

# Chinese Migration In The Russian Far East's Development

## *The October Revolution of 1917 and the Soviet Period*

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**Abstract**—Since the mid-19th century, Chinese immigrants began to appear in the Russian Far East. During the imperial period of Russia and the USSR, Chinese immigrants exerted a discernible influence on the social production and overall way of life in the region. The article is structured into two distinct sections. The initial section delineates the circumstances surrounding Chinese immigrants amidst the October Revolution and Civil War, as well as their experiences during the subsequent period of the USSR in the Far East. This study primarily observes the factors contributing to the influx of Chinese immigrants in the Far East region, the occupational distribution of Chinese immigrants across various industries in Soviet Russia, their impact on economic development in the Far East, and the historical policies implemented by the Russian and Soviet governments towards Chinese immigrants.

**Keywords**—Chinese migrants, Russian Far East, Sino-Russian relations, Red Army and Soviets, Revolution, Civil War, USSR, development

### I. Introduction

Using the method of *system analysis*, the Chinese in the Far East during these periods can be considered as a social group with special characteristics and special numbers. This allows us to study the issues that arise in the interactions between Chinese citizens and local citizens. Therefore, by considering Chinese immigrants as a distinct social group, it becomes possible to discuss Chinese immigration activities in the Far East and the role of immigrants in the development of this region.

*The statistical method* allows us to study the size of the Chinese immigrant population in the Far East. Firstly, it becomes possible to calculate the number, gender and age composition, place of birth, and area of activity of Chinese immigrants in different years.

*Method of historical periodization.* This article examines the activities of Chinese immigrants in the Russian Far East at different times. Therefore, the historical periodization of this study is very necessary. At each stage, the immigration situation in each period is analyzed on the basis of immigration policy, economic conditions, status, role of the immigrant, etc. The method of historical periodization allows you

to more clearly study immigration in different periods and compare them with each other.

This article uses *comparative analysis* to examine the similarities and differences between Chinese immigrants in the Far East over different periods. This method can better identify changes in Chinese immigration to the Far East over different periods. To this end, the author studied the number, activities, role and influence of Chinese immigrants in the region at different times, and also carried out a comparative analysis based on the relevant information collected.

Studying the phenomenon of immigration in the Far East region can provide valuable insights into the societal circumstances experienced by Chinese immigrants during the aforementioned historical epochs. Additionally, such an investigation can shed light on the contributions made by these immigrants to the local socio-economic advancement, as well as the repercussions on the bilateral relations between China and Russia (formerly the Soviet Union).

II. Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East During the October Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War

There were also many Chinese immigrants to Russia during World War I. The rationale behind this phenomenon lies in the active participation of numerous individuals from the local community in frontline combat, necessitating a substantial labor force for the development of the rear economy. Following deliberations with the tsarist administration, the Chinese populace initiated a large-scale endeavor to actively engage in the recruitment of their fellow countrymen to Russia. Russian entrepreneurs and Tsarist government officials of astute intellect initiated the practice of employing Chinese labor due to their significantly lower wages and notable absence of alcohol consumption, coupled with their commendable organizational discipline. By the commencement of 1917, the legal population of Chinese individuals residing in Russia had exceeded 200,000.<sup>1</sup> The precise figure regarding the population of

<sup>1</sup>Tikhomirov Vladimir. The Chinese in the service of the Bolsheviks, M.: "Istoricheskaya Pravda", January 3, 2016 <http://harmfulgrumpy.livejournal.com/241792.html>; <https://scisne.net/a-1231>

undocumented Chinese immigrants, particularly in the Far East region, remains undisclosed. According to estimations, the overall figure may be more proximate to 500,000. Following the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, a considerable number of Chinese individuals were confronted with the predicament of residing in a foreign nation devoid of financial resources or employment opportunities.

