

NATIONALIZATION OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY ON THE ROMANIAN FRONT IN 1917 – 1918

Artem Papakin

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine)

Abstract. At the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918, the process of the nationalization of army units took place on the Romanian Front of the Russian army. In conditions of army disintegration, in order to keep the front fighting against the Central Powers, the Russian Command planned to create two Ukrainian, two Polish, one Muslim corps, as well as Belarusian, Lithuanian, Moldovan, and Siberian military units. During the nationalization of troops on the Romanian Front, the entire corps and divisions, as well as smaller military units were given over to Ukrainization, Polonization, Muslimization, etc. Based on archival documents, the article identifies the numbers of major military units, smaller units and subdivisions intended for nationalization, and traces the course of nationalization. The causes of failures of the nationalization process were determined, and the fates of the nationalized formations of the Romanian Front were traced.

Keywords: World War I; Russian army; Romanian front; nationalization; Ukrainization; Polonization; Muslimization

Introduction

Following the Russian Revolution in 1917, the Romanian Front underwent process of nationalization of military units. Compared to other fronts of the Russian Army, it was the most active there, resulting in the creation of Ukrainian, Polish, Muslim and other national military formations.

The problem has not been adequately covered in historiography. The problem of nationalization in the Russian Army after the revolutions of 1917 is almost completely ignored by scholars. Ideological restrictions forced the Soviet scholars to pay more attention to the Bolsheviks on the Romanian Front than to national movements (Frenkin, 1965; Istrati, 1973). An exception is the study of Mikhail Frenkin, written in exile, where he took a more comprehensive study of the process of disintegration of the Russian Army, including its nationalization (Frenkin, 1978). The creating of national military formations on the Romanian Front is covered with different completeness for different nations (S. K., 1923; Sabalys, 1929; Lokk, 2008; Latyshonak, 2009; Łatyszonek, 2014; Jokubauskas, 2017). The more detailed studies were published on Ukrainian (Tynchenko, 2009;

Kovalchuk, 2016) and Polish (Bergel, 1921; Wrzosek, 1969; Rukkas, 2004) military units on the Romanian Front.

Archival documents shed light on many aspects of this problem, but also do not allow covering the topic evenly. The reason for this is the different preservation state of different military units' documents. In this article I use the documents from the fonds of the Romanian Front Command and units commands from the Russian State Military Historical Archive (Moscow), the Polonized units from the State Archives of Kyiv region (Kyiv), as well as documents of the Bolshevik "Rumcherod" union, the Odessa military district and the Ukrainian authorities from the Central State Archive of the highest authorities and administration of Ukraine (Kyiv).

Methodology

Such complex problem as the nationalization on the Romanian Front was solved by dividing it into smaller problems, such as Ukrainization, Polonization, Muslimization, Belarusization, Siberization, and Lithianization. The study of the nationalization process of the Romanian front army units in 1917 – 1918 required a qualitative assessment of the available archival documents. Therefore, a method of non-quantitative content analysis was used to identify qualitative content models. This method helped to show the mechanisms and main patterns of nationalization, and allowed to summarize its results. The method of discourse analysis allowed analyzing telegrams, orders and correspondence within socio-political and cultural-historical conditions under which they were created.

Theory

In 1917 the Russian Army on the Romanian Front was divided into four armies: IV Army (2nd, 8th, 24th, 30th and 36th Army Corps), VI Army (4th Siberian, 4th, 7th and 47th Army Corps), VIII Army (11th, 16th, 17th, 23rd, 33rd Army Corps and 2nd Cavalry Corps) and IX Army (10th, 18th, 26th, 29th, 40th Army Corps and 6th Cavalry Corps).

The democratization of the Russian army was a result of the February Revolution of 1917 that led to a sharp decline in its combat effectiveness. As a result, the Russian Command decided to create new national military formations, such as the 1st Polish Corps on the Western Front and the 1st Ukrainian Corps on the South-Western Front. The latter was formed through nationalization – the transfer of the 34th Army Corps to the Ukrainians (Kovalchuk, 2007: 56 – 67). The nationalization of the Russian army, however, did not take the form of a purposeful policy of the Russian Provisional Government. For some time the government tried to balance between the demands of the nations of the former Russian Empire to create their own military formations and the Command's desire to keep national

units as a secondary reinforcement. The situation changed after the Bolshevik coup on October 25, 1917¹⁾.

There were no national military units in the Romanian front by that time, only units officially named “Siberian”, “Caucasus” or “Turkestan” that were not replenished on a national basis, as well as the remnants of the Serbian Corps artillery. The nominal commander of the front was King Ferdinand I of Romania, but the actual commander was Deputy Commander-in-Chief, General Dmitriy Shcherbachev. On December 3, 1917 D. Shcherbachev was also appointed the Commander over the Ukrainian front (united South-Western and Romanian), newly established by the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) (Boyko, Buravchenkov, 1996: 94; DAKO²⁾, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 8: 3), and kept his power over the Romanian Front after abandoning this position on January 13, 1918³⁾.

