

# Mercenaries in the Galician Army of the Western Ukrainian National Republic<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** In 1918 Central and Eastern Europe were on the brink of enormous change. The collapse of the German and Austro-Hungarian empires had led to the growth of national self-awareness in many peoples, and the Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, and peoples of the Baltic and Balkan regions declared their nation-statehood. Ukrainians also exercised their right to self-determination, establishing the Western Ukrainian National Republic (Ukr. acronym: ZUNR) on their ethnic territory. The regular military force of the new republic was the Galician Army, with the word “Ukrainian” subsequently added to it (Ukr. acronym: UHA). It immediately commenced armed operations against Polish formations that also aimed to seize power in this territory. However, when establishing their army the Ukrainians encountered serious personnel issues, especially a severe shortage of Ukrainian officers. One means of resolving this problem was to contract military personnel of other nationalities who were citizens of the ZUNR as well as other countries. In some cases actual mercenaries were hired. This article describes where, how, and under what conditions this took place in the UHA.

**Keywords:** Ukraine, officer cadres, mercenaries, Galician Army, Western Ukrainian National Republic (ZUNR).

**U**pon proclaiming Ukrainian statehood in Western Ukraine (Galicia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia) on 1 November 1918, Ukraine stood alongside other nations of Europe that had exercised their right to an independent existence after the collapse of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires. Immediately following this, the question arose of defending Western Ukrainian statehood, for the territories of Galicia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia were coveted by other countries that had emerged out of the ruins of Austria-Hungary—Poland (wanting Galicia) and

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a revised version of part of my monograph *Landsknekhty Halyts'koi armii* (14–91). The revisions include some new data obtained from studies by historians of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and of Ukraine.

Hungary (wanting Transcarpathia)—as well as by the Kingdom of Romania (wanting Bukovyna). As assessed quite aptly by Paul Magocsi, the Ukrainian-Polish armed conflict over Lviv and Galicia is explained by the local Poles' perception of western Ukrainian lands being a part of the Polish national domain, and also by their unwillingness to abandon the political rule that they had over the Ukrainians even under Austria (27). Furthermore, while having declared their independence, the Ukrainians did not join the camp of victorious countries in World War I but rather those who had lost—that is, Austria and Germany (Hrycak 140). On the other hand, their main rivals, the Poles, enjoyed the support of the Entente countries, who won the war.

Hence, almost immediately the Ukrainians were obliged to defend the independence of their republic. They began to establish their military, the Galician Army, and faced the hurdle of a shortage of military cadres. Although recruiting for the Ukrainian Galician Army (Ukr. acronym: UHA) (especially when assisted by conscriptions) resulted in a slow stream of sergeants and infantry, forming an officer corps became an immediate and urgent problem. This issue stems from the Austro-Hungarian army—which formed the basis for the armed forces of the new states that emerged from the ruins of the empire—that customarily has had very few officers of Ukrainian nationality. There were several reasons for this.

One reason was that acquiring a post-secondary education then at a military school was too expensive for Ukrainians from Galicia and Bukovyna, who were overwhelmingly not well off. In contrast to the Poles, for example, the Ukrainians had practically no *szlachta* 'nobility', for whom military service was a matter of honour. Instead, those of the noble class who declared themselves to be Ukrainian were mostly not very wealthy and could not even pay for their sons' valuable studies at an officer's school or at a military academy. Meanwhile, the Polish *szlachta* were significantly more numerous and more well off. For instance, of 438 cadets studying at the Theresian Military Academy in 1912–13 in Wiener Neustadt, only 33 were from Galicia and Bukovyna—and only one of them (0.2% of the overall total) spoke Ukrainian; the others comprised 16 Polish-speakers (3.7% of the overall total), 28 "Czechoslovaks" (6.4%), and 35 "Southern Slavs" (Croatians, Serbs, and Slovenes; 8%). Thus, Ukrainians were the least-represented minority in the cadet corps of the academy in Wiener Neustadt (Deák 92–93).