A statistical analysis was conducted on the population of Chinese migrants in Prague Veshensk, on July 17, 1918. During that particular period, the population of the city amounted to 51,189 individuals. Out of the total population, 41,293 individuals, constituting 80.7% of the population, are of Russian nationality, while 4,513 individuals, accounting for 8.8% of the population, are of Chinese nationality.<sup>2</sup>

During this particular era, Chinese immigrants residing in the Far East region persistently participated in various industrial, commercial, and agricultural activities. In the month of August in the year 1918, the town of Prague Veshensk, was home to a total of 834 trading enterprises. Out of the total, a majority of 505 companies, constituting approximately 60.5%, are of Chinese origin.<sup>3</sup> In the year 1919, within the city of Prague Veshensk, a total of 1,064 trading companies were officially registered. Notably, out of this figure, precisely 528 of these trading companies were of Chinese origin. Indeed, it is the Chinese who engage in the trade of vegetables and fruits, as well as clothing, shoes, and hats. Chinese immigrants constitute the predominant demographic among craft business owners, with 45 out of the total 56 craft businesses being owned by individuals of Chinese descent.<sup>4</sup> During this particular period, a significant number of Chinese businessmen experienced substantial financial setbacks as a consequence of the shift in governmental authority, mirroring the experiences of their Russian counterparts.

Chinese business owners also hold a significant position within the Far East industry. In the year 1922, it was observed that a significant proportion of retail establishments in Chita, specifically 510 out of a total of 1,153, were established by Chinese immigrants. In the Amur region, there are 391 companies owned by Russian individuals or entities, while 510 companies are owned by Chinese individuals or entities. Approximately 80% of the companies in Khabarovsk are under Chinese ownership.<sup>5</sup> From this perspective, Chinese immigrants continue to play a significant role in the socio-economic advancement of the Far East. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there are instances of illicit behaviors, such as smuggling and drug trafficking, within the Chinese immigrant community. In the month of February in the year 1921,

a comprehensive examination was conducted within Chinese communities, resulting in the identification of 13 establishments engaged in prostitution and 36 locations associated with the distribution of illicit narcotics.<sup>6</sup>

The Chinese population made a substantial impact on the course of the Russian Civil War. A portion of individuals aligned themselves with the Red Army, which represented the Soviet power, while others opted to join the White Guard. During this temporal epoch, a substantial portion of the Chinese populace residing in Russia predominantly hailed from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, and embarked upon journeys away from their native locales in search of viable means of subsistence in foreign lands. During this particular era, the political, economic, and social circumstances of the Soviet regime were characterized by turbulence. In the month of February in the year 1918, the collective count of Chinese individuals serving in the Red Army amounted to an estimated range of 40,000 to 50,000 individuals. When military forces, including Chinese soldiers, initiated an incursion into the Russian Far East, a conflict ensued between the Chinese soldiers of the Red Army and their fellow countrymen.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to acknowledge that subsequent to the February Revolution of 1917, Russia's approach to Chinese immigrants experienced substantial transformations in its national policy. The provisional government made an official declaration regarding the amelioration of the circumstances faced by the Chinese population residing in Russia. Chinese immigrants residing in Russia prior to the October Revolution of 1917 were perceived as active participants in the forthcoming proletarian struggle. The leaders of the Soviet Union demonstrated a strong dedication to realizing the global proletarian revolution, necessitating the consolidation of the working class across nations. Based on the tenets of Soviet nationality policy, Chinese immigrants were afforded equitable rights on par with Russian citizens. As an illustration, the governmental authorities of the Amur region extended equivalent rights to Chinese immigrants as those granted to Russian citizens. During the IV Congress of the Far Eastern Soviets in April 1918, a resolution was passed, stipulating that Chinese workers were to be granted equal working conditions as their Russian counterparts. Chinese immigrants and other ethnic minorities were afforded equal land use rights as ethnic Russians. In accordance with this policy, the municipal government distributed parcels of land to Chinese immigrants for agricultural purposes.

<sup>2</sup> Zaleskaya O.V. Chinese migrants in the Russian Far East (1917-1938). Vladivostok: Dalnauk, 2009. P. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., P. 60.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., P. 67.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., P. 82.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., P. 83.

<sup>7</sup> Babichev I.I. Participation of Chinese and Korean workers in the civil war in the Far East, State Publishing House of the Uzbek SSR, Tashkent, 1959, p. 21. <https://koryo-saram.ru/i-babichev-uchastie-kitajskih-i-korejskih-trudyashhihsya-v-grazhdanskoj-voine-na-dal-nem-vostoke/>

### III. Chinese Migrants in the Far East During the Soviet Period: 1920s and 1930s

Beginning in the second part of the 19th century, the Russian Empire under Tsarist rule embarked upon a comprehensive programme of development in the Far East region. As part of this endeavor, a substantial influx of Chinese laborers was recruited to augment the existing workforce in Russia. Following the October Revolution and the subsequent Civil War, which culminated in the establishment of the Soviet Union, there was a significant decline in the influx of Chinese immigrants, primarily due to the repatriation efforts targeting the Chinese population. Nevertheless, the population of the aforementioned group experienced a subsequent increase as a result of the arrival of Chinese migrants. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was established on December 30, 1922, under the leadership of Lenin. The formation of Chinese Red Army soldiers took place within various branches of the Soviet army, security agencies, garrisons, and other governmental departments.

