

ІСТОРИЯ УКРАЇНИ

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Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University

DETENTION CONDITIONS OF PRISONERS AT THE KHARKIV PENITENTIARY (1906–1917 YEARS)

The article examines the detention conditions of prisoners at the Kharkiv penitentiary during 1906–1917. It was established that in 1904, with the beginning of war with Japan, there were difficulties in Russian Empire with prisoners' delivery to Sakhalin island. After the end of hostilities, the government concluded that transporting prisoners across the country was a very expensive and unjustified procedure. Based on this, on April 10, 1906, the State Council of the Russian Empire approved a bill establishing central penal prisons in the European part of the Russian Empire, including Kharkiv. It was found that until 1913 the Kharkiv penitentiary was called the Kharkiv Correctional Detention Unit and was administered by the Kharkiv Provincial Prison Inspectorate. Stepan Feldman was appointed as a head of the prison. In the course of the research it was detected that both political and criminal prisoners were kept in Kharkiv penitentiary for the whole period of its existence. Among them were well-known personalities of that time: former members of the First State Meeting G. Lintvarov and V. Radakov, a member of the liberation movement in Georgia M. Gobechiya. The life of the prisoners was investigated and it was found that there was a church, a hospital and warehouses on the territory of the prison. It was established that the detainees suffered from the arbitrariness of the guards, as well as from typhus epidemics. It was established that the Kharkiv Prison Trusteeship Committee had made a great contribution to helping the penitentiary (including the purchase of medicines to combat typhus). Namely, at the request of the Kharkiv prison guard committee before the governor of the city, the penitentiary installed electric lighting in 818 light bulbs, 15 arc lanterns for 1,000 candles and 20 fans per 400 meters. Nevertheless, the conditions of detention in the penitentiary were far from ideal. The overcrowded and cramped cells of the prison lacked ventilation and clean air. Another problem was the lack of food and the constant outbreaks of typhus, tuberculosis or scurvy. It was noticed that due to the difficult conditions of detention, the history of the Kharkiv penitentiary contained numerous episodes of riots and escapes. The situation for convicts changed only at the end of 1917, when the government decided that the Kharkiv penitentiary was finally liquidated and political prisoners were given the long-awaited freedom.

Key words: hard labor, Kharkiv penitentiary, prisoners, M. Gobechiya, G. M. Lintvarov, V. M. Radakov, Kharkiv Prison Guardianship Committee.

Setting the issue. The hard labor is a special type of punishment for criminal and political crimes. In the end of the 19th century – in the beginning of the 20th century – the hard labor combined deprivation of liberty with a strict regime and attraction of prisoners to physical work. In the Russian Empire, the hard labor existed in the form of a system of central penitentiaries. There were such prisons on the territory of Ukraine, including Kharkiv.

Analysis of prior related research papers and publications. Analyzing the state of scientific development of the problem, it should be noted that

in modern Ukrainian history the topic of functioning of the penitentiaries on the territory of Ukraine (including the Kharkiv penitentiary) is almost unexplored and there is no generalizing paper on this problem. There are only works of authors, which indirectly touch on the mentioned issue. Among them it is possible to allocate papers of L. Levchenko [12], V. Shchukina [26], P. Tokalenko [21]. On the other hand, Russian scientists pay much attention to the place and role of the hard labor in the history of their state. Among them it is possible to allocate papers of A. Ivanova [10], D. Burdini [2], I. Shenmayer [25],

E. Chuvashova [24], which examined the system of the Russian Empire's penitentiaries, conditions of imprisonment and life of the prisoners.

Setting the task. According to the words above, the author has set a goal to study the conditions of detention of prisoners in the Kharkiv penitentiary during 1906–1917.

Presenting the findings. In 1904, with the start of the war with Japan, the Russian Empire faced difficulties in delivering convicts to Sakhalin island. After the end of hostilities, the government concluded that transporting detainees across the country was a very expensive and unjustified procedure. Given that passenger trains traveling from Moscow to the final station Dalekiy were on the road for 12 days, the arresting trailers sometimes traveled for months. And on the way the detainees had to be fed, watered, treated, guarded. In addition, there were sometimes emergencies and even escapes [23]. Based on this, on April 10, the State Council approved a bill stating that “further reference to Sakhalin island for hard labor and settlements, as well as the expulsion of vagrants to the island to stop”. According to the resolution, henceforth convicts to hard labor were sent to serve their sentences in the European regions of the Russian Empire [9, p. 340].

