

**THE POLICY OF THE GERMAN OCCUPATION POWER
IN RELATION TO THE DRAFT FORCE
OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR OF THE AZOV REGION**

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Abstract. The analysis of economic activity, especially at the regional level, has never been the object of research, both in Soviet historiography and in domestic science. We believe that we can most realistically trace the reality of the course of life of the population under occupation exactly at the regional level. The occupation power was changed throughout the war, depending on the situation at the front. These changes are especially noticeable at the regional level. Two years of occupation of the region allows us to analyze, as far as preserved sources, two full agricultural cycles allow. It was on their basis that we were able to come to the conclusions that were laid out in our study. An analysis of the economic activity of the German occupation power in the agricultural region is, first of all, an assessment of the attitude of the government towards its fixed assets that would allow the functioning of the industry as a whole. The subject of our study was the state of draft force, and the measures of the occupying power in relation to it. It is most convenient to analyze its level through the state of field husbandry and animal husbandry of the region declared by us. The logic here is quite simple, these industries simply could not exist without draft force. We believe that the policy of the occupation authorities did not lead the industry to the ruin, but, on the contrary, created conditions that allowed the recovery of draft force, both live and mechanical. It contributed to some stabilization in the functioning of the industry in the region and created even some prerequisites for its development. Elements of development, primarily related to livestock, we were able to prove this in one of our studies. Our study breaks down some stereotypes regarding occupation villages that came to us from the Soviet past. We constantly emphasize that our research

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does not deny the tragedy of war or, God forbid, re-examining its results. A study of the regional manifestations of occupational power allows us to see the diversity and, most importantly, allows us to answer a number of questions, especially related to the behavior of the local population. We believe that through an analysis of economic policy, one can also determine the attitude of the local population towards authorities. The elements of liberalism that were embedded in the capitalist system, even under the Nazi rule in Germany, carried some advantages in their economic policies. It was the recent past of the tragic policies of the Soviet regime that allowed the local authorities of the occupation regime to form a loyal majority among the peasantry of the region as a whole. We make that conclusion on basis the fact that the agricultural sector of the declared region functioned quite successfully throughout the entire period of occupation. We knowingly do not make comparative assessments with the pre-war period. We consider them incorrect. As an assessment of the state of economic life, we take the assessment that the occupation authorities themselves give.

1. Introduction

For some time, many aspects of economic activity were outside the study of Soviet historiography in the occupied territories. In the public consciousness questions about the draft force, like all economic activity in the occupied territory, were framed in an ideological cliché – a woman who plows on a harnessed cow. Moreover, it was a common identification for the whole war. The sharp fall of opportunities for the agrarian sector has always been the result of any war, and for any of warring sides. Although the life of the village was extremely difficult, but it was shown in the Soviet rear, but the life of the peasants in the occupied territories was shown solely in the context of guerrilla actions or the cruelty of the punishment. Unfortunately, these aspects of the history of occupation has been continued to remain outside the area of active scientific interest till today.

The purpose of our study is to find out the real state of the central element of the agrarian sector of the region at the time of occupation – the draft force, how functions of the sphere were able to be realized. Assessment of that theme also makes it possible to evaluate the economic activities of the occupying power in the declared region. We believe that the potential of this territory at the beginning of the occupation allowed the German authorities

to implement a full-fledged, and most importantly effective, policy in the agrarian sphere. It has tried to obtain some results in a very short period.

Our research suggests that the potential of our region's draft force during the occupation period was a bit different than it had been presented before. First of all, it is necessary to get rid of the illusions (the cliché of Soviet history), that there were tractors and combines in the basis of Soviet socialist agrarian production before the war. The basic ideas of the public consciousness about the pre-war village were reduced to images depicted by a number of Soviet films of that period, such as “Tractors” and “The Rich Bride”. The real situation was significantly different from the images officially declared by the Soviet authorities.

