



Organization of the educational process at the Military Artillery Academy named after F.E. Dzerzhinsky during the initial period of the Great Patriotic War

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Abstract: The article reviews and evaluates the organization of the educational process at the Military Artillery Academy named after F.E. Dzerzhinsky in 1941 on the eve of World War II and in its initial period. The study of military education during the Great Patriotic War (WWII) remains at present a relevant research topic for Russian history. The approaches and methods of organizing military education in wartime, the combat training organization in military educational institutions, including higher military education, are of great help for modern military educational institutions in the preparation of military training programs. The use of combat experience acquired by artillery as one of the main branches of the armed forces during the enemy's fire defeat was used and is being used at the Academy as the basis of training programs in the training of engineering and command personnel. It was during the World War II that many methods of dealing with enemy artillery and causing great damage to both military equipment and personnel were born, new methods of using sound-measuring stations for detecting enemy mortars were found, and special groups of counter-mortar warfare were created. This was a great success for the students of the Academy. In this regard, the discovery and use of previously unknown and unpublished historical documents related to the training of artillery commanders will certainly be in demand. "...the experience of individual teachers participating in military exercises or testing new types of weapons is not properly used in the departments to improve the qualification of teachers..." the Chief of the academy, Major General of Artillery Leonid Aleksandrovich Govorov.

Keywords: artillery, the educational process, military education in wartime, weapons and military equipment, combat readiness, staffing, training and material base, military operations, evacuation

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Организация учебного процесса в военной артиллерийской академии им. Ф.Э. Дзержинского в 1941 году

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Аннотация: В статье рассматривается и оценивается организация учебного процесса в военной артиллерийской академии им. Ф.Э. Дзержинского в 1941 г. накануне Второй мировой войны и в её начальный период. Изучение военного образования в годы Великой Отечественной войны (ВОВ) остаётся и на сегодняшний день актуальной темой исследования для отечественной истории. Подходы и методы организации военного образования в военное время, организация боевой подготовки в военных учебных заведениях, в том числе и высшего военного образования, являются для современных военных учебных заведений большим подспорьем в вопросах подготовки программ обучения на военное время. Использование боевого опыта, приобретённого артиллерией как одним из основных родов войск при огневом поражении противника, в академии использовался и используется как основа учебных программ в деле подготовки инженерных и командных кадров. Именно в период Второй мировой войны родились многие методы борьбы с артиллерией противника и нанесения им большого урона как боевой технике, так и личному составу. Найденны новые методы использования звукометрических станций для засечки минометов противника, созданы специальные группы контрминометной борьбы. Это был большой успех воспитанников Академии. В этой связи открытие и использование ранее не

известных и не опубликованных исторических документов, связанных с подготовкой командиров-артиллеристов, безусловно, будет востребовано, так как «...должным образом для повышения квалификации преподавателей не используется в кафедрах опыт отдельных преподавателей, участвующих в войсковых учениях или испытаниях новых образцов вооружения...», считает начальник академии генерал-майор артиллерии Леонид Александрович Говоров.

Ключевые слова: артиллерия, учебный процесс, военное образование в военное время, вооружение и военная техника, боевая готовность, укомплектованность, учебно-материальная база, боевые действия, эвакуация

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The study of military education during the Great Patriotic War (GPW) remains a relevant research topic for Russian history. The approaches and methods of organizing military education in wartime, the organization of combat training in military educational institutions, including higher military education, are of great help for modern military educational institutions in the preparation of military training programs, improving weapons and military equipment, methods of their use, maintaining the combat readiness of the troops and the current level of the educational process. Mikhailovskaya Military Artillery Academy (MMAA) during the Second World War – Military Artillery Academy named after F.E. Dzerzhinsky marks the bicentennial of its founding on December 4, 2020 (Bug, 2020. P. 143). The experience of training artillery personnel for the Tsarist imperial army, the Workers and Peasants' Red Army (Red Army), the Armed Forces of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR AF) and the modern Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (RF AF) is vast and invaluable. The use of combat experience acquired by artillery as one of the main branches of the armed forces, in the case of enemy fire, was used and is being used as the basis of training programs for engineering and commanding personnel with a higher military and artillery-technical education (Dyatlov, 2013. P. 70). In this regard, the discovery and the use of previously unknown and unpublished historical documents related to the training of artillery commanders would always certainly be relevant and in demand.