Right after the announcement of the resolution in 1906, the Kharkiv penitentiary was founded. Until 1913, it was called the Kharkiv Correctional Detention Unit. It was administered by the Kharkiv Provincial Prison Inspectorate [18, p. 108]. Stepan Feldman was appointed as a head of the prison. Oleksandr Myrnyi was elected Deputy Chief, Serhiy Sirenko became Secretary, and Mykola Ivanov and Anatoliy Dmitriev were appointed Assistants [1, p. 167].

Both political and criminal prisoners were held in the Kharkiv penitentiary. Initially, the newly arrived party of detainees was driven to the basement of the prison, which was located in the basement. The department consisted of a corridor and four chambers, each with an area of 20–25 square yards. There were no bunks in the cell, so people were forced to sit on the dirty floor. They started feeding the newcomers only the next day. After that, the detainees were taken to their cells [22].

An article by journalists of the “Utro” newspaper is quite valuable in the context of covering the detention of prisoners in the Kharkiv penitentiary. In particular, it was written that having unwound the sentences in the Kharkiv prison on the Cold Mountain for the “election process” former members of the First State Meeting G. Lintvarov and V. Radakov were released on August 23 at 7 a.m. After their release, we had to

talk to G. Lintvarov about their imprisonment and hear a lot of interesting information from their experiences and observations. Imprisonment affected their health quite unfavorably, especially for G. Lintvarov: he lost weight, wasted. G. Lintvarov and V. Radakov were placed in a single building on the 2nd floor. The windows of their cells faced southwest, into the courtyard, into the bakery. In this regard, more convenient cameras would be those facing east, with windows that offer the best view of the city. In the courtyard there were workshops, in which from 7 o'clock in the morning and up to 6 o'clock in the evening the rattle of iron is incessantly heard. The building where the former deputies were housed is home to a select audience: those sentenced to death, informers and long-term detainees, and those on probation.

On the first day of imprisonment, as soon as the former deputies were placed in cells, they did not have time to get used to the new situation, they were deeply moved by the thunder of chains from the corridors where detainees leaving the church so-called dates. For the first two hours, the noise from this chain bell muffled everyone else and kept everyone nervous. Deputies could not get used to this ringing of chains for another week, but then the habit and other, stronger impressions made them forget about it.

The cells, in which G. Lintvarov and V. Radakov were placed, were three steps wide and five steps long. The window and door of the cell were in deep niches. Window is above the head; the window sill starts from the shoulders and goes steeply up; through the window you can see only the pipes of the bakery, which is 40 steps away, and a piece of the sky through the iron cover of the lattice. The cells contained so-called “toilets”. It was unbearable in the cells on hot days. From 12 o'clock the sun began to heat the chamber and heated it throughout the day. And since the window was small, and because of it there was a weak exchange of air, at night the temperature in the cell remained 5–6° above the outside. It should be added that the prison has “backlash toilets”, from which during the heat came back. There was smoke from the bakery outside.

During the week, G. Lintvarov and V. Radakov managed to get used to the new situation and start reading, the only means of leisure for solitary confinement. No more than three books could be kept in the cell. Although the former deputies were held in solitary confinement, they were soon introduced to both the present and recent past of the corps. In particular, G. Lintvarov was comforted that his cell was located directly opposite the cell in which

in 1905 sat his friend Sergievsky, and nearby, in the same corridor in cell № 35 sat E. Rapp and M. Shidlovsky. Memories of the corps' recent past brightened reality and gave the prisoners some vivacity. But, unfortunately, this cheerful mood began to change very quickly from the incredibly difficult impressions that began to torment former deputies when they learned that under their cells were sentenced to death... It was difficult to observe the fact that adults are healthy Convict prisoners, sentenced to lead many years in prison, were forced by the conditions of a single corps to spend all their time in absolute and compulsory idleness. It is said that there were cases when the detainee made some senseless prank, for example, tore his clothes, although he knew that he would be sent to solitary confinement for it. Meanwhile, the practice of solitary confinement has become so entrenched that, as a general rule, ten months of solitary confinement are counted as one year of hard labor. Thus, the authorities themselves recognize that forced idleness is more difficult than forced labor.

