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CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES OF THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION IN THE CAMPS OF INTERNED UKRAINIAN SOLDIERS IN POLAND, 1921

*Ihor Sribnyak*¹, *Natalia Yakovenko*², *Viktor Matviyenko*³

¹ Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University (Kyiv, Ukraine)

e-mail: i.sribnyak@gmail.com; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9750-4958>

² Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv, Ukraine)

e-mail: zaliznaledi@ukr.net; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3493-5950>

³ Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv, Ukraine)

e-mail: vikmaryuniv@ukr.net; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0012-5175>

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the paper is: to reveal the content and forms of charitable aid provided by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in the camps of interned Ukrainian soldiers of the UPR Army in Poland during a certain chronological period, as well as to determine its overall amount and impact on the everyday life of camp residents and their family members.

The research novelty is demonstrated by the all-sided coverage of the whole amount of the YMCA's activities, whose members initiated a humanitarian aid campaign in the internment camps, thanks to which it became possible to organize a full cultural and educational life of the campers, as well as to satisfy the basic needs of children and women most suffering from hard living conditions of camp life.

Conclusions: The content of the YMCA support campaign in the camps was material assistance to improve nutrition for children, organization of their special care (creation of kindergartens and maintenance of their staff), and purchase of clothing for children and women, assistance to women in childbirth. At the same time, the Association intensively supported the activities of camp cultural, artistic and educational centers, and in particular amateur theaters, choruses and orchestras. The unconditional merit of the YMCA was the development of sports, for which the latter never spared money – equipping gyms, purchasing special equipment for them. At the same time, the YMCA relied on the development of game sports (football, volleyball, basketball, etc.), participation in which enabled to stabilize the emotional state of the military, forced to spend much of time in camp isolation. But the most important aspect was that the YMCA gave a possibility to the internees to acquire new knowledge and specialties, creating additional opportunities for them to integrate into the socio-economic life of their new countries of residence. Thus, thanks to the YMCA, camp schools and courses became able to fulfil their educational mission, and the internees – to overcome difficulties of the first months of staying in camp isolation.

Keywords: Young Men's Christian Association, charitable assistance, interned Ukrainian soldiers, camp, Poland

ХАРИТАТИВНА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ МОЛОДІЖНОЇ ХРИСТИЯНСЬКОЇ АСОЦІАЦІЇ У ТАБОРАХ ІНТЕРНОВАНИХ ВОЯКІВ-УКРАЇНЦІВ У ПОЛЬЩІ, 1921 Р.

Ігор Срібняк¹, Наталя Яковенко², Віктор Матвієнко³

¹ Київський університет імені Бориса Грінченка (Київ, Україна)
e-mail: i.sribniak@kubg.edu.ua; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9750-4958>

² Київський національний університет імені Тараса Шевченка (Київ, Україна)
e-mail: zaliznaledi@ukr.net; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3493-5950>

³ Київський національний університет імені Тараса Шевченка (Київ, Україна)
e-mail: vikmaryuniv@ukr.net; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0012-5175>

АНОТАЦІЯ

Мета статті: встановити зміст і форми харитативної допомоги, яка надавалася Молодіжною християнською асоціацією у таборах інтернованих вояків-українців Армії УНР у Польщі у визначений хронологічний період, а також визначити її загальний обсяг і ступінь впливу на повсякдення таборян і членів їх сімей.

Наукова новизна полягає у цілісному висвітленні всіх проявів діяльності Молодіжної християнської асоціації, члени якої започаткували гуманітарно-допомогову акцію у таборах інтернованих, завдяки якій стало можливим організувати повноцінне культурно-освітнє життя таборян, а також задовольнити найнеобхідніші життєві потреби дітей і жінок, які найбільше потерпали від складних умов таборового існування.

