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Deportations and Compensatory Migrations in the Azov-Black Sea Region during the Great Patriotic War (on the Materials of the Don, Kuban and Stavropol)

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Abstract

Introduction. The study highlights course and results of the migration campaign initiated in the USSR in 1944 to overcome the negative economic and demographic consequences of the eviction of Crimean Tatars from Crimea in May of the same year. The relevance of the topic is conditioned by the remaining lacunas in the historiography. In particular, the South Russian regional historiography does not sufficiently analyse the activities of the local Party and Soviet authorities in the implementation of government resolutions on the resettlement of Don, Kuban and Stavropol collective farmers in the Crimea and the attitude of collective farmers themselves to this campaign.

Materials and Methods. This paper is based on archival and published documents and materials. The leading research methods were chronological and comparative-historical.




Results. It is noted that the deportation of Crimean Tatars entailed a sharp deterioration of the economic and demographic situation on the peninsula. In an effort to restore the economy of the Crimea, in 1944 the USSR government organised the resettlement of 17 thousand collective farmers' farms to the peninsula. The Ukrainian SSR and the RSFSR acted as donor regions for resettlement to the Crimea. In particular, such administrative-territorial formations of the Russian Federation as Rostov Oblast, Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories were to allocate 7 thousand farms for resettlement to the Crimea. Many collective farmers actively responded to the call of the authorities and voluntarily resettled in the Crimea. All this made it possible to fulfil the planned resettlement plans.

Discussion and Conclusion. It has been proved that the final effect of this compensatory migration was minimal. The main reason for the failure of the government's plans was the fact that neither resettlement collective farms nor ordinary collective farmers could fully adapt to the unfamiliar natural, climatic and economic conditions of the Crimea. This hindered the process of economic consolidation of settlers on the peninsula and stimulated the mass return of collective farmers to their homeland.

Keywords: Azov-Black Sea region, Great Patriotic War, deportation, collective farms, collective farmers, compensatory migration, Crimea, Crimean Tatars

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Депортации и компенсаторные миграции в Азово-Черноморском регионе в годы Великой Отечественной войны (на материалах Дона, Кубани и Ставрополя)

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Аннотация

Введение. Освещаются ход и результаты миграционной кампании, инициированной в СССР в 1944 г. с целью преодоления негативных экономико-демографических последствий проведенного в мае того же года выселения из Крыма крымских татар. Актуальность темы обусловлена сохраняющимися в историографии лакунами. В частности, в южно-российской региональной историографии недостаточно проанализированы мероприятия местных партийно-советских властей по реализации правительственных постановлений о переселении в Крым донских, кубанских и ставропольских колхозников и отношение самих колхозников к данной кампании.

Материалы и методы. Настоящая работа базируется на архивных и опубликованных документах и материалах. Ведущими методами исследования выступили хронологический и сравнительно-исторический.

Результаты исследования. Отмечено, что депортация крымских татар повлекла за собой резкое ухудшение экономико-демографической ситуации на полуострове. Стремясь восстановить экономику Крыма, правительство СССР в 1944 г. организовало переселение на полуостров 17 тыс. хозяйств колхозников. Регионами-донорами переселения в Крым выступили Украинская ССР и РСФСР. В частности, такие административно-территориальные образования Российской Федерации, как Ростовская область, Краснодарский и Ставропольский края, должны были выделить для переселения в Крым 7 тыс. хозяйств. Многие колхозники активно откликнулись на призыв властей и добровольно переселялись в Крым. Все это позволило выполнить намеченные планы переселения.

Обсуждение и заключение. Доказано, что конечный эффект данной компенсаторной миграции был минимален. Ведущей причиной срыва замыслов правительства выступило то, что ни переселенческие колхозы, ни рядовые колхозники не смогли в полной мере приспособиться к непривычным природно-климатическим и хозяйственным условиям Крыма. Это затрудняло процесс хозяйственного закрепления переселенцев на полуострове и стимулировало массовое возвращение колхозников на родину.

