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**UMAN IN THE EVENTS OF THE FIRST WINTER CAMPAIGN OF THE UKRAINIAN NATIONALIST ARMY**

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**Introduction.** The First Winter Campaign of the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, which lasted from 6 December 1919 to 6 May 1920, was a unique event in Ukrainian military history. It was a desperate raid behind enemy lines in conditions of extreme fatigue, numerical superiority of the enemy and general uncertainty about the future. The UPR troops, who at that time were bleeding from disease, cold and lack of food, decided to undertake this operation, the sole purpose of which was to preserve a combat-ready military force and continue the struggle for Ukrainian independence.

Among the key locations where this heroic operation took place, Uman holds a special place. The city was of great strategic importance as a transport hub and economic centre and served as one of the last strongholds of the Ukrainian army in central Ukraine. Important events took place in Uman, which influenced the further development of the conflict and created new opportunities for the UPR troops in their quest for statehood. By the end of 1919, the situation in the Ukrainian People's Republic had become critical. The unsuccessful battles against Denikin's Volunteer Army and the Bolshevik Red Army put the Ukrainian army in a difficult position.

Morale was low due to the typhus epidemic that affected soldiers and civilians. Exhausted by continuous fighting, the troops were retreating, and the possibility of continuing the organised struggle was becoming less and less likely [1, с. 206].

Under these conditions, the government and military command of the UPR faced a dilemma: lay down their arms to the Bolsheviks or break the siege and continue the fight. The option of breaking through the enemy's rear was risky, but it prevented complete disarmament and surrender, and the UPR commander, General Mykhailo Pavlenko, decided to launch what would become known as the First Winter Campaign.

**Analysis of research and publications on the issue.** The First Winter Campaign of the UPR Army is one of the least discussed topics in the history of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917-1921, although it occupies an important place in the context of Ukraine's struggle for independence. However, with the beginning of the movement and the approach of its centenary, historians in the country began to pay special attention to this period.

In particular, the events that took place during the First Winter Campaign, especially the capture of Uman, have become the subject of ongoing research, as it was an important turning point.

One of the first attempts to understand the First Winter Campaign was the work of such prominent historians as Oleksandr Ogloblyn, Mykhailo Hrushevsky and Volodymyr Vynchenko, who analysed this period in the context of the overall struggle for Ukrainian independence. Their works focused on the role of military operations of the UPR troops, but their detailed analysis of the First Winter Campaign, in particular the Uman operation, was limited [2, с. 52].

Contemporary research examines the First Winter Campaign from a new and independent perspective, allowing for a deeper analysis of the strategic and political aspects of the events of that period. Vitalii Skalskyi, Ivan Kudriak and Oleksandr Kutuliuk are among the main authors who have paid attention to the description of conflicts during this campaign. In his study, Vitaliy Skalsky emphasises the importance of ‘manoeuvre warfare’ as the main tactic of the First Winter Campaign. The author notes that, despite the enemy's numerical superiority and difficult conditions, the Ukrainian army successfully used mobility and surprise attacks to capture key cities such as Uman. The author also discusses the importance of mobilising local resources, such as the participation of Uman residents in supporting the Ukrainian army, which was an important factor in the victory. Ivan Kudriak in his book ‘Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic: Strategy and Reality’ notes that the Battle of Uman was not only a military operation, but also a symbolic victory. [3, с. 169].

It was a strategic action that proved that the Ukrainian army could resist encirclement. The author also draws attention to the political consequences of these battles for the internal situation in Ukraine and emphasises the importance of this period for the development of the national movement. In the analysis of the events of the First Winter Campaign, a special place is given to the participation of the local population in the struggle.

Contemporary historiography emphasises the importance of the support of the local population, which provided vital assistance to the Ukrainian army, as well as the large number of volunteers from the Right Bank of Ukraine who were able to join the army. This issue is becoming an important aspect of contemporary research, as it allows us to take a fresh look at the cooperation between the Ukrainian army and the population in the struggle for independence.

Despite the significant progress in the study of the First Winter Operation, there are many issues that require deeper analysis. One of the important areas for further research is to study the role of the First Winter Operation in the context of the overall mobilisation of the state and the creation of a national army.

It would also be useful to focus on the international context of the event, in particular, how the First Winter Operation was influenced by diplomatic relations with other countries, such as Poland, Germany and the Soviet Union. Modern methods, such as the study of archival materials, will allow us to more accurately determine the political and strategic aspects of the events and the role played by the UPR troops in securing Ukrainian independence [4, с. 275].

