

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ADAPTATION OF MINING WORKERS OF THE URALS REGION IN THE LATE OF THE XIX - THE BEGINNING OF THE XX CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

Instability of the socio-economic development of post-Soviet Russia and the serious social costs of the political course of its leadership have put forward the study of the adaptation of various social groups to it among the priorities of Russian sociology. Given the long-time forming the adaptation practices and enshrining them into mass consciousness during lifetime of several generations, this problem demands is consideration using the historical data of the Soviet and pre-Soviet Russia. The choice of the research topic is determined by this cause, as well as by insufficient knowledge of those subjects on the example of Urals Region mining workers at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

All the strategies of adaptation of the Ural workers considered in the paper were divided into active and passive adaptation models. The first include various attempts to improve the production activities of their enterprises, including the introduction of workers' control over them, practice in handicrafts and secondary employment in agriculture sector. The main traits of the passive variant of social and economic adaptation were the appeal of the Ural workers to the past, the desire for the preservation of various elements of binding relations and the paternalistic attitudes of mass consciousness. In real life, the mixed nature of the adaptive behavior of Ural workers was the most widespread. Among the main adaptive-forming factors, the authors have identified influence of the features of the mining district system, the psychology of local workers and the socio-cultural mechanism of the "archaization of consciousness". The latter two, in turn, made it difficult to modernize the mining industry of the region. In general, the level of adaptation of Ural workers is assessed as unsuccessful.

Keywords: workers, Ural, adaptation, behavior, binding relations.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of social and economic adaptation of the population to the rapidly changing conditions of modern Russian life, often taking a crisis character and forcing Russians to constantly look for adequate ways of adapting to them, causes an increased interest of sociologists. The emergence of a new branch of sociological knowledge, the adaptation sociology, eloquently illustrates the level of research interest in this problem; 30 classification axes describing its various aspects and, correspondingly, more than 100 of its varieties are distinguished within the branch [Korel List V., 2005]. At the same time, the greatest attention of specialists is paid to socio-economic adaptation. In addition to its certain importance, this is caused by instability, mobility, volatility of socio-psychological processes of adaptation at the individual level, registering and prediction of which involve great difficulties.

Taking into account that the choice of adaptive behavior models largely depends on the presence or absence at an adaptant of corresponding experience which is formed and consolidated in stable behavioral codes during the life of several generations, its study is of undoubted interest and allows performing prediction of the corresponding behavior models at the present stage.

In addition to these socio-psychological features of adaptation, the *urgency of* identifying and analyzing the main models of adaptive behavior of the Ural mining workers in the post-reform period is due to the crisis character of the mining industry modernization of the region, what exacerbated the problem of adaptation to the challenges of the macro- and microenvironment for the local population.

The choice of the basic adaptive behavior methods of the mining Ural region workers as the object of research is also caused by the insufficient development of this problematics in the historical literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A feature of the modern historiographic situation is, on the one hand, singling out of the problem of human survival in extreme conditions and human survival in a new reality as an independent research space, and on the other hand, its consideration mainly on the basis of the revolutionary and social upheavals of 1917-1922 and the subsequent construction of socialism [Kanishchev V.V., 1999; Narskiy I.V., 2001; Leybin N.B., 1999; Krynkov E.F., Tazhidinova I.G., Hlynina T.P., 2001]. The history of Russia before 1917 February revolution is "less fortunate" in this respect and the study of Russian adaptation practices in the context of socioeconomic shifts in post-reform Russia is limited to certain subjects in papers and monographs of Russian historians [Mironov B.N., Alekseev N.N., 1999; Golikova S.V., 2003; Korobkov Y. D., 2010].

Similar trends are also characteristic of European historiography science which representatives focus on the revolutionary and post-revolutionary problems [Figs O., 1998; Kotkin S., 1994; Fitzpatrick Sh., 2008; Jones A., 1997], and the late imperial period has been studied from the point of view of adaptive population practices much less [Hildermayer M., 1989; Bonvech B., 1991; Steffens T., 1985; Held T., 1994].

PROBLEM DEFINITION

The multiplicity of adaptive forms, the certain conventionality and schematicness of classification schemes when they relate to real life conditions, the century-old interval between modern approaches and the realities of Russian life at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries actualize the problem of their adequacy to socio-psychological attitudes, value orientations and standards of behavior of the population of post-reform Russia. In our view, the classification criterion which has timeless stability and makes it possible to objectively compare the different adaptive practices is the factor of using one's own or other people's life support resources, which has a universal character and timeless stability. In accordance with it, a model of active adaptation oriented mainly on one's own resources, capabilities, resources and impact on the social environment, and passive adaptation aimed at helping and supporting from the outside, waiting, conformist perception of environmental conditions and self-correction in accordance with it, say, what is often called with the use of the social dependency concept. Given the significant influence on the people behavior of such a socio-cultural mechanism as "archaization of consciousness", it is logical to assume a fairly wide distribution of mixed adaptive forms that combine the features of both active and passive models.