Ключевые слова: Азово-Черноморский регион, Великая Отечественная война, депортация, колхозы, колхозники, компенсаторная миграция, Крым, крымские татары

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Introduction. The Great Patriotic War includes many diverse events, among which the deportations of small peoples of the USSR, carried out by the Soviet government in order to eliminate a potential ‘fifth column’ and ensure the security of the rear of the Red Army, occupy a special place. At various times, Soviet Germans, Balkars, Karachais, Kalmyks, Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Ingush and other peoples were resettled from their former places of residence in Siberia, the Urals and Central Asia. During the Soviet period, this painful topic was strictly taboo, and it was only during the ‘perestroika’ period and after the collapse of the USSR that researchers were able to cover it freely. To date, there is a significant number of scientific works that thoroughly analyse the processes of forced resettlement of certain peoples of the Soviet Union in the first half of the 1940s. [1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6]. At the same time, there are still a number of inadequately covered issues within the framework of the above-mentioned problems. As a rule, scholars concentrate their efforts on identifying the causes, methods and scale of deportations, the conditions of transportation of displaced peoples, the peculiarities and difficulties of their settlement and life in the new territories, the negative demographic and economic consequences of deportations – the reduction in the number of workers, the cessation of the functioning of collective and state farms, and so on. The ‘compensatory migrations’ remain on the periphery of research attention [5, p. 131], carried out by the Party-Soviet leadership in order to minimise the negative consequences of deportations. Only a few works that analyse these issues can be mentioned [7; 8]. In the South Russian historiography this kind of problematics was practically not touched upon.

Given the obvious gaps in the regional historiography, in this publication we have attempted to analyse the efforts of the Soviet government to optimise the socio-economic situation in those areas of the Azov-Black Sea that were subjected

to deportation during the Great Patriotic War. Being limited by the scope of the article, we focused on the specific content of the measures implemented by the leadership of the Rostov region, Krasnodar and Stavropol territories in the framework of the implementation of government decrees that envisaged economic recovery and replenishment of the population loss in Crimea after the deportation of Crimean Tatars from the peninsula in 1944. The object of this paper is the process of forced displacement of the peoples of the USSR initiated by the Soviet government during the Great Patriotic War. The subject of the study is the governmental measures to minimise the demographic and economic damage caused by deportations in the Azov-Black Sea region, which we consider on the example of the Crimea, Rostov region, Krasnodar and Stavropol territories, since the resources of these southern Russian regions were actively used by the Party-Soviet authorities to improve the situation on the peninsula.

Materials and Methods. The central elements of the source base of this study are archival and published documents and materials. In the representative collections of documents: 'Joseph Stalin to Lavrentiy Beria: 'They must be deported'' (Moscow, 1992) and 'Stalin's Deportations. 1928–1953' (Moscow, 2005), contain a sufficient amount of information about the motives, time and circumstances of the Crimean Tatars' deportation, the number of deportees, and the places of their settlement. Archival funds provide information on governmental measures to organise the resettlement of residents of the Rostov region, Krasnodar and Stavropol territories to the Crimean regions that were emptied after the deportations. We analysed the documents of the Rostov Oblast and Krasnodar and Stavropol Territory Committees of the Communist Party, which were the highest authorities in the boundaries of the mentioned administrative-territorial formations. These documents are now stored in the Centres for Documentation of Contemporary History of Rostov Oblast (f. 9) and Krasnodar Krai (f. 1774a), the State Archive of Contemporary History of Stavropol Krai (f. 1). Their study makes it possible to establish what measures regional authorities took to implement government decisions on the resettlement of Don, Kuban and Stavropol residents to the Crimea. The documents of the Rostov Regional Executive Committee kept in the State Archive of the Rostov Region (f. p-3737) are also very informative. They contain information on the organisation of the resettlement campaign on the Don, statistical data on the number of resettlers, their professional composition, the number of livestock transported with them, etc.

The leading research methods were chronological and comparative-historical. Using these methods, it was possible to identify common features and local peculiarities of the resettlement campaigns in Rostov, Krasnodar and Stavropol regions, the effectiveness of resettlement and the factors that influenced the results of these campaigns.

