

# Forced migration and ways to adapt alien populations to the realities of pre-revolutionary Yakutia

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this article is to study the historical aspects of forced migration to pre-revolutionary Yakutia. The author shows how the alien population adapted to the harsh realities: through active socio-economic activities, through the study of the language and culture of the indigenous people, as well as through the active introduction of the achievements of their own culture into the local environment. The results of the study can contribute to the modern problems associated with labor migration in trans-border areas.

**Keywords:** migration, forced migration, population, region

## 1. Introduction

The contemporary trends of globalization have led to large-scale migration processes. They do not always positively influence inter-ethnic relations in the cross-border regions. Currently, migration flows are mainly caused by the economic needs of a particular region of the country. Thus, labor migrants annually arrive in Yakutia from Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Armenia, China, and other countries, introducing their own culture, language, rules of conduct. It is clear that an alien culture does not always smoothly enter into national traditions, into the local mentality. Addressing this problem, the study of the historical aspects of the issue can play a certain role. In the 17th century, the development of the Northeast of Russia took place through the forced migration of peoples – peasants, service people, Cossacks, exiles. The relevance of this topic is associated with modern migration processes, as well as the problems of adaptation of alien peoples to local reality.

The purpose of this article is to study the process of adaptation of peoples who arrived in Yakutia in the process of forced migration in Russia in the pre-revolutionary times. We focus on the Olekminsky district for our study, in which there were active ethnic processes associated with the alien population. This study contributes to the research on modern labor migration, demonstrating a historical example of the interaction of peoples and their cultures.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The published works of the local and international researchers on the topic under study, as well as the materials of the First General Census of the Population of 1897 in the Yakutsk Region, made the theoretical basis of the study. The research methods used in the article are based on the principle of historicism, which allows one to study the processes of adaptation of migrants during the development of Eastern Siberia and in the exile. The next part of this research is related to the study of the relationship of the incoming contingent with the indigenous population.

### 3. Results

In 1635, along with the formation of the Olekminsky fortress, the first Cossacks arrived in the region. They became the basis of the Russian population. Later, their number increased with the expansion of the administrative functions of the city of Olekminsk, which arose on the basis of the fort. Adaptation of the alien population was due to the introduction of new forms of activity in the economy, such as, first of all, agriculture. The Russians brought with them a new culture, which later changed the entire economic and cultural image of the region. V. N. Ivanov, who investigated the development of agriculture in the studied region, noted that there were two peasant settlements here in 1765, namely Olekminskaya and Amginskaya. Their population was 284 people in 1816 [1]. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Olekminsky district became one of the centers of development of agriculture in Yakutia.

Another historical fact that played a certain role in the adaptation of the Russian population is the passage of the Irkutsk-Yakutsk post road through the Olekminsky district. Across the road, Russian settlements began to emerge, where a unique community formed. Russian peasants, mostly men, began to marry local women, they began to call themselves Yamsky and arable, spoke alternately in Russian and Yakut languages. The symbiosis of these cultures, Russian agricultural and Yakut traditional, created an ability to survive in the harsh conditions of the North. In his study, S. I. Boyakova notes that the clothes, vehicles, food, tools and methods of hunting and fishing, especially the outbuildings were largely adopted by Russians from indigenous peoples [2].

The fate of the Tatars, who appeared in the Olekminsk district in the beginning of the 19th century, was different. The 1816 *Revizskiye skazki* mark 377 Tatars and 35 Bashkirs. Tatars did not assimilate with the local population, but created their own suburb, spoke their own language, served in the prayer house, opened a Tatar school, and buried their departed at the Tatar cemetery. Tatars, after receiving the land, were engaged in agriculture, horticulture, worked in the mines, were engaged in carting, craft, trade [3].

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Jews lived in the region, their number was 147 people. Part of them worked in the gold-bearing mines as workers and employees, two women worked as paramedics in the Olekminskaya hospital. Also, they worked in private households in temporary jobs, some of them lived on benefits [4].

Also, the Poles lived in the Olekminsky district. In the years of the First General Census, there were 238 people [5]. As census materials show, they were all young from different classes. Realizing that the exile is a temporary phenomenon, they did not seek to adapt to local conditions, some of them turned out to be at work in the mines, at the merchants [6].

The Skoptsy constitute a special group among the migrants of that time. They are the people who religiously disagreed with the Orthodox Church. In the middle of the XIX century, they were sent to Yakutia. In the Olekminsky district, they lived in four settlements: in the Spassky village, in the villages of Troitskoe, Ust-Charinskoye, and Illyunskoye. The Skoptsy adapted to the new place of residence. N. I. Yakovlev notes that the most architecturally interesting wooden houses that are now preserved in Olekminsk were built by the Skoptsy [7]. Farming (agriculture) rose to a new level, the Skoptsy taught the local population to engage in gardening. They were the first to write out agromechanisms, which increased labor productivity. E. P. Eresko opened a photo workshop. Today, the negatives of his photographs are the historical source of those events. They also worked in the gold mines. Thus, they not only managed to adapt to the realities of the exile, but also influenced the socio-economic situation of the region.

### 4. Discussion

Currently, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), as well as many other regions of the Russian Federation, is actively involved in the process of labor migration, and problems often arise related to differences in cultures, languages, and mentality. And the events that took place in Yakutia in March 2019 were an example of this, when the illegal actions of representatives of labor migration caused a wave of discontent among the local population [9]. Therefore, it is of the highest importance to study the historical origins of migration in pre-revolutionary Yakutia, examples of adaptation of representatives

of forced migration. The study of the language and culture of local peoples, active socio-economic activities, contributing elements of their culture can facilitate the existence of the indigenous population and provide insights into many pressing issues of contemporary migration.

## 5. Conclusion

According to the First General Census of 1897, the population speaking 39 languages and adverbs resided in the Olekminsky district [8]. In addition to the indigenous population, these were mostly the migrants: the serving people who arrived here under the government decrees, peasants who were sent to work on agriculture, sent exiles, and other parts of the population. And there lived only those who could accept the national traditions, the customs of the indigenous population could adapt to the harsh natural and climatic conditions and actively participate in the socio-economic activities of the region.

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