A long-term detainee brought to Kharkiv penitentiary from remote provinces (there are many Caucasians, residents of Grodno, Astrakhan and other provinces just as far from Kharkiv) and, therefore, deprived of communication with loved ones, must endlessly cherish any news received from relatives. It may be that this connection with loved ones who have remained at large is the only true and most important incentive not to give up. There have been cases where adult detainees have cried without receiving news from home.

Criminal detainees met only with close relatives once a week on Sundays; political had twice: on Tuesdays and Fridays. Walks were allowed for the first four weeks in the courtyard. Lunches were received from the hospital kitchen. For the most part, former deputies met with detainees during walks. There is reason to believe that the news about former deputies of the First Meeting are in prison spread among the detainees in the first two days. The former deputies were amazed that during meetings with the detainees, they looked at them very carefully and perhaps a little gloomily. But they should have been the first to bow and talk to them, as their faces were immediately illuminated by a friendly smile. It was not possible to talk on walks: the guards were very careful about it [11, p. 4].

Detainees often suffered from the arbitrariness of guards. Any protest provoked shouts, curses and often the threat of "shooting like a dog." Interestingly, the more meaningful the protest, the more intelligent

and correct it was, the more storm it caused. The assistant chief of the Kharkiv penitentiary, nicknamed "Psychopath", was especially distinguished by all sorts of allegations and threats to the detainees, whom the detainees hated and feared [22].

There were also conflicts between the prison administration and the city's government agencies. Thus, in 1913, the Sanitary Care on Cold Mountain (where the penitentiary was located) noticed that the penitentiary spent several years removing sewage into the county and dumping it in a pit in front of the windows of residential buildings and the Zemstvo hospital. Despite instructions from the prison chief that such a phenomenon was unacceptable, the sewage continued. Therefore, the Sanitary Care appealed for assistance to the Kharkiv County Zemstvo, according to which the convict prison was strictly prohibited from removing garbage and sewage to the county territory [13, p. 6].

Almost annual outbreaks of typhus were a serious problem for convicts. One of the mass outbreaks occurred in 1913. The patients were sent to the hospital of the Kharkiv penitentiary. Some of the prisoners of the Kharkiv Transfer Prison were also sent there, as it had only a tiny and completely unequipped hospital. The epidemic doctor of the prison was O. Beklemishev [16, p. 3].

However, despite timely assistance, the death rate among convicts was high. Meliton Gobechiya, an active participant in the liberation movement in Georgia (1904-1906), became one of the victims of typhus. For his participation in the revolution he was sentenced in 1911 by the Tiflis Judicial Chamber to four years of hard labor. He arrived in Kharkiv penitentiary on August 9, 1911. D. Gobechiya went down in history as a talented poet and translator of French authors into Georgian, as well as the head of one of the Georgian newspapers during the uprising in Georgia. According to his convictions, M. Gobechiya joined the party of socialists-federalists [14, p. 4].

The Kharkiv Prison Trusteeship Committee, established in 1844 by a decree of June 8, 1843, made a great contribution to helping the convict prison (including the purchase of typhoid drugs), which existed under the government since 1819. The official task of the committee was the moral education of prisoners and charity for their benefit, in fact, he raised funds for the expansion and maintenance of prisons and helped manage them. Formally, the chairman of the committee was the governor, and its members – the bishop, prosecutor, representatives of nobles and merchants (staff of the committee, see Table 1) [18, p. 106].

