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## CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC COMPONENT OF THE CAMP LEISURE OF INTERNED UKRAINIAN SOLDIERS IN ALEKSANDRÓW AND ŁAŃCUT, POLAND (END OF 1920 – 1921)

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the article* is to conduct an analysis into the cultural and artistic component of the camp everyday life of interned UPR Army soldiers in the camps Aleksandrów and Łańcut (Poland) at the end of 1920 and in 1921.

The *scientific novelty* lies in the multi-faceted study of the essence of cultural and artistic activity conducted by creative groups from among camp residents, whose events helped enrich everyday life in the camps for interned soldiers.

*Conclusions.* The cultural and artistic life of interned soldiers was manifested most fully in three categories – songwriting of amateur choirs, performances of camp orchestras, work of camp theaters. At the same time, all amateur theatrical and concert events were national in content and spirit and contributed to the spiritual consolidation of the interned Ukrainian soldiers in the difficult conditions of internment. Thanks to the efforts of members of artistic groups, camp residents had the opportunity to regularly attend theater performances, choir performances, and instrumental music concerts. In addition, with the joint efforts of camp artists, various artistic events ('concert-parties') were regularly prepared for the internees, which constituted a harmonic combination of various theatrical, choral and musical numbers. Usually, they were concluded by dance sections, which enjoyed constant popularity among all camp residents. Similarly, camp artists cooperated in their efforts during the preparation of theatrical performances, thanks to which the performances acquired greater artistic value. It was also important that women (mostly officers' wives), some of whom had undeniable artistic talent, were actively involved in the performances.

Important cultural and artistic events included the celebration of national and state holidays, days of memory of Taras Shevchenko and Ivan Franko, divisional holidays, a commemoration of the fallen in battles, etc. The joint efforts of camp artists, choristers and musicians significantly contributed to overcoming the threatening tendency towards degradation and dispersal of the interned Ukrainian soldiers. Ukrainian song, music, and dramatic art, to the greatest extent, contributed to the camp residents' spiritual unification around national values and also allowed them to successfully overcome all the difficulties of the camp's everyday life.

*Keywords:* interned Ukrainian soldiers, camp, choir, orchestra, theater, cultural event, play, UkrPR Army, Poland

## КУЛЬТУРНО-МИСТЕЦЬКА СКЛАДОВА ТАБОРОВОГО ДОЗВІЛЛЯ ІНТЕРНОВАНИХ ВОЯКІВ-УКРАЇНЦІВ У АЛЕКСАНДРОВІ ТА ЛАНЦУТІ, ПОЛЬЩА (КІНЕЦЬ 1920 – 1921 РР.)

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### АНОТАЦІЯ

**Мета роботи** визначається необхідністю проведення аналізу культурно-мистецької складової таборового повсякдення інтернованих вояків Армії УНР у таборах Александрів та Ланцут (Польща) у кінці 1920 – 1921 рр.

**Наукова новизна** полягає у комплексному дослідженні змісту культурно-мистецької діяльності творчих осередків з числа таборян, заходами яких таборове повсякдення інтернованих було наповнено конструктивним змістом.

**Висновки.** Встановлено, що культурно-мистецьке життя інтернованих найповніше проявлялася в трьох площинах – пісенній творчості аматорських хорів, виступах таборових оркестрів, роботі таборових театрів. При цьому всі театральні-концертні самодіяльні заходи були національними за змістом та духом та сприяли духовній консолідації інтернованого українського вояцтва в складних умовах інтернування. Завдяки зусиллям членів мистецьких гуртків таборяни мали можливість регулярно відвідувати театральні вистави, виступи хорів, концерти інструментальної музики. Крім того, спільними зусиллями таборових артистів для інтернованих регулярно готувались різні мистецькі імпрези («концерти-вечірки»), які являли собою комбіноване поєднання різноманітних театральних, хорових та музикальних номерів. Як правило їх завершальною частиною ставали танцювальні відділи, які користувалися незмінною популярністю у всіх таборян. Так само кооперували таборові артисти свої зусилля і під час підготовки театральних вистав, завдяки чому останні набували більшої мистецької вартості. Важливим було й те, що до участі у виставах активно залучалися жінки (здебільшого – дружини старшин), деякі з яких мали незаперечний артистичний хист.

До числа важливих культурно-мистецьких акцій належало й відзначення національних та державних свят, днів пам'яті Т. Шевченка та І. Франка, дивізійних свят, вшанування полеглих у боях та ін. Спільні зусилля таборових артистів, хористів і музикантів істотним чином причинились до того аби подолати загрозливу тенденцію до деградації та розпорошення інтернованого українського вояцтва. Українська пісня, музика і драматичне мистецтво найбільшою мірою сприяли духовному об'єднанню таборян навколо національних цінностей, а також дозволяли успішно долати всі труднощі таборового повсякдення.