The coup in Petrograd led to the Bolsheviks seizing power in the Supreme Commander-in-Chief’s Stavka and extending it to all fronts of the Russian Army. In order to preserve the fighting capacity on his front and continue the war against the Central Powers, D. Shcherbachev decided to reorganize it on a national basis. He planned to create five national corps: two Ukrainian, one Muslim and two Polish (Val’, 1935: 24). In November 1917, the Front Command ordered the nationalization and established a National Committee headed by a Ukrainian commissar (Frenkin, 1965: 214, 300; Istrati, 1973: 109). The Bolsheviks themselves admitted that the power on the Romanian Front was entirely in the hands of the National Committee (TsDAVO⁴⁾, f. 3156, op. 1, spr. 47: 5). On November 26, 1917, a truce was signed with the Central Powers, which made it possible to carry out nationalization without obstacles from the enemy. Romanian troops help to keep order at the front (Val’, 1935: 25).

Soldiers’ national organizations of the Romanian Front advocated the creation of separate national military units. As the commander of the 29th Army Corps noted in September 1917, the lack of a decision to form separate national units led to despair and the spread of Bolshevik ideas among Polish soldiers of the front (DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 14: 54 – 54). The Polish congresses on the Romanian Front in November 1917 raised the question of “the urgent emanation of aspiring soldiers to separate Polish units”, otherwise the delegates threatened to resolve it “in a revolutionary way”⁵⁾. The Front Congress of Poles in Chisinau (November 25 – December 2, 1917) demanded to form separate Polish armed forces (DAKO, f. 1787, op. 4, spr. 2: 1 – 4; Bergel 1921: 15 – 16). The Lithuanians of the Romanian Front recognized the need to create Lithuanian Army in November 1 – 4, 1917 (Sabalys, 1929: 118 – 119; Miloiu, 2018: 73 – 74). The question of creating separate military units was raised at the Moldovan Military Congress on October 20 – 27, 1917 (Meltiukhov, 2010: 23 – 24; Miloiu, 2018: 77) and at the Congress of Military Belarusians of the Western Front on October 18 – 24, 1917, attended by the Romanian Front representatives (Łatyszonek, 2014: 76).

On December 5, 1917, D. Shcherbachev issued the order “to vigorously reform the troops on a national-territorial basis”. In addition to the Ukrainian, Muslim, Moldovan and Polish units, Deputy Commander-in-Chief ordered the emanation of the Siberians, Armenians, Georgians, Lithuanians, Latvians and others who had declared their desire to serve in national military units (RGVIA⁶, f. 2246, op. 1, d. 654: 132; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 20: 1).

The nationalization process had two main mechanisms. The first, “emanation”, was described in detail in the quoted telegram. Firstly, soldiers of abovementioned nations had to be united into companies, squadrons and batteries within their Russian regiments and brigades. Further, such detachments had to be united into larger units, subdued to the command of divisions, corps or fronts, depending on the numbers of the “emanated”.

The second mechanism was the actual nationalization (“Ukrainization”, “Polonization”, “Muslimization”, etc.) of existing Russian Army units. In this case, the chosen formation was renamed into the national (Ukrainian, Polish, Muslim) and representatives of other nations were removed from it. The units nationalized in this way retained the staff structure from before the nationalization, and the personnel and command staff were replenished by soldiers and officers emanated from other military units.

The purpose of this article is to clarify the course of the nationalization, determine its results and identify the causes of failures that accompanied its implementation.

Results

1. Ukrainization. The creation of Ukrainian corps was one of the key tasks of the nationalization of the Romanian Front, given the fronts’ closeness to Ukraine. Immediately after the October coup, the Ukrainian Assembly detachment within the 258th Infantry Regiment was created (Savchenko, 1938: 82). The plans for the Ukrainization included: 3rd, 9th, 12th, 15th, 31st, 32nd, 41st, 47th, 65th, 71st, 78th, 189th Infantry and 4th Rifle Divisions, 8th and 9th Cavalry Divisions, two regiments (134, 136) of the 34th Infantry Division, 13th and 183rd Artillery Brigade, 1st Siberian Mountain Artillery division⁷, 6th Radiotelegraph division, two detachments of the 9th Armoured Car division, 6th Automobile Company, 22nd Border Izmail Brigade, 22nd Reserve Regiment, Black Sea Cavalry Regiment, 21st Border Regiment, 747th Volyn Infantry Militia battalion, marching and machine-gun companies of the 49th Reserve Brigade, 21st Militia battery, 3rd battery of the 1st Black Sea Separate Heavy division, 15th Cavalry battery, 43rd Light Positional battery, 6th Aeronautical, 6th Radiotelegraph and 6th Aviation divisions, shock battalions of the 2nd, 48th, 49th and 68th Infantry Divisions⁸) (Kovalchuk, 2016: 328 – 329). Also, the Ukrainian Battalion named after War Minister Symon Petlura was formed from the volunteers emanated from 47th Reserve Regiment⁹).

