemán en la Ciudad de México. Trata con su historia y también con la situación hoy en día. Una tercera parte de la tesis se compondrá del análisis de estos cuestionarios que va a encontrar usted justo después de esta carta. Me haría un gran favor si pudiera rellenar este cuestionario. No va a durar más que 15 minutos y es absolutamente anónimo. Si usted conoce a más personas que estén interesadas en rellenarlo, puede reenviar este correo a ellos. En cuanto hayan rellenado el cuestionario, mándenlo por favor a esta dirección (grekry@hotmail.com). Si tiene cualquier cuestión o duda o si está interesado en leer la tesis cuando esté terminada, anótelos en el correo.

¡Muchas gracias por su ayuda!

Gretha

Cuestionario: la vida de los alemanes en la Ciudad de México

¿Cómo relleno este cuestionario?

En la mayoría de las preguntas solamente necesita macar la respuesta correcta con una cruz o poner la letra o el número correspondiente en la línea. Algunas preguntas no contienen especificaciones para responder y usted puede contestar libremente. No hace falta que sean frases completas. Si no quiere contestar a alguna pregunta, omítela por favor, pero intente contestar lo más posible.

I. parte: Su vida en México

1. ¿Se ve a si mismo como mexicano/a (M), alemán/alemana (D) o ambos (B)? _____
2. ¿Cuándo y dónde nació y cuál nacionalidad tiene (M/D/B)?

3a. Si nació en México: ¿Desde hace cuándo sus antepasados viven en México? _____

4a. ¿Por qué vinieron sus antepasados a México?

- Como refugiado
- Por su pareja
- Por el trabajo
- Otras razones: _____

3b. Si no nació en México: ¿Desde hace cuándo vive en México?

4b. ¿Por qué usted vino a México?

- Como refugiado
- Por mi pareja
- Por el trabajo si es así: tiene un contrato de trabajo limitado?
O sí O no
- Otras razones: _____

Las preguntas 5-10 no necesita contestar, si no ha nacido en México.

5. Si usted nació en México, ha vivido en Alemania una temporada? O sí O no.

Si es así, ¿por qué?

- Escuela/estudios
- Trabajo
- Otros: _____

6. ¿Todavía tiene familia en Alemania? O sí O no O no sé

7. ¿Tiene amigos en Alemania? O sí O no O no sé

8. (Para los que emigraron a México antes de la segunda guerra mundial)

¿Como presenció su familia (sus padres/abuelos) la segunda guerra mundial aquí en México?

9. ¿Quiere volver a Alemania algún día? O sí O no O no sé

10. ¿Cuándo y cómo empezó su familia integrarse en la cultura mexicana?

II. parte: Idiomas y el colegio alemán

11. ¿Cómo evaluaría su nivel de español en una escala de 0 a 5?

- Escribiéndolo: _____
- Hablándolo: _____
- Entendiéndolo: _____
- Leyéndolo: _____

12. ¿Cómo evaluaría su nivel de alemán en una escala de 0 a 5?

- Escribiéndolo: _____
- Hablándolo: _____
- Entendiéndolo: _____
- Leyéndolo: _____

13. ¿Cuál idioma utiliza más? (español = e, alemán = a)

- en el trabajo _____
- con amigos _____
- con la familia _____

14. ¿Hablan sus niños/nietos alemán? O sí O no O no tengo niños

¿Qué importante es para usted en una escala de 0 (nada importante) a 5 (muy importante), que sus niños y nietos siguen hablando alemán? _____

15. ¿Hablan sus niños/nietos español? O sí O no O no tengo niños

¿Qué importante es para usted en una escala de 0 (nada importante) a 5 (muy importante), que sus niños y nietos siguen hablando español? _____

16. ¿Usted o su familia fueron/van al colegio alemán? O sí O no

¿Cómo la evaluaría? _____

17. ¿Que experiencias ha hecho con el colegio? (por ejemplo calidad de clases, bilingüismo, contacto entre mexicanos y alemanes)? _____

III. parte: Cultura y vida cotidiana en la Ciudad de México

18. ¿Cuánto utilizas los siguientes medios de comunicación en alemán?

- radio: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana O diario
- TV: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana O diario
- periódicos: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana
O diario
- revistas: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana O diario
- páginas web: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana
O diario

19. ¿Cuánto utilizas los siguientes medios de comunicación en español?