Simultaneously, during the spring season, a substantial influx of approximately 75 to 200 thousand seasonal laborers arrived in the Soviet Union, engaging in employment activities and subsequently repatriating during the winter months upon receipt of remuneration.<sup>8</sup> In the year 1923, the Russian Far East was home to a population of 50,183 Chinese immigrants, constituting approximately 3.2% of the overall population of the region. Among the total count, there are 46,842 individuals identified as men, while 3,341 individuals are identified as women. According to the data, there were 42,586 individuals of Chinese nationality residing in urban areas, while 7,597 individuals resided in rural areas. According to historical records, the population of Chinese immigrants residing in the Amur province in 1923 amounted to 4,427 individuals. Out of the total, 4167 individuals are male, while 260 individuals are female. According to historical records, the population of Chinese residents in the Primorsky Territory in 1923 amounted to 37,040 individuals.<sup>9</sup> According to data from 1926, the population of Chinese individuals residing in the Far East region amounted to 72,000 individuals. This figure comprised 68,000 males and 3,900 females. At that particular juncture, the Soviet Union was home to a cumulative population of 101.7 thousand individuals of Chinese origin.<sup>10</sup> A total of

42,203 individuals of Chinese origin resided in major urban centers within the Far Eastern Territory. Specifically, 24,480 individuals were located in Vladivostok, 5,615 in Khabarovsk, 4,878 in Nikolsk-Ussuriysk and Blagoveshchensk, 3,895 in Chita, and 3,340 in Chita. Out of the total population of 72,000 Chinese immigrants referred to earlier, a mere 3,815 individuals held Russian citizenship, while the vast majority of 68,190 individuals were citizens of China. In the year 1926, the Russian Far East was home to a total of 117.3 thousand individuals from foreign countries. Among this population, approximately 41.3% were identified as Chinese citizens.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the magnitude of Chinese immigrants in the Far East was even more substantial. In his article titled "Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow and the Chinese Revolution", Sheng Yue recounts his arrival in Vladivostok in 1926, where he observed a sizable population of approximately 100,000 Huaqiao.<sup>12</sup> This community primarily consisted of Chinese businessmen and workers. In the year 1928, a notable population of 8,000 individuals of Chinese origin resided within the geographical boundaries of the Soviet Union.<sup>13</sup> The majority of these individuals hailed from the province of Shandong, while a smaller contingent originated from the southern regions of China. The cities of Moscow and Leningrad were primarily inhabited by individuals of Chinese descent who were engaged in business and employment activities. Additionally, a significant number of Chinese individuals were employed in various sectors such as material handling, transportation, mining, leather, and food industries. Chinese entrepreneurs primarily focused on operating small-scale enterprises, such as establishing laundry facilities and manufacturing various goods, including bread, knitted products, and leather bags, among others. The primary occupation of Chinese laborers in the Far East region predominantly involved manual labor.

In the latter half of the 1920s and the early years of the 1930s, there was a gradual decline observed in the population of Chinese immigrants residing in the Soviet Union. The majority of Chinese migrants resided in Primorsky Krai. As an illustration, the Primorsky Territory witnessed a notable presence of Chinese immigrants during the years 1926, 1929, and 1932, with respective population figures of 43,513, 42,316, and 32,600. It is important to acknowledge that in the year 1933, a total of 4,920 individuals of Chinese descent resided in the Amur region. Out of

<sup>8</sup> Ning Yanhong: "History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2015, p. 278. // Census of the Central Bureau of Statistics of the USSR: "Briefing on the All-Soviet Census", Series 4, "Nationalities and Mother Tongues in the USSR", Moscow, 1928, pp. 40, 41.

<sup>9</sup> Zaleskaya O.V. Chinese migrants in the Russian Far East (1917-1938). Vladivostok: Dalnauk, 2009. P. 343.

