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**SOCIAL ADAPTATION AS A FACTOR OF SURVIVAL OF
CHECHENS DURING DEPORTATION**

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Abstract

The article deals with the understudied problem of labor and socio-political activity of Chechens during their forced resettlement in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. On the basis of new documentary sources, the authors emphasize that despite the difficulties with the employment of deportees, the authorities managed to cope with this difficult task. Labor has always played a special role in the life of Chechen society, and settlers quickly learned the importance of responsible and highly productive work for survival and adaptation to new living conditions. Therefore, they worked selflessly and efficiently, which was repeatedly emphasized in government and party documents. Highly qualified specialists were in high demand, and there were many of them among the deported contingent. Despite restrictions, settlers were active in social and political life. They were elected to the leading bodies of the party, Komsomol, trade union bodies. The authors cannot agree with researchers who believe that special settlers were not accepted as members of the Komsomol or trade unions, that they were not able to run for local and central authorities. The ban did not exist, and active representatives of the deported peoples received the opportunity to influence the social and political processes. Chechens began to be nominated to elective party, Soviet, trade union, Komsomol and other bodies.

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1. Introduction

Despite the fact that the problem of political repressions and mass deportations has been discussed by researchers, many of its manifestations are still insufficiently studied. This includes the problem of everyday life of special settlers, the most important components of which are labor and socio-political activities, and adaptation to new living conditions.

2. Problem Statement

The topic of deportation and everyday life of Chechen special settlers has been analyzed by Ermekbaev (2009), Nekrich (1978), Dunlop (2001), Isakieva (2020), Schneider (2008), Ibragimov (2006), Michaela (2002). However, the daily life of special settlers, their labor and socio-political activities as a strategy for survival in extreme living conditions require further deep studies.

3. Research Questions

The object of the article is the Stalinist deportation of the Chechen peoples in 1944-1956. The subject is the daily life of special settlers and their social adaptation to new living conditions in the context of labor and socio-political life.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the work is to study the labor and socio-political activities of Chechen special settlers, as the main factor in their adaptation and survival in new living conditions.

5. Research Methods

The methodology and research methods are based on the principles of historicism, scientific objectivity and consistency. The work has adopted an interdisciplinary approach, which necessitates a historical, sociological and political analyses of the problem using the general scientific methods of analysis, synthesis, and description.

6. Findings

Labor has always occupied a special place in the life of Chechens, and finding themselves in extreme living conditions, they realized how important it is for their physical survival. Therefore, they worked selflessly and efficiently. It is no coincidence that in one of his interviews, published in the Pravda newspaper in the late 1980s, Kunaev, who led Kazakhstan for over thirty years, noted that the contribution of Chechens to the development of the economy of Kazakhstan is invaluable (History of Chechnya, 2008).

Relocating a large number of people to new territories, the state took into account the needs of workers in various sectors of the national economy. It can be assumed with a high degree of certainty that one of the reasons for the deportation of peoples was the task of filling the labor shortage, which severely

tested the industrial potential of these regions. This is evidenced by many orders and resolutions of the State Defense Committee of the USSR and the Government of the Soviet Union, which indicated where migrants would be sent.

However, despite the efforts of the government, the employment situation was not favorable. Families of the deported were not enrolled as members of agricultural enterprises, hired by industrial enterprises (Kozlov, 2011). But in the first half of 1946, almost all special settlers from Checheno-Ingushetia got a job. Of the 151,924 Chechens and Ingush settled in Kazakhstan, 151,349 people were employed. Only 575 people remained unemployed for various reasons. The vast majority of Chechens and Ingush were employed in agriculture – 103,088 people, 5,288 people worked in the coal mining industry, over 2,000 people work in the construction industry, 3,028 – in government institutions, 271 – in education, and 1,236 – in the PCIA.