- radio: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana O diario
- TV: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana O diario
- periódicos: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana
O diario
- revistas: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana O diario
- páginas web: O poco/nunca O 1x por semana O varias veces por semana

O diario

20. ¿Qué periódicos/revistas alemanas lee?

21. ¿Utilizó alguna vez páginas web alemanas-mexicanas? O sí O no Si es así, ¿cuáles (por si se acuerda del título)? _____

22. ¿Es usted miembro del club alemán / de otra agrupación alemana? O sí O no

23. ¿Cuántas veces participa en eventos alemanes, visita exhibiciones alemanas etc.?
O muchas veces O a veces O pocas veces O nunca

¿Cuáles eventos son? _____

24. ¿Cuánto va a la iglesia? O 1x por semana O 1-2x al mes O menos

¿Cuántas veces va a la misa protestante o católica en alemán?

O 1x por semana O 1-2x al mes O menos

25. ¿De dónde conoce otros alemanes en México? _____

26. En una escala de 0 a 5, ¿qué importante es para usted mantener y vivir la cultura alemana en su familia y en la vida cotidiana? _____

27. ¿Qué importante es el contacto con Mexicanos? (en una escala de 0 a 5)? _____

28. ¿Qué importante (en una escala de 0 a 5) la integración en la cultura mexicana para usted?
_____ ¿Cómo de integrado se califica a si mismo y a su familia (en una escala de 0 a 5)?

29. ¿Alguno vez ha tenido el sentimiento que los alemanes se ven mejores que los Mexicanos?

Y al final solamente falta su opinión sobre las ventajas y desventajas de las culturas:

30. ¿Qué le gusta más de la cultura mexicana (que de la cultura alemana)?

31. ¿Qué le gusta más de la cultura alemana (que de la cultura mexicana)?

¡MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU AYUDA!

APPENDIX III

English Questionnaire with answers

I. part: Your life in Mexico.

1. *Do you regard yourself as Mexican, German or both?*

Category 1 (C1): 22 persons German (42%)⁷⁴, 12 p. Mexican (23%), 18 p. both (35%). **Category 2 (C2):** 42 p. German (100%)

2. *When and where were you born and which Nationality do you have?*

When: **C1:** 1971-1985: 5 p. (10%). 1956-1970: 14 p. (27%). 1941-1955: 16 p. (31%). 1926-1940: 17 p. (33%). **C2:** 1971-1985: 20 p. (48%). 1956-1970: 18 p. (43%). 1941-1955: 4 p. (10%).

Where: **C1:** 33 p. in Mexico (63%), 19 p. in Germany (37%). **C2:** 40 p. (95%) in Germany, 2 p. in other countries (Poland and Russia) (5%).

Nationality: **C1:** 19 p. German (37%), 26 p. Mexican (50%), 7 p. both (13%). **C2:** 42 p. German (100%)

3a. *If born in Mexico: When did your ancestors arrive in Mexico?*

1946-1980: 4 p. (12%). 1933-1945: 6 p. (18%). 1900-1932: 9 p. (27%). 1850-1899: 5 p. (15%). Before 1850: 4 p. (12%). n.s.: 5 p. (15%).

4a. *Why did your ancestors come to Mexico?*

Refugee: 5 p. (15%); work/work of the partner: 23 p. (70%); Mexican partner: 3 p. (9%); other reasons: 2 p. (6%), not specified (n.s.)

3b. *If not born in Mexico: When did you arrive in Mexico?*

2001-2007: 47 p. (77%); 1991-2000: 5 p. (8%); 1971-1990: 2 p. (3%); 1951-1970: 4 p. (7%); before 1951: 3 p. (5%).

4b. *Why did you come to Mexico?*

⁷⁴ The single percentage values are rounded, that is why the result of the added values of one item can be 101% or 99% instead of 100%

Refugee: 2 p. (3%); work/work of partner: 48 p. (79%); Mexican partner: 8 p. (13%); other reasons: 3 p. (5%), n.s.