However, Ukrainization encountered obstacles. The 3rd Infantry Division did not receive replenishments (Koval'chuk, 2016: 327). In the 8th Cavalry Division only its Rifle Regiment, two squadrons of Ulan and Hussar Regiments were given to Ukrainians¹⁰⁾ (Koval'chuk: 328). They were withdrawn to Odessa already in November 1917¹¹⁾, as was the 136th Infantry Regiment, that by January 23, 1918, "melted daily" near Şiviţa¹²⁾. From the 32th Division, only its artillery and Engineer Regiment were Ukrainized, and in 12th Division, only two regiments (45, 47), Engineer Regiment and shock battalion were taken by the Ukrainians¹³⁾. Of the 189th Infantry Division, only 753rd Regiment was Ukrainized; it left for Odessa on November 16, 1917, and the rest of the division was disbanded (Kaliuzhnyi, 1938: 177; RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 34). The property of 6th Automobile Company was looted¹⁴⁾. The Ukrainization process was opposed by the Russians as well as Ukrainians themselves, who did not wish to be Ukrainized¹⁵⁾, and the VIII army Command was seized by the Bolsheviks who strongly opposed nationalization (Frenkin, 1978: 626). Nevertheless, Ukrainians of the Romanian Front united in two corps: the 10th and 26th (For detailed results of nationalization, see Table 1).

It is worth noting that, given Ukraine's closeness to the Romanian Front, in the eyes of its soldiers Ukrainization meant nothing more than a quick return home. In the eyes of the UNR leaders however, the Ukrainized units had to be submitted to the Ukrainian government. Nevertheless, for a long time D. Shcherbachev refused the UNR demands to send troops to Ukraine (Kovalchuk, 2016: 329). Yet, they did gradually leave the front. In December 1917, the 9th Cavalry and 9th Infantry Divisions, Ukrainian "Symon Petlura" Battalion, 134th Infantry Regiment, and 10th Army Corps were withdrawn to Ukraine. The 31st Division was demobilized near Balta, waiting in vain for the echelons to move east (Korniyiv, 1935: 70, 73; Tynchenko, 2009: 35; Koval'chuk, 2016: 332 – 335). After Romanian attempts to disarm the 26th Corps, it moved towards Kamianets-Podilskiy on February 12, 1918 (Riabinin-Skliarevskiy, 1925: 115 – 116), and so did the Ukrainian Assembly detachment of the IX Army (Savchenko, 1938: 82 – 85). The 4th Rifle Division arrived in Odessa in March 1918, on the eve of the Austro-Hungarian army's entry (Savchenko, 1934: 153 – 154).

Most of the Ukrainized units' soldiers were demobilized in Ukraine. However, in April 1918 the majority of these units were considered "the main cadres of the future army" by the Ukrainian General Staff: the Headquarters of the 8th, 10th, and 26th Army Corps, the 9th, 12th, 15th, 31st Infantry and 4th Rifle Divisions with their artillery brigades, 65th and 78th Infantry, 3rd Rifle and 9th Cavalry Divisions, 32nd Artillery Brigade, and 10th Mortar Artillery division¹⁶⁾. These units kept their old names and numbers until June 20, 1918 (Tynchenko, 2009: 205).

2. Polonization. There was a high-scale Polonization on the Romanian Front. On December 23, 1917, the 29th Army Corps, where the Bolsheviks ruled was to be disbanded to form the headquarters for a Polish one. Also, more units were

planned for Polonization: 2nd, 160th and 166th Infantry and 1st Rifle Divisions, 112th and 183rd Infantry Divisions, 23rd and 33rd Mortar and 9th Cavalry Artillery division, 2nd park of the 2nd Rifle division, 3rd Serbian Park Artillery division, batteries of the 23rd Detached Field Heavy Artillery division, 52nd Militia Pioneer Company, two detachments of 9th Armoured Car division, 18th Aeronautical detachment, 3rd Automobile Company, 4th Automobile Sanitary and 16th London Military Sanitary detachments, and 75th Reserve Infantry Regiment¹⁷⁾ (Rukkas, 2004: 23 – 24). Also, two Polish squadrons were emanated from the 8th Cavalry Division, joined by the Poles from the Izmail Cavalry Border Brigade (Hlawaty, 1973: 11, 13).

However, the Polonization process encountered some difficulties. The Command planned to Polonize the 8th Rifle Division, but the idea failed¹⁸⁾. The 166th Infantry Division was disbanded before Polonization, as was the 33rd division; 183rd Artillery Brigade was already Ukrainized, as well as the armoured cars¹⁹⁾. The 160th Division was seized by the “revolutionary command” (DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 13: 51; Frenkin, 1965: 335). When transferring to Soroca at the end of January 1918, the revolutionary soldiers fought the Polish detachment of the VIII Army, disarming one of its batteries; two more batteries joined the Bolshevik forces in February²⁰⁾ (Frenkin, 1965: 333 – 334; Kozłowski 1993: 328; Wrzosek, 1972: 316).