In general, modern studies demonstrate a significant evolution in the interpretation of the events of the First Winter Campaign and emphasise the importance of this period in the context of Ukraine's struggle for independence.

**Aim of the article is**: to analyse and determine the strategic importance of the occupation of Uman during the First Winter Campaign of the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic (1919-1920) and to assess the impact of this stage on the development of the Ukrainian liberation struggle. The purpose of the study is to provide a detailed analysis of the fighting, to analyse the participation of the local population in it, and to consider the political and moral consequences of this victory for the UPR Army and the national movement as a whole.

**Objectives of the article:**

1. To find out what factors influenced the decision of the Ukrainian military command led by Symon Petliura to conduct the First Winter Campaign, as well as to assess the difficult situation at the front, including the typhus epidemic, lack of resources and moral difficulties.

2. Examine the tactics and course of the battle for Uman in January 1920, emphasising the speed and effectiveness of the Ukrainian troops' attacks and their interaction with the local population, which provided critical support.

3. Investigate how the capture of the city strengthened the position of the UPR Army, allowed it to replenish resources and food, mobilise local forces and establish contacts with insurgent groups.

4. Study the moral and political impact of this victory: To assess the impact of the victory in Uman on the morale of Ukrainian troops and the overall political situation in Ukraine, as well as on the support of the national movement among the population and the international community.

5. Analyse how the capture of Uman affected the further course of the First Winter Campaign and the development of military operations that followed.

6. To assess the symbolic and strategic significance of this victory for the development of the national movement in Ukraine and its impact on subsequent events, in particular on the consolidation of Ukraine's independence in 1991.

**Research results.**Uman was under Bolshevik control at the time and was an important administrative and military centre. The capture of the city would have significantly changed the balance of power, provided the Ukrainian army with food and ammunition, and mobilised the local population to increase its combat capability. In January 1920, the advanced forces of the UPR troops approached Uman.

The offensive was planned as a quick and organised operation to ensure surprise and maximum effectiveness in the shortest possible time. The Ukrainian army consisted mainly of cavalry units that were mobile and could quickly attack enemy positions. The first clashes with the Bolshevik garrison in Uman took place on the outskirts of the city [5, с. 318].

 Since the Bolsheviks were aware of the importance of the city and wanted to keep control of it, they put up considerable resistance. However, Ukrainian troops used the tactic of surprise attacks and gradually drove the enemy out of key positions. During the fighting, the local population actively helped the Ukrainian military. Residents provided the soldiers with food, informed them about the positions of Bolshevik troops, and some soldiers joined the Ukrainian army.

The support of the population was an important factor in the victory over the enemy garrison. After several days of fighting, the Ukrainian army completely occupied the city. Bolshevik troops suffered heavy losses and were forced to retreat to the east. The conquest of Uman was a great success for the UPR troops.

Firstly, the city provided the troops with food and weapons, which was very important in the harsh winter conditions.

Secondly, the victory over the Bolshevik garrison significantly raised the morale of Ukrainian soldiers. They could fight the Bolsheviks because they believed that the struggle was ongoing and that they could still defeat a stronger enemy. However, the city could not hold out for long. Due to a lack of resources and the inability to organise a stable defence, the Ukrainian army left Uman after a while and continued on its way, raiding enemy-held territories. The events in Uman had not only military but also political significance [6, с. 248].

The occupation of Uman was a powerful signal for the Ukrainian liberation movement. It showed that the UPR forces were not yet defeated and could continue to fight. It increased the patriotism of the Ukrainian people and strengthened their faith in the possibility of restoring independence. The capture of Uman also gave rise to increased contacts between Ukrainian troops and local rebel groups. After this event, many rebel groups operating in the region began to support the UPR troops more actively. This contributed to the further development of the anti-Bolshevik movement on the Right Bank.

The First Winter Campaign of the Ukrainian Army was a desperate attempt to preserve the Ukrainian army and continue the fight for independence when all seemed lost. At the end of 1919, the Ukrainian army found itself in a difficult situation, caught between the Bolsheviks, the White Guards and Polish troops. The army was exhausted and affected by typhus, and the only way out seemed to be disbandment. But instead, it was decided to penetrate the enemy's rear [7, с. 57].

The purpose of this dangerous raid was to raise the morale of the population, show that the struggle was ongoing, and give the political leadership time to negotiate with the Allies. In December 1919, several groups of small but combat-ready units were formed and set out to raid the enemy's rear. The operation was led by General Mykhailo Pavlenko.