Results. After Crimea was liberated from Hitler's occupation in April-May 1944 and found itself in the rear of the advancing Red Army, the Soviet government became concerned about ensuring order and security on the peninsula. This work included the detection of enemy spies and saboteurs, active collaborators, and anti-Soviet elements. Counterintelligence quickly established that although 'a significant part of the Tatar population' during the occupation of the peninsula by the Nazis remained loyal to the Soviet authorities, still 'many of the Crimean Tatars were in the service of the enemy' [9, p. 11]. People's Commissar of Internal Affairs L.P. Beria in a letter to I.V. Stalin on 10 May 1944 claimed that more than 20 thousand Crimean Tatars (with the total number of the Tatar population on the peninsula in 140–160 thousand people) deserted from the Red Army and fought with weapons in their hands on the side of the Nazis [10, p. 496]. According to Beria's data, the staff of the People's Commissariats of Internal Affairs and State Security arrested 5,381 collaborators of Hitlerites in Crimea by 7 May 1944 [10, p. 496]. At the same time, many collaborators remained on the peninsula, trying to dissolve in the mass of the Tatar population and escape from justice, which threatened the security of the rear of the Soviet troops. For this reason, on 11 May 1944 GKO adopted a resolution № 5859ss 'On the Crimean Tatars', according to which it was necessary to 'evict all Tatars from the territory of the Crimea and settle them permanently as special settlers in the areas of the Uzbek SSR' [10, p. 494].

The operation to evict the Crimean Tatars, carried out by the NKVD forces, began in the morning of 18 May 1944 and ended at 4 p. m. on 20 May. According to the initial data contained in a telegram addressed to Commissar of Internal Affairs Beria, signed by Deputy Commissars I.A. Serov and B.Z. Kobulov, 180,014 thousand Crimean Tatars were deported [9, p. 138]. According to revised information, 191,014 Crimean Tatars (over 47 thousand families) were subjected to forced resettlement [10, p. 492].

According to fair observations of researchers, after the eviction of Crimean Tatars on the peninsula 'a catastrophic situation was created' [3, p. 74] in the economy. [3, p. 74] in the economy. Repeated deportations (at different times, not only Crimean Tatars, but also Germans, Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians living on the peninsula were evicted) extremely worsened the demographic situation in Crimea, already complicated by hostilities and terror during the Nazi occupation. By the summer of 1945, the population of Crimea decreased by more than half – from 875 thousand people who lived here before the war to 379 thousand people [10, p. 492]. On the peninsula there was an acute shortage of labourers and specialists, vast field areas, orchards and vineyards were left without care and fell out of agricultural rotation. Urgent measures were required to remedy the dire socio-economic situation.

The authorities in Crimea made maximum use of internal resources to close the gaps in the national economy of the peninsula. The collective and Soviet farms of the neighbouring regions of Crimea, workers and employees, soldiers and officers of the Red Army mobilised in the cities and rural areas of the peninsula were involved in the processing of the devastated lands of the evicted Tatar collective farms [3, p. 75]. However, the socio-economic damage inflicted on Crimea was too severe for the peninsula authorities to overcome it by their own efforts. This required the use of not regional, but state resources. Deportations of Crimean Tatars and other peoples of Crimea led to the need to resettle to the peninsula significant contingents of able-bodied population from other regions, territories and republics of the USSR.

First of all, it was about the able-bodied rural population. It is important to emphasise here that almost all the deported peoples during the Great Patriotic War were 'predominantly rural in terms of settlement and agrarian in terms of occupation structure' [5, p. 131]. The Crimean Tatars had the largest urban population: 28% of them (the second place in the degree of 'urbanisation' went to the Soviet Germans - among them the urban population made up 20% [5, p. 131]). But, and in this case, as we see, the vast majority of able-bodied Tatars were employed in the agrarian sector of the economy. Therefore, the first and urgent task of the government was to organise the relocation of tens of thousands of collective farmers from different regions of the USSR to the regions of Crimea, where the Crimean Tatars lived until May 1944.

In order to solve this national economic task, on 12 August 1944 the State Committee of the Soviet Union adopted a decree 'On the resettlement of collective farmers in the Crimean regions', according to which 17 thousand peasant farms with a total number of up to 65 thousand people were to be resettled to the peninsula [11, p. 95]. The Ukrainian SSR and Bryansk, Voronezh, Kursk, Orel, Rostov, Tambov regions and Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories of the RSFSR were specified as donors of migration in the decree. Collective farmers from these regions were to be settled in the Alushta, Bala-Klava, Bakhchisarai, Karasubazar, Kuibyshev, Starokrym, Sudak and Yalta districts of Crimea [3, pp. 81–82].

The Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories and the Rostov Region were to send a total of 7,000 farms (more than 21,000 people) to Crimea. The regional party committees took the GKO decree with due seriousness and promptly responded to it.