For more clear understanding of the processes taking place in military education, it is necessary to determine the main criteria for considering this issue. In our opinion, they include: the quality of the staffing

of the educational institution with the teaching staff; planning and organization of training sessions and preparatory activities related to them, first of all, the provision of educational material base; the use of combat experience in the educational process (Kupriyanov, Velikay, 2020. P. 206).

When studying archival documents of the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense Central Military Archive (CMA MD RF), we managed to get acquainted with many interesting documents related to the history of the MAA named after F.E. Dzerzhinsky during the period of 1941–1945.

With the beginning of the GPW, on June 22, 1941, the Academy was located in Moscow (Znamenskaya, 1989. P. 16), the educational process of the institution was carried out in accordance with previously approved curricula.

When studying the first criterion, with the help of archival funds, it was established:

“... as of May 30, 1941, the teaching staff in accordance with the staffing table was only 317 people, of which 211 were teachers (military personnel) and 54 (civilian) teachers, teachers of certain disciplines (the Department of Foreign Languages, Shooting and Physical Education) – 52 people” (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 218).

The quantity and quality of the academy staffing with the teachers is noteworthy: “...186 teachers (military personnel), 88.1 % of them have academic ranks and degrees, 50 people of teachers (civilian employees), 93 % of them have academic ranks and degrees, 26 people of teachers (military personnel and civilian employees) 50 % of Shooting and Physical Education departments have academic ranks and degrees” (CMA

MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 218).

According to the documents, the total percentage of those who had a scientific degree or a degree among the teaching staff was 80 %, which is a very high indicator (Kupriyanov, Velikay, 2020. P. 206). For example, at present, in accordance with state educational standards, the professors and teachers of the academy in academic ranks and degrees should be at least 65 %.

At first sight, we can conclude that MAA named after Dzerzhinsky F.E. fully corresponded to the status of an educational institution capable of fulfilling the tasks of retraining and training highly qualified specialists for artillery of the Red Army before the start of the Great Patriotic War. But it is only at first sight. The teaching staff had a high educational status, but as it became known from the act of accepting affairs and the post of the Head of the academy by the Major General of Artillery Leonid Aleksandrovich Govorov from the Lieutenant General of Artillery Arkady Kuzmich Sivkov¹, it was established: "In the 29 departments of the total of 38 departments, the professors and teachers staff provides a generally normal course of the educational process, with the exception of some teachers that do not cope with pedagogical work due to poor preparation. 9 departments: Tactics of Ground Artillery, Military Theory, Tactics of Air Defense, Mechanical Technology and Artillery Production, Design of Artillery Systems, Explosives, Mortar Weapons and Mortar Shots need to be controlled".

Not all the teaching staff has been reorganized in the direction of mastering the modern level of military equipment and its combat employment, as well as changing the methods of training students in accordance with the restructuring of the training and educating troops methods.

First of all, in the Academy, the military cycle departments lag behind in this respect, which have not yet become laboratories of military thought in the study, creative comprehension and transfer of modern experience to students, and sometimes lagging behind what has already become part of the army.

¹ On the People's Commissar of Defense Order No. 01313 of May 15, 1941.

"In order to improve the qualification of teachers, the experience of some teachers participating in military exercises or testing new types of weapons is not used in the departments" (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 202–203).

As can be seen from the document, the problem of the quantity of the teaching staff personnel for a higher educational establishment is very important, this understanding was both with the previous head and the new Head of the academy. But this problem is not the last of the cases and positions indicated in the acceptance certificate. The new Head of the academy, the future Marshal of Artillery L.A. Govorov payed special attention to the quality of the staffing of the Academy with variable composition: "The process of the Academy staffing with variable composition for 1941 is unsatisfactory and requires the adoption of immediate decisive measures to ensure at least the minimum necessary competitions are received. To be received:

1. Command-and-Ground faculty – 277 people;
2. Command and Anti-Aircraft faculty – 133;
3. Armament faculty – 132;
4. Ammunition department – 125.

In total – 667 people" (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 209).