On January 8, 1918, all Polish units of the Romanian Front were united into the 2nd Polish Corps (the 1st already existed on the Western Front), led by General Sylwester Stankiewicz²¹⁾. The corps included: the headquarters of the 29th Army Corps, the 4th, 5th and 6th Polish Rifle Divisions (former 1st Rifle, 2nd and 166th Infantry), 4th and 5th Polish Rifle Artillery Brigades (2nd Artillery and 1st Rifle Artillery Brigades); 2nd Polish Mortar division (former 25th); 5th and 6th Polish Ulan Regiments (from different cavalry units); 4th and 5th Polish Reserve Regiments (9th and 75th); Polish Automobile Company (former 3rd), Railway Battalion (former 4th), 2nd Polish Aviation detachment (14th Corps Aviation detachment), 2nd Polish Convoy Battalion (former 36th) and the engineer company of the 5th Rifle Division (former the 52nd Pioneer Company)²²⁾. In reality though, the 2nd Polish Corps had only one division (4th), consisting of four infantry regiments, an artillery brigade and a heavy artillery division, an engineering regiment, two cavalry regiments and cadres of the 5th Division, for which there were not enough men. On March 8 – 11, 1918, the corps crossed the Dniester. The aim of the corps was to wait for a possibility to transfer to Poland, occupied by that time by Germany and Austria-Hungary. Yet after the corps was joined by the of defectors from the Austro-Hungarian army (soldiers of the Polish Auxiliary Corps), they staged a coup, removing General S. Stankiewicz, and withdrew the corps east, where near Kaniv in Ukraine it was disarmed on May 12, 1918, after the battle with the German army (Bergel, 1921: 57 – 63).

3. Muslimization²³⁾. Already in November 1917, the formation of a Muslim Corps began. In December 1917, the Muslimization of the headquarters and institutions of the 36th and 40th Army Corps, the 13th, 23rd, 25th, 48th and 191st Infantry and 3rd Turkestan Rifle Divisions, and the 35th Engineer Regiment was announced²⁴⁾. The National Committee additionally issued orders for the Muslimization of the 49th Artillery Brigade, 68th Field Heavy and 40th Mortar Artillery division, 8th Caucasus Detached Mountain division, 16th and 23rd Detached Heavy divisions, and 4th and 27th Corps Aviation Detachments²⁵⁾. Despite the plans to transfer Muslims to the Crimea²⁶⁾, D. Shcherbachev clearly planned to leave these units on his front. On December 26, he even ordered the transfer to Chisinau of one of the infantry units created by the Tatars in the Crimea. Only Muslim cavalymen from the Romanian Front were sent to the Crimea²⁷⁾. On February 7, 1918, it was also decided to Muslimize the headquarters of the 7th and 36th Army Corps, as well as the 2nd Corps Aeronautics detachment²⁸⁾.

On January 23, 1918, General D. Shcherbachev ordered to unite all Muslimized military units into the 1st Muslim Corps, under the command of General Matvey Sulkevich. The corps consisted of four Muslim Rifle Divisions (former 191st, 13th Infantry, 3rd Turkestan Rifle and 26th Infantry), and also included: the headquarters of the 40th Corps, 2nd Rifle and 48th Infantry Division with artillery, 40th Mortar Artillery division, artillery brigades of the 84th Infantry and 3rd Turkestan Rifle Divisions, 9th Armoured Car division and the Izhevsk Detached Railway Company²⁹⁾. By February 1918, the Muslimization of the 26th and 48th divisions and their artillery brigades, as well as 13th Artillery Brigade was cancelled though³⁰⁾. The 3rd Turkestan Division reached a “state of complete disarray” by the end of 1917, and its property was handed over to the Poles³¹⁾. Apparently, due to the lack of personnel in February 1918, M. Sulkevich asked the command to allow the enlistment of prisoners of war: Turks and Dobrudja Tatars³²⁾. In February 1918, “in order to provide food”, the 1st Muslim Corps moved to Ukraine³³⁾, but it was disarmed by the Austro-Hungarians near Tiraspol.

4. Belarusization. At the end of December 1917, the 30th Infantry Division with its artillery brigade was planned to give to the Belarusians³⁴⁾. The National Committee also decided to Belarusianize: the 6th Tauragė Border Regiment (renamed the 1st Hussar Belarusian National), the 4th Heavy Separate Artillery division, the 77th Convoy Battalion, the 5th and 284th and Reserve Regiments, 357th Vitebsk and 401st Minsk Militia Battalions, and later the whole 4th Army Corps with headquarters and all its units, 30th, 40th and 43rd Infantry Divisions (S. K., 1923: 41; RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 149 – 150, 153).

However, the Belarusization of the 4th Corps as of January 19, 1918 had not yet been approved by the Command³⁵⁾. It turned out that the number of Belarusians was not enough for even a single division, thus the 4th Army Corps was disbanded³⁶⁾. Instead, in January 1918, a project was born to unite all Belarusianized units

into one Belarusian division (based on the 30th Infantry) with an artillery brigade (30th and 40th Brigades), Engineer Battalion, Automobile detachment, radio station and bakery of the 4th Army Corps³⁷). Eventually, Belarusian troops remained in Bessarabia, where they were surrounded and disarmed by Romanians in April 1918 (Latyshonak, 2009: 64; Łatyszonek, 2014: 81 – 82). Belarusians failed to agree with Romania the terms of transportation of their property to Belarus, and their soldiers returned home via Odessa (S. K., 1923: 44; Latyshonak, 2009: 65; Shchavlinitskiy, 2009: 140; TsDAVO, f. 3766, op. 1, spr. 192: 1 – 7).