**Ключові слова:** інтерновані вояки-українці, табори, хор, оркестр, театр, імпреза, вистава, Армія УНР, Польща

## INTRODUCTION

The internment of the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic in the camps of Poland, which was preceded by its military defeat in an armed duel with the Bolshevik troops and retreat from the territory of Ukraine (November 21, 1920), became a severe test for the Ukrainian military that found themselves in a foreign land facing a difficult life choice. The vast majority of the soldiers of the UPR Army preferred to continue the fight against Bolshevism and restore the Ukrainian People's Republic, while some of them, especially those who did not have lasting worldview orientations, were in a completely confused state and needed spiritual care and moral help. This state of affairs required an immediate response from the military command and the top political leadership of the Ukrainian People's Republic, because even a short delay could have the consequence in the form of intensifying destructive processes among the camp residents. Already in a short time, energetic measures were taken in the camps to create favorable conditions for the organization of cultural and artistic leisure of the interned Ukrainian military.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the fact that the circumstances of the interned UPR Army soldiers stay in the camps of Poland are currently quite clear<sup>1</sup>, the study of the specifics of the functioning of the cultural and artistic everyday life of internees is at the initial stage of research and is limited to only a few articles<sup>2</sup>. Some manifestations of the concert and artistic activity of the campers were reflected in the documents edited by V. Morenetz in the collection 'Army behind the wires'<sup>3</sup>, in which, in particular, some programme samples of a number of cultural and entertainment events in most camps of interned Ukrainians in Poland were reproduced.

This article is prepared on the basis of a wide range of archival sources, which were processed by the authors in the Central State Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine and two archives of Poland. These are, in particular, reports of cultural-educational departments of camps, reports of heads of internee groups, minutes of meetings of drama societies, programs of theatrical performances, which were performed on the stages of camp theaters. Materials of the camp press, on the pages of which announcements of future performances, reviews of them and even

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<sup>1</sup> Karpus Z. Jeńcy i internowani rosyjscy i ukraińscy na terenie Polski w latach 1918-1924. Toruń, 1997. 209 s.; Срібняк І. Обеззброєна, але нескорена: Інтернована Армія УНР у таборах Польщі й Румунії (1921-1924 рр.). Київ-Філядельфія, 1997. 187 с.; Павленко М.І. Українські військовополонені й інтерновані у таборах Польщі, Чехословаччини та Румунії: ставлення влади і умов перебування (1919-1924 рр.). Київ, 1999. 352 с.; Колянчук О. Українська військова еміграція у Польщі (1920-1939). Львів, 2000. 274 с.; Bruski J.J. Petlurowscy. Centrum Państwowe Ukraińskiej Republiki Ludowej na wychodźstwie (1919-1924). Kraków, 2000. 600 s.

<sup>2</sup> Срібняк І., Срібняк М. «Змога пережити естетичну насолоду...» (діяльність театральномистецьких осередків у Калішському таборі інтернованих Військ УНР у Польщі, 1921-1923 рр.). *Art-простір*. 2018. № 3. С. 32-39; Срібняк І., Надтока Г. З-тя Залізна стрілецька дивізія Армії УНР у 1921 р.: просвітня та культурно-мистецька складова таборового повсякдення вояцтва. *Вісник Національної академії керівних кадрів культури і мистецтв*. 2018. № 3. С. 108-115; Sribniak I. Życie kulturalne i artystyczne żołnierzy Ukraińskiej Armii Ludowej internowanych w obozie w Strzałkowie (lipiec 1921 – sierpień 1922). *Polonia Maior Orientalis. Studia z dziejów Wielkopolski Wschodniej*. 2021. T. VIII. S. 97-112.

<sup>3</sup> Армія за дротами. Збірка документів / редактор-упорядник Володимир Моренець. Кам'янець-Подільський, 2018. 432 с.

analytical review articles on further ways of development of Ukrainian theatrical art were regularly placed, are important for the objective reproduction of theatrical and artistic life in the camps.

## DISCUSSION

### *Aleksandrów*

The cultural and artistic component of the daily life of the interned soldiers in the Aleksandrów (Aleksandrów Kujawski) and Łańcut camps was never static – Ukrainian songs, music, theater “sprouted” on the worst “soil” and in the most difficult conditions. Actually, a telling example of this was the beginning of cultural and artistic life in Aleksandrów, the beginnings of which date back to December 13, 1920, when standard-bearer Stepan Shabalin and lieutenant Sinelnyk started organizing a choir (at the 6<sup>th</sup> division of the Army of the Ukrainian People’s Republic). The aforementioned senior officers set themselves the task of “acquainting the riflemen with Ukrainian songs and music, providing them with useful entertainment, and organizing singing and music courses”. On December 27, the choristers held their first concert in front of the Polish public which was very successful (thanks to their performance, the choir received the first funds needed for further development – 10 417 Polish marks (current monetary unit in Poland – *auth.*). On December 31, the choir performed a concert for the soldiers of the 6<sup>th</sup> division, the next day – for everyone in the camp (both were free of charge)<sup>4</sup>.

In the first half of January 1921, the choristers learned several patriotic and historical songs (*‘Zhyvy, Ukraino!’* (‘Live, Ukraine!’), *‘Burlaka’*, *‘Baida’*, *‘Morozenko’*), simultaneously preparing for a concert for the residents of Aleksandrów, hoping to earn at least some funds for own activities and repayment of debts (6 000 Polish marks) in this way. In addition, the choir had to pay monthly 2 500 Polish marks to the owner of the rented piano<sup>5</sup>.

At the same time, efforts were made to create a camp theater and drama center in Aleksandrów, and already on December 20, 1920, a theater group was organized by the M. Sadovskyi Dramatic Society, which included amateur artists of the 4<sup>th</sup> division. At that time, according to M. Hladkyi, “there was no stage, no scenery, no costumes, and, most importantly, there were no means for a young drama group to start their work”<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, the organizational formation of the community continued, ending on December 26, 1920, after the approval of its temporary charter. In it, the main goal of the Dramatic Society was formulated: “to get acquainted with the native thing (art – *auth.*) and to entertain the internees”, for which the members of the society committed themselves to popularizing the national dramatic art and engaging in artistic self-improvement<sup>7</sup>.