Висновки: Змістом допомогової акції YMCA у таборах стало матеріальне забезпечення поліпшення харчування для дітей, організація їх спеціального догляду (створення дитсадків та утримання їх персоналу), придбання одягу для дітей і жінок, допомога породіллю. Одночасно Асоціація інтенсивно підтримувала діяльність таборових культурно-мистецьких та освітніх осередків і, зокрема, аматорських театрів, хорів та оркестрів. Безперечною заслугою YMCA став розвиток спорту, для чого остання ніколи не шкодувала коштів – облаштовувачи спортзали, закупаючи спеціальне обладнання для них. При цьому YMCA зробило ставку на розвиток ігрових видів спорту (футбол, волейбол, баскетбол та ін.), участь в яких дозволяла стабілізувати емоційний стан вояцтва, змушеного проводити значну частину свого часу в таборівій ізоляції. Але найголовнішим було те, що діяльність YMCA дозволяла інтернованим набути нові знання та фахи, створюючи для них додаткові можливості для інтеграції у суспільно-економічне життя країн їх осідку. Таким чином, завдяки YMCA таборові школи та курси змогли виконати свою освітню місію, а інтерновані – здолати труднощі перших місяців перебування в умовах таборової ізоляції.

Ключові слова: Молодіжна християнська асоціація, благодійна допомога, інтерновані вояки-українці, табір, Польща

Introduction

In November 1920, due to the onslaught of the Bolshevik forces, the UPR Army was compelled to retreat to Polish territory, after which its effectives were interned in several internment camps: Pikulice, Łańcut, Wadowice, Częstochowa, Alexandriv, Piotrków, Kalisz (and by the end of 1921 Ukrainian soldiers were only in Strzałków, Szczypiorno and Kalisz). By agreement with the Polish authorities, Ukrainian units and

formations were to retain their inherent structure and their personnel remained under the command of their commanders and superiors. The UPR government, which had left Ukraine with the army, was temporarily stationed in Tarnów, Poland, to organize an armed struggle against Soviet Russia. In the difficult conditions of internment, it was extremely important to create conditions for the improvement of the morale of the Ukrainian Army, to fill its existence in the camps with constructive content.

However, organizing cultural and educational work among the campers, establishing their leisure time and providing humanitarian care for the sick, disabled women and children (who were also in the camps) was an extremely difficult task. The UPR government did not have sufficient funds for these activities, and there was lack of experienced organizers to carry out such kind of work. As a result of recent military defeats, part of the interned Ukrainian Army was demoralized, and the difficult food and living situation in the camps only intensified the feeling of despair and doom.

Therefore, from the very beginning of the internment, the Army Command and the UPR state and political leadership (State Centre of the UPR in exile) made every effort to overcome the difficulties of the initial period of stay in the camps. First of all, measures were taken to organize the leisure of the campers, with significant assistance from the international organization called the *Young Men's Christian Association* (YMCA) (in particular, its structural unit in the United States), which established its regional representation in Poland. The latter accumulated a wealth of experience in the camps for prisoners of war during the First World War, providing humanitarian assistance to prisoners of warring armies, regardless of their national, religious and political affiliation.

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The activities of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in the internment camps for the UPR Army soldiers in Poland have not yet been the subject of research in either Ukrainian or foreign historiography. However, some facts concerning charitable actions of this organization appear in several monographic studies on history of the camp society of the UPR Army soldiers, published at different times in Ukraine and Poland¹, as well as in a number of research papers².

It is also worth mentioning the book by American historian K. Steuer titled «Pursuit of an 'Unparalleled Opportunity': The American YMCA...». It contains valuable conceptual approaches and important factual material concerning the specifics of the YMCA activities (its American branch), but does not concentrate on Poland, touching on

¹ 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 умови перебування (1919-1924 рр.). Київ. 1999. 352 с.; Wiszka E. Emigracja ukraińska w Polsce 1920-1939. Toruń, 2004. 750 s.; Bruski J.J. Petlurowscy. Centrum Państwowe Ukrainiejskiej Republiki Ludowej na wychodźstwie (1919-1924). Kraków. 2000. 660 s.

² Срібняк І. Національно-патріотична та спортивно-оздоровча мобілізація вояцтва у таборі інтернованих Військ УНР Стшалково (Польща) у 1921-1922 рр.: форми і методи. *Ідеологія і політика*. 2018. № 2 (10). С. 131-146; 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; Срібняк І. Діяльність освітніх закладів у таборі інтернованих вояків Армії УНР Каліш (1921-1924 рр.). *Facta Simonidis (Zamość)*. 2020. № 1 (13). С. 143-161.

the territories of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey during The First World War and the post-war five-year period³.