When distributing special settlers into the spheres of production, their qualification and specialty were taken into account. In the Aktobe region in 1944, 436 people were registered as specialists. Of these, there were 10 turners, 4 fitters, 3 drillers, 6 tractor drivers, 91 carpenters, 46 shoemakers, 27 tailors, 38 blacksmiths, 1 electric welder, 4 gardeners, and 2 carpenters, 2 livestock specialists, 6 wind workers, 2 medical workers, 1 agronomist. Among the unemployed were 124 teachers (Ibragimov, 2006, pp. 54–63). Specialists who were previously employed in the oil industry of Checheno-Ingushetia were distributed to the regions of Kazakhstan. One of the leaders of the People's Commissariat of the Oil Industry of the USSR Karyagin reported that Narkomneft assumes the costs associated with the transfer of special settlers-oil workers from various regions of the Kirghiz and Kazakh SSR to Guryev's Kazneftekombinat. As historian Zharas Yermekbayev put it, since 1944 Chechens have been working in the fields of the Kazakhstanneft association, as well as in the Kaznefterazvedka trust and Koschagylneft. Among them were oil engineers who graduated from Grozny Oil Institute and experienced oil practitioners (Ermekbaev, 2009). Persons with higher and secondary specialized education worked only in their specialty, mainly at those enterprises where special settlers worked. But if there was no such possibility of using qualified specialists within the area of settlement, the people's commissars of internal affairs and heads of the UNKVD allowed them to be employed in their profile within the region.

Attention was also paid to the employment of Chechens and Ingush in party economic activities; former executives were nominated even for senior positions in party structures. The former secretary of the Chechen-Ingush OK CP (b) Muslim Gairbekov worked for the Kustanai regional committee of the party. In 1947, he was transferred to Alma-Ata where he headed the agitation and propaganda department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b) of Kazakhstan. In the East Kazakhstan region, V. Adsalamov worked as an instructor in the department of propaganda and agitation, as a deputy prosecutor of the Taldy-Kurgan region (Ermekbaev, 2009).

But not all former party and economic workers held leading positions. For example, Supyan Mollaev, the former chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, harvested reeds in the Alma-Ata region. People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the CHIASSR Isaev worked as a stockpiling agent. Dachaeva, the former people's commissar for social security of the republic, also worked as a laborer (Ibragimov, 2006).

Serious attention was paid to the problem of training qualified personnel for industry and agriculture from among the special settlers. Only in six regions of the Kazakh SSR, in 1945–1946, more than 2,600 special settlers were trained. In 1945, about 3,000 teenagers from among the special settlers were called up, and the plan for 1946 was to call up another 4,000 people (Bugai & Gonov, 1998).

Most of the deported Chechens conscientiously treated their labor duties. The inspectors of the Central Committee of the CPSU Gaenko and Alatorseva wrote that the vast majority of special settlers work conscientiously, often demonstrating examples of highly productive labor, receiving for their work the same payment as all other workers and collective farmers.

In archival sources, there is information indicating that at the Keltemashatugol mine, the Makhtiyev brothers fulfilled the daily norms of coal mining by 500-700 percent. 119 special settlers worked at the mines of the Kirovugol trust, of which 98 people systematically overfulfilled production standards (GARF). For high performance indicators, 15,643 special settlers living in the Kazakh SSR were awarded orders and medals (SARF). Only in the Leninogorsk region of the East Kazakhstan region in 1948 18 Chechens were awarded the medal “For Valiant Labor during the Great Patriotic War”.

A native of Guni, Vedensky district, a tractor driver from Aktobe region Abukhanov Sharani was also awarded one of the highest awards of the Soviet Union – the Order of the Red Banner of Labor. At the Leninogorsk enterprises in 1956, 61 Chechens were listed on the “Honor Board”, 65 received the title “Best in Profession” (Ibragimov, 2006).

Thus, the Chechens received the same material and moral rewards. Many families acquired good home furnishings and other valuable items. A significant number of them purchased cars and motorcycles. In Akmola region, in 1956, Chechens and Ingush had 150 cars and 614 motorcycles, in the Karaganda region, they had 247 cars and 740 motorcycles (Kozlov, 2011).

Settlers’ rights remained declarative. Their violations were rarely suppressed by the authorities. Nevertheless, realizing that labor activity is decisive for survival, the Chechens and Ingush tried to work hard.