The command of the group of internees found an opportunity to transfer a separate barrack, which had to be converted into a camp theater (for 400 seats), to this group. A significant problem for the camp artists was the arrangement of the stage and the production of theatrical costumes, and here the already mentioned YMCA<sup>8</sup> came to

<sup>4</sup> *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 27.

<sup>5</sup> The Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (CTA SBP&GU). Fund 3526. List 1. File 3. P. 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Гладкий Г.* Театр. *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 17.

<sup>7</sup> CTA SBP&GU. Fund 3523. List 2. File 1. P. 12; Fund 3526. List 1. File 3. P. 12.

<sup>8</sup> *Young Men’s Christian Association* – a charitable American organization that provided humanitarian assistance to prisoners and internees in camps in various European countries.

help, which provided a monetary subsidy to the theater (the M. Sadovskiy Dramatic Society also contributed to the production of scenery and props)<sup>9</sup>.

Thanks to this help, during the first month of the camp theater's work, the plays '*Poshylys v durni*' ('Were Shown as Fools') by M. Kropyvnytskyi and '*Diva Maria*' ('The Virgin Mary') by V. Vynnychenko were staged on its stage, as well as several more plays were prepared: '*Zoria Novoho Zhyttia*' ('The Dawn of a New Life') by Kashchenko, '*Martyn Borulia*' by Tobilevich, '*Nazar Stodolia*' by T. Shevchenko<sup>10</sup>. In the future, the repertoire of the theater expanded thanks to the preparation of new everyday and historical plays by Ukrainian authors, including: '*Oi ne khody Hrytsiu ta na vechornytsi*' ('Oh, don't go, Hryts, to the vechornytsi'), '*Dai sertsiu voliu – zavede v nevoliu*' ('Give your heart freedom – it will lead you into captivity') (both by M. Kropyvnytskyi) and etc., but the most popular among the campers were '*Pro shcho tyrsa shelestila*' ('What was that the sawdust rustled') by S. Cherkasenko and '*Nevolnyk*' ('The Slave') by M. Kropyvnytskyi, as well as several one-act plays<sup>11</sup>.

It was also important that in order to improve the skills of the camp actors and to acquaint them with the basics of directorial work, in February-March 1921, "theatre courses" were organized (the director was Bloschanevich), at which 45 students were given lectures such as 'History of the theater', 'Practical face painting', 'Theory of singing' and others<sup>12</sup>.

By preparing performances and offering them to the audience free of charge, the camp theater performed an important mobilizing function in the camp. At the same time, even when a small fee was charged for visiting the theater, the net profit from a part of such performances was transferred to various humanitarian needs of the camp residents. So, in particular, all proceeds from the performance of the play '*Nevolnyk*' by M. Kropyvnytskyi (10 325 Polish marks (mp) from the sale of entrance tickets and sample programs), which took place on April 20, 1921, were used to improve the nutrition of sick riflemen in the camp at Easter holidays<sup>13</sup>.

The same performance was repeated the next day, and the camp journal commented on the masterful performance of the actors, which was characterized by "preparedness and self-confidence", in a short review note. The sublime performance of Bloschanevych, Zhivotivskyi and Agres was especially noted, who "were especially beautifully and demonstrated artistic skills" while reproducing "the page of suffering of our people in its long struggle with the enemy in the ordinary everyday life of the village" in the last act<sup>14</sup>.

In general, during 1921, the M. Sadovskiy Dramatic Society prepared about 50 performances, 30 of which were held free of charge for the camp residents. Thanks to the work of the camp theater and the performances of the choirs, the evening time of the camp residents was filled with constructive content, able to at least temporarily satisfied the nostalgic feelings of the internees<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 2562. List 1. File 32. Pp. 108-108back.

<sup>10</sup> *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 30.

<sup>11</sup> Національно-освітня та військова праця в 4 Київській дивізії. *Альманах* (Александрів Куявський). 1921. № 1. С. 29; *Нове життя* (Щипорно). 1921. 26 грудня. № 97. С. 2.

<sup>12</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 3523. List 2. File 1. P. 12; *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 30.

<sup>13</sup> Хорому Стрільцеві. *Нове життя* (Александрово). 1921. 24 квітня. № 41. С. 4.

<sup>14</sup> «Невольник» на таборовій сцені. *Нове життя* (Александрово). 1921. 24 квітня. № 41. С. 4.

<sup>15</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 2562. List 1. File 32. Pp. 108-108back.

The Dramatic Society also had a string orchestra with 20 musicians, the instruments for which were purchased with funds provided by the YMCA. This circumstance made it possible to widely develop the activities of the singing section of the cultural and educational department, which organized about 30 concerts – both in the camp for internees and in Aleksandrów for its residents. Members of the section prepared and published 40 copies of “Collections of Ukrainian songs from the repertoire of the choir of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sich Division.” The section had a school of singing and recitation, the students of which often came to the barracks and taught Cossack from individual kurins choral singing<sup>16</sup>.