<sup>10</sup> Ning Yanhong: "History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2015, p. 278. // Census of the Central Bureau of Statistics of the USSR: "Briefing on the All-Soviet Census", Series 4, "Nationalities and Mother

Tongues in the USSR", Moscow, 1928, pp. 40, 41.

<sup>11</sup> Zaleskaya O.V. Legal status of Chinese migrants in the Russian Far East. 1920-1930s // New and recent history. 2009. No. 3. <http://www.modern-current-history.igh.ru/archive/2009/3/>

<sup>12</sup> Alexander Lanin: "The Contribution of Chinese Immigrants in Russia to the Development of the Russian Far East", "Historical Archives", February 1994, page 136.

<sup>13</sup> Ning Yanhong. "History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2015, p. 278.

the total population, counts of 3,714 individuals were classified as workers, 405 individuals were identified as members of collective farms, and 801 individuals were engaged in various other occupations. As of 1937, the population of Chinese individuals residing in the Far East amounted to 34,589.<sup>14</sup>

The residential areas of Chinese immigrants in Vladivostok were primarily situated on Kolkhoznaya, Pekinskaya, and Koreyskaya streets. Additionally, a number of houses were found on Utkinskoye, Badalenaya, and Pribrezhnaya streets, resulting in the formation of both large and small Chinatown districts. The majority of Chinese immigrants residing in the locality possessed valid residence certificates, although a minority of Chinese immigrants was found to lack proper documentation for legal residency. Numerous Chinese individuals engaged in commercial activities within these regions with the aim of generating income, and additionally established establishments such as opium dens, casinos, and brothels.

#### A. Chinese Immigrant Activities

The Soviet Union implemented a policy of ethnic equality, thereby eliminating the discriminatory treatment experienced by Chinese immigrants under the Tsarist regime. Consequently, Chinese immigrants were afforded equal treatment to that of Soviet citizens in their daily lives and professional environments. The Soviet regime sought to manage the influx of foreign immigration by encouraging Chinese immigrants to become members of the Soviet Union of Trade Unions. Chinese immigrants who actively participated in workers' unions and held positions within government agencies had the opportunity to experience equitable treatment comparable to that of Soviet workers. Conversely, Chinese workers who did not engage in labor unions were unable to secure employment in factories and were consequently deprived of the same privileges and stability enjoyed by their Soviet counterparts. Regarding the Chinese soldiers, a portion of them transitioned into social work professions, while others pursued occupations as workers, rank-and-file managers, or enrolled in educational institutions and industrial establishments for further studies. Despite the fact that a significant majority of Chinese immigrants, approximately 98%, did not successfully assimilate into Soviet society as full-fledged citizens, they harnessed their diligent work ethic to excel in diverse socialist competitions and participate actively in assault movements.<sup>15</sup> After successfully eliminating ethnic discrimination, they were able to actively participate in socialist reforms and contribute to the establishment of the Soviet Union on an equitable

footing alongside other ethnic groups. Closed organizations were a prevalent feature within Soviet schools, and it is noteworthy that individuals from China were also afforded the opportunity to participate in these organizations. In general, party organizations would commonly engage individuals who were at least sixteen years old to actively participate in the party's organizational activities. Hence, it was also possible for Chinese laborers to be chosen for positions within local and central governmental bodies in the Soviet Union. These circumstances indicate that the Chinese workers received equitable treatment in political terms, comparable to that of their Russian counterparts.

During the period of the New Economic Policy, Chinese immigrants experienced a similar level of impoverishment as other residents of the Soviet Union, as a result of the economic collapse, escalating prices, and scarcity of goods. However, subsequently, there was a gradual improvement in all aspects of the situation. Chinese immigrants predominantly concentrated in major urban centers. Of the aforementioned locations, the highest proportion was observed in Vladivostok, where 21.7% of the urban populace resided. The categories of individuals identified in the data were self-employed individuals, workers, entrepreneurs, service personnel, and employees, constituting 21.5%, 35%, 34.5%, 11%, and 36.3% of the total population, respectively.<sup>16</sup> The presence of Chinese individuals was pervasive, with a notable involvement of many in agricultural pursuits. The economic standing of Chinese businessmen and foreign students surpassed that of Chinese workers due to their employment in diverse industries. Despite their relatively small population, the Chinese community made a substantial impact on both the regional and national economies.