A lot of continuous upheavals and numerous human casualties completely crossed the whole way of life of the Ukrainian village. Naturally, it affected the new industrial relations. It is unwise to deny the presence of technique, in large enough quantities, but it would also be unwise to forget the role of the subjective factor in social processes, people, who began to work on that technique. For many decades, there were an acute shortage of equipment to work, despite the fact that it was in high availability, on the one hand, and its massive failure due to breakdowns, very poor and multi-term repair, on the other hand, in the socialist collective farm village. For the first time such a picture became a real phenomenon for Ukraine in 1938 [1, p. 29, 116]. The unpreparedness of a large amount of equipment for field work has been due the poorly repair and long-term delay. That fact has become so widespread and massive character that in some areas it has reached half of all standard equipment, and sometimes it has reached much more. The case when the whole area was forced to switch to manual mowing and gathering by horse-drawn, of course, cannot serve as a typical example. At the same time, the fact of manual labor or live draft force using instead machines or mechanisms was rather a norm, ubiquity than a single accident, for all regions of the Ukrainian prewar village [2, p. 171, 202]. The mass repression among workers of mechanism equipment resulted in extremely low skills among the mechanizers and steering. It led to the poor productivity of the work and to the rapid failure of the mechanisms. Naturally, there were different picture in regions. So, in 1940, it was ordered officially that tractors cultivated no more than 80% of the land in the Zaporizhzhya region. We have all reasons to believe that the figure was even lower in reality. Thus, we can state that,

despite the large number of equipment, it was not possible to operate it by one hundred percent. The actual working equipment was significantly lower than its regular number. We would like to point out that the establishment of an archaic system of work organization during occupation (mass manual labor, the attraction of a large number of additional workers, lack of equipment and mechanisms, the mass transition to horse thrust, the attraction of oxen and cows) did not become a sharp deterioration of daily work and living conditions of region's peasants [3, p. 33; 1].

In general, the situation with similar working conditions and the provision of draft force was also characteristic of the village in the conditions of the Soviet rear that lasted for many years even after the war in Ukrainian villages [4, p. 88].

Possibly, we could consider that regional specific of the occupation policy was as such an opportunity, when without drastically worsening the living conditions of the peasants, the new policy of power for a certain number of the population proved to be much more attractive. The German political system, even under totalitarianism, brought a lot of centuries-old culture elements of market economic relations to the occupied land. Despite the archaic nature of work organization, and most importantly its conditions, the introduction of elements in market relations was quite sufficient to become more attractive than the relations of the Soviet collective farm system.

Equally important notion that the new occupying power, in addition to punitive functions, pursued some economic policies that was positively and locally received in some regions. It is possible that such an approach should also be considered as regional features of policy occupation power.

Therefore, we believe that the stated theme should be considered through such directions, namely: machine– tractor maintenance and draft force – horses, oxen and cows.

2. Machine – tractor maintenance

Among the many economic institutions of the former Soviet power that new government left virtually unchanged, was the machine – tractor system (hereinafter MTS). Such action by the new authorities could be caused quite prosaic reason. The presence of such stations in the collective farm system was the result of a shortage in technology that only grew during the war. In our studies, we take as the basis the official figure of the Soviet post-war

documents according to which there were destroyed 69927 units of agricultural machines by the occupiers. The basis of that machines were tractors and combines [5, p. 20].

Another reason for this position of the German authorities may be the service nature of the stations that remotely resembled a means of working in Germany and was more convenient for them.

Keeping the stations as a system, the new authorities retained even completely broken MTS, using them as machine-tractor workshops. There were restored the district mechanization and agricultural services virtually unchanged. All station employees were retained and they continued to work in their field. Only the agronomists of the stations, which before the war performed more controlling functions, were transferred to the district agro-counters. Understanding the role and importance of these stations for the functioning of the industry, all employees were left with a pre-war pay system. The salaries of the mechanics depended on the work performed, and the executives – on rates [6, p. 4, 5, 7; p. 22]. In addition to the cash payment, that was quite high as for the countryside, all the mechanics received various natural surcharges during the harvesting campaign. For example, for each mowed hectare, the tractor driver accounted for 1.5 kg of grain (800 gr. of productive grain and 600 gr. of forage), the assistants received 80% of the tractor driver's payment in one of the MTS. Working in the fields of a particular collective farm, they also received work day, as well as farmers of this collective farm. In order to encourage workers during the period of mowing time, they were paid for 5 carb. for work / day, in case of a constant fulfillment of the daily norm for four days. When it came out for ten days, all these days were paid in double amount [7, p. 3, 4; p. 17, 24, 25]. Such an approach can be considered quite marketable that could stimulate the explorer to work well. An interesting point, the regional leadership of agriculture, the new power, made sure that all farms paid to MTS for the work they had done in 1941, that is, even before the new power came. It is impossible to say about the volume of work in 1942, but the available calculations show that they were.