The 4<sup>th</sup> division also had its own choir consisting of 40 people (leader was lieutenant Babichenko), and the high level of performance of Ukrainian folk songs by their soloists allowed them to perform concerts not only in the camp, but also outside its borders (in Toruń, Ciechocinek, etc.), popularizing Ukrainian art in this way<sup>17</sup>. It is clear that their performances in Polish cities (as well as field trips of the camp theater) also pursued a completely mercantile goal – to earn additional funds both for the organizations to which the camp artists belonged, and to improve the material condition of the artists.

In turn, the Polish local authorities willingly allowed such outdoor performances and concerts, not only taking care to improve the perception of interned Ukrainians by the inhabitants of Polish cities, but also not forgetting about their “own interest”. Performances and concerts organized by the camp’s cultural and educational department outside the camp were subject to quite significant fees (“for the benefit of the Polish state”, “for Polish schools”, etc.). In view of the insignificant profits these events brought, and taking into account the needy state of the internees, the Ukrainian Military Liquidation Commission appealed to the Polish government to exempt camp performances and concerts from tax collection, to which a positive response was received<sup>18</sup>.

As a result of the actions of the command and employees of the divisional cultural and educational departments, a camp library was created in Aleksandrów, the total stock of which was 1 510 different books. There was a separate library of the Officer Community of the 6<sup>th</sup> Division, which had about 1 000 volumes<sup>19</sup>. The 6<sup>th</sup> Division took care of the creation of the ‘*Khata Striltsia*’, which was equipped with a canteen and a reading room<sup>20</sup>.

The cultural and artistic life in the Aleksandrów camp was quite developed (thanks to the help of the already mentioned YMCA), where on December 20, 1920, a theatrical group was organized by the Drama Society named after M. Sadovskyi, which included amateur artists of the 4<sup>th</sup> Kyiv Division. At this time – according to one of the organizers of cultural and artistic life in Aleksandrów, Captain M. Gladkyi – “there was no stage, no scenery, no costumes, and most importantly – there were no means for a young drama group to begin its work”<sup>21</sup>. Nevertheless, the organizational formation of the society

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<sup>16</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 1078. List 2. File 200. P. 60; *Нове життя* (Щипіорно). 1921. 26 грудня. № 97. С. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Національно-освітня та військова праця в 4 Київській дивізії *Альманах* (Александрів Куявський). 1921. № 1. С. 28-29.

<sup>18</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 2439. List 1. File 27. P. 627.

<sup>19</sup> *Битинський М.* Українське вояцтво на культурно-освітньому фронті. *Гуртуймося*. Прага, 1932. № IX. С. 37; *Нове життя* (Щипіорно). 1921. 26 грудня. № 97. С. 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 15 січня. Ч. 1. С. 6.

<sup>21</sup> *Гладкий Г.* Театр. *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 17.

continued, ending on December 26, this year with approval of its temporary statute. It formulated the main purpose of the Drama Society – “acquaintance with the native art and entertainment for internees”, for which members of the society committed themselves to promote national drama and engage in artistic self-improvement<sup>22</sup>.

The command of the internee group found an opportunity to transfer a separate barrack, which was to be converted into a camp theatre (for 400 seats), to this group. A significant problem for the camp artists was the arrangement of the stage and the production of theatrical costumes, and here the theatre received help from the YMCA, which provided a monetary subvention to the theatre (the Drama Society named after M. Sadovskyi also contributed to the production of scenery and props)<sup>23</sup>.

Thanks to this assistance, during the first month of the camp theatre, M. Kropyvnytskyi's plays *'Poshylys v durni'* and V. Vynnychenko's *'Panna Mara'* were performed, as well as several other plays: *'Zoria novoho zhyttia'* ('Dawn of a New Life') by Kashchenko, *'Martyn Borulia'* by I. Tobilevych, *'Nazar Stodolia'* by T. Shevchenko<sup>24</sup>. Later, the theatre's repertoire was expanded due to the preparation of new domestic and historical plays by Ukrainian authors, including: *'Oi ne khody Hrytsiu ta na vechornytsi'*, *'Dai sertsiu voliu – zavede v nevoliiu'* (both – by M. Kropyvnytskyi) etc., but the most popular among the campers were *'Pro shcho tyrsa shelestila'* ('About what sawdust rustled') by S. Cherkasenko and *'Nevolnyk'* by M. Kropyvnytskyi, as well as several one-act plays<sup>25</sup>.

It was also important that in order to improve the skills of camp actors and to acquaint them with the basics of directing in February-March 1921, “theatrical courses” were organized (led by Lieutenant Colonel M. Bloschchanevych), in which such lectures as ‘History of Theatre’, ‘Practical grease-paint’, ‘Theory of Singing’, etc. were held by 45 of their listeners<sup>26</sup>

The camp theater performed an important mobilizing function in the camp in preparing performances and offering them to the audience free of charge. At the same time, even when a small fee was charged for visiting the theatre, the net profit from some of these performances was donated to the various humanitarian needs of the campers. Thus, in particular, all proceeds from the performance of the play *'Nevolnyk'* by M. Kropyvnytskyi (10 325 mp from the sale of tickets and programmes), which took place on April 20, 1921, were used to improve the nutrition of sick Streltsy during Easter holidays in the camp<sup>27</sup>.

