

# Participation of The Colonial Armed Forces in Suppressing the Popular Movements Of 1916 in The Fergana, Syrdarya, And Transcaspian Regions

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**Abstract:** The article examines the protests, uprisings, and national liberation movements against the colonial regime in Turkestan in 1916, as well as the reasons for their emergence. The main object of research in the article is the uprising in the Fergana, Syrdarya and Transcaspian regions, which was one of the main centers of popular movements in Turkestan at the beginning of the 20th century. The origin of the uprising, the main armed resistance movements, and the difficulties in its suppression led the imperial administration in the region to rely on the troops of the Turkestan Military District. The brutal and chauvinistic attitude of the colonial armed forces toward the Turkestanis is revealed.

**Keywords:** Colonial regime, military district, regular army, rebellion, company, cossack, machine gun, soldier, squadron.

**Introduction:** In recent years, a number of leading scientific research centers worldwide have been increasingly studying issues such as the military actions carried out by the Russian Empire in Turkestan in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the establishment and strengthening of the colonial system in the region, including the participation of the Russian Empire's armed forces in socio-economic and political processes in Turkestan, and their essence and consequences. In this regard, the study of the history of the Turkestan Military District, which was one of the main participants in the establishment of the colonial system in the Turkestan region, its strengthening, and the suppression of national liberation movements, is becoming increasingly relevant. After all, the formation of the military district system in Turkestan by the Russian Empire, the organization of the regular army, and their role in the military and socio-political history of the region have not been studied as a separate object.

## METHODS AND LITERATURE ANALYSIS

Literature dedicated to the study of the history of the period under study should be conventionally divided into the following groups: 1) sources and literature published during the Russian Empire; 2) literature, brochures and articles published during the Soviet period; 3) research conducted during the years of independence; 4) foreign literature. The works created during the years of the rule of the Russian Empire and during the Soviet period, issues regarding the history of the Turkestan Military District were interpreted from the perspective of the interests of the existing system. Even in the studies created during the years of independence, the activities of the military district, its role in strengthening the colonial system in the Turkestan region, and its activities aimed at protecting the interests of the empire were not sufficiently covered. Therefore, the implementation of research in this direction is relevant and of scientific and practical importance. Research methods such as problem-based, quantitative, and comparative-historical analysis, historical-chronological, and systematic methods were

used in the research.

## RESULTS

As is well known, the First World War began in 1914 between the imperialist powers. The Russian Empire also became a participant in the war. Although the Turkestans were not drafted into the army, they also fell into a difficult situation as the economic difficulties of the war began to fall on the dependent countries. In 1914-1916, a large amount of cotton, cottonseed oil, meat, fish, horses and camels, and a large amount of food were taken from the country for the needs of the war. Prices and taxes have also increased sharply. During this period, there were interruptions in the grain supply from the center, and famines began to be observed in the country.

In such a difficult situation in the country, emperor Nicholas II issued a decree on June 25, 1916, for the male population aged 19-43 in the Caucasus, Astrakhan, Siberia, and Central Asia "On the involvement of the non-Russian male population of the Empire in the construction of defensive structures, military communication routes, and any other work necessary for the defense of the state within the territory of the active army", which led to an uprising against the colonial regime in Turkestan.

The beginning of uprisings in the country was also a big impetus for the widespread cases of bribery and familiarity during the formation of lists of those called up for labor mobilization. It was often observed that single breadwinners from poor families were excluded from mobilization by bribery. This situation further increased the anger of the common people. In the report of the assistant head of the Turkestan district security department dated July 20, it was noted that officials did not stop taking bribes, and the amount of bribes received by lower-level officials was measured in millions of rubles.

According to the imperial decree, it was planned to recruit 250,000 people from Turkestan (8% of the male population) for day labor. On June 30, the commander-in-chief of the district, General Yerofeev, sent a telegram to the regional governors to begin compiling the lists. It is emphasized that when compiling the list, it is necessary to focus primarily on men born between 1885 and 1897.

The first uprisings against serfdom in the country began on July 4, 1916, in the Samarkand region. The first major protests in the Fergana region began on July 9 in Andijan. On this day, between 8,000 and 10,000 demonstrators gathered in the square of the Jome Mosque. They demanded that the head of the uyezd, Brzezinski, write a written agreement not to carry out the mobilization. The demonstrators were fired upon

by 0.5 company of soldiers and Cossacks from the Andijan garrison. Three people were killed and 12 were injured[1]. Brzezinski explained his order to use weapons in his report by saying, "Our humanity is completely incompatible with the local people; only rifle bullets will make them work"[2].

On July 10-13, people in the Altynkul and Maygir volosts of Andijan uyezd revolted and attacked representatives of the local administration. 20 Cossacks were sent from Andijan to Maygir under the leadership of the uyezd head. 32 people were arrested in Altynkul, 16 in Maygir[3]. In Kokand uyezd, 25 soldiers were sent against the rebels who killed the volost head in Aravon, and 43 soldiers against the rebels in Ganjiravon volost. Punitive detachments arrested 316 people in Aravon and 134 in Ganjiravon[4].