On 17 August 1944 the Krasnodar Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (Bolsheviks) adopted a resolution 'On the resettlement of collective farmers of the region in the Crimean regions', which indicated that by 1 October of the current year it was necessary to select and transport to the peninsula 3 thousand households of 'conscientious and hardworking collective farmers', including 11 collective farm chairmen and the same number of village council chairmen, 11 teachers, 5 doctors, 15 tractor drivers, 5 agronomists, 2 mechanics and 2 zootechnicians. 2.5 thousand farms of Kuban collective farmers were to be sent to the Alushta district of Crimea and another 500 farms to the Sudak district [12, p. 31].

At the same time, the Stavropol Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks adopted a resolution 'On the resettlement of collective farmers in the Sudak district of Crimea', according to which the number of resettlers was 2,000 households (6,000 people). They included 16 collective farm chairmen and 13 village council chairmen, 16 teachers, 5 doctors, 10 tractor drivers, 2 mechanics, 5 agronomists, 2 zootechnicians [13, l. 15].

On 18 August 1944, a joint meeting of the Rostov Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (Bolsheviks) and the regional executive committee was held, which resulted in the adoption of a broad resolution 'On the resettlement of collective farmers to the Crimean regions'. Representatives of the Party and Soviet leadership of the Rostov region decided that 2 thousand collective farmers' farms (6 thousand people) should be selected for resettlement to the Crimea, including 21 collective farm chairmen and 12 village council chairmen, 20 teachers, 5 doctors, 10 tractor drivers, 2 mechanics, 5 agronomists, 2 zootechnicians. One thousand farms of Don collective farmers were sent to the Staro-Krymsky district and the same number to the Yalta district. Resettlement should have been completed, as well as for Kuban and Stavropol, until 1 October 1944 [14, l. 23].

The resettlement of South Russian collective farmers in the Don, Kuban and Stavropol regions was led by commissions composed of senior representatives of the local leadership: in the Rostov region, for example, the first secretary of the regional committee, B.A. Dvinsky, was personally in charge of such a commission, and its members included the chairman, I.P. Kiparenko, and the head of the regional land department (oblzo), Chumakov. In the districts, commissions were also set up consisting of the first secretary of the district committee, the chairman of the district executive committee and the head of the district land department; these commissions acted together with an authorised person from among the senior officials of the regional level who was seconded to a district. The district commissions were responsible for the bulk of the tasks to inform the local population about the resettlement to the Crimea, select resettlers, ensure their transport, etc. Secretaries of district committees and chairman of district executive committees were personally responsible for the selection of settlers and the implementation of resettlement work strictly within the established deadlines [14, l. 23, 23ob, 25]. In wartime conditions, the regional departments of the People's Commissars of Internal Affairs and State Security were also involved in the inspection of collective farmers who wished to move to Crimea [15, l. 106].

The documents of the authorities specifically stressed that the resettlement of collective farmers in the Crimea was organised within the framework of solving important national economic tasks, ‘in order to quickly develop the fertile lands, orchards and vineyards’ of the peninsula [14, p. 23]. Based on this, only ‘conscientious and hardworking collective farmers’ were subject to resettlement, primarily those who were familiar with horticulture, viticulture and tobacco growing and could ‘in the shortest possible time develop the fertile lands of the Crimea’ [14, l. 23]. The authorities responsible for the formation of resettlement contingents should have sought to ensure that each family of collective farmers – resettlers had at least 1–2 able-bodied members [14, p. 23]. It was forbidden to resettle families without able-bodied members to Crimea [14, p. 23ob].

The population migrations organised by the Soviet government during the Great Patriotic War to compensate for the economic and demographic losses caused by deportations are described by researchers as ‘formally voluntary, but, in fact, forced’ [5, p. 131]. It seems that this judgement can hardly be recognised as fully fair. Of course, compensatory migrations were of an organised nature and pursued the implementation of plans established by the government to resettle a certain number of people. All this, naturally, contradicted the principle of voluntariness and led to the extensive use of administrative levers and even coercion for resettlement. Nevertheless, some migrants were ready to move to a new place of residence quite voluntarily, as the state was not stingy with benefits in this case.