5. Siberization. An attempt was made to form separate Siberian military units, based on the Siberian (by name) troops of the Russian army. In December 1917, the Siberian government signed a cooperation agreement with the UNR, according to which the future Siberian Army became a subject to the commander of the Ukrainian Front. On January 4, the Siberian military commissar Arkadiy Krakovetskiy asked D. Shcherbachev to begin Siberization of units³⁸). On January 23, 1918, all units carrying names “Siberian” and “Trans Amur” were designated for Siberization: 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th and 8th Siberian Mountain divisions, 5th Siberian Detached Heavy Artillery division, 10th Siberian Engineer Regiment, 4th Siberian Army Corps (with both 9th and 10th Siberian Rifle Divisions, and their artillery) and 33rd Army Corps (1st, 2nd Trans Amur Border Divisions with artillery, the 1st Trans Amur Engineer Company and two infantry regiments of the 4th Trans Amur Border Division)³⁹). The Siberians were also given the 10th Fighter Squadron and the 36th Corps Aviation detachment, but with the exception of 4 planes they both had already been gone to Ukraine⁴⁰).

Siberization failed. The soldiers refused to be transferred; the property was partly confiscated by Romanians. Due to the Bolshevik agitation, the soldiers of the 9th and 10th Divisions even fought against the Romanian Army (Frenkin, 1978: 721). Siberian military units were finally ordered to be disbanded. Instead, the command tried to create two Siberian infantry battalions and an air detachment, but on February 24, 1918, “due to changed circumstances,” their formation was cancelled (RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 127– 128).

6. Moldovanization. At the end of December 1917, the 14th Infantry and 124th Infantry Divisions with their artillery, 4th and 8th Mortar division, one battery of the 34th Artillery Brigade, 11th Railway Battalion, the 3rd and the 16th Automobile Companies were planned to be transferred to Moldovans⁴¹). The Moldavian battalion was created within the 134th Regiment⁴²). The situation in the 3rd Automobile Company was curious: according to the Poles, it was Polonized, according to the Moldovans – Moldovanized⁴³). Emanating from the 8th Cavalry Division, Moldovans and other natives of Bessarabia formed the 1st Hussar Bessarabian Regiment, and later a whole Bessarabian cavalry division was formed⁴⁴) (Tynchenko, 2009: 224). There were even plans to give the entire 8th Army Corps to the Moldovans⁴⁵).

Moldovan military units were to become the armed forces of the autonomous Moldovan Democratic Republic, proclaimed in Bessarabia on December 2, 1917 by Sfatul Țării (Country Council). The government though could not rely on above-mentioned cavalry regiments because they supported Bolsheviks (Frenkin, 1978: 699). Therefore, the authorities tried to persuade D. Shcherbachev to transfer the 14th Division to Chisinau (Ciobanu, 2007: 95, 97). By the request of War Minister Gherman Pânteă, D. Shcherbachev renamed the units into the 1st (former 14th), 2nd (124th) Infantry Divisions and the 1st Artillery Brigade of the Republic of Moldova (former 14th Brigade)⁴⁶⁾. It turned out, however, that the 124th Division no longer existed: the men fled, the horses were sold out, the weapons surrendered⁴⁷⁾. After the annexation of Bessarabia by Romania, these units were included into the Romanian army (Ciobanu, 2007: 101).

7. Lithuanization. The 115th Infantry Division with artillery, the 15th Railway Battalion, the 226th Field Hospital and the 52nd Bakery on January 23, 1918 were planned to give to the Lithuanians (Sabalys, 1929: 120, 129)⁴⁸⁾. However, the number of Lithuanian volunteers was too small to complete these units. The soldiers of the 115th Division fled. The Lithuanians tried to replace this division with the 116th, but its nationalization did not take place either (Sabalys, 1929: 134 – 135). It was also impossible to nationalize the 15th Railway Battalion, and the 52nd Bakery simply vanished. Of all the units, only the 226th hospital became Lithuanian (Sabalys, 1929: 120 – 121). Naturally, the hospital itself could not act as a separate combat-ready unit, so it became a collection point for Lithuanians leaving the Romanian Front. The hospital was captured by the Romanians in the end of June 1918; some soldiers and officers joined the Lithuanian battalion in Rivne in Ukraine (Sabalys, 1929: 122 – 124, 129).

8. Other nationalization. Following the disbandment of the 29th Army Corps, its 3rd Caucasian Rifle Division was transferred to Armenians and other “nationalities and natives of the Caucasus” (Rukkas, 2004: 24)⁴⁹⁾. At the same time, in November-December 1917 the Armenian and Georgian corps were formed on the Caucasian Front, and the armies of the Romanian Front were asked to send volunteers there⁵⁰⁾. When leaving the VIII Army, Georgian volunteers tried to take the 478th Field Mobile Hospital with them, but the command refused this⁵¹⁾. Finally, there were only the places for concentration of leaving soldiers on the Romanian front: for Georgians – Odessa, for Armenians – Odessa and Chisinau⁵²⁾.

There were made unsuccessful attempts to create Jewish companies in the VI Army or within the Moldovan units of the Romanian Front (Frenkin, 1978: 717). Latvians and Estonians were sent home, to the Main Committee of Estonian Soldiers in Tallinn⁵³⁾.