The introduction of the collective farm system in the Soviet Union occurred during the 1920s. In order to incentivize Chinese individuals to participate in collective farming, the collective farms implemented measures such as allocating land to them and reducing the associated land rent fees. Therefore, Chinese collective farms were allocated a substantial quantity of cultivable land that could be utilized over an extended period. The Chinese employed distinct agricultural techniques for land cultivation, which garnered recognition from various governmental departments within the Soviet Union. The local governments of the Soviet Union in the Far East region also facilitated the adoption of traditional agricultural practices by Chinese laborers, specifically in cultivating Eastern crops like rice and soybeans. During the early 1930s, several Chinese collective farms were established in the Amur region. In 1930, the collective farm known as "Toilers of the East" was founded, followed by the establishment of the

<sup>14</sup> Tkacheva G.A. Demographic situation in the Russian Far East in the 20-30s of the twentieth century. (monograph). Vladivostok: Dalrybvtuz, 2000., p. 66.

<sup>15</sup> Ning Yanhong: "History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2015, p. 278.

<sup>16</sup> Ning Yanhong: "History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2015, p. 278.

collective farm named "Sun Yat-sen" in 1931. Additionally, in 1932, the collective farm known as "Eastern Paratrooper" was established in the same region. Based on contemporary statistical data, it can be observed that the cultivated land area of Chinese collective farms exhibited a consistent annual growth trend. As an illustration, the sown area of the "Toilers of the East" collective farms experienced an increase from 208 hectares in 1931 to 340 hectares in 1933. The sown area of the Sun Yat-sen collective farm experienced a notable increase from 160 hectares in 1931 to 508 hectares in 1933.<sup>17</sup> Local authorities in China provided increased support to collective farms. The rationale behind this was that the Chinese collective farms primarily met the production objectives established by the state, thereby guaranteeing the adequate provision of grain and vegetables to the market. Nonetheless, the progress of livestock farming within the collective farm system in China exhibited a relatively sluggish pace, resulting in a gradual growth in the goat population. In the year 1932, the Far Eastern Territory housed a total of 16 collective farms, consisting of both Chinese collective farms and mixed collective farms. Out of the total, sums of 13 collective farms were exclusively established by the Chinese.<sup>18</sup>

In the year 1933, a significant purge was executed on the collective farms situated in the Far Eastern Territory, encompassing the Chinese collective farms within the area as well. An illustration of this phenomenon can be observed in the Red East collective farms of China during the period commonly referred to as the Great Purge. The leadership of the collective farm did not consist of any party members, and a significant number of its members were individuals engaged in business activities. The "Great Purge" led to the expulsion of numerous entrepreneurs from collective farms, subsequently resulting in the election of new management within these agricultural establishments.

Following the triumph of the October Revolution, Chinese immigrants and Soviet citizens were granted equitable access to educational opportunities, a notable contrast to the Russian Empire. The Soviet government additionally facilitated the promotion of literacy and newspaper subscriptions within the Chinese immigrant community, actively fostering an environment that encouraged the acquisition of cultural knowledge among the Chinese population. The Soviet government exhibited a particular focus on the cultural, ideological, and educational development of Chinese and Korean individuals employed in the gold mines. Various facilities, including cultural centers, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities, have been established with the intention of fulfilling this objective. During that period, there was a

<sup>17</sup> Zalesskaya O.V. Chinese migrants in the Russian Far East (1917-1938). - Vladivostok: Dalnauk, 2009. pp. 275-276.

<sup>18</sup> Zalesskaya O.V. Chinese migrants in the Russian Far East (1917-1938). - Vladivostok: Dalnauk, 2009. P. 277.