Some facts from the history of the YMCA's activities in the internment camps can be taken from collections of documents published over the past decade. In particular, the album, which was composed by Polish historians, included several photos of camp athletes training in the gym, equipped by the YMCA camp branch in Strzałków⁴. The collection on «Army behind bars» also presented programs of several musical-theatrical and sports events having the YMCA emblem (thus certifying the participation of this organization in their realization)⁵.

However, these separate facts do not in any way provide a holistic view of the specifics of the YMCA activities in internment camps. Therefore, the writers of this paper raised a problem of carrying out a comprehensive reconstruction of the Association activities by studying available documentary sources from the funds of the Central State Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (CDAVO of Ukraine), as well as camp press materials, including «Nasha Zorya» and «Promin» magazines (both of Łańcut-Strzałków), «Sportsman» magazine (Strzałków), «Ukrainsky Surmach» newspaper (Szczypiorno).

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The first evidence of the YMCA's activities dates back to December 1920, when the YMCA camp office in Alexandriv supported the campers, giving all internees a portion of cocoa (once a week), and sick soldiers received it daily. Also, the YMCA met the needs of some campers in detergents when they visited the camp bath⁶. In the winter 1921, the YMCA further cared for patients interned in the camp hospital and out-patient's clinic, providing them with linen and hygiene items⁷.

From January 1921, the YMCA provided material assistance to the art studio (headed by Zaporozhets, an artist) in the Pikulice camp. The latter also equipped the reading room and the theater hall at its own expense, which largely contributed to the development of the camp theatre⁸. At the same time, in another internment camp of Częstochowa, on the initiative of the newly established «Refugee Bureau» (from Ukraine), a kindergarten, a gymnasium with daily classes (75 students), a library and a reading room began functioning. The camp singing society of 70 people prepared concerts accompanied by a string orchestra, and the drama group started their amateur performances⁹. Almost all of above-mentioned cultural and educational centers benefited from the humanitarian assistance provided by the YMCA (the latter also took care of a free demonstration of films in the camp)¹⁰.

³ Steuer K. Pursuit of an 'Unparalleled Opportunity' The American YMCA and Prisoner of War Diplomacy among the Central Power Nations during World War I, 1914-1923. New York, 2009. 452 p.

⁴ Czerniak B., Czerniak R.M. Obóz jeńców wojennych i internowanych pod Strzałkowem 1914-1918, 1919-1924. Strzałkowo, 2013. S. 19-23.

⁵ Армія за дротами. Збірка документів / редактор-упорядник В. Моренець. Кам'янець-Подільський. 2018. С. 346, 348, 352, 354.

⁶ Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu, Polska (ZNiO), Dział Rękopisów. Sygn. akc. 22/53/1.

⁷ Зірниця (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 26; Центральний держархів вищих органів влади та управління України (ЦДАВО України). Ф. 2562. Оп. 1. Спр. 32. Арк. 109зв.

⁸ ZNiO, Dz. Rękopisów ZniO. Sygn. akc. 22/53/1.

⁹ Зірниця (Олександрів). 1921. 25 лютого. Ч. 3-4. С. 23-24.

¹⁰ Колянчук О. Українська військова еміграція у Польщі 1920-1939 рр. Львів. 2000. С. 96-97.

In spring 1921, the YMCA expanded its humanitarian assistance intensifying its work in the camps. In above-mentioned Alexandriv camp, the YMCA representation (leaders – P. Vukov, from July, 1921 – A. Sadikov)¹¹ significantly contributed to the development of general education in the camp, and in particular, to primary schools. Owing to its assistance, the Real School was opened in the camp, which gave the opportunity to complete secondary education to many Cossacks and officers of the 4th Kyiv and 6th Sich Riflemen Divisions, thanks to which some of them were able to continue their education in higher schools (mostly in educational institutions of Czechoslovakia)¹². With the assistance of the YMCA, special educational courses (on agriculture, horticulture, etc.)¹³ were held in the camp from time to time. The YMCA hosted a movie theatre in the camp from March 1921, which also helped improve the campers' general level of education¹⁴. In the same month, the YMCA donated 185 different books (mostly in writing) to the camp library, which were of great use to all camp students¹⁵.