Table 1
**Staff of the Kharkiv Guardianship Committee
 (1909) [1, p. 168]**

Occupation	Name and surname
Head of Committee	Alexander Yefimov
Assistant Director	Alexander Kulikov
Merchant	Solomon Dobkin
Merchant	Vasil Holberg
Burgher	Hryhoriy Nutys
Burgher	Leonid Lukashenko
Secretary	Mykola Popov

At the request of the Kharkiv Prisons Trustees Committee before the governor of the city, the penitentiary installed electric lighting in 818 light bulbs, 15 arc lanterns for 1,000 candles and 20 fans in 400 meters [15, p. 5]. However, the conditions of detention in the penal colony were far from ideal. The overcrowded and cramped cells of the prison lacked ventilation and lacked clean air. Another problem was the lack of food and the constant outbreaks of typhus, tuberculosis or scurvy. However, this was the situation in other penitentiaries in the Russian Empire. In May 1913, the head of the Main Prison Department of the Russian Empire inspected the penitentiaries, during which he also visited the Kharkiv penitentiary. On the basis of the inspector's visit, a bill on the reform of penal servitude was prepared, which in the autumn of 1913 was submitted to the State Meeting for consideration [19, p. 3]. According to it, forced labor institutions were destroyed. The convicts had to serve their sentences in the central penitentiary prisons of a new type, which were to be built in the centers of the empire according to a new model; instead of a four-year minimum, it was a six-year minimum. Exile after hard labor was replaced by a discount on the rights of "general" residence [17, p. 3]. However, this project was never implemented and remained only on paper.

The difficult conditions of detention of convicts made their adjustments, due to which the history of the Kharkiv penitentiary contained numerous episodes of riots and escapes. One of such riots took place on March 6, 1908, directly on a train while escorting another party of prisoners from Kharkiv to Mykolayiv on the Southern Railway. 37 convict detainees who were escorted to the Nikolaev temporary convict prison, between Kryukov and Pavlysh stations, attacked the convoy in the car for the purpose of escape. Senior Corporal Viktor Kuraletchenko, having received information from one of the convicts about the planned attack on the convoys, barely managed to get to the middle of the car, as he was surrounded by detainees. The corporal immediately stripped the

checker, and the head of the convoy, senior non-commissioned officer Yosyp Terentyev, who left at the same time, immediately called four convoys from the next car, ordering everyone to remove their revolvers. As soon as ranker Dmytro managed to pull out his revolver, one of the detainees hit him on the arm. His blow and the onslaught of an agitated crowd of detainees forced him to fire at the crowd, killing one of the detainees. The shot dispersed the crowd of detainees, which allowed the guards to immediately handcuff the detainees and thus restore order in the car. After a while, the detainees, already partially reassured, openly said: "Luckily for you, you were ready – we were preparing to escape to Kharkiv and to attack the convoy." March 7 at 8 a.m. the whole party of detainees numbering 105 people arrived in Mykolayiv in full order and was handed over to a temporary convict and city prison [3, p. 3].

Another escape attempt took place in the Kharkiv penitentiary in 1914, when three prisoners – M. Seryogin, A. Trempoln, S. Yelyzarenko (previously convicted of robbery) – dismantled several bricks in the wall and were exposed by the prison administration, because the neighbor-convict reported the escape of the beginning [20, p. 7].

However, there were successful attempts to escape the detainees. One of these occurred in the same year, 1914, and was carried out by Semyon Kal, convicted by the Kharkiv District Court for murder with intent to rob for 12 years. The detainee was 30 years old at the time of his escape and came from the peasants of Kharkiv province. S. Kal had a high-profile criminal record behind him and was serving a sentence for burglary for several years before his murder. Despite the strict supervision of the detainees, he still managed to escape in such circumstances. The fact is that S. Kal, while serving his sentence, worked among other detainees in a weaving warehouse at the prison. At the end of the work, he went unnoticed by others somewhere in the studio. During the search of the detainees, the disappearance of one detainee was probably noticed. S. Kal then made his way from the workshop to the attic, and from there to the roof adjacent to the outer wall of the prison. He came down from the wall, jumping into the garden. One of the guards noticed that a man was running through the garden. He was chased, but S. Kal managed to hide in the dark. Further searches were unsuccessful. S. Kal ran in gray prison clothes, without a hat, lost one shoe on the way [7, p. 6].