scarcity of Chinese instructors, as well as an insufficient number of Russian educators proficient in teaching the Chinese language. In the year 1923, it was observed that approximately one-third of the Chinese population residing in the Far East possessed the ability to read and write. During the year 1925, approximately 180 Chinese individuals were enrolled as students in secondary educational institutions located in the Far East region of Russia.<sup>19</sup> During the latter part of the 1920s, a specialized educational programme was established at the Lenin School in Blagoveshchensk, with the explicit purpose of catering to the educational needs of Chinese children. The classroom consisted of approximately fifty Chinese children, comprising both male and female students. The educational institution employed a pair of full-time instructors specializing in Chinese language instruction and implemented pedagogical approaches derived from Chinese teaching methodologies. In addition to instructing schoolchildren on the Russian alphabet, Russian educators also imparted knowledge of common everyday expressions. During this era, various cultural institutions such as national theatres and club sports associations were established across the Soviet Union with the aim of enhancing the amateur cultural experiences of the Chinese population. The Soviet government actively promoted the establishment of public organizations and trade unions among overseas Chinese, while also permitting the development of Chinese newspapers. During that period, approximately fifteen newspapers of Chinese origin were being published.<sup>20</sup>

#### *B. The impact of Chinese immigrants on the development of the Soviet Far East*

During the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese immigrants were present in various sectors of economic activity across the Far East region of the Soviet Union. The economic activities undertaken by Chinese immigrants in the Far East of the Soviet Union occurred within the context of the implementation of a novel economic policy. Initially, the Soviet regime permitted the presence of privately-owned agricultural enterprises to a limited degree. Chinese immigrants played a significant role in various economic sectors, including commodity production and trading, timber, coal and gold mining, construction and transportation, as well as vegetable cultivation and fishing. Chinese society played a significant role in both production and daily life. During the 1930s, Chinese immigrants in the Soviet Union actively participated in collective farming initiatives as mandated by governmental legislation. The Soviet government extended equal rights to both Chinese collective farms and Soviet collective farms.

<sup>19</sup> Ning Yanhong. "History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2015, page 278; A. Larin: "Overview of the History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", "Research on Overseas Chinese"; Issue 2, 2005.

<sup>20</sup> Ning Yanhong. "History of Overseas Chinese in Russia", Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2015, pp. 282, 283.

Due to their proficiency in agricultural practices, the regional government sought the assistance of the Chinese population in cultivating and providing vegetables for the local community. Hence, it was common for Chinese collective farms to provide vegetables and other agricultural commodities to the Soviet Far East in order to fulfill the demands of the indigenous populace. It is important to acknowledge that the Chinese population typically did not acquire the most desirable parcels of land. However, their adeptness in employing effective planting techniques enabled them to efficiently cultivate crops, including food staples and vegetables, on these lands. The influx of Chinese immigrants not only resulted in the expansion of arable land in the Far East, but also contributed to an augmentation in crop diversity. The Soviet government actively promoted the cultivation of traditional Chinese crops, including rice and soybeans, on collective farms in order to facilitate their widespread adoption in the Far East region. Therefore, it can be argued that the establishment of Chinese collective farms played a significant role in facilitating the involvement of Chinese immigrants in the process of socio-economic integration within the Far East region. The contribution of Chinese immigrants' labor played a significant role in the advancement of Soviet industry. Chinese immigrants possessed distinctive experiences and methodologies across various domains, yielding highly efficacious outcomes, notably within the realms of construction and gold mining.<sup>21</sup>

### *C. The immigration policy of the Soviet government*

The Soviet government expressed significant concern regarding the legal status of Chinese immigrants in the Far East subsequent to the establishment of Soviet power in the region. The issuance of Soviet residence certificates to foreigners was regulated by the Soviet government in January 1923 through the issuance of official documents. According to the provided document, it is stated that each non-native resident has the opportunity to acquire a residence permit valid for duration of one year. In accordance with the regulations, Chinese delegates were eligible to acquire a residency authorization valid for period of one year, with the option to request an extension of said authorization. In order to acquire resident status in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), Chinese immigrants were required to complete a formal application form and remit a fee amounting to 3 rubles. In accordance with pertinent Soviet policies and regulations, Chinese immigrants were afforded the privilege of exercising their voting rights. During the period of 1926 to 1927, the re-elections of the Far

Eastern Village Council witnessed a participation rate of 46.8% among Chinese immigrants. Subsequently, from 1928 to 1929, the participation rate of Chinese immigrants in the elections increased to 52.4%. This observation demonstrates the inclination of Chinese immigrants to engage in the civic affairs of the Far Eastern border region. A total of 10,407 Chinese laborers actively participated in the electoral process for the Vladivostok City Duma during the period spanning from 1925 to 1926. The Municipal Council witnessed the election of 44 individuals of Chinese descent as a consequence of the electoral process. Chinese immigrants were granted the privilege of engaging in regional party congresses and gatherings, albeit with certain restrictions imposed on their participation. To facilitate the execution of the nation's official policy, a plenipotentiary representative role for national minorities was established within regional administrative bodies. This position entailed the formulation and implementation of strategies aimed at fostering improved integration of foreign individuals, including those of Chinese origin, into the social and public spheres of the Far Eastern region.