Assessing the organization of the educational process, L.A. Govorov also focused on the shortcomings in the planning of educational and independent work (Kupriyanov, Velikay, 2020. P. 206). Here is what was reflected on this issue in the act of accepting the case and post: "...Lack of necessary time for students to work independently, overloaded with lecture classes to the detriment of practical classes and insufficient time allocated for laboratory classes from the total number of practical classes" (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 205).

They were also pointed to the inadequacy of the educational process with the facilities and equipment in the training laboratories of the departments of Tactics of Ground Artillery, Shooting, Artillery Instrumental Reconnaissance, Rifle Weapons, Acoustic Devices, Mechanical Traction, Saving and Assembling Shots,

Physics, Electrical Engineering, Material Resistance, Theory of Mechanisms and Machines (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 205).

It should be noted that the conclusions that were made by the new leadership of the institution turned out to be very significant for the academy. In the initial period of the Great Patriotic War, the Academy, thanks to the measures taken, although not in full, but still in a very short time, was able to rebuild its educational process for wartime.

On the afternoon of June 22, 1941, speaking on the radio, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs V.M. Molotov announced the villainous attack of Nazi Germany on our country (Meretskov, 1969. P. 210). It sounded for all the higher military educational establishments and combat units as a signal of combat alarm. A vivid expression of the high patriotic upsurge of teachers and students was the massive receipt of reports from them with a request for immediate sending to the front.

In the very first days of the war, in accordance with mobilization deployment plans, significant changes took place in the training of artillery personnel at the academy (Tonkikh, 1982. P. 236).

On August 1, 1941, 1,097 listeners had gone to the front. We can't but say that Artillery Supply department tutors left for front (Borodin, 2003. P. 167).

Artillery Academy personnel took part in combat actions in the initial period of war. At the beginning of the war, the Artillery Academy, like many other higher military educational institutions, in the most difficult period was forced by its personnel to take part in hostilities (Zhelanov, Khorzhevskii, Vasil'ev, Chistyakov, 1958. P. 21).

I constantly had to work in the late evening hours during the German air raids on Moscow. "Not far from our house, on Gorky Street, one could see a large crater from a high-explosive bomb that exploded on the pavement. Next to it there was a bus with broken glass and traces of fragments on the body. But gradually we started to get used to the raids of the fascist aircraft. The population learnt to deal with the incendiary bombs that often fell on our house. The Academy building was also covered with incendiary

bombs several times, but the high-explosive bombs did not cause much damage. During one of the meetings in my office, an air wave from a large aerial bomb that fell on the opposite side of the Moskva River (the windows of the office overlooked the embankment) broke glass and disrupted the blackout; the work had to be moved to the bomb shelter, which was the basement floor of the Academy building" (A.A. Blagonravov).

The commander of the Leningrad Front and the artillerymen of the Academy often had to look for new possibilities and solutions for counter-battery warfare, it was during the period that many methods of fighting with enemy artillery were born and causing great damage to both military equipment and personnel. It was a great success for the students of the Academy. Here is what G.F. Odintsov says: "I remembered my artillery academy – alma mater with gratitude, which foresaw the role that I would carry out in the war. The fact is that once, against my will, I was assigned to a new specialty – a department for training specialists in artillery instrumental reconnaissance. The training I received at the academy helped me a lot in organizing the defense of Leningrad from the barbarian artillery shelling of the city" (Odintsov, 1968. P. 115).

Also, with the active participation of the students of the Academy, new methods of using sound-measuring stations for detecting enemy mortars were found, and special groups for counter-mortar warfare were created. M.V. Rostovtsev was an enthusiast of that work. Describing the combat work of the artillery of the Leningrad Front, N.N. Voronov notes "The chief of the reconnaissance department of the Red Army artillery headquarters, Colonel M.V. Rostovtsev, an excellent expert and patriot of his specialty. Skillfully organized artillery reconnaissance quickly affected the success of the counter-battery fight..." (Voronov, 1968. P. 203).

An example of it is lots of feats accomplished both by the teaching staff and by the students in the performance of combat missions in the defense of the capital of our homeland, Moscow.

On January 8, 1946, all personnel involved in the defense of Moscow were awarded with one of the

most memorable medals of the Second World War, "For the Defense of Moscow" (Tonkikh, 1970. P. 18).