Conclusion. The nationalization of military units on the Romanian Front led to the creation of two Ukrainian, one Muslim and one Polish corps, as

well as one Belarusian and one Moldavian divisions, which did not take part in the World War I fighting. The process of nationalization on the Romanian front was complicated and failed due to a number of factors. First of all, the extension of Bolshevik power led to the transformation of divisions and corps, some of which were intended for nationalization, into Bolshevik-led units. Secondly, soldiers' unwillingness to carry out the Command orders and their unauthorized, voluntary demobilization made it impossible to bring the nationalized units to the staff quantity. Thirdly, the national military formations had different purposes, compared to the Command's aim to maintain a combat-ready front against the Central Powers: Ukrainian corps sought to move to Ukraine, the Muslim corps to Crimea, and the Polish corps – to Poland. Finally, after the Bolsheviks started a large-scale war against the UNR, the Republic was forced to negotiate with the Central Powers, which led to the Brest Peace Treaty. Negotiations with Central Powers were continued by Romania, who, taking advantage of the revolutionary chaos and with the support of Sfatul Țării, had annexed Bessarabia. As a result, the national military formations from the Romanian front were withdrawn from it and disarmed by the Romanian, German, and Austro-Hungarian armies in the spring of 1918.

Appendix

Table 1. Nationalization of the major Russian Army units on the Romanian Front in 1917 – 1918

Army No.	Division No.	Recipient	Results
IV	2nd Infantry	Poles	5th Polish Rifle Div. (2nd Polish Corps); dissolved February 1918
	14th Infantry	Moldovans	1st Infantry Div. of Moldovan Republic; incorporated into the Romanian Army
	15th Infantry	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, March 1918
	25th Infantry	Muslims	not included into 1st Muslim Corps; fate unknown
	26th Infantry	Muslims	4th Muslim Rifle Div. (1st Muslim Corps); Muslimization cancelled, February 1918
	48th Infantry	Muslims	Muslimization cancelled, February 1918
	49th Infantry	Muslims (artillery only)	included into 1st Muslim Corps
	71th Infantry	Ukrainians	only shock battalion Ukrainized; fate unknown
	84th Infantry	Muslims (artillery only)	included into 1st Muslim Corps
	191th Infantry	Muslims	1st Muslim Rifle Div. (1st Muslim Corps); disarmed by the Austrian-Hungarian Army

VI	13th Infantry	Muslims; Ukrainians – artillery	2nd Muslim Rifle Div. (1st Muslim Corps); disarmed by the Austrian-Hungarian Army
	30th Infantry	Belarusians	Belarusian Div.; voluntarily demobilized; property seized by the Romanian Army
	34th Infantry	Ukrainians (two regiments)	134th Reg. withdrawn to Ukraine December 1917; 136th Reg. voluntarily demobilized
	40th Infantry	Belarusians	artillery included into Belarusian Div.; property seized by the Romanian Army
	115th Infantry	Lithuanians	voluntarily demobilized
	124th Infantry	Moldovans	voluntarily demobilized
	3rd Rifle	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, December 1917; voluntarily demobilized, property partly seized by the German Army
	8th Rifle	Poles	planned to transfer to the South-Western Front for 3rd Polish Corps; dissolved February 1918
	8th Cavalry	Ukrainians	8th Ukrainian Mounted Cossack Div.; Poles and Moldovans were emanated; only 8th Lubny Hussar Reg. Ukrainized as 2nd Lubny Mounted Cossack Reg., withdrawn to Ukraine, March 1918
	9th Siberian Rifle	Siberians	disbanded; property seized by the Romanian Army
VIII	10th Siberian Rifle	Siberians	disbanded; property seized by the Romanian Army
	12th Infantry	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, January 1918
	32nd Infantry	Ukrainians (artillery, engineer regiment)	seized by the Bolsheviks; artillery withdrawn to Ukraine
	41st Infantry	Ukrainians	seized by the Bolsheviks
	47th Infantry	Ukrainians	seized by the Bolsheviks
	160th Infantry	Poles	seized by the Bolsheviks
	1st Trans Amur Border	Siberians	disbanded; property seized by the Romanian Army
	2nd Trans Amur Border	Siberians	disbanded; property seized by the Romanian Army
	4th Trans Amur Border	Siberians	disbanded; property seized by the Romanian Army
	9th Cavalry	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, December 1917

IX	9th Infantry	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, December 1917
	31st Infantry	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, December 1917
	23rd Infantry	Muslims	not included into 1st Muslim Corps; fate unknown
	43rd Infantry	Belarusians	fate unknown
	65th Infantry	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, January 1918
	78th Infantry	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, January 1918
	189th Infantry	Ukrainians	753rd Reg. withdrawn to Ukraine; rest disbanded
	166th Infantry	Poles	planned to transfer to the South-Western Front for 3rd Polish Corps; dissolved February 1918
	1st Rifle	Poles	4th Polish Rifle Div. (2nd Polish Corps); disarmed by the German Army, May 1918
	2nd Rifle	Muslims	included into 1st Muslim Corps
	4th Rifle	Ukrainians	withdrawn to Ukraine, March 1918
	3rd Caucasus Rifle	Caucasus nations	fate unknown
	3rd Turkestan Rifle	Muslims	3rd Muslim Rifle Div. (1st Muslim Corps); seized by the Bolsheviks, artillery transferred to the 2nd Polish Corps