The same performance was repeated the next day, and the camp periodical responded to the actors' skillful play, which was characterized by “preparedness and self-confidence”, in a short review. The sublime play of Bloschchanevych, Zhyvotivskyi and Agres was especially noted, who recreated “the page of our people's suffering in its long struggle with the enemy in the ordinary daily life of the village” “especially beautifully and with artistic skill” in the last act<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 3523. List 2. File 1. P. 12; СТА SBP&GU. Fund 3526. List 1. File 3. P. 12.

<sup>23</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 2562. List 1. File 32. Pp. 108-108back.

<sup>24</sup> *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 30.

<sup>25</sup> Національно-освітня та військова праця в 4 Київській дивізії. *Альманах* (Александрів Куявський). 1921. № 1. С. 29; *Нове життя* (Щипіорно). 1921. 26 грудня. № 97. С. 2.

<sup>26</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 3523. List 2. File 1. P. 12; *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 30.

<sup>27</sup> Хорому Стрільцеві. *Нове життя* (Александрово). 1921. 24 квітня. № 41. С. 4.

<sup>28</sup> «Невольник» на таборовій сцені. *Нове життя* (Александрово). 1921. 24 квітня. № 41. С. 4.

In general, during 1921 the Drama Society named after M. Sadovskiy prepared about 50 performances, 30 of which took place free of charge – for the residents of the camp. Thanks to the work of the camp theater and the performances of choirs, the evening time of the campers was filled with constructive content, able to at least temporarily relieve the nostalgic feelings of the internees<sup>29</sup>.

### **Łańcut**

In the Łańcut camp, almost immediately after the placement of the interned Ukrainian military in it, several amateur groups (drama and musical-choral) were created by several initiative officers, the members of which managed to hold various cultural and artistic events, trying to give the internees at least a little entertainment and give hope for changes for the better. At the same time, their activity became a powerful consolidating factor for the entire population of internees, positively influencing the morale of the military.

One of the first such events in the camp was a concert led by standard-bearer Zukornyk, which took place on January 8, 1921. As the camp journal '*Nasha Zoria*' reported, "an outside audience was present, namely the local Polish intelligentsia." The audience was satisfied with the concert, and they especially liked the playing of one of the campers on the *bandura* (perhaps it was Mykhailo Teliha – *auth.*), although the acoustics of the room were not suitable for this<sup>30</sup>. The next day, a vocal and literary evening "for the needs of the Camp of Interned Troops of the Ukrainian People's Republic" was organized in Łańcut by the musical and choral section of the camp's cultural and educational commission. Its program featured 18 choral and solo performances by camp artists<sup>31</sup>.

Theatrical and artistic life was especially active in the Łańcut camp, where the premises for the theatre (named after T. Shevchenko) were arranged at the cost of internees. To do this, General N. Nikonov, the head of the group, initiated, in particular, fundraising (on loan) through voluntary contributions from each unit in the camp<sup>32</sup>. Due to this, it became possible to finally complete all the works in it and to perform a concert in honour of the memory of Taras Shevchenko on March 20, 1921 (to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death)<sup>33</sup>.

The opening of the camp theater also helped to intensify the work of amateur theater centers in the camp – at the 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Division led by Captain V. Dalekyi and at the *Zbirna Stanytsia* led by Captain M. Gorunovych (already March 31, this year the play '*Khaziain*' was staged by the drama group of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division)<sup>34</sup>. From the very beginning of their existence, these two drama groups (dramatic societies) conducted their activities quite independently. They also set the cost of tickets for theatrical performances – 25 mp, which took into account all the expenses for preparing performances, including remuneration to the musicians of the orchestra. But even in this case, the balance of dramatic societies was sometimes closed with a deficit – due to the fact that only the first performance was paid, and the second and third (for Officers

<sup>29</sup> ЦТА SBP&GU. Fund 2562. List 1. File 32. Pp. 108-108back.

<sup>30</sup> *Наша Зоря* (Ланцут). 1921. 24 січня. Ч. 3 (there is no pagination – *auth.*).

<sup>31</sup> ЦТА SBP&GU. Fund 4007. List 1. File 17. P. 49-49back.

<sup>32</sup> ЦТА SBP&GU. Fund 2439. List 1. File 189. P. 60.

<sup>33</sup> ЦТА SBP&GU. Fund 4007. List 1. File 17. P. 31.

<sup>34</sup> ЦТА SBP&GU. Fund 2439. List 1. File 24. P. 104back.



and Cossacks) were free. Despite this, the directors still managed to “make both ends meet”, and “the theater was successful, giving good plays in good performance of artists and perfect in terms of the stage attitude on the local stage”<sup>35</sup>.

On May 2 and 3, 1921, a camp troupe led by Captain V. Dalekyi staged a new play, ‘*Syny narodu*’ (‘Sons of the People’). On this occasion, the camp periodical ‘*Promin*’ published a review article by one of the spectators, which stated that some character types in this play were performed by artists “with special delicacy and brightness”. Camp amateur actors S. Yakerson, M. Salivon, Tymchenko together with the director made all efforts to convey the main idea of this work to the audience. On May 5, the camp troupe under the direction of Pashinkovskiy staged the play ‘*Harkusha*’ for the third time, which “made a pleasant impression on the audience”<sup>36</sup>.