To be sure, the fact that anti-military attitudes were very widespread among the Ukrainian intelligentsia was also a negative factor in the chronic shortage of officer cadres. It is well-known that even when the metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, Andrei Sheptyts'kyi, an indisputable authority among the Galicians at the time, spoke to his clergy about the need for the Ukrainian nation to have its own military elite, the priests rejected this notion, saying that military affairs were not for Ukrainians but "for

counts and princes” (Iaroslavyn 126). Moreover, the wages of Austro-Hungarian officers were not high enough to tempt the sons of a Ukrainian clergy or educator’s family to a hard life far away from home: in 1899–1900 an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army earned 25% less on average than an ordinary civil servant. Obviously, this only increased the above-mentioned anti-military attitudes in Ukrainian society (Deák 121).

As of 1910, in the Common Army of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (not including the Austrian Imperial-Royal Landwehr and the Royal Hungarian Landwehr as well as the *Landsturm* forces) there were only 34 Ukrainian commissioned officers, or 0.2% of the total number of officers. By comparison, the number of Polish officers was twelve times greater, or 2.5%—while the general population of Poles and Ukrainians (Ruthenians) in the empire was approximately equal, with around 5 million of the former and 4 million of the latter (Deák 13, 181).

At the same time, this situation gradually improved due to Ukrainians participating in the one-year voluntary service, a reserve officer training system. It also began to change at the start of World War I, when thousands of Ukrainians were conscripted into the Austro-Hungarian Army. They included many capable soldiers, whose bravery and talent for leadership earned them military accolades and promotion to officer rank. This improved the situation with the Ukrainian officer corps but failed to resolve the problem with cadres for the new Ukrainian state. As a result, according to Oleksa Kuz’ma, a historian of the November Uprising in Lviv, as of 21 November 1918 the ranks of the Galician Army included 4,517 riflemen (Ukr.: *stril'tsi*; Ger.: *Schützen*) and only 161 officers (*starshyna*)—that is, one officer per 28 soldiers. Furthermore, while a company (*cheta*) of the Austrian army included five or six officers, the analogous Ukrainian unit had only one or two. The field artillery in the UHA was commanded by a single *starshyna* (or two at the most) instead of the necessary five. By comparison, the Polish Army at that time had 572 officers and 4,746 privates, or one officer per 8 soldiers (Kuz’ma 394). The archive of Czesław Monczyński, then commander of the Polish military forces in Lviv, contains a daily report dated 9 December 1918 that listed “battle readiness” for infantry regiment nos. 1, 2, and 3, artillery regiment no. 1, and the Officer’s Legion stationed in Lviv and surrounding villages, with 343 officers and 3,217 soldiers. Thus, a Polish officer was in charge of 9 soldiers on average (DALO, f. 257, op. 2, spr. 598, ark. 52).

The new Ukrainian republic began to fill the shortage of officer cadres with representatives of other nations—primarily Germans, Austrians, Czechs, Jews, and others—who were not obligated to defend its independence. As stated in one of the first documents passed by the parliament of the ZUNR, the Ukrainian National Rada (UNRada), this obligation accorded only to ethnic Ukrainians. In an appeal to the Ukrainian

people dated 1 November 1918, this legislative body specified that defending the new state was required of all military personnel “of Ukrainian nationality,” and also “all the Ukrainian population capable of bearing arms,” who should establish local combat units (“Ukrains'kyi narode!”). Thus, citizens of the Ukrainian state that were of non-Ukrainian nationalities were exempt from the duty of defending the state of the Ukrainian nation.

The main agency for drafting foreign military specialists for the needs of the ZUNR Armed Forces was the Induction Station of the Ukrainian National Army (Ukr. acronym: ZS-UNA). It was established in Vienna on 1 November 1918 at a joint meeting of the Ukrainian faction in the Austro-Hungarian parliament and Ukrainian officers who were in the imperial capital at the time. Its main objectives were stipulated as intake, material support, and relocation of Ukrainian soldiers formerly of the Austro-Hungarian Army to their homeland; after the end of World War I and de-facto collapse of the “Danubian Empire” they had essentially been abandoned by the government. Another category of Ukrainian soldiers included those who had been captured in combat by Italians, Serbs, or Albanians and upon being released had no way of getting home on their own.