The YMCA services in the creation and development of the camp theater cannot be overestimated. After the Command of a group of interned Ukrainian soldiers transferred a separate hut to the disposal of the M. Sadovsky Drama Society of the camp, the YMCA carried out repairs in it (along with the construction of the stage) at the own expense. The latter also provided a monetary subvention to the theater for making theatrical costumes (amateur actors dealt with the scenery and props)¹⁶. The Drama Society also had a string orchestra of 20 musicians, whose instruments were purchased at the expense of the YMCA. It enabled to widely develop the activities of the singing section of the cultural and educational department, which held about 30 concerts, both in the internment camp and in Alexandriv for its residents¹⁷.

In summer 1921, the YMCA camp branch came to the aid of the disabled (among the internees), facilitating their employment at the shoemaker's, tailor's, locksmith's, bookbinding, and basket workshops it had founded¹⁸. Its merits also include the establishment of a painting club in the camp (September 26, 1921), whose functioning became possible due to the arrangement of the workshop, as well as purchase of tools for painting (two easels, palette, twenty brushes and paints)¹⁹. Thanks to this YMCA's gift, the members of the club created 9 paintings, and later fulfilled the orders of the camp's cultural and educational department. Besides, the members of this club created a great number of paintings on various Ukrainian historical themes²⁰.

The YMCA always took the interests of women into consideration: when the camp «Union of Ukrainian Women» took over the «boarding school for the youngest» in

¹¹ Ш.І. Благодійні чужоземні організації та шкільно-просвітня діяльність в таборах інтернованих Українців в Польщі. *Український Сурмач* (Щипіорно). 1923. 6 травня. Ч. 51-52. С. 7.

¹² Битинський М. Українське вояцтво на культурно-освітньому фронті. *Гуртуймося* (Прага). 1932. № IX. С. 37.

¹³ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 2562. Оп. 1. Спр. 32. Арк. 108-108зв.

¹⁴ *Зірниця* (Олександрів). 1921. 15 березня. Ч. 5. С. 27.

¹⁵ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 3526. Оп. 1. Спр. 5. Арк. 14-15.

¹⁶ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 2562. Оп. 1. Спр. 32. Арк. 108-108зв.

¹⁷ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 1078. Оп. 2. Спр. 200. Арк. 60; *Нове життя* (Щипіорно). 1921. 26 грудня. № 97. С. 2.

¹⁸ *Нове життя* (Александрово). 1921. 30 серпня. № 66. С. 4.

¹⁹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 2439. Оп. 2. Спр. 58. Арк. 13.

²⁰ Битинський М. Українське вояцтво на культурно-освітньому фронті. *Гуртуймося* (Прага). 1932. № IX. С. 37; *Нове життя* (Щипіорно). 1921. 26 грудня. № 97. С. 3.

Alexandriv (June, 1921), where 25 «young Cossacks»²¹ were studying, they were assisted by the camp office of the Association which organized the distribution of additional food products for children²².

Finally, the YMCA's contribution into the development of cultural and educational life was recognized by the campers themselves. According to «New Life» camp magazine, the Head of the YMCA's camp representation P. Vukov was well known to all campers due to «his energy, his commitment to our (campers' – authors) cultural and educational activities, responsiveness (sympathy – authors) to every kind of assistance useful to us»²³.

However, when he was replaced by another leader – A. Sadikov (obviously of Russian origin – authors), the relationship between him and the Command of the camp began to gain increasingly conflicted nature. In particular, he complicated the work of the Drama Society, the management of which sometimes could not come to an agreement on the use of the camp theater. Moreover, because of false accusations of the former conductor of the music group in his sympathies with the «*sovdepiia*» A. Sadikov ordered to take away musical instruments from its members (although they were soon returned). In addition, A. Sadikov's individual decision terminated any financial assistance to the camp reading room (for subscription or purchase of newspapers) and the drama society. Such actions of his caused the UPR Command's impression that «Mr. Sadikov's activities are harmful not only to the internees but also to the idea of the YMCA,» and that «instead of promoting amateur activities Mr. Sadikov wants to command the internees on the Russian model and therefore it results in nothing but destruction»²⁴.