Questions 5-8 do not have to be answered if the respondent's stay in Mexico is limited (i.e. because of a four-year-contract at a German enterprise)

5. *If you were born in Mexico, did you also live in Germany for a certain period?*

yes: 15 p. (45%), no: 18 p. (55%)

If so, how long and why? school/studies: 8 p. (24%) (5 p. between 4 and 7 years, 3 p. for one year). work: 3 p. (9%) (between 6 months and 4 years). others: 4 p. (12%) (between 3 months and 2 years), specification: parents wanted child to get to know Germany, learn German

6. *Do you still have family in Germany?*

yes: 23 p. (70%), no: 8 p. (24%), don't know: 2 p. (6%).

7. *Do you have friends in Germany?*

yes: 15 p. (45%), no: 17 p. (52%), don't know: 1 p. (3%).

8. *(For the ones whose families migrated to Mexico before World War II) How did your family (your parents/grandparents) experience the war here in Mexico?*

answered by 11 persons (33%)

9. *Do you want to return to Germany some day?*

C1: Yes: 6 (12%), no: 33 (63%), don't know: 13 (25%). **C2:** yes: 39 (93%), no: 1 (2%), don't know: 3 (5%).

10. *When and how did your family start to integrate themselves into the Mexican culture?*

answered by 32 persons (34%); (**C1:** 19 p. (37%), **C2:** 13 p. (31%))

II. part: Language and the German School

11. *How do you evaluate your Spanish skills on a scale from 0 to 5?*

a. Writing **C1:** 5: 39 p. (75%), 4: 6 p. (12%), 3: 4 p. (8%), 2: 3 p. (6%).

C2: 5: 12 (29%), 4: 16 (38%), 3: 5 (12%), 2: 4 (10%), 1: 3 p. (7%), 0: 2 p. (5%)

- b. Speaking **C1:** 5: 40 p. (77%), 4: 8 p. (15%), 3: 4 p. (8%).
C2: 5: 15 p. (36%), 4: 17 p. (40%), 3: 7 p. (17%), 2: 2 p. (5%), 1: 1 p. (2%)
- c. Understanding **C1:** 5: 46 p. (88%), 4: 4 p. (8%), 3: 2 p. (4%).
C2: 5: 17 p. (40%), 4: 17 p. (40%), 3: 5 p. (12%), 2: 3 p. (7%)
- d. Reading **C1:** 5: 39 p. (75%), 4: 10 p. (19%), 3: 3 p. (6%)
C2: 5: 16 p. (38%), 4: 15 p. (36%) 3: 6 p. (14%), 2: 3 (7%), 1: 2 (5%).

12. How do you evaluate your German skills on a scale from 0 to 5?

- a. Writing **C1:** 5: 29 p. (56%), 4: 11 p. (21%), 3: 4 p. (8%), 2: 3 p. (6%), 1: 2 p. (4%), 0: 3 p. (6%) **C2:** 5: 42 p. (100%)
- b. Speaking **C1:** 5: 33 p. (63%), 4: 8 p. (15%), 3: 5 p. (10%), 2: 2 p. (4%), 1: 1 p. (2%), 0: 3 p. (6%) **C2:** 5: 42 p. (100%)
- c. Understanding **C1:** 5: 34 p. (65%), 4: 10 p. (19%), 3: 3 p. (6%), 2: 1 p. (2%), 1: 2 p. (4%), 0: 2 p. (4%) **C2:** 5: 42 p. (100%)
- d. Reading **C1:** 5: 31 p. (60%), 4: 9 p. (17%), 3: 5 p. (10%), 2: 3 p. (6%), 1: 1 p. (2%), 0: 3 p. (6%) **C2:** 5: 42 p. (100%)

13. Which language do you use more?

- a. At work **C1:** Spanish (S): 45 p. (87%), German (G): 4 p. (8%), n.s.: 3 p. (6%).
C2: S: 3 p. (7%), G: 39 p. (93%)
- b. with friends **C1:** S: 30 p. (58%), G: 22 p. (42%)
C2: S: 6 p. (14%), G: 36 p. (86%)
- c. with the family **C1:** S: 16 p. (31%), G: 36 p. (69%)
C2: S: 0 p. (0%), G: 42 p. (100%)

14. Do your children speak German?

C1: yes: 33 p. (63%); no: 14 p. (27%); I have none: 5 p. (10%) **C2:** yes: 22 p. (52%); no: 0 p. (0%); I have none: 20 p. (47%)

On a scale from 0 to 5, how important is it for you that your children and grandchildren continue to speak German?