In addition to MTS, there were tractors in some state farms. Most of them were preserved in the Novo-Mykolaiv grain state farm that had a large machine-tractor base before the war. It is unlikely that the situation with the amount of equipment, especially the ability to work with it, in this farm was radically different from others.

Thus, before the spring and field work in 1942, there were 11 tractors, 6 of them were in working order, two operating combines “Komunar” and two on-board machines ZIS and GAZ in the farm [8, p. 6; p. 1; p. 1-2].

By the spring of 1943 we see a clear tendency of a positive plan in the development of the tractor park of the aforementioned state farm. All existing 10 tractors were in working state. Also, there was the abundance of various trailed vehicles and mechanisms. The lists included 59 items, with only three items not working out of them [9, p. 46].

The rational management of the state farm was manifested in the qualitative organization of work of the entire economy, as well as in the use of equipment in field work. Such an assessment is confirmed by the results during the spring field work of 1943. Thus, on May 5, 1943, of the 1754 hectares that had already been plowed and sown, 1030 hectares of all work were done by tractors, 430 hectares were used for horse-drawn drafts and only 290 hectares were sown manually. There were usually small fields of several tens of hectares. Of the 1000 hectares of steam raised, 958 hectares were plowed by tractors [10, p. 60; p. 74].

There must be a lot of factors to explain the successful operation of this farm, where the subjective factor played not a lasting role. The main thing is to admit that such work could also be. At the same time, we believe that the example of functioning of such a state farm under occupation conditions cannot be considered as typical for our region. We believe it is necessary to continue the discussion of fact that it was successful work of the territory during the occupation. Although it should not be forgotten that it was a state-owned enterprise and everything that made its management, it was hardly in line with the policy of the authorities. By the way, this is probably one of the few farms that has not been involved in the field work of cows that has been common practice in our area.

An example of other farming, as an example of realizing other opportunities, can be seen at the work of the collective farm "Zgoda" in the same area. At the beginning of the occupation, there were two running tractors, two operating combines, 12 draft horse and several engines in the collective farm. During seeding campaign in 1942, the farm was unable to plow and sow about 20% of its land, planting only 943 hectares of 1665 hectares. Tractors were cultivated not more than 10% of the total land. But every day 50 horses, 20 oxen and 40 cows were involved in field work [11, p. 43, 53, 75].

There are some more examples that show us the situation with tractors in the region. In 1942 there were planned to use about 60 tractors for field work to the whole Pologovskyi District. They could use more tractors, but only the lack of fuel prevented this. The plowing rate was completely in line with the plans for the district that the regional agriculture department offered – up to 1500 hectares per day. Similar indicators help us suggest that the bulk of the field work in the area was performed by tractors. Maybe because of it 1,200 cows were not recruited into the fields to work in the area.

Another example helps to look at the problem a little differently. On April 22, 1942 the field work began in the Kuibyshev district. According to the plan, there had to be plowed up to 1300 hectares per day in the area. However, by April 27, only 1,072 hectares were able to be sown that was nearly 214 hectares per day. This very modest amount was achieved despite the fact that 1240 oxen, 4251 horses and almost 4200 cows were attracted. On April 27, the tractor-fuel was received in the area. We do not know the number of tractors in the area, but in a few days, according to reports, 11200 hectares of cereals were ready in the area and the potato and late corn could be planted as of May 5 [12, p. 14, 16].

