

**FORCED RELOCATION AND SETTLEMENT OF THE KOREAN POPULATION
IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

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Annotation: Among the peoples living today in Uzbekistan, the Korean nation occupies a special place. The entry of Koreans into Uzbekistan is associated with the policy of forced resettlement and deportation of entire peoples, which began in the USSR on the eve of World War II. This policy has become a real tragedy for peoples doomed to forced resettlement. The policy of forced resettlement has led to numerous victims, moral and political losses. Great damage was done to the culture and economy of the peoples sentenced to resettlement.

Keywords: Far East, Koreans, Uzbekistan, deportation, forced resettlement, special settlers, Koryo saram.

Аннотация: Среди народов, проживающих сегодня в Узбекистане, корейская нация занимает особое место. Въезд корейцев в Узбекистан связан с политикой насильственного переселения и депортации целых народов, начавшейся в СССР накануне Второй мировой войны.

Эта политика стала настоящей трагедией для народов, обреченных на насильственное переселение. Политика насильственного переселения привела к многочисленным жертвам, моральным и политическим потерям. Большой ущерб был нанесен культуре и хозяйству народов, приговоренных к переселению.

Ключевые слова: Дальний Восток, Корейцы, Узбекистан, депортация, насильственное переселения, спецпоселенцы, Корё сарам.

Introduction: The Korean diaspora in Uzbekistan is the largest in Central Asia. During visits by the Presidents of the Republic of Korea to Uzbekistan, the historical roots of interactions between the countries and the importance of the role of Koryo-saram in the development of relations with Uzbekistan have been repeatedly emphasized.

The first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, stated that "in Uzbekistan, together with representatives of other nationalities, 200,000 Koreans live. And we constantly strive to make them feel at home"[1].

At the opening ceremony of the House of Korean Culture and Art in April 2019, which took place during the visit of President Moon Jae-in of South Korea to Uzbekistan, his words were particularly symbolic: "The people of Uzbekistan warmly welcomed citizens of Korean origin, who lost their homes more than 80 years ago. When we recall that Uzbekistan and its population were going through difficult times at the onset of World War II, our gratitude becomes even greater. The Republic of Korea feels a deep sense of respect and friendship towards the Uzbek people, who provided selfless help during a challenging time"[2].

Main Part: The Korean community in Uzbekistan, including in Khorezm, was formed as a result of deportation from the Far East and subsequent migration processes. Almost the entire Korean population of the Soviet Union—over 170,000 people—was subjected to forced relocation. The repressive nature of the action and the utilitarian economic considerations—dispersing the compactly settled population and maximally utilizing their labor skills and preferences—determined an extremely wide geographic distribution: from Astrakhan and Karaganda to the lower reaches of the Amu Darya and the outskirts of Tashkent. The deported Koreans were placed under a special settler regime, a kind of restricted settlement.

It was the first total deportation of an entire nationality in Soviet history. Naturally, much of what was developed during the eviction and resettlement of Koreans—such as the secrecy of preparation, preventive confiscation and subsequent destruction of the educated population, the suddenness and extremely short duration of the operation, restrictions on the freedom of movement of special settlers, and decisive suppression of any forms of disobedience—was later widely used against other repressed peoples.

The policy of repression became a real tragedy for the peoples condemned to forced relocation. This policy led to numerous casualties, moral and political losses, and inflicted significant damage on the culture and economy of the peoples sentenced to relocation. The «Evacuation» of those sentenced to relocation became a true tragedy for these peoples.

On August 21, 1937, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Politburo of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks adopted a resolution on the relocation of Koreans from the Far East to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan [3].

The decree provided for the resettlement of all Koreans living in border areas of the Far East to the South Kazakhstan Region, the Aral Sea region, the Priozersk region, and the Uzbek SSR. The relocation was planned to be completed by January 1, 1938.