Thus, there is every reason to conclude that a system conflict developed between the Command of the group of internees and the Head of the YMCA camp representation, the constructive settlement of which was almost impossible due to a «special» position of A. Sadikov. The latter's unwillingness to search for any compromise settlement, his desire to impose apolitical position on Ukrainian soldiers (arguing that the YMCA was as such) to deny their national-state ideals, removed the very grounds of any understanding. Unfortunately, this state of affairs objectively led to a decrease of humanitarian aid provided by this organization to the internees in Alexandriv, which indirectly caused the curtailment of cultural and educational activities in the camp.

Almost similar situation occurred in the Wadowice camp, where the Head of the YMCA camp branch, Captain (Presenting himself as a «Captain» Albert Guzik did not specify of which army, although basing on this very fact it is possible to assume that he was a Captain of either the tsarist or Denikin's Army – authors)²⁵ A. Guzik, almost openly patronized a group of captive Bolsheviks (who were being held there) by involving them in the labor activities under the contracts of the institution he headed. In general, A. Guzik's activities in the camp were rather destructive, because A. Guzik treated the Ukrainian national cause with «emphasized intolerance, promoted russification, which caused “general dissatisfaction and indignation in the whole camp”,

²¹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 2439. Оп. 1. Спр. 34. Арк. 107-107зв.

²² ЦДАВО України. Ф. 3523. Оп. 1. Спр. 12. Арк. 12зв.

²³ *Нове життя* (Щипіорно). 1921. 26 грудня. № 97. С. 6.

²⁴ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 2439. Оп. 1. Спр. 40. Арк. 90-90зв.

²⁵ Presenting himself as a «Captain» A. Guzik did not specify which army, although basing on this very fact it is possible to assume that he was a Captain of either the tsarist or Denikin's Army. – *Authors*.

and often posted advertisements in Russian». On these grounds, a conflict emerged between him and a group of Ukrainian campers, as the latter demanded that Ukrainian flags be hoisted in the camp theater next to the American and Polish flags. Ukrainian campers were also offended by the fact that A. Guzik distributed Russian church icons, books and newspapers in the camp²⁶.

The conflict situation provoked by A. Guzik became so acute that the latter even addressed the Chief Otaman S. Petliura (a letter of July 22, 1921), in which he made complaints against senior Ukrainian military commanders in the camp – Generals M. Shapoval and A. Vovk for their attempts to hinder his activities and in view of their interference into his «orders». In his opinion, the latter, in particular, did not give him the opportunity to «conduct theatrical work in a proper way», «terrorizing the directorate and the director», after which the OKKD camp artists «expressed a desire to abandon these cultural and educational activities». According to him, the Generals' subordinates took unfriendly steps towards the Polish authorities, breaking «Polish flags and portraits of the Chief [Piłsudski] in the theater hall». To A. Guzik's mind, it introduced «chauvinistic policy into the camp life»²⁷.

Considering the text of this letter it is already possible to draw a conclusion concerning provocative activities of A. Guzik, who resorted to deliberate manipulation, without advertising his destructive actions, which led to the aggravation of the situation in the camp. The parallel use of both Polish and Ukrainian state symbols and presenting announcements in the Ukrainian language could have completely eliminated any tension in his relations with the Command of the interned units of the UPR Army in Wadowice. However, such a step would mean respect for national feelings of the Ukrainians, which, due to his *Ukrainophobia* and clear pro-Russian position A. Guzik could not venture.

Despite the instruction of the Head of the YMCA camp branch, the activities of the organization brought objective benefits to the campers, as it helped implement various cultural and educational projects in the camp. In particular, with the YMCA assistance, a theatre was set up in Wadowice camp, where amateur camp troupes staged and offered their theatrical performances and amateur concerts to the interned soldiers.

The YMCA's activities in Łańcut camp began at the latest (May 1921) due to the Polish Commandant's groundless refusal to allow the organization to set up a camp branch (its representatives came to Łańcut three times with such a proposal)²⁸. The YMCA branch began its work with organizational and material assistance to the camp «Union of Artists», which managed to develop its activities almost exclusively thanks to the transferred paints, brushes and paper. In just two days from the beginning of its work, its members created 50 drawings (including portraits of Ukrainian Hetmans and Taras Shevchenko), after which an art studio was established in the camp²⁹.