These examples show that the industry is not left without tractors, but their total number was small. In addition, they are very unevenly distributed across the region. At the same time, in spite of their small numbers, tractors performed a very large amount of work, especially during performing field work on cereals.

As we noted in our research, since the fall of 1942, the authorities have started quite profound changes in the agrarian sphere. In our opinion, it can be equated to the level of reforms. They also touched the machine-tractor sector. According to the order that came from the German instance, all working agricultural machinery and mechanisms from all farms in the region was collected at several sites at the end of 1942 [13, p. 23]. These were usually good working MTS or farms with a large tractor base. There are several reasons for such a move by the authorities. First, it is to concentrate equipment in farms where it could be more rationally managed, serviced and centralized. The lists of necessary spare parts for their agricultural machinery show how practically the unsolved problem was for small farms in Novo-Ivanivka village [14, p. 5-6].

Processes that began during the reorganization of collective farm could be another reason. In areas where collective farms began to be eliminated,

the arable land that was most commonly used by tractors and that were divided into small individual areas, disappeared. Peasants were handed oxen and horses to cultivate these areas. Having achieved an increase in the level of cultivation on a part of the land in this way, the authorities began to collect equipment, most likely, in the areas where large farms were preserved and where significant parcels of land remained.

3. The live draft force

The state of the horse park can be recorded on numerous accounting documents that were made immediately after the occupation began. These reports allow us to see a real picture of the region through examples of individual farms. We tried to make generalizing figures for the region ourselves. First of all, it should be noted that, at least in our region, the passage of the front did not lead to the destruction of villages on the scale previously represented by Soviet historiography. We traced a similar situation on the example of cattle, this can be seen in the examples of horses. Moreover, the picture in the region under review differed little, both in areas where there were hostilities and where the Red Army left without a fight. So, in the collective farm "Communar" of Andreevsky district (area of hostilities), there were 220 horses at the beginning of 1942. In the collective farm "2 five-year-olds", in Belozersky district (leaving the Red Army without a fight), there were 79 horses. The collective farm "Zgoda" of the Novomykolaiv district (finding on the way of intensive movement of retreating Soviet troops), there were 45 working horses [15, p. 1-2; p. 1-2; p. 18].

Immediately after the occupation began, the new authorities in relation to the horses declared that they could only be in the possession of artillery and state farms. This approach did not cause much criticism from the peasants, because the situation with them before the war was similar. As we know, just before the war, the Soviet authorities campaigned on the final elimination of the last individuals and the private ownership of horses. When migrants or refugees came to live or work in the farms with their own horses, farms didn't take animals away, they bought them [16, p. 75].

Despite the numerous farm records, systematic and generalized data on the area could not be identified. The author tried to independently systematize the revealed data and to bring it into the table №1 [17, p. 22-31; p. 3, 34; p. 1-6; p. 30-31].

Table 1

**State horse herd employed in agriculture field during the occupation
(1941-1943 years)**

| | 01.01.42 | 01.09.42 | 01.10.42. | 01.01.43 | 15.03.43 | 01.07.43 |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Region | 132573 * | 128652 * | 128377 * | 92476 ** | – ** | 97825 ** |
| Collective Farms | 127490 | – | 117276 | 82043 | – | 80538 |
| State farms | 4727 | – | 8496 | 7515 | – | 6731 |
| Private | 346 | 2409 | 2605 | 2918 | 3524 | 10556 |

* data included attachment areas, cities, as well as police horses and administrations, all in 30 districts

** data is given only for horses working in agriculture and in 14 areas

There was difficulty in organizing the data due to the inability to correctly identify which categories of horses were mentioned in the reports. Especially it was difficult in reports of 1942. It was not always clear which horses were designated as working, those already walking in the yoke, or only draft. In 1943, it was already clearly seen in the horse category reports; working horses, stallions, young animals, mares of the uterus, etc.

Despite all the mechanization of World War II, the horse remained a serious draft force, including for the occupying power. It was the main one for the agricultural sector of the occupied territories. On this basis, we believe that the conservation and development of the stock of horses should be one of the top priorities of the occupying power.