Although the decree entrusted the Councils of People's Commissars of the Kazakh SSR and the Uzbek SSR to immediately designate areas and resettlement points, ensure economic development for the resettled population in new locations, and determine measures to provide them with necessary assistance, making this decision without prior coordination with the leaders of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan caused significant difficulties in its implementation.

In 1937, more than 170,000 Koreans were forcibly resettled to Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Of these, over 74,000 arrived in Uzbekistan, with the remainder settling in Kazakhstan [4,-p.3]. This act violated the constitutional rights of the Korean people to free development, constituting an illegal act of extreme cruelty that contradicted the national policy proclaimed by the state.

The party-state directive of August 21 obliged the governments of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to ensure "economic development of the resettled population in new locations" within extremely short timeframes.

To carry out this task, the Soviet Central Asian republics, economically weakened as a result of Stalin's policy of collectivization, undertook the heavy burden of resettling many thousands of Korean families who arrived in their settlements on the eve of the harsh winter of 1937-1938 [5,-p.64].

This military-strategic undertaking dramatically altered the destinies of entire peoples and was carried out hastily, without adequate preparation. Initially, the resettlement registered 6,000 families (approximately 30,000 people) in Uzbekistan, and by October, this number increased by another 5,000 families (around 22-25,000 people) [6]. The Councils of People's Commissars of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan were responsible for overseeing the resettlement.

This decision posed numerous challenges for Uzbekistan. Materially and technically, the republic was not prepared to accommodate such a large number of resettled people. In the mid-1930s, Uzbekistan was one of the least developed republics in terms of socio-economic development within the Soviet Union. It struggled to provide adequate socio-economic and living conditions not only for the resettled population but also for its own inhabitants. There was a shortage of housing, food, medical personnel, and medications. Uzbekistan had to import construction materials, bread, and meat from other republics. Additionally, there was a malaria outbreak at the time. Uzbekistan ranked tenth among the Soviet republics in terms of the number of doctors per 10,000 residents (4.7 doctors).

Despite this, the government and people of Uzbekistan did everything possible to receive, accommodate, provide food, and employment for all immigrants in those challenging conditions.

In order to implement the decision of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Politburo of the CPSU dated August 21, 1937, the Council of People's Commissars of the Uzbek SSR adopted a resolution on September 16, 1937, "On the resettlement of Korean households." The Republican Extraordinary Commission for the Reception and Resettlement of Migrants was established.

The resolution outlined crucial measures for the resettlement of forcibly displaced Koreans, the timely implementation of which could have positively impacted the lives of those resettled. However, executing these measures during that period was exceedingly difficult.

According to the resolution, the resettlement of 6,000 Korean households was planned in the districts of Nizhnechirchik, Srednechirchik, Gurlyan (Khorezm region), and Ikramovskiy, focusing on rice cultivation, grain, and horticulture. The resolution also specified placing resettled Koreans in existing district premises and, in case of shortages, immediately beginning the construction of housing from reeds, mobilizing housing resources, and temporarily adapting other buildings.

On November 15, 1937, forcibly resettled Koreans in Uzbekistan mainly settled in the following districts: Srednechirchik (11,932 people), Chirchik (8,669), Urtachirchik (1,814), Mirzachul (6,975), Bekabad (4,438), Chinaz (2,746), Kungirat (2,746), and Gurley (5,799). They also settled in cities such as Samarkand (1,798), Bukhara (399), Fergana (1,104), Kokand (1,700), Namangan (1,269), and Andijan (1,928) [7].

From 1937 to 1945, these Koreans were not classified as special resettlers, but their passports had restrictions preventing them from leaving Uzbekistan. On June 2, 1945, they were officially registered as special resettlers by order of the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR, L. Beria, and measures to intensify their residential regime were also applied to them. [4,-p.5]

On July 2, 1945, a directive was issued by L. Beria which officially registered Koreans as special resettlers. Special Commandant's Offices were established in the settlements of Koreans under the local administrations of the NKVD and at the Special Resettlement Department of the NKVD to manage their affairs.