NOTES

1. This article uses Julian Calendar (Old Style) dates as recorded in documents.
2. Derzhavnyi arkhiv Kyivs'koyi oblasti (State Archives of Kyiv Region), Kyiv.
3. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 21: 128.
4. Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv vladly i upravlinnia Ukrayiny (Central State Archive of the highest authorities and administration of Ukraine), Kyiv.
5. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 32: 4.
6. Rossiyskiy gosudarstvennyy voyenno-istoricheskiy arkhiv (Russian State Military Historical Archive), Moscow
7. Divizion – unit of the Russian Army, an equivalent of battalion.
8. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 7, 8, 11 – 12, 13, 17, 24, 27, 34–35, 90; RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 217: 477, 545; RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 233: 351 – 352; RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 663: 47; RGVIA, f. 2134, op. 6, d. 1309: 94; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 14: 233; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 21: 51, 125; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 10: 2.
9. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 30 – 31.
10. RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 217: 544, 553; RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 663: 3.

11. (RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 663: 3, 4, 12.
12. RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 217: 533.
13. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 30 – 31.
14. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 60 – 61.
15. (RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 26, 30 – 31)
16. TsDAVO, f. 2233, op. 1, spr. 11: 1, 3 – 4, 26 – 27.
17. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 1, spr. 2: 185; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 1, spr. 3: 107, 109; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 1: 4, 77; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 3: 1, 10; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 8: 9, 50; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 18: 5 – 6; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 22: 207; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 4, spr. 1: 1, 3; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 4: 42, 53, 95, 106; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 5: 3, 6, 9 – 11; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 18: 262; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 19: 14, 15, 27, 29, 38, 42, 54; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 20: 22, 29; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 23: 32, 55, 117, 125; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 1: 31–33; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 8: 33; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 18: 67; RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 24; RGVIA, f. 2134, op. 6, d. 1309: 68–69, 74, 94, 109.
18. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 11 – 12; RGVIA, f. 2126, op. 1, d. 217: 559.
19. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 21: 51, 125; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 8: 48 – 50; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 19: 2.
20. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 2, spr. 4: 118; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 2, spr. 5: 118.
21. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 20: 87; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 6, spr. 3: 29.
22. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 33: 17.
23. This nationalization was based on rather religious than national principle. The main nation involved in this process was Crimean Tatars, but representatives of other Muslim nations were also included into the Muslimized units.
24. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 8, 11, 17, 35, 64, 68, 69; DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 8: 68.
25. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 70 – 72, 75, 82.
26. TsDAVO, f. 1705, op. 1, spr. 8: 50, 67, 69, 70, 72.
27. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 8: 19; TsDAVO, f. 1705, op. 1, spr. 8: 73.
28. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 85.
29. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 83.
30. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 79, 90, 92, 94, 95.
31. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 5, spr. 21: 125.
32. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 85 – 89.
33. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 98).
34. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 11 – 12.
35. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 153.

36. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 152 – 165.
37. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 167.
38. TsDAVO, f. 2592, op. 1, spr. 30: 8, 11 – 12; RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 108–110.
39. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 114 – 117.
40. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 119, 122.
41. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 1, 11 – 12, 17, 24, 173.
42. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 26
43. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 38.
44. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 174, 175, 178.
45. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 184.
46. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 173, 179, 185.
47. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 181.
48. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 17, 168.
49. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 8, 212.
50. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 187 – 194.
51. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 200 – 203.
52. RGVIA, f. 2085, op. 2, d. 128: 205, 206, 216, 218, 220, 221.
53. DAKO, f. 1787, op. 3, spr. 8: 68.

REFERENCES

- Bergel, R. (1921). *Dzieje II Korpusu polskiego*. Warszawa: Główna Księgarnia wojskowa.
- Boyko, O. & Buravchenkov, A. (1996). *Ukrayinskyi front u 1917 r. Tsentral'na rada na tli ukrayins'koyi revolyutsiyi*. Kyiv: Instytut istoriyi NAN Ukrayiny, 89 – 97.
- Ciobanu, V. (2007). Directoratul General de război și marină al Basarabiei (1917–1918). *Cohorta. Revistă de istorie militară*, 1, 93 – 102.
- Derzhavnyi arkhiv Kyivs'koyi oblasti (State Archives of Kyiv Region), Kyiv (DAKO)
- Frenkin, M. S. (1965). *Revolutsionnoye dvizheniye na Rumynskom fronte. 1917 g. – mart 1918 g. Soldaty 8-y armii Rumynskogo fronta v bor'be za mir i vlast' Sovetov*. Moscow, Nauka.
- Frenkin, M. (1978). *Russkaya armiya i revolyutsiya*. Munich: LOGOS.
- Hlawaty, A. (1973). *Dzieje 6 pułku ułanów Kaniowskich*. Londyn: Wydawnictwo “Przeglądu Kawalerii i Broni Pancernej”.
- Istrati, Ye. N. (1973). *Demokraticheskoye dvizheniye za mir na Rumynskom fronte v 1917 godu*. Chisinau, Știință.