The meeting also resolved to send Ukrainian officers as military representatives to all Austro-Hungarian induction stations in order to separate ethnic Ukrainian military personnel from the general stream of soldiers and steer them, first of all, to the ZS-UNA in Vienna and thereafter to Galicia in support of the homeland, which was at war. They also sought out Ukrainian soldiers among the crowds at all of Vienna’s railway stations. Furthermore, it was resolved to send an emissary to the management of the Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt in order to identify Ukrainians among the cadets there.

In December 1918 and January 1919 alone, these measures resulted in nearly 32,000 Ukrainian soldiers and officers being sent back to Galicia (*Visti kombatanta* 62; TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 205, ark. 1–27). Additionally, the ZS-UNA began at the same time to draft foreigners into Ukrainian military service. Recruiting former Austrian officers for the Ukrainian side was helped by the fact that in the first few days of November 1918 the Ukrainian military representatives had already rented an office right in the premises of the imperial defence ministry (*Neue Freie Presse* 6).

The process of recruiting mercenaries followed all the relevant rules. A foreign officer wishing to serve under the blue-and-yellow flag would apply to the director of the ZS-UNA or the ZUNR military delegate with details about his biography and military career, accepting the obligation to serve Ukraine honourably and conscientiously. These candidates also acknowledged that they comprehended all the danger and risks that are associated with military service and that they were giving informed consent thereto. For its part, the employer (i.e., the Ukrainian side) took upon itself a

whole series of welfare commitments. After being enlisted with the staff of the Induction Station, the volunteers were fully supported with materiel, food, and medical care. Their accommodations in Vienna, transportation costs to Ukraine, and of course their actual service in the UHA were all covered, as well as annual vacations and medical leave. Extant evidence even testifies that customized language courses existed at the ZUNR Induction Station, where the foreign military special hires learned the basics of Ukrainian language.

Moreover—in order to avoid accusations from the Polish side that the Ukrainians were recruiting Austrian former officers of the Imperial-Royal Landwehr, not originally from Galicia or Bukovyna and therefore despised by the Entente countries—it was often suggested that they could move, take up permanent residence in the new Ukrainian state, and then as citizens contribute to the development of its army. One such Austrian wishing to become a Ukrainian wrote to the Embassy of the Western Province of the Ukrainian National Republic (ZOUNR): “I am prepared to give my life and my knowledge to serve my new, grateful fatherland” (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 205, ark. 21, 23). In early November 1918 the Vienna press even declared that the UNRada had proposed to Gen. von Böhm-Ermolli, a field marshal commanding one of the Austrian armies stationed on Ukrainian territory, that he take charge of the newly established Galician Army; however, no confirmation of this has been found in Ukrainian sources (*Monitor Polski* 4). The remuneration of foreign military specialists was effected either in cash in Ukraine or by transfer to their personal accounts at Austrian banks. In order to further safeguard foreigners in Ukraine from possible theft or robbery, the Ukrainian side offered them the possibility of holding “large sums of money” on cash deposit with the State Secretariat for Military Affairs (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 146, ark 75).

Equipping the armed forces of the ZUNR came also under the purview of its civil service—in particular, the Personnel Department of the State Secretariat of Military Affairs (Ukr. acronym: DSVS), headed by Capt. V. Panchak. At the initiative of the director of the secretariat, Dmytro Vitovs'kyi, as of 15 December 1918 any of the COs, NCOs, and riflemen formerly of the Austrian army who decided to enlist in defence of the ZUNR were promoted by one military rank (Tyshchych and Vivcharenko 52). In addition, their wages remained the same, to which were added a variety of significant cash bonuses—for combat, food, quarters, and supporting orderlies.

It is worth noting that the officer remuneration system in the Galician Army during 1918–20 was generally quite progressive for those times—very similar to the wage-and-bonus format of salaries used today, in the twenty-first century, in leading companies worldwide. Its main feature was that employees did not receive a fixed salary, independent of performance, but

rather a combination of various payments, in amounts calculated according to a special productivity grid.