According to directive No. 196 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR dated August 2, 1946, new passports without restrictions were issued to Koreans who were sent in administrative order. This included those whose passports had a 5-year limitation that had already expired, and the process of their resettlement from the Far East was determined based on general principles at their place of residence.

The second directive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, No. 30 dated March 3, 1947, clarified the procedures for issuing passports to Koreans. According to this directive, passports were issued only to Koreans residing in the Central Asian republics, excluding those living in border regions.

However, despite the strict administrative regime, the entire population couldn't be held in the initial resettlement areas contrary to economic logic, vital interests, and sometimes simple survival instincts. Already in the early years after resettlement, movements to new areas began, initially organized with entire households and later spontaneously on an individual basis. Migration flows shifted from northern regions to the south, from Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan, from arid lands to floodplain (tugai) and other irrigable lands.

Post-war economic development, marked by strengthening industrial and defense capabilities of the country, brought about significant changes in the socio-demographic sphere, including the system of population reproduction and distribution. Natural population growth rates decreased, rural-to-urban migration began, and population mobility increased. In Uzbekistan, these processes occurred more slowly, but not within the Korean national community. General factors such as increased mechanization, releasing labor from traditional agricultural sectors, rising educational standards, and diversification of professions and industries also played a role. Changes in agricultural specialization, shifting from rice cultivation to growing kenaf and later cotton in the 1950s-60s, which became less labor-intensive due to mechanization progress, also influenced these developments.

Results: During the intercensal period from 1939 to 1958, the Korean population in the country increased. The Korean population in the republic grew most intensively at a rate of 3% annually from 1939 to 1959. During these years, there was also the largest influx into the republic, estimated at 22-24 thousand people. From 1959 to 1970, alongside a decline in natural population growth rates, there was significant migration to other republics, resulting in a decrease of approximately 10 thousand people due to this reason. It was only in subsequent migration flows between republics that the overall balance was restored.

Population of Koreans in Uzbekistan

Table 1

Years	Population, thousand people.	Including	As a percentage of the total population	Population of Koreans in the USSR, thousand
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		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	people
1939	73	11	62	15	85	182
1959	138	44	94	32	68	314
1970	148	85	63	57	43	357
1979	163	117	46	72	28	389
1989	183,1	146	37	80	20	439

The population of Koreans in Karakalpakstan and regions of Uzbekistan Table 2

	The entire population	Including		As a percentage of the total population of the region
		Urban	Rural	
Uzbekistan	183,3	146,1	37,0	0,92
Karakalpakstan Republic	9,2	8,8	0,4	0,76
Andijan Region	4,2	4,0	0,2	0,24
Samarkand Region	8,1	7,6	0,5	0,37
Surkhandarya Region	1,8	1,5	0,3	0,14
Tashkent Region	76,2	45,6	30,6	3,6
Fergana Region	8,1	7,8	0,3	0,38
Khorezm Region	5,9	4,8	1,1	0,58
Tashkent city	44,0	44,0	-	2,1

Note: Data for the Bukhara, Kashkadarya, and Namangan regions are not printed. In these regions, a total of 8,891 people of Korean nationality lived.

Conclusion: Koreans reside in all regions of Uzbekistan, but their distribution is uneven. Some reasons trace back to the history and geography of initial resettlement, while others relate to the direction of subsequent migrations [8,-p.137-139].

Initially, the majority of resettled Koreans were placed in villages in the Tashkent region, as well as in small enclaves in Karakalpakstan, Khorezm, and Samarkand regions. Subsequent movements were largely associated with the development of irrigated agriculture, which

intensified among Korean peasants before its widespread expansion in the 1950s. Over time, pioneer families settled in nearby cities. A significant number of residents from these regions also became specialists, directed there after completing their educational institutions [8,- p.140].

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