In particular, a long list of various benefits was envisaged for collective farmers resettled in the Don, Kuban and Stavropol regions who wished to go to the Crimea. Not later than five days before leaving for the Crimea, the settlers had to receive a full payment for the labour days they had worked in collective farms where they had worked before the move [14, l. 23ob]. Each family was given a lump-sum allowance of 2.5 thousand rubles and guaranteed the transport of cargo weighing up to two tonnes [13, l. 17]. Moreover, travel, transport of livestock and personal property of the settlers, as well as their medical care on the road, were at the expense of the state [14, p. 24].

All arrears of monetary taxes, insurance payments and state supplies of natural products were cancelled from the resettlers. They retained all crops from their homestead plots in the places of their former residence; they had the right to surrender these crops, as well as livestock, to the state procurement authorities and receive an equal amount of produce and animals in the places of resettlement. At the new place of residence, the farms of settlers (as well as collective farms moved to the Crimea from Don, Kuban and Stavropol) were exempted from all payments, fees and supplies in 1944–1945 [14, fol. 23ob, 24].

The state provided the formed contingents of resettlers with transport for travelling and transporting property to railway stations. Before boarding the echelons, resettled families were to receive a dry ration – bread and other foodstuffs – for five days; the ration was given to the resettlers according to the norms established for workers, i. e. the highest norms (700–1,000 g per day; in comparison, the norms for servants were up to 500 g). In addition, while travelling, the resettlers were to be provided with a hot meal of two meals once a day. A doctor and two nurses ‘with a proper supply of medicines’ were allocated for each echelon of settlers. The authorities of the Crimean ASSR were obliged to organise the meeting and resettlement of collective farmers arriving on the peninsula, to provide them with food during unloading and transporting them and their property to the places of settlement [14, l. 24ob].

In the places of resettlement collective farmers could buy food grain at state prices in the amount of 2 cents per family. In 1944–1945, cowless resettlement families were given the opportunity to buy a cow or a heifer at state purchase prices (in such cases, as a rule, kolkhozes or sovkhoses acted as sellers of livestock). The Agricultural Bank was allowed to issue loans to needy settlers in the places of settlement for household equipment and other needs in the amount of 5 thousand rubles per household with the condition of repayment within 5 years [14, p. 24]. The People’s Commissariat of Textile Industry of the USSR was obliged to ship to Crimea a certain amount of cotton fabric for sale to needy settlers by 15 September 1944. Finally, the government obliged the USSR People’s Commissariat for Foreign Trade to allocate to Crimea in August and September 1944 a certain amount of linen, clothes and shoes from among the so-called ‘foreign gifts’ (this was humanitarian aid in the form of household items, usually clothes and shoes, which citizens of the USA and Canada donated to the population of the USSR). Such ‘gifts’ were to be given to especially needy migrants and their children [14, l. 24ob].

Upon arrival in Crimea, the settlers received houses, outbuildings, homestead plots, as well as agricultural equipment and household items previously owned by Tatars. The conditions under which settlers acquired ownership rights to former Tatar property varied. The crops from the plots sown by the Tatars were transferred to the resettlers free of charge (as one can understand from the content of the relevant documents). Agricultural equipment and household items were provided to them for a fee; the cost of both was assessed by the local bodies of the People’s Commissariat of Finance. As for houses and buildings, they became the personal property of the new owners not earlier than after five years of ‘continuous work in the collective farm’; until then, the settlers could not sell or rent the property [14, fol. 24, 24ob]. Nevertheless, the

collective farmers arriving in Crimea did not have to build their own housing: they were accommodated in ready-made houses left by the previous owners.