The ZUNR's armed forces were created on the example of leading armies of that time, so their structure and legislative underpinnings were the same as those of other countries' armies. This also applied to the system and amounts of monetary payments to military personnel. For example, pursuant to a decision of the UNRada dated 13 November 1918 and a resolution of the DSVS dated 5 December of that year, the aggregate income earned by each officer was dependent on the numerous bonuses that he could receive, or not, given the effectiveness of his service. Besides the basic wage and cost of accommodation, batman, and food, the main source of additional income for officers was the "combat bonus" or "field allowance" (from the German *Feldzulage*), for which only front-line officers were eligible. Namely, "The combat bonus accrues exclusively to units operating in zones of unfriendly fire (except the Romanian front)" (*Dennyi nakaz* 1). Depending on the rank, title, and seniority of the officer, the combat bonus could add up to nearly 40% of his total earnings. On the other hand, if a *starshyna* member tried to stay in the rear or leave the country, then this bonus would be decimated. In this way (as practised by many corporations today), the Galician Army commanders incentivized their subordinates to fulfill their duties more effectively.

Pursuant to the above-mentioned UNR decision and DSVS resolution, from the very beginning of the Ukrainian Revolution the average lieutenant (*chetar*) received a monthly wage of 250 Austrian Kronen, a combat bonus of 6 Kr daily, 50 Kr monthly for his batman, and also from 40 to 120 Kr for renting quarters and 500 Kr every six months to purchase a uniform. By comparison, a colonel (*polkovnyk*) in the Galician Army received government wages (slang: *hazha*) of 560 Kr, 20 Kr "field allowance," 750 Kr for his uniform, and 160–420 Kr for rent.

It might seem unusual today, but during the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918–19 even prisoners received an accommodation allowance. This was stipulated in an agreement signed on 1 February 1919 by authorized representatives of the State Secretariat of the Western Ukrainian National Republic and delegates of the Commission of the Supreme People's Council (Polish acronym: NRL). According to this document, prisoners of both armies should receive monthly allowances in amounts, depending on ranks and assignments, that ranged from 30 (for privates and sergeants; slang: *muzhva*) to 800 Kr (for COs). However, while rank-and-file soldier prisoners were to be fully supported by the victors, officer prisoners (*starshyny*) were to "support themselves" (*Vistnyk DSVS* 1; *Strilets*' 2).

Subsequently the allowance amounts were increased several times, taking into consideration inflation and price rises. For instance, in October 1919 a captain (*sotnyk*) of the 8th Sambir Brigade, Ludwig Schmidt, was paid

a monthly wage of 400 Kr, a 60 Kr daily “combat bonus” (that is, 1,860 Kr per month), 250 Kr per month for rental of class 1 quarters, 75 Kr daily for meals (2,325 Kr per month), and 50 Kr for his batman; the monthly total was thus 4,885 Kr, of which the majority comprised money for food and his “frontline allowance.” In addition, this officer received free “English cigarettes” and 700 Kr to purchase a new uniform. Meanwhile, another UHA *sotnyk*, Gottlieb Mott, was stationed in Vienna, several thousand kilometres from the theatre of operations; instead of the “combat bonus” he received a “reserve supplement” of 5 Kr per day and ate in the dining hall of the ZS-UNA.

Officers’ trips abroad were also paid for. Thus, in October 1919 during his vacation in Austria the Chief of General Staff of the Galician Army, Col. Gustaw Zieritz, received 4,065 Kr, while his *otamans*, Maj. Rudolf Wurmbrandt (GS) and Maj. Alfons Ehrle (NKHA<sup>2</sup>), received 2,090 and 1,098 Kr, respectively; in addition, they were issued an additional 1,000–1,500 Kr each for the return journey to Ukraine (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 189, ark. 4, 15, 37; spr. 199, ark. 19, 26–29). To better understand the value of these costs at that time, it is worthwhile to provide some comparative statistics. In April 1919 a loaf of bread in Vienna cost 1 Kr 34 centimes, a cup of coffee cost 10 centimes, and a kilogram of ham cost 40 Kr (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 201, ark. 7); while in May 1919, officers who had moved to Galicia could make purchases at the army commissary for the following prices: 500-gram loaf of bread for 2.4 Kr, a kilogram of potatoes for 0.7 Kr, a litre of milk for 1 Kr, a single serving of coffee for 0.3 Kr, fatback (*salo*) for 32–35 Kr/kg, ham sausage (*kovbasa*) for 20 Kr/kg, and fruit butter (*povydlo*) for 12 Kr/kg.

