



## MILITARY PRISONERS OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN AND GERMAN ARMIES IN KHUJAND

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<b>Received:</b> May 11 <sup>th</sup> 2021 <b>Accepted:</b> May 28 <sup>th</sup> 2021 <b>Published:</b> June 29 <sup>th</sup> 2021	The article examines the prisoners of war of the First World War in the Khujand district in the Fergana Valley for 5-7 years.
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The city stretches along the banks of the Syr Darya. It is located in that narrow intermountain passage along which the path to the Fergana Valley has long been running. From the north behind it rise the Mogoltau mountains with the main peak called Muzbek (means "Lord of the Ice"). From the south, the Belesynik mountain range rises, behind which the high snow-capped peaks of the Turkestan ridge can be seen in the distance.

Handicraft production was intensively developed here. It is noteworthy that there were quarters in which they were engaged in a certain type of craft, in connection with which they had characteristic names.

For example, silk winders and cotton pickers worked in the Pillakash quarter, fine yarn weavers in the Khosa bofon quarter, jewelers in the Zargaron quarter, stonemasons in the Sangburon quarter, and battle shield masters in the Sanjaron quarter. There were also quarters of blacksmiths, foundry workers, skullcaps, etc. [1].

Today Khujand is a large industrial and cultural center of northern Tajikistan. There is a large silk factory, a cotton ginning plant, a shoe and furniture factory, and a plant for breeding grana.

At one of the oldest enterprises in the city - a cannery - high quality canned food is prepared from various fruits, including local varieties of very sweet apricots, which are delivered to different parts of the region and to the world market.

In Khujand there is a university, a technological and pedagogical institute, a botanical garden, and a regional musical and drama theater.

Those who enter the city from the north - east, for example, from the Samgar side, or, as we are, from the Buston side, immediately find themselves on the street that runs along the river bank, which is called the Syr Darya.

To the right of it passages leading to new micro-districts leave, and on the left a wide river bed opens up, smoothly flowing in the green, slightly winding banks.

There is a recreation area, a bicycle track is visible a little further, and then a comfortable city beach begins, where you can stop and swim in the warm waters of the river[2].

Khujand was far from the fronts of the First World War, but the tragedies of this senseless war reached the city. The mass consciousness erased the memories of several million who died on the battlefields of this epoch-making conflict, among whom were hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war of the German, Austro-Hungarian army.

The first group of Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war arrived in Khujand on September 28, 1914.

They were met by the head of the guard team, warrant officer G. Tarasenko, with an escort from the Chernyaev station, and, under heavy guard, on foot, they went to the right bank of the Syr Darya river.

To create a barracks town, a team of prisoners of war and a military garrison of the Khujand district were mobilized. A special commission was created, which outlined the construction of a bridge across the river. And in the shortest possible time, a barracks town, an infirmary and a ferry were built. Most of the soldiers lived in the barracks town, and the officers were housed in the city fortress.

The head of the administration of the Khujand district and the head of the military garrison had to work hard to employ 6 thousand prisoners of war, feed them and put shoes on.

Thanks to her efforts, in many industrial enterprises, on the basis of a treaty, a large number of prisoners of war were accepted. For example, at the state-owned cement plant st. Khilkovo, on the basis of an employment contract, 295 prisoners of war workshops and workers were accepted, including: mechanics-41, carpenters-25, builders-19, masons-24, unskilled workers-165 and clerks-21 [3] In the Hungry Steppe, 219 prisoners of war worked, and it was also cheap. So, in the village of Konno-Guards, 46 prisoners of war worked. They received 25 kopecks per

day for their labor. The drummer among them was Mishko Yan, in 9 days he received 2 rubles 75 kopecks. In Khujand, many prisoners of war in production workshops, factories and factories took part in charity events, and many seamstresses from prisoners of war embroidered shirts and rings for the front at the call of the "Ladies' House". In March 1916 alone, they sewed 161 shirts and the same number of rings for the army in the field. We received 32 rubles for their labor.

According to the report of the head of the prisoners of war of the Khujand prisoner of war town, the second lieutenant of the Mikhalevsky Committee of the Red Cross and the Ladies' House, the following of the prisoners of war were encouraged for their good work: Gavril Shvidchenko, Stefan Sanger, Paul Kliment, Franz Vasiash and 30 others with money and linen. Tailors, seamstresses - prisoners of war high wages from 2 rubles 50 kopecks up to 3 rubles.

Those years the population of the city was only 30 thousand. They helped in every possible way in home improvement, paid for hairdressing and bathing services, and provided clothes.