But such a system of organizing the activities of drama groups did not satisfy the newly created cultural-educational department of the camp, headed by Lieutenant Colonel S. Taran<sup>37</sup>. He desperately needed funds to undertake his activities, but the group’s headquarter did not have the opportunity to help him even minimally. In this situation, the head of the department decided to take over the entire financial side of theatrical business, “getting ‘a hand’ on the free work of artists who worked not for pocket but for art, aiming to give, no matter how much energy it costs, something the best on the local stage...”. Initially, by order of the head of the camp cultural-educational department, two drama societies were united into a single camp theatre troupe of amateur actors consisting of two drama groups (with no real association), and for some time the officials of the cultural-educational department managed to cause quarrels between members of two drama groups<sup>38</sup>.

A commission convened on May 5, 1921, which included one representative of each unit in the camp, had to “make up” theatrical affairs. It decided to reduce the cost of tickets (up to 5 mp), but at the same time authorized the cancellation of free performances. It was also decided that in the future all artistic forces, stage workers and musicians would work for free; tickets would be sold in the future by a head of the cultural-educational department specially appointed by treasurer, and would go to the box office of the department.

During the discussion, the head of the camp cultural-educational department suggested forming a new troupe, which should include artists who would be willing to play for free, to Captain V. Dalekyi. The latter warned that if the soldiers could still be forced to participate in the show, the camp women would not be satisfied with such working conditions. Moreover, V. Dalekyi expressed doubts about the possibility of forming a troupe due to the absence of women in it, in response to which the commission promised him to involve someone from outside the camp, setting a monthly salary (5-7 thousand mp). After that, the commission completed its work, sincerely believing that “its decision... put the theatrical business on a certain path. The harsh reality has revealed that something is wrong here, that the decision of the commission is not an improvement of the theatrical business, but its destruction”<sup>39</sup>.

However, this became apparent only after May 11, when the decision came into force. By this time, the camp artists had the opportunity to hold already planned

<sup>35</sup> *Театрал.* Театральні справи. *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 16 травня. Ч. 2. С. 41.

<sup>36</sup> *Театер і мистецтво.* *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921, 13 травня. Ч. 1. С. 40.

<sup>37</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 2439. List 1. File 24. P. 275.

<sup>38</sup> *Театрал.* Театральні справи... С. 41.

<sup>39</sup> *Театрал.* Театральні справи... С. 42.

performances. On May 8, the Drama Group of the *Zbirna Stanytsia* offered the play *'Bortsi za mrii'* ('Fighters for Dreams') (directed by Gorunovych) to the campers. As noted in the camp periodical *'Promin'*, "technically the play was performed flawlessly", but "the artistic performance did not reach the proper height... the role of Callistratus was dead, to which he had to convey the characteristics of the peasant spirit". Pashinkovskyi, one of the actors of the troupe, "led the role in such a way that it seemed that he was not playing, but performing a duty"<sup>40</sup>. A day later, the drama group under the direction of Pashinkovskyi gave another performance – the comedy *'Poshylys v durni'* which, although amused the campers, but did not differ in successful acting.

On May 9, it was the turn of amateurs from the drama group of the 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Division, who staged *'Kuma Marta'* ('Martha Godmother') (directed by V. Dalekyi). This time, "the cast of artists was chosen for the play as best as possible. In addition to being in their roles, the artists also knew them and played with enthusiasm, which is why they deserved praise and a load of applause". The reviewer especially emphasized the fact that this play made a "huge impression" on the audience, so – in his opinion – "it would be desirable that such plays will appear more often on our stage performed by this group"<sup>41</sup>.

But after this performance, there was a break for several days – the director failed to form a troupe, because none of the drama groups wanted to disperse their forces and unite with someone. Women who needed at least a minimum of money to buy grease-paint and role-playing paper also refused to join the troupe. The performances *'Syny narodu'* scheduled for May 13 and 14 did not take place, although tickets for them had already been partially sold<sup>42</sup>.

The cultural-educational department resorted to regular "maneuvers", trying, on the one hand, to move the work of drama groups and the theater, and, on the other, continuing to claim all the proceeds from the tickets. Ticket fees were increased again, free performances were to take place again, and the women involved in the performances were entitled to "help". These "innovations" also did not work, because the camp actors were willing to work for free in the end, but on the condition that the audience would not be charged for all performances.

The order proposed by the cultural-educational department was, in their opinion, completely unfair, because at the time when they would play on stage for free, "they would take money from the public, and this money would go to someone else's treasury". Thus, behind the artists "someone will earn money, spend it somewhere", while the latter would not have any influence on this process<sup>43</sup>.

Thus, attempts to organize a camp theater in Łańcut on a military basis using the language of orders and directives – proved only that the organizers of cultural and educational affairs had no idea about the specifics of the dramatic craft. In fact, they were driven only by the desire to ensure the receipt of all proceeds from performances, without exception, for the needs of the cultural-educational department of the camp, the head of which would be their main manager.

Their misconceptions that the theater could be managed as a military unit were due to the lack of humanitarian knowledge of those appointed by the group's headquarters

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<sup>40</sup> Театер і мистецтво. *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 13 травня. Ч. 1. С. 40-41.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>42</sup> *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 16 травня. Ч. 2. С. 48.

<sup>43</sup> *Театрал. Театральні справи...* С. 42.

to organize cultural and educational work, as well as the fact that the theater was completed due to several monetary contributions from those units who were in the camp, so – according to the command of the group – the theater had to be in the “common camp” property. According to an unknown observer of theatrical reality in Łańcut, it would be possible to get out of this “dead end” if a person who “was in the shoes of an amateur and a professional” came to the management of theatrical affairs in the camp and was good at it<sup>44</sup>.