The assortment comprised only thirty food and consumer goods items, with prices from 0.30 to 70 Kr (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 146, ark. 42). For other soldier’s necessities, prices in the territory controlled by ZUNR forces were: 50 Kr for a set of underwear, 300 Kr for a pair of boots, 50 Kr for 1 kg of soap, and 250 Kr for a man’s suit. If an officer wanted to indulge in a luxury item, one kilo of “real” coffee cost 50 Kr, half a litre of vodka (*horilka*) 35 Kr, and a stuffed chicken 20 Kr. In a private store, for 250–300 Kr he could buy a Zenith, Seeland, or Omega Swiss wristwatch (DALO, f. 257, op. 1, spr. 166, ark. 2, 4–5).

In December 1919–January 1920, typhus-stricken UHA soldiers in Podillia and Tavriia<sup>3</sup> lacked proper treatment and were forced to pay 1,000 *karbovantsi* for medical care; according to the exchange rate in Kamianets (Kamianets-Podilskyi was then the seat of the evacuated UNR government),

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<sup>2</sup> Supreme Command of the [Ukrainian] Galician Army.

<sup>3</sup> Territories formerly under the Russian Empire, where the rouble had been replaced with the *karbovanets*’ as the currency of the Ukrainian National Republic.



it was equivalent to 120 Kr. At this time, 50 *karbovantsi* (6–7 Kr) would buy 1 litre of milk or 1 pood of coal (*Hromads'ka dumka* 2). Thus, with their allowances of several thousand Kronen, even under ruinous conditions, food shortages, and epidemics the foreign officers (and their Ukrainian colleagues) could ensure themselves a more-or-less respectable existence—as long as the wages kept being paid on time, of course.

UHA officers would also have a paid two-week annual vacation, and if they fell ill, their medical leave would be covered for up to three months. Material assistance was also provided to their families; for example, allowances were issued to 58 families of military personnel at the ZUNR Induction Station in July 1919, 48 in September, and 55 in November. They included the families of Galician Army commanders (incl. Kurmanovych, Mykytka, Zieritz, and Wolf) as well as those of ordinary COs and NCOs, both Ukrainians and of other nationalities.

Upon the death of a serving military member, his wife was guaranteed a monthly allowance of 60% of her husband's wage, plus an additional 10% for each surviving child. Thus, for instance, the widows of deceased UHA generals Mykytka and Zieritz were receiving an allowance from the Induction Station even in 1922, two years after their husbands had died (*Vistnyk DSVS* 1; TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 194, ark. 2; spr. 203, ark. 97–98, 110–12, 263). These kinds of social guarantees in uncertain post-World War I times were yet another factor that encouraged former officers of the Austrian army to enlist in the Galician Army.

An indicative example is found in the ZS-UNA archives: a complaint submitted by the wife of Lt.-Col. Alfred Lachini, commander of the UHA's Berezhany District Military Command, who had not received any family allowance payments from January through August 1919. After a lengthy investigation and review (especially given that after only a year of marriage three children of various ages had appeared in the family), in October of that year the lieutenant-colonel's wife (Olena) did receive the outstanding funds, amounting to 3,870 Kr. The record shows that besides this, various sums (from 352 to 2,000 Kr) were paid out that month to the wives of other senior *starshyny* in the Galician Army who were living in the former imperial capital (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 203, ark. 58). At the same time, it should be noted that even with such a critical shortage of commander cadres, the Ukrainians were quite scrupulous about selecting the mercenaries they hired. The archive includes several application forms from officers requesting to join the UHA that are stamped "Applicant cannot be accepted" (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 205, ark. 21–25).