In 1941, a month after the start of the war, the current situation at the front required the leadership of the academy to review and make a number of significant changes in educational and scientific work, and the academy was reassigned by the decision of the People's Commissar of Defense to the Chief of artillery of the Red Army. At that time, the academy began to recruit for four-month courses to train military technicians, recruitment was made among students of senior courses of higher technical educational institutions and among citizens with a higher technical education (who had been mobilized into the Red Army, according to plans for mobilization deployment), the number of these courses reached up to 2,000 people (Uglov, 2020. P. 12).

The leadership of the RCRA, realizing the enormous educational potential of the academy, as one of the higher educational institutions for training command personnel, considered the academy its reserve. In September 1941, there was a shortage of commanders and positions associated with their supply of the Red Army during the period of hostilities.

Staff workers were trained by the remaining teachers of the ground artillery command faculty.

In connection with the prevailing gap in the personnel of the academy, in particular, for carrying permanent orders and patrol commandant service in Moscow, it led to the fact that the educational process was stopped. The so-called reserve was practically used, in the academy by that period there were no more than 300 students (Kuzhel'kov, Popov, 1945. P. 102).

On the basis of mobilization plans, the personnel management of the Academy RCRA was instructed to recruit senior courses students of civilian higher educational institutions of the country, with the main task of preparing artillery commanders and engineers and it was done. For this purpose, training programs and plans for the artillery personnel training for the active army were prepared in a very short time. As of these plans and programs analysis, the academy leadership devoted more than half of the educational time allotted for the training of specialists to practical exercises

with the widespread use of artillery weapons used in the Red Army (Plotnikov, 1990. P. 89). In accordance with the order of the Chief of artillery of the Red Army, the leadership of the academy was ordered to prohibit the distraction of personnel (especially from engineering faculties until their final training on reduced and accelerated curricula). All that had a positive effect and allowed the academy leadership to restore the educational process.

The Military Artillery Academy, despite a large number of different programs and plans, not typical for the artillery academy in military specialists training, was able to cope with the assigned tasks. That kind of work has never been done during the entire existence of the Academy.

In spite of the difficulties in the training of specialists for the artillery of the Red Army in the initial period of the Second World War, the academy leadership and personally its chief – the future Marshal of Artillery L.A. Govorov did not forget about the quality of the students training. So two weeks after the beginning of the Second World War, the Chief of artillery L.A. Govorov² sends his proposals to the Head of the Red Army, which indicate the need for candidates to enter the academy with a deadline 1 year of training, at least 1 year of command experience and combat experience (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 240). Here he proposes a term for recruiting students for training from December 15, 1941. Looking ahead, I would like to note that the date he indicated for the start of training will be fulfilled even taking into account the relocation of the academy to Samarkand.

20 days after the start of the war, wartime curricula were approved in the academy, with the calculation of the training period for students of the Academy for one year. At the Armament Faculty, Departments of Artillery, Rifle and Artillery Devices, Ammunition Faculty, Department of Ammunition, Department of Powder and Explosives, as well as at the Department of Mortar Weapons, the term of study was set

² Directive of the General Staff of the Red Army No. Org / 1/524383 of 06/30/1941, "On the order of recruiting military educational institutions".

at 2 years (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 246–255).

In accordance with the plans for wartime, the academy continued its work, but by mid-August 1941, in case of significant losses in the command personnel of the Red Army, the academy students were forced to leave for the front after receiving appointments to the active forces, without even graduating from the academy. in the shortest possible time of training. As it is clear from the report of the Head of the academy to the PCD Deputy, 1st rank army commissar Mehli: "...by June 22, 1941 594 students out of 1384, after accelerated graduation and assignment to the troops, 485 people did not complete the training course, 305 people remained in the academy and 47 of them were on various business trips" (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 3. Sheet. 279).

By the autumn of 1941, the German fascist troops successfully developed an offensive on Moscow. The enemy sought to encircle the Soviet troops defending the capital, defeat them, and starve its population to death. One of the SS ranks on October 9, 1941, wrote in his diary after one of the so-called table conversations between the Fuehrer and his retinue: "The Fuehrer ordered that not a single German soldier should enter Moscow. The city will be flooded and wiped off the face of the earth" (Grushevoi, 1974. P. 126). In this situation the country's leadership was forced to take measures to relocate not only the country's industry, but also many educational institutions, including the MAA named after F.E. Dzerzhinsky.