Promises of large irrevocable grants, cancellation of all debts owed to the state, sale of livestock to cowless families at state prices, provision of food on the way, free housing and land in the places of settlement - all this certainly stimulated the interest of South Russian collective farmers, especially the less well-off families, to resettle in the Crimea. One of the most tempting promises, obviously, was the possibility of acquiring a cow or heifer at state prices, which were lower than market prices. In the extreme conditions of the war, when inflation permanently devalued money, the cow was a real breadwinner, on which the welfare of the whole family depended directly and which the owners valued very much. It is indicative that during the resettlement to the Crimea in September 1944 there were not isolated cases when collective farmers did not want to surrender their livestock, especially cows, to the procurement authorities (in order to receive new animals upon arrival), but sought to bring them with them, despite all the difficulties and inconveniences. Thus, resettlers from the Kagalnitsky district of the Rostov region loaded 20 cows into the train, but handed over only 2 cows, 11 sheep, and 1 calf to the procurement office; resettlers from the Razvalensky district took with them 27 cows, 14 calves, 5 pigs, and 5 sheep, but handed over only 5 cows to the procurement office; Collective farmers from Kuibyshev, Malchev, Matveevo-Kurgan, Neklinovsky districts of Rostov region took all the livestock with them, without surrendering anything to the procurers [16, fol. 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13]. Against the general background, the information of the authorities of the Orlovsky district of Rostov region, who reported to the regional leadership on September 29, 1944, that all 73 collective farms to be resettled had fully surrendered their livestock (65 cows, 20 calves, 28 sheep, 5 pigs) to the procurement organisations, looks unusual. However, the case was explained by the fact that 'the cattle were not loaded into the echelons because the wagons were not delivered' [16, p. 20].

The documents at our disposal allow us to state that the number of collective farmers who voluntarily wished to move to the Crimea was quite significant in the South of Russia. In a number of cases, the district commissions encountered an oversupply of volunteers and rejected certain candidates. In particular, in Rodionovo-Nesvetaisky district of Rostov region 183 applications for resettlement in Crimea were submitted, and the district resettlement commission approved 179 of them; in Salsky district up to 500 applications were received, 346 were approved; in Tarasovsky district out of 253 applications 239 were approved; out of more than 600 applications submitted by residents of Tselinsky district, the district commission approved 239 [15, fol. 30, 94, 101, 124]. All this allowed, in general, to fulfil and even exceed the government plans for the resettlement of 7 thousand collective farms of Don, Kuban and Stavropol to the Crimea.

Discussion and Conclusion. In October 1944, the campaign to resettle collective farmers of the RSFSR and Ukraine to the Crimea was completed. As envisaged in the plans, more than 17 thousand resettlement households arrived on the peninsula, including 2,400 families from the Rostov region, 2,980 families from the Krasnodar region and 1,973 families from the Stavropol region [3, p. 84]. Don, Kuban and Stavropol collective farmers settled Alushta, Starokrymsk, Sudak, Yalta districts of Crimea. In the second half of the 1940s, 198 resettlement collective farms operated in Crimea [17, p. 60]. Thus, the resettlement of collective farmers from the RSFSR and Ukraine, organised by the Soviet government in 1944, allowed at first to compensate for the demographic damage caused to the peninsula by the war and deportations. At the same time, the realisation of the most important task, which was the restoration of the functioning of the Crimean agrarian sector, was not so brilliant.

It seemed that the collective farms formed from migrants had opportunities for effective functioning. After all, the government granted benefits not only to the collective farmers resettled in Crimea, but also to the newly formed collective farms on the peninsula. The government decrees indicated that the newly organised collective farms in Crimea, consisting of migrants, received at their disposal not only land areas and lands of evicted Tatar collective farms, but also the harvest from these fields and plantations [14, p. 24]. The new collective farms transferred a certain part of this harvest to the state on account of compulsory deliveries of agricultural products, but the rest they could use to replenish seed funds and pay for labour days worked by collective farmers [14, f. 24ob]. The Crimean authorities were obliged to provide the new collective farms with all possible assistance and co-operation. The fact that, when selecting settlers, the authorities paid special attention to collective farmers familiar with horticulture, viticulture and tobacco growing (industries that played an important role in the agricultural production of the Crimea), made it possible to hope that the new collective farms would be provided with a sufficient number of specialists able to quickly adapt to the peculiarities of economic activity on the peninsula.

In reality, however, the organisational and economic condition of most resettlement collective farms was far from acceptable. In the conditions of the ongoing war, the newly formed collective farms in Crimea faced the same problems as collective farms throughout the USSR: shortage of machinery, draught cattle, sowing material, etc. The acute problem was the ignorance of the vast majority of resettlers of the natural-climatic and climatic conditions. An acute problem

was the ignorance of the overwhelming majority of immigrants of the natural-climatic and, accordingly, economic conditions of the Crimea. Attempts by the authorities to recruit as many collective farmers as possible with knowledge of horticulture and viticulture or with skills in growing technical crops (such as tobacco) did not yield any noticeable results. As a result, although the new collective farms in Crimea sought to expand grain crops, they could not overcome the crisis in tobacco growing, viticulture and horticulture caused by the deportation of Crimean Tatars [17, p. 60]. The organisation of the production process in the above-mentioned sectors required skills that most of the migrants did not possess [5, p. 135].