Thanks to the YMCA, it became possible to start classes in the newly created camp gymnasium, which could «use only what could be found in the camp». And thanks to financial assistance from the Head of the YMCA camp branch, P. Vukov, textbooks were purchased in Lviv and delivered to the camp, together with other school materials. The

²⁶ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 2292. Оп. 2. Спр. 58. Арк. 84-84зв.

²⁷ Wojskowe Biuro Historyczne (WBH), Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe (CAW), Zespól Akt «Sprzymierzona Armia Ukraińska» (SAU), sygn. I.380.1.60.8.

²⁸ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4007. Оп. 1. Спр. 9. Арк. 16зв.-17зв.

²⁹ *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 3 червня. Ч. 7 (page-by-page pagination is absent. – Authors).

YMCA also took care of providing students with paper, pencils and everything they needed to study. Therefore, to a very large extent, all further activities of the camp gymnasium became possible thanks to the full support of the YMCA camp branch. The YMCA also contributed effectively to the launch of the Ukrainian People's University in Łańcut (with 523 campers) and provided its students with paper, textbooks, and equipment³⁰.

The development of sports life in the internment camp was also due mainly to the material contributions of the YMCA camp branch. With its assistance, sports competitions, and in particular football matches began to be held inside and outside the camp. One of them was held on May 13, 1921, at the «Sokół» city stadium, with members of the Polish sports society of the same name³¹. The return match was to take place on May 15, and the Polish side took such an initiative. But that day such a meeting did not take place due to the absence of the Polish team in full (after that the it was credited with a defeat with a score of 0:5). For the spectators who gathered for this match, a game between two camp teams was played. It was won by the football team of the 5th Kherson Riflemen Division led by cornet S. Nagnybida³². With the YMCA assistance, in the second half of May 1921, a sports society («Sportsmen's Union») headed by a board, was founded in the camp. At its request, the YMCA purchased sportswear for its members and installed necessary equipment for gymnastic exercises³³.

YMCA also took care of establishing its representation in the Kalisz camp, one of the best-equipped internment camps for Ukrainian soldiers. There the YMCA joined the establishment of the camp «Taras Shevchenko Gymnasium» providing for the needs of its students a significant number of notebooks and paper, which enabled beginning studies in it on July 5, 1921. After that, regular classes (the 3rd, 5th and 6th) were formed in the Gymnasium, which enrolled 104 students. Unfortunately, the material condition of the Gymnasium improved just slightly in the new school year, only thanks to the YMCA it became possible to purchase some textbooks, as well as provide «the proper amount of notebooks, paper, pencils, pens, erasers, ink, visual aids and drawings». The YMCA also provided regular financial support to lecturers of the Gymnasium, thus ensuring their ongoing work³⁴.

The sports life of the campers in Kalisz was also very diverse and intense. Despite all unfavorable circumstances, the «Officers' Sports Club of the 2nd Riflemen Volyn Division» was founded in the camp. Its members began regular exercises in May 1921³⁵. At the same time, a sports club (consisting of 36 members) of the 3rd Iron Riflemen Division began its activities, for the needs of which a gym was equipped. At the expense of the YMCA camp branch, a sports uniform and all the necessary equipment for track and field athletics and weight-lifting were purchased for its members. This, in turn, made it possible to launch sports festivals and camp

³⁰ Ш.І. Благодійні чужоземні організації та шкільно-просвітня діяльність в таборах інтернованих Українців в Польщі. *Український Сурмач* (Щипіорно). 1923. 6 травня. Ч. 51-52. С. 7.

³¹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4007. Оп. 1. Спр. 17. Арк. 1.

³² *Промінь* (Ланцут). 1921. 16 травня. Ч. 2. С. 45.

³³ *Промінь* (Ланцут) 1921. 23 травня. Ч. 4 (page-by-page pagination is absent. – Authors).

³⁴ А.Д. Гімназія імені Тараса Шевченка в таб[орі] Каліш. *Український Сурмач* (Щипіорно). 1923. 6 травня. Ч. 51-52. С. 11.

³⁵ Гончаренко [І.]. Огляд спортивного минулого таб[ору] Каліш. *Спортсмен*. 1922. Ч. 4-5 (липень-серпень). С. 4.

championships and competitions. The group also arranged «various kinds of entertainments» for the Cossacks, trying to attract them to sports in this way³⁶. At the same time, a football team and the Gymnastics and Fencing School of the 3-rd Iron Division were formed in Kalisz, and a championship on French wrestling was held. Its participants made several off-camp trips to demonstrate their skills to residents of nearby Polish cities³⁷.