The largest uprising in the Fergana region took place in Margilan on July 10. It was attended by 20,000-25,000 people. In a report sent to the provincial governor Hippus, the police chief of the old city, Pakhatin, reported that the enraged people had killed the mingbashi Shahrikhanov, Badalbaev, and the and the chief of the mirshabs Suyanov. A centurion of the 6th Orenburg Cossack Regiment was sent to the city to suppress the uprising in Margilan. As a result of the Cossack attack, 63 people were killed or wounded[5].

On July 11, riots broke out in Namangan. More than 1,500 people gathered at the "Kurashkhona" square in the Labbaytoga village. The head of the Namangan uyezd, Krashkov, sent an infantry company armed with machine guns under the command of Captain Rummyantsev against the rioters. Despite threats of shooting, the people threw themselves at the soldiers and police officers and tried to seize their weapons. About 38 people were injured and 12 were killed in Namangan from machine gun and rifle fire. Boyjonov, Rozikboyev, and a total of 19 people were arrested among the participants in the riot[7].

To prevent uprisings in the Fergana region, the military governor of the region, general Gippus (1911–1916), requested the commander-in-chief of the district to send 1,000 soldiers to guard the railways in the region, 1 detachment to defend Russian settlements, and 600 Cossacks to support district police officers, to introduce martial law in the region, and to grant him the right of temporary commander-in-chief of military units in the region to have broad opportunities against the popular movement[8]. Furthermore, Hippus sent telegrams to Tashkent and St. Petersburg stating that labor mobilization could not be fully carried out in the rebellious Fergana region, and the use of force could lead to a strong popular movement. On July 27, he even issued an order to temporarily suspend the execution

of the imperial decree within the territory of the province. However, on July 30, Hippus was dismissed from his post for failing to comply with the Tsar's decree and favouring the Muslims. By decree of the district commander Kuropatk, he was replaced by the vice-governor of the Semirechye Region, colonel Ivanov-Rinov[9].

During the uprisings in the Fergana region, rebels killed 34 local officials. Of these, 8 were volost chiefs, 11 were village elders, 5 were ellikbashis, and 11 were armed guards and judges[10]. During the people's uprising in Fergana, clashes between insurgents and military units of the district occurred in 17 locations across the region. According to official data, 56 local residents were killed and 109 were wounded in these battles. 28 of the wounded also died[11]. In reality, the casualties were much higher.

The riots in the Syrdarya region began with the events in Tashkent on July 11. On July 11, 1916, a large demonstration of 2,000-3,000 people took place in Tashkent. Women also actively participated in it. The main events took place in front of the Old City Police Department, where the rioters stormed the police department. During the riot, the police department guard Mirakshiyev was killed, the head of the police department Mochalov, secretary Terentyev, and the sergeants of the Sebzor and Shaykhontokhur districts Ismoiljonov, Eshmuhammedov, and Isakhojayev were wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Kolesnikov and a Cossack squadron were among the first to come to the aid of the Old City Police Department. Subsequently, the head of the Tashkent city police, Kochin, a detachment from the Tashkent Military School, a company of warrant officers led by Lieutenant Colonel Savitsky, and the New City police arrived and dispersed the crowd. In the capital, 11 people were killed and 15 others were wounded in the shootout during the suppression of the demonstrations. 34 rebels were arrested[12].

In the second half of July, district troops were dispatched to suppress uprisings in various volosts of the Tashkent district. On July 21-22, a detachment led by Ensign Bernardsky was sent against insurgents near the stations of Kaunchi and Kaufman in the Zangiata volost. The punitive detachment killed 3 people and captured 20 others[13]. On July 21-23, uprisings began in the areas of Tuytepa, Pskent, Buka, and Chinaz. General Galkin (1911–1916), the governor of the Syrdarya region, sent a 100-man detachment armed with machine guns under the command of Afanasyev, the deputy head of the Tashkent district, to suppress these uprisings[14]. Afanasyev's detachment killed 20 people and set fire to the residents' houses. With the help of the punitive detachment, 200 people from 325 households were recruited for day labor in the Tuytepa

volost[15]. Afanasyev also managed to ensure the implementation of the emperor's decree using military force in the Akkurgan, Buka, Karis, and other volosts of the Tashkent region.

The Turkestan Military District faced great difficulties in suppressing the uprisings of 1916. Due to the withdrawal of the troops of the Turkestan Military District to the fronts of World War I, very few military units remained in the district.

In total, 14.5 battalions, 33 Cossack companies, 42 cannons, and 69 machine guns were mobilized from the fronts of the World War in 1916 to suppress the uprisings in Turkestan. After additional military units were brought to the district from the center, the popular movements were suppressed, and by the end of 1916, 92,423 people were mobilized from Turkestan for the needs of the rear.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, during the popular uprisings in Turkestan that began against forced labor and later turned into national liberation movements, it became clear that the existence of colonial rule in the country depended not on the military-popular government in the country, but on the troops of the Turkestan Military District. This is especially evident during the period of popular movements in the Jizzakh uyezd, Semirechye, and Transcaspian regions. Due to the mobilization of the troops of the Turkestan Military District to the front lines, the colonial administration in the region, which was left almost without armed forces, faced great difficulties in suppressing uprisings that had spread to all regions. As a result, it was no longer possible to suppress the uprisings as quickly as before. The national liberation movement of 1916 greatly alarmed the colonial authorities and proved to them that the struggle of the peoples of Turkestan for freedom and independence had not yet died down.

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