An important factor that extremely hindered the effective functioning of the collective farms organised in 1944 in Crimea was the difficult material and living conditions of many collective farmers-settlers. Among the many everyday problems they faced on the peninsula, the unaccustomed for them natural and climatic conditions of the Crimea, the shortage of drinking water and, in particular, the poor condition of the housing stock left by the evicted Tatars came to the fore [17, p. 60, 61]. The settlers pointed out that the farmsteads handed over to them often lacked outbuildings, so there was no place to keep livestock, and the dwellings either did not meet the requirements of sanitation and hygiene (had earthen roofs or were dugouts and half-dugouts) or were in need of repair. The credit promised to the resettlers for household equipment and other needs in the amount of 5 thousand rubles per household (with repayment within 5 years) was often too small: in fact, according to available data, the construction of a new house required 16 thousand rubles or more [17, p. 60]. At the same time, the settlers regularly complained about bureaucratic red tape in addressing vital issues and the indifferent and callous attitude of local officials to their needs [17, p. 60].

Difficult living and material conditions naturally undermined labour discipline in the new collective farms of Crimea, reduced the production motivation of ordinary agrarians and provoked their return from the peninsula to their native land. Already by April 1945, about 11.4 thousand families left Crimea, while only 1 thousand entered. By July 1948, 52.5% of the families that arrived on the peninsula since 1944 left Crimea [5, c. 135].

It should be added that, unable to optimise the economic and demographic situation in Crimea, the resettlement of collective farmers from other regions of the USSR to the peninsula in 1944 had a negative impact on the economy of these regions. This issue is not practically touched upon in the scientific literature; however, in this case, the interconnection between the demographic and economic situation in Crimea and the resettlement donor regions is obvious. During the Great Patriotic War, agrarian production in certain regions of the Soviet Union experienced an acute shortage of workers due to continuous mobilisations to the active army, and compensatory resettlement only increased the severity of this problem.

In particular, in the collective farms of the Rostov Oblast, Krasnodar and Stavropol Krai the number of able-bodied men and women of both sexes in 1943 was only 61% of the 1940 level, in 1944 – 55.6%, in 1945 – 61.4% [18, l. 4; 19, pp. 395–396, 397–398]. Including, already by the end of 1941 in the listed regions able-bodied male collective farmers remained only 60% of the pre-war level, in 1943 – 24.8%, in 1944 – 19.4%, in 1945 – 27.4% [18, l. 28; 20, l. 28; 20, l. 1; 21, l. 2; 22, l. 1; 23, l. 333, 326, 319; 24, l. 90; 25, l. 82]. Of course, the number of migrants sent from Don, Kuban and Stavropol to Crimea in 1944 was small compared to those mobilised to the active army and amounted to less than 1% of the total rural population available here. However, in the conditions of a huge reduction of labour force, even these small losses became very tangible and turned into one of the factors of agricultural production decline in the South Russian regions. It is indicative that even in 1945 the sown area in the collective farms of the Don was no more than 56.2% of the level of 1941 [24, p. 37].

It should be noted that during the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet government used resettlement as a means of compensating for demographic losses and restoring the national economy in those regions that had suffered from the war and Nazi occupation and were subjected to politically motivated deportations of the local population. In 1944, the donors of such compensatory migrations included the Rostov region, Krasnodar and Stavropol kraia, which, according to the government's decision, were to send thousands of local collective farmers to compensate for the economic and demographic losses suffered by the Crimean ASSR as a result of the mass deportation of the Tatars living on the peninsula. The South Russian regions fulfilled the resettlement tasks assigned to them by the government, thus contributing to the optimisation of the social and economic situation in Crimea. However, the newly formed resettlement collective farms in Crimea proved to be too weak in organisational and economic terms and were unable to adapt to the local natural, climatic and economic conditions. Many resettled collective farmers, faced with unfamiliar natural conditions and material and domestic difficulties in their new place of residence, preferred to return home. Thus, the migration campaign of 1944 had a very limited effect and not only failed to radically improve the difficult situation in the Crimea, but also, to some extent, aggravated the difficult situation in the agrarian sector of the Don, Kuban and Stavropol regions.

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