There were also cases when the detainee, after his release, was sent to hard labor again after a short period of time. Thus, on May 19, 1914, the body of a local

prostitute Varvara Daviskibina was found near the Karpovsky Garden. Investigators of the investigative police during the investigation of this case received information that on the day of V. Daviskibina's murder Ivan Fomenko was among the detainees of the penal prison. The latter was released on May 19 in the morning. He was seen with V. Daviskibina throughout the day. The next day, after her murder, I. Fomenko disappeared without a trace. He was searched in Zmievo, from where, at the request of the police, he was sent in stages to Kharkiv as a suspect in the murder of a prostitute. The motives for this crime, committed on the basis of revenge, are interesting. A few years ago, V. Daviskibina, according to rumors spread among the criminal world, "framed" in the forced labor of two well-wishers, who were also serving their sentences in the Kharkiv penitentiary. The "framed" decided to take revenge on the traitor. The case for this very soon presented itself. The convicts became friends with the prisoner I. Fomenko, whose imprisonment expired on May 19, 1914. Before his release from prison, the convicts asked him to take revenge on V. Daviskibina. I. Fomenko swore to comply with their request. After his release, on the same day, he met with V. Daviskibina, who was almost always in the den on Oleksandrivska Street. I. Fomenko was an old client of V. Daviskibina, and therefore when he offered her first a good drink in the dining room, and then, taking with him vodka and snacks, go for a walk in the Karpovsky garden, the prostitute had nothing against it. In court, one of I. Fomenko's close friends told how he said so that the prostitute did not hear: "She must be killed today for being framed with two friends. I swore to them that I would take revenge..." [8, p. 5].

After the February Revolution of 1917 and the change of power, the prisoners of the Kharkiv penitentiary, realizing that the situation could improve dramatically for them, made a number of demands to the judicial department, including: to release all prisoners from prison, whose guilt is unproven; to release from police supervision or on bail those prisoners whose guilt has been established but does not impose severe punishment; to apply the law of August 1 on early release. The prisoners went on a hunger strike until their demands were met, deciding to inform the Council of Workers and Soldiers Deputies, as well as the city council, that the hunger strike was a protest against their unfair treatment and was not excessive.

In this regard, the district court prosecutor informed the prison administration that the issue of precautionary measures, as well as the application of

the amnesty decree could be considered by the judicial authorities at the request of each of the interested parties. The law of August 1 on early release can be applied only after its publication in the "Collection of government decrees and orders." Instead, it was explained to the detainees that the hunger strike could not be a means to achieve illegal results and that any request of each prisoner would be considered immediately by the prosecutor [5]. However, none of the requests of the detainees was granted. The situation for convicts changed only at the end of 1917, when by the decision of the government Kharkiv penitentiary was finally liquidated and political prisoners were given long-awaited freedom [18, p. 106].

After the revolutionary events and the establishment of Soviet power, the former political prisoners of the Kharkiv penitentiary founded the Kharkiv Branch of the All-Ukrainian Society of Political Prisoners, which in 1925 had 67 members. According to statistics, the first place among the members of the society were socialists-revolutionaries, who numbered 31%, followed by the Social Democrats (Mensheviks) – 29%, Bolsheviks – 10%, Polish Socialists – 7%, anarchists and volunteers – 5% and non-partisans – 18%. A total of 88 members of the society spent 88 years and 7 months in prison pending trial. All received death sentences, which were later replaced by indefinite hard labor. Among the members of the Kharkiv Society were nine people, namely Bychkov, Vilensky, Galkin, Viktorov, Gornynenko, Levapekiy, Tornopolchenko and Ivanov-Solntsev, who were sentenced to death twice for various crimes. Among the members of the Kharkiv branch of political prisoners, 19 were beaten while serving their sentences, six of whom were repeatedly beaten by both the prison administration and senior officials. Four members of the Kharkiv branch were severely punished. One of the means of protest against the violence of the prison administration was the hunger strike of prisoners [4, p. 2].