The table allows us to draw several generalizations and conclusions. First, the processes that have taken place in the industry during the review period don't allow us to say that the policy of the new government led to the decline of the horse industry or to a sharp decrease in its livestock. Trends that increase the total number of horses are clearly visible. Secondly, estimating the number of employed livestock exclusively in the agricultural sector, we see that despite the planned mobilizations, unplanned requisitions and deaths, the number of horse livestock not only remained, but also showed growth. It allowed to keep the industry in working condition. The preservation of young animals made it possible to start increasing the number of working horses in 1943.

The growth of horses in the state farms is notable in the table. Such growth coincides with the beginning of activity on restoration of livestock

herd in state farms. The used means of farms are interesting and important. In 1942 the number of horses is increased from 32 heads to 296, 131 of which were purchased by state farm. The sharp growth of the young horse was the result of a sharp increase in the mares of the uterus from 14 to 60 heads [18, p. 128]. We think it is necessary to pay attention to the word "purchased". State farms are state-owned enterprises, so they could not be so free to choose economic policy, as well as the means of its implementation. They couldn't do it even in terms of market relations, even to former collective farms. That's why, we can assume that such activities agreed with the political authorities. And their means were also sanctioned. That is, the activities of state farms can, and even should be considered, as an open manifestation of the occupation power policy in the region.

Financial documents are very interesting. They show what economic base was laid under the measures of state farms. The financial plan of the farm included such items of expenditure as: the purchase of young animals, the cost of transporting animals, exchange [19, p. 1]. The stable growth of livestock in the collective farms of the region suggests that economic incentives were not out of place in this regard as well.

The reform of collective farms was measures of authorities that undoubtedly had a stimulating significance for horse breeding. The transfer of land and drafts into private hands gave an impetus to the development of horse breeding. This is very clearly seen in the presented table. The whole numerical increase of working horses, despite the reduction of horses' stock in farms, was due to private farms. This trend was clearly growing. A similar pattern was present in the private farms of a small number of individuals in the pre-war period, compared to collective farms. However, here we see a striking difference in the actions of two authorities. Soviet authorities interrupted this pattern by eliminating individuals and the right of private ownership of horses. The occupying power, on the contrary, encouraged the creation of a similar layer of peasants by eliminating collective farms. For the development of private horse breeding, the authorities issued an order to abolish the bundle of horses. By the way, such a service was paid before the war.

The new authorities began to rebuild all the pre-war equestrian infrastructure for the development of horse breeding. So, by the spring of 1943, 4 restored breeding horses engaged in growing horses in the region. In addition to factories, tribal work was also carried out in 7 specialized items

that numbered 667 heads. In the spring of 1943, a new large horse-breeding plant situated on three kilometers south of the city of Zaporizhzhya. Two large tracts of land, 2000 ha and 6000 ha each, were designated under the pastures. Breeding stallions were imported from Germany to improve breeding work in the region [20, p. 110; p. 17].

Almost all farms had their own farms. Dozens of farms began to do their own breeding work. At the beginning of May 1943, there were 66 breeding farms with 2074 heads [21, p. 28].

The mobilization of horses into the army, as an inevitable consequence of war for any country, was fairly planned and at the same time selective in the region. Only adult horses were taken into the army, at the age of 4-10 years. The young and female horses completely excluded from the mobilization [22, p. 48].

The question of whether a sufficient number of horses were enough to do the necessary work on farms would be a matter for discussion, because every owner would always want to have more. We believe that this issue should be considered from the standpoint of the possibility of fulfilling the tasks that the authorities are entrusted. This formulation of the question requires further research, and possibly development of new approaches for its understanding. Thus, materials on the course of field work in farms in 1943 show a fairly stable performance. A large number of farms coped with field work without the involvement of tractors. By the way, it was much better compared to the works in 1942. Once again, we aim to draw attention to the fact that it is not a question of comparing the quality of the work performed. Thus, the farm №48 of the Minchikursk Rural Administration performed spring work without using of tractors. There were used about 25 horses and 50 cows daily. For comparison, in the spring of 1942, only two horses, four oxen and more than 100 cows worked in the fields of the same farm. The farm “Zlagoda”, having 43 working horses, coped with the work without tractors. There were cultivated all its land. The example of a farm in Novo-Ivanivka can well be considered as indicative in this regard. In the spring of 1943 it had 86 horses, 18 of them were two years old young horses. 114 cows were prepared for field works, however, such amount wasn't need; maximum daily use varied in the amount of 10 heads [23, p. 1; p. 1-8; p. 39; p. 18]. It should be emphasized that in 1943, the amount of land under cultivation decreased significantly.