The Soviet government's actions during the 1920s and 1930s, including the discontinuation of the New Economic Policy in the Far East, the Great Purge, and escalating international tensions, led to the frequent confiscation of property and arrests of Chinese immigrants. During the period from 1928 to 1929, the Far East region implemented a series of restrictive measures targeting Chinese individuals, including the prohibition of their participation in trading activities within local markets, the closure of major Chinese-owned enterprises, and the imposition of higher taxes on Chinese landowners.<sup>22</sup> On March 1, 1929, in Vladivostok, the local law enforcement authorities initiated a policy mandating Chinese individuals to provide documentation verifying their employment status and details pertaining to their financial resources. In 1929, a state of conflict emerged in the relations between China and the Soviet Union, prompting the Soviet government to issue directives to freeze the financial assets of Chinese entrepreneurs. As the deteriorating conditions in the Far East region unfolded, the Soviet authorities initiated a series of actions aimed at safeguarding the security of the Far Eastern borders. A significant undertaking involved the relocation of Chinese immigrants residing in the Far East to the regions of Xinjiang and Central Asia. Chinese migrants were also impacted by the Great Purge that took place in the 1930s. Chinese immigrants were subject to arrest, suppression, and even execution by the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs. The policies implemented by the Soviet government towards Chinese migrants exhibited distinct political objectives, as a significant portion of the evidence utilized to detain Chinese immigrants

<sup>21</sup> Kocheharova E.D. On the issue of the use of Chinese workers in the gold industry of the Far East (20–30s of the XX century). Russia and China on the Far Eastern borders. Blagoveshchensk: AmSU Publishing House. Vol. 3. 2002, p. 379.

<sup>22</sup> Zaleskaya O.V. Legal status of Chinese migrants in the Russian Far East. 1920-1930s // New and recent history. 2009. No. 3., pp. 211-219.

was demonstrably fabricated.<sup>23</sup> The implementation of extensive measures to restrict the influx of Chinese immigrants resulted in a notable decline in the number of Chinese individuals residing in the Far East region. In light of escalating tensions in the Far East, particularly following the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1936 by Japan and Germany, the Soviet government undertook measures to safeguard national interests and fortify border security. Consequently, a significant number of Chinese individuals were apprehended and detained. This course of action ultimately led to the determination that Chinese immigrants residing in the Soviet Far East should be compelled to relocate, with some individuals being subject to arrest.

#### IV. Conclusion

Regardless of the revolutionary or Soviet period, the role of Chinese immigrants in the economic development of the Russian Far East is irreplaceable. Throughout history, Chinese immigrants have played a significant role in fostering Russia's economic growth and have been instrumental in Russia's rise as a prominent player in the Pacific region. Chinese immigrants played a crucial role in supplying the Far East with essential commodities and serving as a source of affordable labor. The restriction on the mobility of Chinese immigrants by Russian authorities was implemented as a measure to safeguard national interests, primarily in response to the prevalence of smuggling and illicit criminal undertakings. However, the presence of labor shortages has posed challenges in implementing restrictions on Chinese immigrants. The October Revolution had a profound impact on social production and the lives of Chinese immigrants residing in the Far East region. During this period, the Chinese population residing in the Far East underwent substantial transformations under the newly established Soviet regime, resulting in a notable increase in their social standing and influence.

The fate of Chinese immigrants in the Far East was ultimately shaped by a series of significant events and policies, including industrialization, collectivization of agriculture, the repeal of the New Economic Policy (NEP), the Great Purge, the Sino-Soviet border conflict in the late 1920s, and the escalating international tensions during the 1930s. These factors led to the arrest, imprisonment, and forced relocation of Chinese immigrants.

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<sup>23</sup> Zaleskaya O.V. Chinese migrants in the political situation in the Far East in the late 1920s and mid-1930s, scientific article in the journal "Proceedings of the Russian State Pedagogical University named after A.I. Herzen, St. Petersburg, pp. 162-163.