C1: 5: 22 p. (42%), 4: 13 p. (25%), 3: 5 p. (10%), 2: 3 p. (6%), 1: 4 p. (8%), 0: 2 p. (4%) **C2:** 5: 39 p. (93%)

15. *Do your children speak Spanish?*

C1: yes: 44 p. (85%); no: 3 p. (6%); I have none: 5 p. (10%)

C2: yes: 8 p. (19%); no: 14 (33%); I have none: 20 p. (47%)

On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is it for you that your children and grandchildren continue to speak Spanish?

C1: 5: 42 p. (81%), 4: 3 (6%), 3: 2 (4%), 2 p. (4%); 2 p. (4%)

C2: 5: 8 p. (19%), 4: 13 p. (31%), 3: 0, 2: 0, 1: 2 (5%), 0: 3 p. (7%)

16a. *Did you and/or you family go to the German school?*

C1: yes: 39 p. (75%); no: 13 p. (35%) **C2:** yes: 19 p. (45%), no: 23 p.(55%)

How would you evaluate it?

C1: 5: 32 p. (82%), 4: 5 p. (13%), 3: 2 p. (5%) **C2:** 5: 17 p. (89%), 4: 2 p. (11%)

17. *Which experiences have you made (i.e. quality of the courses, bilingualism, contact between Germans and Mexicans)?*

answered by 42 persons (45%) (**C1:** 27 p. (52%), **C2:** 15 p. (36%))

III. Part, Culture and everyday life

18. *How often do you consume German media?*

a. Radio **C1:** every day: 0 p.; several times a week: 0 p. ; 1-2 times a week: 4 p. (8%); seldom/never: 48 p. (92%). **C2:** every day: 2 p. (5%); several times a week: 6 p. (14%); 1-2 times a week: 5 p. (12%); seldom/never: 29 p. (69%)

b. TV **C1:** every day: 13 p. (25%); several times a week: 14 p. (27%); 1-2 times a week: 12 p. (23%); seldom/never: 13 p. (25%). **C2:** every day: 17 p. (40%); several times a week: 11 p. (26%); 1-2 times a week: 12 p. (29%); seldom/never: 2 p. (5%)

c. Newspapers **C1:** every day: 3 p.(6%); several times a week: 4 p. (8%); 1-2 times a week: 17 p. (33%); seldom/never: 28 p. (54%) **C2:** every day: 5 p. (12%); several times a week: 9 p. (21%); 1-2 times a week: 21 p. (50%); seldom/never: 7 p. (17%)

d. Journals **C1:** every day: 0 p.; several times a week: 0 p.; 1-2 times a week: 26 p. (50%); seldom/never: 26 (50%). **C2:** every day: 0 p.; several times a week: 10 p. (24%); 1-2 times a week: 21 p. (50%); seldom/never: 11 p. (26%)

e. websites **C1:** every day: 5 p. (10%); several times a week: 9 p. (17%); 1-2 times a week: 17 p. (33%); seldom/never: 21 p. (40%) **C2:** every day: 14 p. (33%); several times a week: 17 (40%); 1-2 times a week: 11 (26%); seldom/never: 0 p.

19. How often do you consume Mexican media?

a. Radio **C1:** every day: 19 p.(37%); several times a week: 17 p. (33%); 1-2 times a week: 13 p. (25%); seldom/never: 3 p. (6%). **C2:** every day: 7 p.(17%); several

times a week: 18 p. (43%); 1-2 times a week: 9 p. (21%); seldom/never: 8 p. (19%)

b. TV **C1:** every day: 23 p. (44%); several times a week: 12 p. (23%); 1-2 times a week: 10 p. (20%); seldom/never: 6 p. (12%). **C2:** every day: 8 p. (19%); several

times a week: 14 p. (33%); 1-2 times a week: 12 p. (29%); seldom/never: 8 p. (19%)

c. Newspapers **C1:** every day: 15 p. (29%); several times a week: 17 p. (33%); 1-2 times a week: 13 p. (25%); seldom/never: 7 p. (13%). **C2:** every day: 4 p. (10%); several times a week: 8 p. (19%); 1-2 times a week: 9 p. (21%); seldom/never: 21 p. (50%)