There was another kind of draft force that today is probably forgotten. However, the reality of the events shows that, personally to the southern region, this kind of draft force did not disappear anywhere, it continued to exist throughout the whole period before the war. It's about oxen. The number of working oxen was about 15 thousand heads in Zaporizhzhya region at the beginning of the occupation [24, p. 1].

During a short period of occupation, sharp quantitative fluctuations in relation to oxen were not and could not be, but a number of trends can be noted. All oxen and horses were concentrated in the former collective and state farms. If there were cases of their finding in private hands, they were bought by farms (not confiscated – V.O.). Quite soon, already in the spring of 1942, the process of raising bulls on oxen was put in farms on an industrial stream. At the beginning of 1943 oxen were grown in 308 collective farms and 12 state farms. There were 12119 and 1858 heads respectively [25, p. 19]. The situation of rather rapid recovery of the whole direction of the livestock industry suggests that this skill has not disappeared in the region. The fact of its rapid recovery may confirm our assumption that the population of the region was mentally ready for it, and it adopted the model of industrial relations that new authorities offered.

Widespread self-cultivation and purchasing animals allowed to form a steady tendency to increase their numbers. At the beginning of spring 1943, only in 14 districts of the region their number exceeded 10 thousand heads [26, p. 22-31; p. 1-6].

Oxen and horses were given to peasants for personal use as a draft force in areas where were liquidation of farms / former collective farms.

The practice of involving cows in field work, as we noted above, has been familiar to the peasants of the region since the pre-war period. Deficiency of draft animals in the agricultural sector offset using cows everywhere. It must be remembered that such practices were far from unique in the villages of the Soviet rear. We aim to draw attention to some of the issues that will help you to consider this issue more comprehensively.

First, involvement was desirable and maybe even necessary somewhere, but it was not totally mandatory for all cow owners. The fluctuations in the involvement of cows in the field work varied within 30% – 70% of their number. In some regions, such involvement was seen as a forced action and only during peak periods. In our view, in the spring of 1943, one can even

say that there has been a decline in such practices. The common practice of using cows in field work was to transport some cargo, very rarely harrowing. We have not found any examples of using cows for plowing the ground.

Secondly, the appointment of cows for work was done in advance. They were socially accustomed to walk in the yoke. Most cows were used for transportation or field work – harrowing. There may have been some use of them for plowing the ground, but we did not find that facts.

Third, the involvement of cows was encouraged by farms and local authorities. There were made special units for the working cows in the fields. There they received fodder that was issued from stock farms. The owners received certain work days for their working cows. Local governments removed part of the milk supply plan from working cows.

4. Conclusions

Our study gives all reasons to assume that at the beginning of the occupation of draft force, both live and mechanical, it was quantitatively quite sufficient to assert that the industry did not fall. The policy of the occupation authorities contributed not only to the preservation of draft force, the policy was aimed at preserving it as a warehouse part of the industry. We can see the prerequisites for its development already on the second year. These studies allow us to consider the processes that occurred in industries in which the draft warehouse is central – this is primarily field cultivation. Processes in living draft force cannot be considered in isolation from the livestock industry. In general, it can be argued that the occupation authorities pursued a fairly liberal economic policy that did not meet with mass rejection by the peasants in this region. On the contrary, we can even talk about some favorable perceptions of it. The loyalty of the population was manifested in a fairly rapid stabilization of the agricultural sector in the region and the establishment of mechanisms for its stable functioning.

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