Based on the testimony of former political prisoners, the Soviet government opened criminal proceedings against former members of the prison administration of the penal colony. For example, on July 24, 1925, a Kharkiv court heard a case accusing Kramarenko, an assistant chief of the former Kharkiv penitentiary, of beating political prisoners in 1907, the day the Second State Meeting was convened. About this case a telegraphic message was sent to the deputy from Kharkiv in the State Meeting Pozchansky. Witnesses in the case were those who had been beaten, including a number of people who held responsible positions as of 1925 – Senior Assistant Prosecutor

General Falkevac, Senior Assistant Prosecutor Toporyshch, Engineer Guzikov and others [6, p. 4].

Conclusion. Thus, examining the conditions of the prisoners in the Kharkiv penitentiary during 1906–1917, the following conclusions can be drawn. First, both political and criminal prisoners were held. Among them were well-known personalities of the time – former members of the First State Meeting G. Lintvarov and V. Radakov, as well as a participant

in the liberation movement in Georgia M. Gobechiya. Second, the conditions of the prisoners in the penal colony were appalling: the overcrowded and cramped cells of the prison lacked ventilation and lacked clean air; outbreaks of typhus, tuberculosis and scurvy were constant. Detainees often suffered from the arbitrariness of guards. Difficult conditions in the Kharkiv penitentiary forced detainees to riot and flee.

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Біліченко Л.С. УМОВИ ПЕРЕБУВАННЯ У В'ЯЗНЕНИХ У ХАРКІВСЬКІЙ КАТОРЖНІЙ ТЮРМІ (1906–1917 РР.)

У статті досліджуються умови перебування ув'язнених у Харківській каторжній тюрмі упродовж 1906–1917 рр. Встановлено, що у 1904 р., з початком війни з Японією, в Російській імперії виникли труднощі, пов'язані з доставкою каторжан на о. Сахалін. Після закінчення бойових дій уряд дійшов висновку, що транспортування арештантів через всю країну є дуже дорогою і невиправданою

процедурою. Виходячи з цього, 10 квітня 1906 р. Державна Рада Російської імперії затвердила законопроект, в якому засновувалися центральні каторжні тюрми у європейській частині Російської імперії, у тому числі й у м. Харків. З'ясовано, що до 1913 р. Харківська каторжна тюрма мала назву «Харківське виправне арештантське відділення» та перебувала у віданні Харківської губернської тюремної інспекції. Начальником тюрми був призначений Степан Олександрович Фельдман. У ході дослідження було виявлено, що у Харківській каторжній тюрмі, за весь період її існування, утримувались як політичні, так і кримінальні в'язні. Серед них були й відомі особистості того часу: колишні члени Першої Державної Думи Г.М. Лінтваров і В.М. Радаков, учасник визвольного руху в Грузії М.Д. Гобечія. Досліджено побут ув'язнених та виявлено, що на території тюрми функціонувала церква, лікарня та майстерні. З'ясовано, що арештанти страждали від свавілля наглядачів, а також від епідемії сипного тифу. Установлено, що великий внесок у допомогу каторжній тюрмі (у тому числі й у закупілі медикаментів для подолання сипного тифу) зробив Харківський піклувальний про тюрми комітет. Саме за клопотанням Харківського піклувального про тюрми комітету перед губернатором міста, у каторжній тюрмі встановили електричне освітлення у 818 лампочок, 15 дугових ліхтарів по 1 тис. свічок і 20 вентиляторів на 400 метрів площі. Однак, не дивлячись на це, умови утримання в'язнів у каторжній тюрмі були далекі від ідеалу. Так, у переповнених і тісних камерах тюрми не було вентиляції та бракувало чистого повітря. Ще однією проблемою був брак їжі та постійні спалахи епідемії тифу, туберкульозу або цинги. Виявлено, що через складні умови утримання каторжан, історія Харківської каторжної тюрми містила багаточисленні епізоди бунтів і втеч. Ситуація для каторжан змінилася лише наприкінці 1917 р., коли за рішенням уряду Харківська каторжна тюрма була остаточно ліквідована, а політичні ув'язнені отримали довгоочікувану свободу

Ключові слова: каторга, Харківська каторжна тюрма, в'язні, М.Д. Гобечія, Г.М. Лінтваров, В.М. Радаков, Харківський піклувальний про тюрми комітет.