Despite all these restrictions, the special settlers gradually began to manifest themselves in social and political life. The main role belonged to the Communists and Komsomol members. By the middle of 1946, 817 Chechens who were members of the CPSU (b) and 232 candidate members of the CPSU (b) were registered in the party organizations of the Kazakh SSR. There were 369 Komsomol members. They worked as agitators and lecturers. 380 people were agitators. 375 reports, 243 lectures, 12 thousand conversations were held in their native languages (Ibragimov, 2006). There was a shortage of people who could perform political work, and therefore new methods had to be found. For these purposes, religious figures – mullahs, family members of vird authorities revered by the people – were involved. From the point of view of power structures, they had a serious impact on the economic arrangement of special settlers, their conscientious attitude to work and political mood. Party and Soviet authorities involved people in election campaigns. IN 1946, Zatobol district committee of the Communist Party (b) of Kazakhstan held a special meeting with the ministers of the church (18 people), at which the appeal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b) was explained (Patiev, 2004). Election campaigns acquired a special character, the attitudes of special settlers to the party's policy and deportation were clarified. These assessments were of a contradictory nature. Some of these statements were cited by the

People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR Kruglov in his memorandum to Stalin dated January 31, 1946. He writes that Akhmed Basayev, a resident of the Lazovsky district of Pavlodar region, urging Chechen migrants to participate in the elections, said that they must be satisfied that they have not been deprived of voting rights. Mulla Khadzhiev, who lived on the Oktyabr collective farm in Kaganovich district of Frunze region, spoke in the same vein (Patiev, 2004). A description of the upcoming elections and possible participation of Ismailov's special settlers from the Kazakh SSR was different: "We, Chechens, should not vote, and if we are forced to vote, we should cross out all the ballots" (Patiev, 2004, p. 15). Nevertheless, under the influence of agitation and pressure of the commandant's offices, the special settlers participated in the elections. In Frunze region, during the campaign for elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (1946), 208 Chechens worked as agitators.

Some researchers argue that the special settlers were not accepted as members of the Komsomol, the trade union, and were not able to run for local and central authorities. In fact, this did not exist, and some of the most active representatives of the deported peoples had the opportunity to influence socio-political processes. Chechens gradually began to be nominated to elective party, Soviet, trade union, Komsomol and other bodies. For example, in 1950, Khusain Lobazanov, the head of the mining section of the Leninogorsk mine, was nominated as a candidate for deputies of Leninogorsk City Council of Workers' Deputies, East Kazakhstan region. At the same Leninogorsk mine, 5 Chechens were elected to the trade union and 2 Chechens were elected members of the Komsomol committee. Vakha Tataev was elected a deputy of the district council of one of the districts of Alma-Ata (Ermekbaev, 2009). While a schoolboy, Abdulla Kindarov, the future Minister of Culture of the Chechen Republic, joined the Komsomol. He writes:

On September 25, 1951, I was fourteen years old. In this age I was accepted into the Komsomol. I was an excellent student and an active social activist; therefore, I wrote an application with a request to accept me as a member of the Komsomol. Our history teacher, a party member since 1918, vouched for me. At the meeting of the committee and at the general meeting of the school Komsomol organization, I was accepted without problems ... The decision of the bureau of the district committee of the Komsomol was unanimous (Kindarov, 2008, p. 38).

The participation of special settlers in social and political life expanded by the mid-1950s, after the death of Stalin. In the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of July 5, 1954, some restrictions were removed from the special settlers. People engaged in socially useful work freely moved within the region and had travel certificates to move within the country. Children under 16 were deregistered in the bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, and children over 16 who were sent to study were able to enter any educational institution of the Soviet Union. In the same Decree, special attention was paid to strengthening political work among the special settlers. It was proposed to involve them in social and political life. Special settlers were involved in trade unions, Komsomol organizations, rewarded for labor success (Patiev, 2004).

On May 10, 1955, the Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR Kruglov instructed to deregister the members and candidates for membership of the CPSU and their families. In March, the Council of

Ministers of the USSR issued a decree on the conscription of special settlers into the Soviet Army. Chechens were elected to the governing bodies, Komsomol and trade union organizations. They were delegates of district, city and regional reporting and election party conferences. A high honor was given to the turner of the machine shop of mine No. 1-bis of the Aktyubinskugol trust, a member of the CPSU, a participant in the Great Patriotic War, a holder of many military awards Ismail Ismailovich Ismailov. He was elected a delegate and participated in the US Congress of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, which was held in January 1956 (Ibragimov, 2006).

7. Conclusion

Thus, the government and society gradually approached the milestone from which the countdown of the new time began – the time that gave a fundamental assessment of the tragic deportation of the Chechen people and determined its future fate. After the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the process of gradual rehabilitation of the repressed peoples began. On January 9, 1957, the statehood of the Chechen and Ingush peoples was restored.

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