Describing the period in the fall of 1941, the battles were fought on the near approaches to Moscow, N.N. Voronov says: "One day A.A. Blagonravov, who was acting as the head of the artillery academy, came to see me. and reported on how difficult it had become in such an environment to train personnel for artillery. The academy was pulled up. The commandant of the city of Moscow somehow summoned Blagonravov and offered to get a significant amount of explosives from the warehouses. – Why? What for? – Blagonravov was surprised. – Destroy enemy tanks on the streets of Moscow. – How? – The forces of the personnel of the academy must scatter explosives on

the streets of the city. Enemy tanks will go and explode. Together with A.A. Blagonravov we sincerely laughed at the military ignorance of the esteemed commandant. But I came to the conclusion that the educational institution needs help. At the very first conversation at Headquarters, I suggested to evacuate the Artillery Academy from Moscow immediately. They agreed with me" (Voronov, 1963. P. 225).

In accordance with the directive received from the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR³ on relocation, the academy was ordered to relocate to Tomsk (later Samarkand) by October 25, 1941. For this purpose the academy leadership urgently needed to submit an application to the Red Army Military Communication Authorities for transportation.

The need for the academy property and personnel transportation was about 400 cars (the Head of the academy filed an application for 460 cars). It should be noted that while the academy moving to Moscow from Leningrad in 1938, the need was 1080 cars and 2 barges (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36377. File no. 166. Sheet. 30).

It was difficult to supply with such number of carriages in 1941. On October 17, 1941. It was possible to receive an order for only 240 cars, 92 cars and 15 platforms from two echelons were actually delivered for loading (Morozov, 2011. P. 58). Getting acquainted with the archival documents comes an understanding of all the difficulties and problems that the Academy leadership had to face during that difficult period for the country. There was a great tension in all administrative structures of both the army and civilian organizations. Such a large-scale evacuation of not only educational institutions, but also industry from the capital required enormous costs and efforts in managing the process. Due to the lack of echelons, the academy was ordered to make a part of the personnel a marching march to the area of the city of Kovrov, where the Head of the academy decided to finish the military technician courses (about 1,500 people), since the curriculum in terms of training was already completed. In such difficult conditions, the

³ Directive of the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR No. Org / 2270. October 15, 1941.

Academy leadership managed to carry out the evacuation.

On November 30, 1941, all academy students arrived in Samarkand and began training (CMA MD RF. Fund no. 60716. Inventory no. 36347, File no 3. Sheet. 297).

According to the data given in this report, by December 3, 1941, in the academy there were 1,581 people of variable personnel, 755 people of which are at command faculties (including courses for commanders of mortar batteries), 231 people at artillery supply courses and 599 people at technical courses.

The relocation of the academy and the large number of teaching and laboratory facilities that had to be left in Moscow naturally left an imprint on the organization of training in the new conditions. The leadership of the academy was forced to mobilize the staff of teachers and students with all its strength and capabilities to normalize the educational process. The academy made the first graduation of its students on December 31, 1941, (Kezhaev, 2007. P. 74) these were the commanders of the mortar batteries, who were released ahead of schedule, instead of three months of training, they studied for only one month. This fact

does not meet the requirements of the curriculum and leads to a low level of knowledge of the students. Proceeding from this, the leadership of the academy noted, with a request to the Chief of Artillery of the Red Army, to prevent this from happening in the future (Uglov, 2008. P. 54).

Later, during the war, when the leadership of the armed forces came to the conclusion that "all gunners from private to General" should understand "...that they are responsible for the fate of the battle and operation, for the advancement of infantry and tanks, as well as General commanders for the performance of the task" (Chernukhin, 2013. P. 160).

As can be seen from the cited historical documents and facts in the article, an unambiguous conclusion can be made that the training of students of the MAA after F.E. Dzerzhinsky during the first year of the Second World War was organized and carried out according to previously prepared plans. Yes, these plans were adjusted in accordance with the needs of the Red Army, but their presence and the mobilization of all personnel allowed the academy leadership to carry out all the planned measures in the difficult period of wartime.

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