METHODS

The methodological toolkit of the paper is determined by the finding of this problem in the research space both in adjacent areas to historical science (social history, the history of everyday life, the history of

mentality) and closely related to the history of branches of humanitarian knowledge (sociology, culturology, social psychology). This implies their comprehensive use, along with general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction.

Among the historical methods themselves, the most valuable for us are the comparative-historical one, because it enables us to consider changes in the comparative context, and also the historical and typological one which allows us to identify the main categories of changes in the behavioral patterns and lifestyle of those employed in the industry of the region. Consideration of the adaptive practices of the Ural workers in the broader context of the capitalist transformation of Russia and taking into account the diversity of the corresponding changes predetermined the importance of the historical and systemic method. The most interesting for us from the toolkit of "allies" is the concept of "archaization" of consciousness that speaks of the reproduction in critical, uncertain situations of ancient behavior patterns that block modernization development, and the concept of the consciousness and behavior automatisms developed by "the Annals" school within the history of mentality, which form a stable behavioral codes for people and for a long historical period.

MAIN PART

One of the most typical and mass forms of adaptation activity of the Ural workers was various attempts to minimize the impact of the crisis in the mining industry and the related decline in the standard of living, by improving the performance of their enterprises. They varied from proposals for the rationalization and optimization of production to the transfer of factories to the state administration or under the control of the workers themselves, which, as noted by the congress of the mining owners of the Ural region in March 1906, were confident that in the event of turning plants into their hands, "they would arrange business more rational, and would avoid costs for an expensive top administration" [Russian State Historical Archive. Fund 81. Series 1. File 233. Sheet 2].

In the spring of 1917, the workers' actions to change the situation by their own forces became the particularly massive, what was largely determined by the influence of the general political situation in the country. Considering the availability of qualified personnel, and materials "lying around... in the form of 250-pood bars on the Kama bank and throughout the plant", the workers of the Motovilikhinsky plant proposed in the spring of 1917 to organize the production of products for agrarian customers. According to "Izvestiya Uralsoвета" newspaper, in May 1917, despite the departure of the Sosvinsky plant administration and the obstacles on its part to conduct production, workers organized uninterrupted work under the leadership of the Soviet (Work Council), exemplary peace and quiet. In June of 1917, seeing the inactivity of their administration, workers of the mechanical plant belonging to the V.G. partnership in the town of Chelyabinsk have decided to send their representatives to other factories to find the metal needed to make shells. Having got to hear that the reasons for the low productivity of labor at the Kholunitsky factories are the lack of labor and the poor work of prisoners of war in the Klimkovsky mines, the workers themselves went out to extract ore, with three times increase in its production. As the "Vyatskaya rech" newspaper has noted, they believed "that activity will hum again in the province that had been asleep before that 7 years" ["Vyatskaya rech". 1917, September, 17].

Along with measures to rationalize and optimize production in the spring of 1917, workers began to introduce control over the technical side of the business. The workers of the Alapaevsky plant decided on March 18 to "choose a permanent commission to examine issues relating to the technical side of the matter", the workers of the Pashiysky factory decided in April 1917 to form a factory committee with the aim of inducing the administration "to carry out uninterrupted activities to enhance the plant's productivity" [Russian State Historical archive. Fund 86. Series 1. File 294. Sheet 35].

In the summer of 1917, workers began to exercise direct capture of enterprises into their own hands. On June 8, the administration of the Revdinsky District passed into the hands of a committee of workers and employees. In September 1917, the workers committed a "self-acquisition" of the platinum mines in the Nizhny Tagilsky and Lunevsky factories, the management of which was transferred to a special committee [State Archives of the Perm Region. Fund 167. Series 1. File 35. Sheet 123].

In addition to steps to improve factory production, workers made repeated attempts to create small businesses in the form of small handicrafts.

Back in the early 1880's, workers of Mikhailovsky plant offered to build a vocational school for the teaching of their children forging and locksmith, and carpentry and joinery crafts "in order to adapt themselves to free handicrafts" for their public funds at the expense of the wine trade, the right to which was possessed to the rural societies on their lands [Vyatkin M.P., 1965]. However, the introduction of a wine monopoly prevented the implementation of this plan. In the second half of the 1880's, in connection with the reduction of work volumes at the Votkinsky plant, its workers formed a handicrafts guild. Later, workers of the same Mikhailovsky, Nizhne-Serginsky, Atigsky, and other factories complained repeatedly to high authorities for their plant administrations which "severely hampered the development of agricultural handicrafts".