Even then, the foreigners who passed the preliminary screening and became Ukrainian officers were regularly reviewed. For example, on 23 July 1919 the Ukrainian employer terminated a military service hiring contract with a native of the town of Stryi, Leopold Dolleczeck. Submitting his



application to serve in the Ukrainian army in July, he indicated that his rank was artillery captain, that he had served on the Italian Front, and that his military experience extended from battery commander to artillery liaison in the 2nd Army Isonzo (Soča) HQ. A detailed examination of his documents as well as queried reports received from the Austrian defence ministry established, however, that the captain had provided incorrect data about himself by falsifying his documents. As a result, on the eve of the advance of the UNR and ZUNR's combined armies on Kyiv it was decided to reject officer Dolleczeck's application (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 193, ark. 1–2, 22, 29, 30).

A general overview of the archive documents provides evidence to conclude that during the period from November 1918 through the end of 1919 the ZS-UNA in Vienna deployed a minimum of two hundred foreign "soldiers of fortune" to the Galician Army. Approximately an equal number of Austrians, Czechs, Hungarians, and representatives of other European nations enlisted within Galicia to defend the ZUNR. Interestingly, moreover, during the same time nearly three hundred military personnel of Jewish, Russian, and other heritage joined the ZUNR's armed forces. The Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv also contains a "List of officers who have voluntarily enlisted in the Ukrainian National Army" that includes the names of 89 (actually, 87) officers of the Austro-Hungarian Army who were recruited from November 1918 to June 1919 to serve in the Galician Army and were deployed to Ukraine. Among them were *starshyna* names that subsequently became famous: Wilhelm Lobkowitz, Richard Jary, Emil Brandner, Ferdinand Löhner, and others.

Among the other documents in the archives of the Induction Station is a "List of officers who departed" that shows the biographical data for four officers (three Western Ukrainian *Volksdeutsche* and one Austrian from Vienna) who joined the Galician Army in May 1919 (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 205, ark. 1, 5, 26–27). Among all the foreign soldiers in the UHA, the shortest service record (4–6 weeks) belonged to Col. Walter Böhm, Anton Lehar, and K. Stipsitz-Ternowa, as well as the 26-year-old Austrian *Oberstleutnant* Wolfgang Frantzel. Having joined the Galician Army at the end of May 1919, already by summer he was back in Vienna, and in August 1919 as First Lieutenant (*poruchnyk*) he was sent to an internment camp for soldiers of the Galician Army in the Czechoslovak town of Německé Jablonné (Germ.: Deutsch Gabel).

Relocating eastward to Ukraine and back again was quite typical for the mercenaries. Contrary to most of the *starshyna* officers who were Ukrainian—to say nothing of the rank-and-file soldiers stuck at the front—the Austrian officers in the UHA were able to travel west for their vacation or for medical treatment. Some of them, having relocated to Galicia, would soon afterward cut their ties and return home. Others of the *starshyna* would go

back either on sick leave or be redeployed as part of other units of the Galician Army.

Starting in the third quarter of 1919, the functions of the Induction Station of the Ukrainian National Army changed with respect to providing shelter for Ukrainian prisoners of war, recruiting foreigners, and deploying them to join Galician Army detachments. The stream of World War I prisoners had gradually decreased, while instead the ZS-UNA began to process escapees from Polish, Bolshevik Russian, and Denikin's (White Russian) captivity, among whom were also non-Ukrainian military personnel from the armed forces of the ZUNR. The first POWs from the Galician theatre of operations started arriving in Vienna already at the start of 1919, but these were only individual cases. By summer, however, the number of foreign military specialists who by various means had left the Galician Army and turned up at the ZS-UNA had increased to several dozen. Most of these escapees were sent to the army camp at Německé Jablonné, where they were reinstated in their military service. In early 1920 the Induction Station practically stopped deploying soldiers to Ukraine, as it realigned its mandate around processing escapees. Among them were several dozen mercenaries; they all had to undergo interviews with the UHA's Exoneration Commission, explaining the circumstances of their capture as enemy POWs. As a rule, though, the former prisoners were exonerated. Some of them—including *otaman* Ferdinand Lang and *sotnyk* Edward Henig, who appeared before the commission in June 1920—shortly afterwards themselves sat as members of the Exoneration Commission, interviewing other ex-prisoners.