After May 11, 1921, there was a break in the work of the camp theater for several days, which was due to the refusal of members of drama groups to work under conditions offered by the camp cultural-educational department. Obviously, the responsibility for this was entirely on those heads of cultural and educational affairs in the camp who were far from theatrical art, as well as on General N. Nikonov, who appointed them to these responsible positions. However, in the theater, camp actors read the first issue of the “living camp newspaper” *‘Promin’* to several sotnias, which aroused keen interest of the campers present here – from admiration to critical attacks on artists who were not the authors of the sound materials<sup>45</sup>.

Nevertheless, a compromise was found – it was decided that drama groups would contribute 7-10% of net income for each paid performance to the needs of the cultural-educational department, which can be found in the order №3 of the internee headquarter from June 4, 1921 (signed by Lieutenant Colonel V. Czabaniwski) on the income of various amounts (eight payments from 155 to 539 mp for a total amount of 2 432 mp) to the treasurer of the camp cultural-educational department for theatrical performances<sup>46</sup>.

Thanks to this decision, the camp theater resumed its work, and on May 21, the drama group under the direction of Captain M. Gorunovych offered the play *‘Nakhmarylo’* (‘It became cloudy’) by B. Hrinchenko to the campers. This play, according to an unknown reviewer’s assessment published in the camp periodical *‘Promin’*, was marked by a somewhat weak performance by Gorunovych himself because of his “apathy” and some strange distraction from what was happening on stage. The reviewer suggested involving “people with more flexible facial features so that they could reflect the vulnerability of the soul”. In his opinion, the choice of artists for this performance was not entirely successful, one of whom did not know her role, “making whole pauses between sentences, which means that in the pauses she listened to the prompter’s remarks”. In general, “it was noticeable that everyone was in a hurry, even the prompter, because he was flipping through two pages of the play”, which almost “fooled” some actors<sup>47</sup>.

The next day, the drama group led by Captain V. Dalekyi performed the drama *‘Bezrobotni’* (‘The Unemployed’) on the stage of the camp theater, all the net profit on which was intended for the Łańcut branch of the Ukrainian Red Cross (the camp musicians, who were satisfied with their half fee – 1 000 mp, also contributed to this)<sup>48</sup>. Amateur actors coped with their task in an exemplary manner, and “almost the entire

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<sup>44</sup> *Театрал.* Театральні справи... С. 42.

<sup>45</sup> *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 16 травня. Ч. 2. С. 44.

<sup>46</sup> Wojskowe Biuro Historyczne. Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe (WBH CAW). Zespół Akt «Sprzymierzona Armia Ukraińska» (SAU), sygn. I.380.13.7.

<sup>47</sup> Театер і мистецтво. *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 23 травня. Ч. 4 (there is no pagination – *auth.*).

<sup>48</sup> *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 3 червня. Ч. 7. С. 27.

hall, together with the artists, experienced those difficult pictures of real life, the real struggle for a daily piece of bread”, because the latter was quite familiar to the campers<sup>49</sup>.

The premiere of V. Vynnychenko's play *'Panna Mara'* took place on May 28. The camp periodical immediately responded to this event with a review by Captain M. Gorunovych, who wished his colleagues that “the director will continue to take the repertoire more seriously and not limit himself to the rubbish he has at hand”. He welcomed the staging of this play, as well as the performance of the vast majority of amateur artists involved. At the same time, he noted the “defects” of directing and acting during the play, pointing in particular to the lack of communication between the prompter and the artists, a complete failure of one of the artists (Captain Bazylevych), who would be better “not to let on stage, because he showed a lack of understanding of the character type he had to play, an inability to stay on stage, and instead of a game – nothing but jesting”<sup>50</sup>.

On this occasion, the reviewer expressed his lack of understanding about why, instead of Bazylevych, the actors “with sacred fire” presents in the troupe, including the actor P. Kaspert, were not involved. The reviewer paid tribute to almost all the artists for their masterful performance on stage, to the director – for his “artistic work, which was obvious even to not a connoisseur of the scene with the scenery and its setting, despite all the poor theatrical means”<sup>51</sup>.

The reviewer's reaction to Konich-Lysenko's play *'Zhyvi pokiinyky'* (‘The Living Dead’), which was staged at the camp theater on May 31, was quite different. The first thing that the unknown reviewer did not like was the imperfect translation from Russian and the frequent use of Russian-language phrases by the artists. In his opinion, staging this play, the drama group overestimated its strength, and there was an unsuccessful casting of roles by artists, the reviewer was convinced – it was even “dangerous to let on stage” one of them, because she could not show “any acting or primitive skill to stay polite (on stage)”. The only bright side of the play was acting by Pashinkovskiy, who was the only one “good talented artist”<sup>52</sup>.

In late May – early June 1921, there were the following performances in the camp theater: *'Kokhaitesia chornobryvi, ta ne z moskaliamy'* (‘Have love black-browed, but not with the Muscovites’), *'Nakhmarylo'*, *'Nevolnyk'*, *'Zhyvi pokiinyky'*, *'Zarucheni po smerti'* (‘Engaged in Death’), *'Zhinka z toho svitu'* (‘Woman from that world’), *'Na mezhi'* (‘On the border’), *'Zhydivka-Vykhrestka'* (‘Baptized Jew’)<sup>53</sup>. At this time, the directors of amateur camps made every effort to enrich their theatrical repertoire – the drama group of the 5<sup>th</sup> Division (former 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Division, which was combined with the 5<sup>th</sup> Kherson Division) staged the play *'Stepovyi hist'* (‘Steppe Guest’) by B. Hrinchenko (June 19 and 21), on 20 and 22 of the same month, the drama group of the *Zbirna Stanytsia* presented the play *'Poky sontse ziide, rosa ochi vyist'* (‘Until the sun rises, the dew will eat out eyes’) (the second play – for free)<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> Театер і мистецтво...