Since the position of the State Mining Department was aimed at preserving the monopoly of mining owners, including by prohibiting the development of small and artisanal industries and private crafts, these complaints of workers remained unanswered. Therefore, at the beginning of the 20th century this adaptation practice was not widely used and was partially restored after the February revolution.

Such a variant of active adaptive behavior as horizontal and vertical migration, the change of work and activity in the Ural Region was point-wise and rather rare. This was due to the peculiarities of the mining system, the narrow professional specialization of local workers, and the fact that the working conditions in a new place did not differ from the previous ones, and the conditions of everyday life worsened considerably due to the absence of their homes, farms and falling the workers into the category of "newcomers". In the sources of the late XIX - early XX century individual cases of inter- and intra-factory mobility of workers in the Mikhailovsky, Verkhne-Serginsky, Dobriansky, Satkinsky, Votkinsky, and other factories of the Ural Region are documented, but this practice was not of a mass character, and the craftsmen could beachcomb for years with a view to "sooner or later, be at the factory work".

The main form of secondary employment of mining Ural workers was various types of agricultural labor on their own land allotments. At the same time, the degree of their interest in the land largely depended on the state of factory operations; it was insignificant in stable times and increased with the deepening crisis of the mining industry.

In the first post-reform decades, in their numerous petitions, the workers wrote that the factory works "were the only means of subsistence" for them, and the land satisfied "only an extreme household necessity". The analysis conducted by A.B. Rabinovich of 30 applications and strike demands of the workers of the Stroganovsky factories in 1872-1882 confirms this feature: the issue of endowment with land was raised only twice there, and the main problem for workers was the regulation of wages [Rabinovich A.B., 1961].

At the end of the nineteenth century, especially after the adoption of the law of 1893 in connection with the growing need of workers in the land, the practice of its unauthorized capture took on a mass character in the conditions of the fall of factory production. According to I.Kh. Ozerov's estimations, the relationship between factories and workers on the basis of the land issue acquired the character of a real war. Only in Kyshtymsky district, the plant management has made more than 600 protocols for a

unauthorized use of mowing. At the same time, the workers sought to consolidate as much land as possible into their property, regarding land allotments not only as a means of maintaining the necessary level of welfare, but also as an insurance policy "for a rainy day", and as a way of achieving a certain independence from the mining owner's arbitrariness.

In general, we can say that the desire of workers to obtain the maximum land area to achieve with it the necessary level of social protection and minimize adaptive losses can be viewed as a timeless, universal form of population's adaptive activity. Such life practice had the same wavy character (decreasing in stable times and increasing in crisis ones) during the Soviet period, it also distinguishes the behavioral codes of modern Russians. According to sociological data, 81% of workers in the machine-building plants of Bryansk, Pskov and Kirov in 2003 had or wanted to have land plots [Bessokirnaya G.N., 2005]. Being adjusted for regional specifics, these data characterize the overall Russian situation as a whole.

The main manifestation of the passive variant for social and economic adaptation of the Ural workers was their appeal to the past, the desire to restore certain forms of binding relations and the paternalistic attitudes of mass consciousness.

First of all, the craftsmen considered it an injustice to liquidate state and private tutelage over them, which formed the basis of their relations with enterprises until 1861. In July 1881, workers of the Ochersky plant asked the plant administration to provide them with land, free timber supply and assistance to the aged and sick craftsmen. In a statement of the shop representatives of the Zlatoustovsky factory workers association on November 11, 1896, a request was made to pay workers for the territorial public responsibilities to build and repair roads, free treatment of members of working families at the expense of the plant, the opening of a free school, the granting of mowing to those who did not have a right to mow [Central State Historical Archives of the Republic of Bashkortostan. Fund 187. Series 1. File 35. Sheet 593].

Another evidence of the preservation of the patriarchal system by the Ural workers as an attempt to adapt to the new production conditions is the massive practice of refusing to introduce settlement books at the Ural plants. The main reason for this behavior was the inclusion in the rules on hiring an item on liability in the event of a strike and other duties of workers, so they demanded exclusion from them of excerpts from the laws on the duties of workers.