d. Journals **C1:** every day: 8 p. (15%); several times a week: 19 p. (37%); 1-2 times a week: 16 p. (31%); seldom/never: 9 p. (17%). **C2:** every day: 2 p. (5%); several times a week: 7 p. (17%); 1-2 times a week: 8 p. (19%); seldom/never: 25 p. (60%)

e. websites **C1:** every day: 17p. (33%); several times a week: 14 p. (27%); 1-2 times a week: 9 p. (17%); seldom/never: 12 p. (23%). **C2:** every day: 6 p. (14%); several times a week: 13 p. (31%); 1-2 times a week: 16 p. (38%); seldom/never: 7 p. (17%)

20. Which German newspapers/journals do you read?

answered by 68 persons (72%) (**C1:** 32 p. (62%), **C2:** 36 p. (86%))

21. Do you use / have you ever used German-Mexican websites?

C1: yes: 6 p. (12%); no: 46p. (88%) **C2:** yes: 9 p. (21%), no: 33 p. (79%)

If so, which ones (if you can remember the title)?

Answered by 10 persons (11%) (**C1:** 3 p. (6%), **C2:** 7 p. (17%))

22. Are you a member of the German Club / another German grouping?

C1: yes: 8 p. (15%), no: 44 p. (85%) **C2:** yes: 2 p. (5%), no: 40 p. (95%)

23. *How often do you take part in German events, visit German exhibitions etc.?*

C1: often 12 p. (23%); sometimes: 21 p. (40%); seldom: 14 p. (27%); never: 5 p. (10%). **C2:** often 18 p. (43%); sometimes: 16 p. (38%); seldom: 7 p. (17%); never: 1 p. (2%)

Which events are those?

Answered by 74 persons (79%) (**C1:** 36 p. (69%), **C2:** 38 p. (92%))

24. *Do you usually (once a month or more) go to church services?*

C1: yes: 19 p. (37%); no: 33 p. (63%) **C2:** yes: 13 p. (31%); no: 29 p. (69%)

Do you usually take part in the evangelic or the catholic service in German?

C1: yes: 12 p. (23%); no: 40 p. (77%) **C2:** yes: 10 (24%); no: 32 p. (76%)

25. *Where do you know other Germans in Mexico from?*

Answered by 71 persons (**C1:** 35, **C2:** 39)

26. *On a scale from 0 to 5, how important is it for you to maintain the German culture in your everyday life?*

C1: 5: 23 p. (44%), 4: 20 p. (39%), 3: 6 p. (12%), 2: 0 p., 1: 0 p., 0: 3 p. (6%)
C2: 5: 10 p. (24%), 4: 13 p. (31%), 3: 11 p. (26%), 2: 8 p. (19%)

27. *How important is the contact to Mexicans for you?*

C1: 5: 35 p. (67%), 4: 15 p. (29%), 3: 2 p. (4%)
C2: 5: 16 p. (38%), 4: 17 p. (40%), 3: 6 p. (14%), 2: 1 p. (2%), 1: 0 p., 0: 2 p. (5%)

28. *How important is the integration into Mexican culture for you?*

C1: 5: 14 p. (27%), 4: 15 p. (29%), 3: 10 p. (19%), 2: 10 p. (19%), 1: 3 p. (6%)
C2: 5: 13 p. (31%), 4: 15 p. (36%), 3: 11 p. (26%), 2: 1 p. (2%), 0: 2 p. (5%)

As how integrated to you regard yourself?

C1: 5: 18 p. (35%), 4: 19 p. (37%), 3: 5 p. (10%), 2: 6 p. (12%), 1: 4 p. (8%)
C2: 5: 5 p. (12%), 4: 11 p. (26%), 3: 20 p. (48%), 2: 4 p. (10%), 0: 2 p. (5%)

29. Have you ever had the feeling that the Germans regard themselves as superior to the Mexicans and that they look down on them?

answered by 56 persons (**C1:** 33 p., **C2:** 23 p.)

30. What do you like more about the Mexican culture (than about the German)?

answered by 72 persons (**C1:** 42 p., **C2:** 30 p.)

31. What do you like more about the German culture (than about the Mexican)?

answered by 67 persons (**C1:** 43 p., **C2:** 24 p.)