At the direction of the head of the Khujand district, a first-aid post, a butcher's and a bakery were opened. Many prisoners of war were sent to work for local entrepreneurs, for defense plants, railways, landscaping, construction and irrigation canals. Prisoners of war were used and guarded for in many volosts and districts of the Khujand district, for example, a guard group was organized from prisoners of war at the Dragomirovo station, and a guard team of 45 Auto-Hungarian soldiers and officers was also created in the Ura-Tyubinsky district. A guard team of prisoners of war carried out a security service on the railway line and at the Ursatevsk, Dragomirovo, Skobelev stations, all the way to the city of Tashkent.

The Turkestan military district approved the document "14 working conditions for prisoners of war", which was also adopted in the Khujand district with some additions. In particular, prisoners of war were not allowed to use military uniforms in their workplaces, to engage in trade, and free movement around the city was also prohibited.

Permanent public supervision was established, it was strictly forbidden for citizens to receive prisoners of war at home without the written permission of the head of the team, and it was forbidden to forward postal items without censorship.

In the Khujand district, prisoners of war were employed in various jobs. Among them there were doctors, shoemakers, hairdressers, builders and other specialists. Thus, Lieutenant Kober was the first to compile a relief map of Khujand and its volosts. In the field of medicine, Dr. Theodore Lagny, Fan Maglot, cadet Aldo Smarella, Lieutenant Rudolf Ventruba worked in government agencies. Many of them worked in factories, factories, private enterprises and many others.

For good and conscientious work, many prisoners of war were given the right to walk freely not only in the Russian, but also in the Muslim part of the city.

Good specialists enjoyed great prestige and made a significant contribution to the economic and cultural life of the Khujand district. Thus, a brass band was organized, which took part in all the activities of the county. Of the 95 prisoners of war, for the first time in March 1915, the notes of "Chardasha" sounded on the banks of the Syr Darya. The orchestra from the Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war played this wonderful melody, besides "Chardasha", the orchestra's repertoire also included other interesting melodies, marches, fragments from operettas, etc.

Thus, the orchestra performed such musical works as melodies: "Zaporojest beyond the Dunai", "Hopak", "Little Russian Cossack", "Saratov Latina", a polka concert for two cornettoes and "Mazurka", a work by Lewandowski.

Painters taught local residents to whitewash the facades of their houses, and builders began to build beautiful European houses, began to install European doors and windows, some of which have survived to this day. Joiners made desks and boards for the Russian-native school, made doors and frames, wooden spoons, benches, bedside tables in European style. The local population bought these wooden products willingly.

In those years, numerous representatives of charitable organizations tried to provide material assistance. Thus, on July 29, 1916, a delegation of the Swedish Red Cross arrived in Khujand, which included Vulga Oga Galina Herney, Monera Peterson, Fenger Ramp, Selding Arendrup, accompanied by 6 German and 5 Austrian sisters of mercy.

In the following months, several more groups of Germanic and Austrian Sisters of Charity arrived.[4].

After 1917, the prisoners received more freedom of movement and in 1918 they elected the Prisoners of War Council. By the middle of 1918, when the Brest Peace was in effect, the fate of the former soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies was determined by the agreement on their evacuation to their homeland.

But not all prisoners of war managed to go home. Some of the prisoners even got families. Some prisoners of war were destined to stay here forever. There were also 590 of them in Khujand.

During a visit to the burial sites of Austrian prisoners of war, it turned out that in 1960, during the construction of the military registration and enlistment office, their remains were reburied in a mass grave in the 18th micro district. But, unfortunately, we could not find their graves, since at that time the monuments and corresponding tablets were not installed.

In search of traces of the Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war of the First World War, we found that in D. Rasulovsky district, at the railway station (at that time, Dragomirov station), there were preserved historical sites.

According to historians, old-timers, some of the prisoners of war died in carriages. And upon arrival at the station, they were buried not far from it.

One of such incidents happened in Khujand. Where the prisoners of war were buried, a plot of land was allocated for the construction of a house, the family built a house, but they did not touch the monument, on the contrary, family members looked after it. So the monument was preserved.

On it in 3 languages (German, Russian, Persian) it was written: **"Prisoners of wars (POW) who died in 1919 from their comrades"[5].**

It is known that most of the prisoners of war stayed here forever, got families, and their children considered Fergana and other settlements of the Fergana Valley their homeland. They took a lively part in the economic, social and cultural life, were elected as deputies, built houses, created new enterprises and worked in them together with the indigenous population.

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