- Jokubauskas, V. (2017). An army never created: Lithuanian national units in Russia and their veterans organisation in Lithuania in the interwar period. *Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, XXXIV, 101 – 122.
- Kaliuzhnyi, O. (1938). Iz Sarans'ka do Khersona (do ukrayinizatsiyi 753-ho pishoho Vinnyts'koho polku). *Za Derzhavnist'*. *Materiyaly do istoriyi Viys'ka Ukrayins'koho*, 9, 171 – 178.
- Korniyiv, V. (1935). Spohady pro ukrayinizatsiyu 36 pishoho Orlovs'koho polku (X korpusu rosiys'koyi armiyi) v 1917 rotsi. *Za Derzhavnist'*. *Materiyaly do istoriyi Viys'ka Ukrayins'koho*, 1 (2nd ed.), 65 – 74.
- Koval'chuk, M. (2016). Borot'ba za vladu y ukrayinizatsiya na Rumuns'komu fronti naprykintsi 1917 – na pochatku 1918 rokiv. *Ukrayins'kyi arkhoehrafichnyy shchorichnyk*, 19 – 20, 323 – 337.
- Koval'chuk, M. (2007). Ukrayinizatsiya na Pivdenno-Zakhidnomu fronti rosiys'koyi armiyi. *Viys'kovo-istorychnyi almanakh*, 2 (15), 45 – 86.
- Kozłowski, W. (1993). *Artyleria polskich formacji wojskowych podczas I wojny światowej*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- Latyshonak, A. (2009). *Zhauniery BNR*. Białystok.
- Łatyszzonek, O. (2014). The Belarusization of Russian military units in 1917–1918. *Latvijas Kara Muzeja Gadagrāmata*, XV, 74 – 82.
- Lokk, V. (2008). *Eesti rahvusväeosad 1917 – 1918. Formeerimine ja struktuur*. Tallinn: Argo.
- Meltiukhov, M. (2010). *Bessarabskiy vopros mezhdru mirovymi voynami 1917 – 1940*. Moscow: Veche.
- Miloiu, S. (2018). On the pathway to independence: The Congress of the Representatives of the Lithuanian Military Officers of the Romanian Front (1917). *Revista Română pentru Studii Baltice și Nordice*, 10, Issue 2, 65 – 88.
- Riabinin-Skliarevskiy, A. (1925). Okkupatsyya Bessarabiii Rumyniyey. *Lyetopis' revolyutsyi*, 1 (10), 97 – 138.
- Rossiyskiy gosudarstvennyy voyenno-istoricheskiy arkhiv (Russian State Military Historical Archive), Moscow (RGVIA).
- Rukkas, A. (2004). Stvorenniya polskykh natsionalnykh chastyn na Rumuns'komu fronti (lystopad 1917 r. – berezen' 1918 r.). *Nad Dniprom i Visloyu. Materialy mizhnarodnoyi naukovoï konferentsiyi "Ukrayina i Pol'shcha u vyzvol'nykh zmahannyakh XIX – pochatku XX st."* Kyiv, 18 – 36.
- S. K. (1923) Byelaruskiya vayskavyia farmavanni na b. rumynskim frontse. *Kryvich*, 2, 41 – 44.
- Sabalys, K. (1929). Lietuviai kariai Rumunų fronte. *Karo archyvas*, V, 115 – 146.
- Savchenko, V. (1934). Ukrayniskiy rukh u rosiys'kykh chastynakh u 1917 i 1918 rr. *Za Derzhavnist'*. *Materiyaly do istoriyi Viys'ka Ukrayins'koho*, 4, 145 – 160.

- Savchenko, V. (1938). Ukrayns'kyi rukh u IX-iy rosiys'kiy armiyi. *Za Derzhavnist'. Materiialy do istoriyi Viys'ka Ukrayins'koho*, 8, 81 – 85.
- Shchavlinskiy, N. B. (2009). *Gosudarstvenno-politicheskoye i natsional'no-kul'turkoye samoopredeleniye Belarusi v roky Pervoy mirovoy voyny (1914 – 1918)*. Minsk: Medzhik Buk.
- Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv vlady i upravlinnia Ukrainy (Central State Archive of the highest authorities and administration of Ukraine), Kyiv (TsDAVO).
- Tynchenko, Ya. (2009). *Ukrayns'ki zbroyni syly berezen' 1917 – lystopad 1918 r. (organzatsiya, chysel'nist', boyovi diyi)*. Kyiv: Tempora.
- Val', E. G. (1935). *K istorii Belogo dvizheniya. Deyatel'nost' general-adyutanta Shcherbacheva*. Tallinn.
- Wrzosek, M. (1969). *Polskie korpusy wojskowe w Rosji w latach 1917 – 1918*. Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza.

✉ **Dr. Artem Papakin, Assoc. Prof.**

Web of Science ResearcherID AAJ-6945-2020

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

10, Verkhovnoyi Rady Blvd. 24a,

02094 Kyiv, Ukraine

E-mail: artempapakin@knu.ua