A significant proportion of the escapee POWs were in dire material straits, having lost all their property while fighting on the Ukrainian side and then spending time behind barbed wire. Many of the escapees managed to get to Vienna through Berlin, where they tried unsuccessfully to obtain some assistance from the diplomatic representation of the UNR, which at the time considered Poland to be its ally. Meanwhile, the correspondent for the émigré Ukrainian newspaper *Svoboda* (*Freedom*) sent the following report from the German capital:

Virtually every day on the cobblestone streets of Berlin we see bedraggled, exhausted, miserable, and impoverished people, who are looked upon with pity by the Germans. They are Ukrainian soldiers who had fought for an independent Ukraine . . . and then were captured by the Poles and sent to their infamous camps. They would escape en route and arrive in Berlin hungry and cold, hoping that the military-sanitary Ukrainian Mission would help them. But the doors of the Mission were, unfortunately, closed to them, and the embassy [of the UNR] could not provide assistance to "people who had escaped the camp of an allied state." (*Svoboda* 2)

Therefore, upon returning home the foreign officers would often demand compensation from the Ukrainian side for their lost health and property. Among the most indicative examples of the level of material wealth of an average officer at that time is a complaint addressed to the Embassy of the UNR in Vienna by Capt. Alfons Komora, commander of the 1st machine-gun company of the UHA's 2nd Brigade, dated 25 July 1920. Having escaped during the night before 2 June from the Polish POW camp in Tuchola, he made his way through Berlin, Leipzig, and Passau to Vienna and faced his Ukrainian army commanders with only his uniform to his name. In his appeal he reported that upon being taken prisoner on 1 April 1920 he lost everything he had: two suitcases, a backpack, binoculars, a pistol, jacket, trousers, army boots, quilt, toiletries, five summer-weight and two winter-weight undergarments, and slippers. These losses Komora valued at 18,000 Kr, plus he was owed his captain's back pay for nearly three months, calculated at 4,164 roubles (or 1,666 Kr) (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 179, ark. 121–23).

The case of the last commander of the Kolomyia Brigade, Karl Kwapil, was made even more eloquently. He addressed a letter to the Ukrainian ambassador in Vienna dated 8 July 1920, saying “[t]he Poles took everything from me. I am lacking the most basic things; I have one pair of underwear and my other clothes are in very poor shape” (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 179, ark. 125). However, not all officers requested that the Ukrainian side return only the items and moneys they had actually lost. Some officers' complaints went much farther. Notably, one of the sticklers regarding their contract with the ZUNR army was Aleksander Strobel, former chief quartermaster of the NKHA. In early 1920 he arrived in Vienna and immediately applied for medical treatment at the resort in Carlsbad (Karlovy Vary). After returning from there, on 14 February he somehow forced the ZS-UNA to pay him 360 Kr for the trip and 1,346.74 Kr for the treatment. Two days later he received another 750 Kr from the ZS for the purchase of a new military uniform, which technically was a contractual allowance. Finally, on 5 March Strobel was given another 360 Kr and sent to the Ukrainian brigade stationed at Německé Jablonné (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 199, ark. 20).

Capt. Henig went even further in his demands of the Ukrainian employer. On 2 September 1920 he sent a letter to Ievhen Petrushevych, then-head of the ZUNR, complaining that during his military service on Ukrainian territory and his subsequent internment, he had lost property worth a total of 85,200 Kr; the cavalry officer actually stated that he expected this loss to be properly compensated. However, he was not paid that extravagant sum, only a small amount in cash (TsDIAL Ukrainy, f. 581, op. 1, spr. 189, ark. 175–77, 184).