Joint efforts of all camp athletes and the support of divisional cultural and educational departments and the YMCA, enabled holding of three camp sports Olympiads during May-July 1921 with a rather diverse program. The first of them took place on May 2, when the audience was introduced to gymnastic exercises, fencing, track and field athletics («jumping», «javelin and discus throwing», etc.), weight-lifting, wrestling competitions («French wrestling», «English boxing»). The Olympiad ended with performances by pupils of V. Avramenko school of national dance³⁸. The guest of honor at this Olympiad was the Chief Otaman of the UPR Army S. Petliura, who visited Kalisz at that time. On the occasion of his next visit to the camp (July 21, 1921, according to other sources July 22-24), the sports Olympiad was also held in Kalisz, among various events and celebrations³⁹.

The team of camp footballers met thrice with local Polish teams (with the team of Kalisz and the one of «Prosna» club), it was common to attract the best Ukrainian footballers to participate in friendly matches between Polish clubs. The camp volleyball players did not lag behind the football players either: the team of the Officers' sports club competed with the athletes from Łódź outside the camp (with a total score of 45:34 in their favor)⁴⁰. This game concluded the 1921 sports season in Kalisz (outdoors), because with becoming cold and rainy, training took place only in the gym.

In summer 1921, some of Ukrainian camps were terminated, and their inhabitants were redeployed to Strzałków, which was «international»: in separate sections it housed interned Belarusians («Balakhovites»), Russians and captured Red Army soldiers. It exerted its impact on the life of the internees, producing some kind of tension (considering different worldview and value ideals of different groups of the campers). Nevertheless, the YMCA tried to bring soldiers of different political affiliations closer together, which ultimately effectively favored normalization of internal atmosphere among the campers.

As in other camps, the success of the educational work depended to a large extent on financial assistance from the YMCA camp office (headed by Sergievsky), which was significantly involved in the implementation of the vast majority of such initiatives. The necessary educational equipment and stationery (paper, chalk, pencils, notebooks, maps, paints, etc.) were purchased at the expense of this charitable organization; repair of educational premises was carried out; from its funds material aid was paid to teachers of various educational courses taught in the camp⁴¹. As it was earlier, the apolitical contents of teaching process always served as a main criterion for providing

³⁶ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 3525. Оп. 1. Спр. 1. Арк. Ззв., 13зв.

³⁷ Гончаренко [Л.]. Огляд спортивного минулого таб[ору] Каліш... С. 4-5.

³⁸ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 3525. Оп. 1. Спр. 15. Арк. 1.

³⁹ Левицький В. В «союзницьких» таборах для полонених та інтернованих. *Свобода* (Джерси-сіті). 1934. 6 жовтня. Ч. 234. С. 2.

⁴⁰ Гончаренко [Л.]. Огляд спортивного минулого таб[ору] Каліш... С. 5.

⁴¹ Ш.І. Благодійні чужоземні організації... С. 7.

material assistance by the YMCA, the organization was willing to support humanitarian projects, and gave up assistance when it concerned military drill of the internees.

In this camp the YMCA began its activities with handing over its own book collection to the campers (August, 1921)⁴². Its primary attention was devoted to camp education – in particular, the YMCA supported students of the Department of Physical Training of the Ukrainian People's University. Lectures at this Department took place rather regularly, its students were preparing essays, the content of which was discussed in class, and then passed to the editorial board, which took a decision concerning their publication either as separate prints or in the «*Naukovy Visnyk*» magazine. According to the camp magazine, «the working conditions of the Department of Physical Training [were] the worst among all other cultural institutions». Although it was supported by the YMCA camp branch, which provided some amount of paper and other kinds of stationery, the amount of this assistance was not enough⁴³.

Until early winter of 1921, the primary school was also «afloat», however at the same time it was forced to overcome permanent difficulties due to lack of textbooks and school equipment, necessary for studies, «but the salvation for them was the help of the YMCA»⁴⁴. There was also a school for children (28 teenagers) in the camp, whose functioning became possible thanks to the help of the British Committee for Refugees (BCR) (apart from the YMCA)⁴⁵.