Another type of passive adaptation to the situation was the regular appeals of workers to power structures with the aim of preventing a mass reduction of production. The workers, who believed that the management departments were obliged to provide them with the amount of work necessary for maintenance of their families, considered the other order of things "a colossal injustice and an unlawful deed" and constantly appealed to the administration, and to higher authorities with demands and requests for full employment. The essence of these proposals formulated in August 1891 by the workers of the open-hearth shop at the Nizhne-Tagilsky plant, was reduced to ensuring the labor of a worker on the part of the owner "so that the worker together with his family did not need to satisfy the first and urgent necessities of life" [State Archives of the Sverdlovsk Region. Fund 24. Series 18. File 4972. Sheet 60].

The manifestation of the paternalistic component in the social psychology of the Ural workers was the practice of their mass appeals to the central government for the provision of assistance, social protection and protection from the arbitrariness of factory bosses.

At the margin, the belief in the justice of the highest power was manifested at the meeting of the workers of the Kusi-Aleksandrovsky plant on May 15, 1905, which, in response to the factory administration giving them a copy of the telegram of the Perm governor, who refused to satisfy their petition, demanded from the Territory head a real telegram, since "It turned out that many of them did not believe in sending this telegram". Generalizing this situation, the Minister of Agriculture and State Property noted in

November 1905 that the workers of private factories "explain the fact that they have received failures to their complaints throughout" that the complaints do not reach their addressee" [Russian State Historical Archive. Fund 1291. Series 66. File 27. Sheet 118].

The mass nature of such adaptive life practices was determined, first of all, by the influence of traditions, customs, norms and patterns of behavior that had developed in the pre-reform Ural Region and established in the minds of the population, which formed the appropriate mechanisms for adaptation after the abolition of serfdom. According to the testimony of the Izhevsky factory workers in April 1885, up to 1867, "all care for their existence was entirely on the government, which in the face of the factory administration gave them work, fed, taught, treated them, say, from the birth of every worker up to his grave thought of and cared about his physical and spiritual existence. In this environment, several generations have been born and lived". [Russian State Historical Archives. Fund 1291. Series 66. Case 82. Sheet 187], what formed their belief in the inviolability of these orders.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis shows that the Ural workers had various ways of adapting to the changing realities of post-reform Russia. At the same time, the division of their adaptation practices into active and passive is rather conditional. Even in active strategies of behavior, the leading trend in the adaptation of workers to a changing situation was the preservation of the production relations established earlier. This was manifested not only in the land issue, the most mass and typical form of self - preservation of the existing system, but also in the transition of enterprises to the management carried out by workers. According to the testimony of the manager of the Seversky plant, Chekantsev, who also noted the positive moments of workers' participation in management, in the fall of 1917 they made a number of demands related to the desire to facilitate their work, to get more time for housekeeping, to raise their wages, to start "own" people as managers, what negatively affected the production and characterized their mental make-up and the level of culture [Russian State Historical Archive. Fund 86. Series 1. File 294. Sheet 36].

Even such forms of entrepreneurial adaptation as the organization of workers' labor cooperatives were built on an equalizing principle with the aim to "do way to doing the largest possible number of working people" without taking into account their professional qualities.

This makes it possible to assert that many active forms of social and economic adaptation of the Ural workers determined the desire not to change the surrounding production and everyday landscape, but to preserve it and adapt to it. In turn, the passive forms of adaptation behavior of the Ural workers were based on the increase in labor costs and regular self-restraint, i.e. on self- assessment as one of the main criteria for an active variant of socio-economic adaptation. Therefore, it is more correct to speak of the predominance of mixed adaptive behavior forms among the Ural workers.

Practically all adaptive strategies of the Ural workers, as the comparison with similar processes in modern Russia shows, are universal. The difference lies in the quantitative and qualitative relationship of various forms, and the vectors of socio-economic adaptation evolved and evolve now in the same direction. Just as now, the Ural region workers were at various stages of the adaptation process in the early XX century. Some of them did not come out of the state of social and psychological shock and could not find adequate answers to the challenges of the environment, others were confident enough to adapt to the new situation, while others were in the middle of that path.

Due to the lack of the necessary database, it is difficult to give an unambiguous answer to the question on the adaptation process effectiveness for the Ural workers. If we proceed from the criterion of its confrontational, equilibrium or harmonious character, then, taking into account the pointwise nature of uniquely active forms of adaptation, the conflict nature of land relations, the high level of the strike movement, including factory terror, one can speak about the predominance of the first option and

therefore consider the socio-economic adaptation of the Ural mining workers unsuccessful. We are convinced in this by the enormous protest potential accumulated in the course of its development, which lashed out to the surface of Russian reality in 1917 and largely influenced the development of the country.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors confirm that the presented data do not contain a conflict of interest.

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Central State Historical Archives of the Republic of Bashkortostan. Fund 187. Series 1. File 35. Sheet 593.