To be sure, there were instances at the other side of the spectrum, as well. The Galician colonist Karl Schlösser, for example, ending up in Czechoslovakia with the UHA's Mountain Brigade in May 1919, showed himself to be an honest person and a Ukrainian patriot. In contrast to many of his ethnic-German fellow POWs, he did not take advantage and quit service but rather fled Czechoslovakia and returned to the Galician Army via Romania. Soon afterward Schlösser was given command of the newly created Eleventh Brigade and stayed with it until the UHA ceased its operations.

Analyzing the national composition of foreign officers whose biographies are collected in my book *Landsknekhty Halyts'koi armii (The Landsknechte of the Galician Army)*, we see that they can be divided into several groups. The largest would encompass the Central and Eastern European nations, and this group is colloquially named “Germans” in a number of documents and recollections of former combatants—evidently because of German being their common language and due to their common “Austro-Hungarian” background. Of the 342 European mercenaries in this group, by nationality they were comprised of ethnic Austrians (at least 67), Sudeten Germans (min. 60), Galician Germans (min. 62), and Bukovynian Germans (min. 36). Besides the Austrians and colonial Germans, the UHA also included at least 18 Czech officers, 8 Italians, 7 Poles, 5 Hungarians, 4 Croatians, and 3 Romanians, as well as a Belgian, a Canadian, a Serb, and a “Serbo-Croat.”

The second-largest group were the Jewish *starshyna* officers, of whom there were at least 217 (mostly from Western Ukraine). The Ukrainian Galician Army also included up to 100 serving “Russians,” so called because they were non-Ukrainian (but not necessarily Russian) former officers in the Imperial Russian Army. Unfortunately, the nationality of nearly 70 more officers cannot be ascertained to date, due to a lack of more detailed information (Stetsyshyn 314–438).

Notably, the Ukrainian government propagandized the multinational nature of the officers' corps of the Galician Army. For example, on 9 August 1919 the chair of the Council of Ministers of the UNR Borys Martos and the minister of Jewish Affairs, Pinchas Krasnyi, issued a joint appeal to “Jewish residents and workers” of Ukraine, calling on them to co-operate with the Ukrainian government; the appeal also highlighted the advance against Bolshevism of both armies—“Republican” (i.e., the Army of the UNR) and Galician—in operational union, emphasizing that a “significant number of Jewish soldiers and officers” were fighting for Ukraine in the latter formation (Hunczak 96).

Ethnic Poles also served in the Galician Army. One of the NKHA's “lists of foreign *starshyna* officers” names the following Galician officers of Polish nationality: *chetar*-rank (i.e., Lieut.) Kwarta, Przybóg, Ostrowski, and Miśniakewicz, Senior Lieut. Czepita, Capt. Garguliński, and civilian doctor

Markiewicz. Most of these Poles enlisted in the Galician Army within a few days of the ZUNR declaration of independence—when the Galician Army was actually clashing with the Polish Army. (Furthermore, Lieut. Hryhorii Trukh of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen would later recall that five Poles participated in the 1918 November Uprising in Lviv, standing alongside Ukrainian soldiers when Ukrainian statehood was announced in Lviv.) Poles also served in non-combat units of the UHA; they included five NCOs and senior NCOs of Polish nationality (TsDAVO Ukrainy, f. 2188, op. 1, spr. 146, ark. 1–47; Hutsuliak 90).

In sum, we may assert that the ZUNR authorities (ZOUNR) and command of the Galician Army succeeded in significantly abating the problem of insufficient officer cadres—although it was never completely resolved. This was accomplished by actively promoting the most capable and battle-hardened Ukrainian NCOs as well as by attracting officers of non-Ukrainian nationalities, primarily from the ranks of the former Austro-Hungarian and Imperial Russian armies. As a result, based on personnel records, by the end of 1919 nearly 6,000 officers had served in the Galician Army, of whom approximately every 8th or 9th was non-Ukrainian. These mercenaries significantly changed the armed forces of the ZUNR (ZOUNR) and left their own memorable trace in the history of Ukraine's struggle for independence.

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