Nevertheless, with the onset of winter cold, the activities of almost all educational courses and schools were temporarily suspended (their students could not be provided with heated premises to continue their studies). At that time, the gymnasium appeared in the most difficult situation, because in November coal for heating the barracks was not given at all. And only thanks to the help provided by the YMCA camp branch, it became possible to continue the work of the gymnasium. And although its work was accompanied by difficulties (lack of textbooks and fuel), the studies did not stop. With the onset of spring, the gymnasium was functioning quite normally, which caused numerical increase of students (up to 42 people)⁴⁶.

The YMCA also essentially helped the camp theatre, which already had its own premises, but, however, needed modernization. It was done in late July – early August 1921 due to the YMCA's financial assistance for equipping the stage and dressing rooms for actors. After the re-equipment, the «YMCA Theatre» also had got a larger auditorium, and the only inconvenience was the lack of acoustics⁴⁷.

Another artistic group supported by the YMCA was a chorus led by Captain Dmytro Kotko. In the second half of October 1921, this chorus continued to tour successfully in various cities of Poland, and in early November it left for another concert tour, giving concerts in Poznań, Bydgoszcz, Krotoszyn, Leszno, Inowrocław, Toruń and others. Humanitarian assistance in this concert activity of the chorus was provided by the

⁴² *Промінь* (Стрільково (Стшалково)). 1921. 21 серпня. Ч. 14 (page-by-page pagination is absent. – Authors).

⁴³ Народний Університет в таборі Стрільково. *Українська Трибуна* (Варшава). 1921. 17 листопада. Ч.163. С. 4.

⁴⁴ Рік за дротами. *Промінь* (Стрільково (Стшалково)). 1921. 20 листопада. Ч. 26. С. 4.

⁴⁵ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 1075. Оп. 2. Спр. 830. Арк. 25.

⁴⁶ Реальна Школа в таб[орі] Щипіорно. *Український Сурмач* (Щипіорно). 1923. 6 травня. Ч. 51-52. С. 10.

⁴⁷ *Горунувич М.* Рецензія. *Промінь* (Стрільково (Стшалково)). 1921. 7 серпня. Ч. 12. (page-by-page pagination is absent. – Authors).

YMCA camp branch, at the expense of which national costumes were made for all choristers⁴⁸.

Conclusions

Because of the lack of state aid to Ukrainian soldiers in the camps (at the end of November 1920, the UPR did not occupy any Ukrainian territories, which were currently divided between Bolshevik Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland), the YMCA launched a large-scale humanitarian campaign in the internment camps for the UPR Army, while adhering to absolutely apolitical position. The YMCA's help was primarily targeted at the most vulnerable categories of camp residents – women and children, as well as the disabled. Having sufficient funds to carry out its statutory activities, the organization managed to establish its branches in the camps, appointing their representatives (attachés) to organize humanitarian aid. Most of them were appointed from among the former subjects of the Russian tsar, who had appropriate educational qualifications and shared the YMCA values.

The content of the YMCA support campaign in the internment camps included material support to improve nutrition for children, organization of their special care (creation of kindergartens and maintenance of their staff), and purchase of clothes for children and women, obstetrics. At the same time, the Association intensively focused on the activities of camp cultural, artistic and educational centres, and in particular amateur theatres, choruses and orchestras. Finally, the undoubted merit of the YMCA was sports for the development of which the organization never spared expense – equipping gyms, purchasing special equipment for them. The YMCA paid special attention to the development of game (football, volleyball, basketball), as well as power (weight-lifting, French wrestling, boxing) kinds of sports.

During 1921 the YMCA camp branches managed to achieve significant results by providing humanitarian assistance to the vast majority of internees' cultural and educational centers. Due to this, it became possible to significantly diversify the humanitarian component of the camp routine of the Ukrainian military. The YMCA made a significant contribution to the establishment of camp cultural and artistic centers (theatres, choruses, orchestras), creating all necessary organizational and material conditions. The most important aspect was that the camp schools and courses were able to fulfil their educational mission, and the internees were enabled to overcome difficulties of the first months of being in the camp isolation.

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⁴⁸ Концертове турне хору з табору Стрільково. *Українська Трибуна* (Варшава). 1921. 8 листопада. Ч. 155. С. 4.

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