<sup>50</sup> *Горунович [М]. Театер і мистецтво. Промінь (Ланцут). 1921. 31 травня. Ч. 6. С. 31-32.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* С. 32.

<sup>52</sup> *Промінь (Ланцут). 1921. 26 червня. Ч. 9 (there is no pagination – auth.).*

<sup>53</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 2439. List 1. File 24. P. 276-277.

<sup>54</sup> СТА SBP&GU. Fund 2439. List 1. File 24. P. 250; WBH CAW. Zespół Akt «Sprzymierzona Armia Ukraińska» (SAU), sygn. I.380.13.7; *Семмо О. Театр і мистецтво. Промінь (Ланцут). 1921. 26 червня. Ч. 9 (there is no pagination – auth.).*

On June 23 and 24, 1921, members of the Cossack drama group (17) also tested their strength in acting. They offered three one-act plays (*'Buvalshchyna abo na chuzhyi korovai ochei ne poryvai'* ("True tale or Don't covet another man's pie") by A. Velisovsky, *'Susidy'* ('Neighbours') by L. Hlibov and *'Po revizii'* ('After the audit') by M. Kropyvnytskyi) to the campers<sup>55</sup>.

The 'Register of Performances' presented in the order of the Chief of Staff of the interned group testifies that the camp theater (headed by Colonel Ya. Balme) fully fulfilled its mission, offering performances to the campers almost every day. During June 23 – July 12, 1921, the following plays were staged: *'Nakhmarylo'*, *'Panna Mara'*, *'Nevolnyk'*, *'Zhyvi pokyinyky'*, *'Zarucheni po smerti'*, *'Zhinka z toho svitu'*, *'Na mezhi'*, *'Kuma Marta'*, *'Zhydivka-Vykhrestka'*, *'Pomsta hutsula'* ('Hutsul's Revenge')<sup>56</sup>. Based only on this list, we can conclude that the best acting forces of the interned UNR Army were gathered in Łańcut, by whose efforts bright colors of theatrical art were introduced into the mostly sad leisure of the campers.

In the summer of 1921, the number of interned Ukrainian camps was reduced, and the inhabitants of Aleksandrów, Łańcut, and Wadowice were transported to Kalisz, Szczypiorno, and Strzałkowo. Due to this compaction, five amateur theatre troupes worked in parallel in Strzałkowo, which led to competition between them. This had a rather positive effect on them, as it forced amateur actors to improve their skills. One of the important factors of such stimulation was the tradition of critical evaluation of performances and placement of critics' judgments about almost every performance on the pages of the camp "live" periodical *'Promin'*<sup>57</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

The internees had the opportunity to attend theater performances as often as possible and listen to the performances of the divisional choir, which was organized by amateur actors, singers, musicians – in fact, everyone who had an artistic talent and a calling for it. The performances of the divisional cultural and artistic groups were important for raising the morale of the camp residents, satisfying their nostalgic feelings for their own home and native land. It was very important that all theatrical and concert amateur events, without exception, were national in content and spirit and contributed to the spiritual consolidation of the Ukrainian military.

Thus, the presented material gives grounds to conclude that the camp theater had always preserved its national soul, comforting the campers in the difficult moments of their gray life, filling their daily lives with constructive sense. All the time, the theater remained one of the most important parts of cultural, educational and patriotic work in the camps, strengthening the national and state aspirations of the interned army. At the same time, the performances of the camp drama and art groups allowed mental moving to Ukraine, at least for a short time suppressing their nostalgia for their own home and homeland.

Despite all the difficulties of the military presence in the camp, which in no way contributed to the development of its creative and organizational activity, on the stage

<sup>55</sup> *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 26 червня. Ч. 9 (there is no pagination – *auth.*).

<sup>56</sup> WBN SAW. Zespół Akt «Sprzymierzona Armia Ukraińska» (SAU), sygn. I.380.13.7.

<sup>57</sup> *Срібняк І.* Український аматорський театр у таборі інтернованих Військ УНР Стшалково. Польща очима театральних критиків, серпень 1921 – липень 1922 рр. (за матеріалами часопису «Промінь»). *Синopsis: текст, контекст, медіа.* 2020. Т. 26. № 2. С. 48-60.

of the camp theater, plays that belonged to the classics of Ukrainian and world drama (most of them were free for campers) were performed almost daily. The vast majority of performances were national in content and spirit (all, without exception, the play was prepared to be staged in Ukrainian), thus contributing to the spiritual consolidation of the interned army. At the same time, visiting the theater ennobled the souls of the campers, made them think again about the complex issues of social development of Ukrainian society.

So, thanks to Ukrainian songs, music, and dramatic art, a positive vision of the Ukrainian People's Republic and Ukrainians as part of the European political and national-cultural space rooted among Polish society. The most important thing in this process was that the internees found their own original expression through their artistic search, thus making their contribution to the treasury of Ukrainian and European culture.

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