After months of cold, hunger and constant fighting, the Ukrainian army advanced across the territory of Ukraine. They attacked Bolshevik garrisons, liberated villages and supplied them with weapons and food. They were supported by local peasants who considered themselves defenders. The operation was difficult but successful. It showed that the spirit of the Ukrainian people was not broken and people were ready to fight for their freedom. It spoiled the enemy's plans, gave Symon Petliura time to conclude an alliance with Poland and opened a new stage in Ukraine's struggle for independence [8, с. 125].

**Conclusions.** Summing up, we can say that the events that took place in Uman during the First Winter Campaign of the UPR Army were an important stage in the struggle for the liberation of Ukraine. Although the city was under the rule of the UPR troops for a short time, its de-occupation was of great military and political importance.

It allowed the Ukrainian army to obtain the necessary resources, mobilise new troops, and demonstrate that the struggle for Ukraine's independence was ongoing.

The First Winter Operation was a model of manoeuvre warfare that allowed the UPR military forces to maintain their combat capability and avoid total defeat. One of the key events of the operation, the Battle of Uman, was a vivid example of the courage and resilience of Ukrainian soldiers fighting for their country. Despite all the difficulties, this battle was a harbinger of the future restoration of Ukraine's independence.

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***Бежинар Тарас. Умань у подіях Першого зимового походу армії УНР***

**Анотація.** Стаття присвячена детальному аналізу ролі Армії УНР у подіях Першого Зимового походу (1919-1920 рр.). У загальному контексті українського революційного фронту 1917-1921 рр. заняття Умані зміцнило стратегічні позиції української армії, а також стало важливим етапом, який відновив її боєздатність і надав тимчасову можливість продовжити боротьбу за українську незалежність.

У статті аналізуються передумови, які спонукали українське військове командування на чолі з Головним отаманом Симоном Петлюрою прийняти рішення про перший зимовий похід, а також розкривається складна ситуація на фронті, ускладнена епідемією тифу, бідністю та нестачею ресурсів. Особливий акцент зроблено на стратегічному значенні Умані, як важливої транспортної та економічної бази для постачання продовольства, боєприпасів та інших необхідних ресурсів для української армії. Окупація міста дала можливість посилити особовий склад, мобілізувати місцеве населення та налагодити контакти з повстанськими загонами, що діяли на українському Правобережжі.

У статті детально аналізуються бої в Умані в січні 1920 року та активна участь у них місцевого населення, яке надавало життєво важливу підтримку українській армії, постачаючи продовольство та інформацію. Автор описує тактику української армії як таку, що складалася з раптових і швидких атак, завдяки яким вдавалося прорвати оборону більшовицьких військ. Важливим елементом є опис наслідків цих боїв для морального духу армії та подальшого розвитку першого зимового наступу.

У дослідженні також проаналізовано політичний вплив окупації Умані на внутрішню ситуацію в Україні. Зайняття міста стало важливим сигналом для українців та міжнародної спільноти, що, попри всі труднощі та поразки, війська УНР все ще здатні чинити опір. Ця перемога стала потужним чинником мобілізації місцевого населення, підтримки національного руху та активізації повстання проти більшовиків. Моральне піднесення, спричинене цією перемогою, відіграло важливу роль у подальших військових операціях військ УНР, але, зрештою, місто не вдалося утримати надовго через брак ресурсів та постійний тиск з боку ворога.

У висновках дослідження підкреслюється, що, незважаючи на тимчасовий характер першої зимової операції, вона стала символом незламного духу українських вояків та їхньої відданості справі незалежності. Уманський бій і вся операція продемонстрували високий рівень організованості та героїзму військ УНР і стали важливим кроком у процесі зміцнення національного руху, який увінчався здобуттям незалежності України в 1991 році.

**Ключові слова:** Українська Народна Республіка, Умань, Перший зимовий похід, армія УНР, війська більшовиків, війна.

 ***Bezhynar Taras.******Uman in the events of the First winter campaign of the Ukrainian nationalist army***

**Abstract.** The article is dedicated to a detailed analysis of the role of the Ukrainian People's Army (Ukrainian National Republic Army) in the events of the First Winter Campaign (1919-1920). In the broader context of the Ukrainian revolutionary front of 1917-1921, the occupation of Uman strengthened the strategic positions of the Ukrainian army and marked an important stage that restored its combat capability, providing a temporary opportunity to continue the struggle for Ukrainian independence.

The article analyzes the preconditions that prompted the Ukrainian military command, led by Chief Ataman Symon Petliura, to decide on the First Winter Campaign. It also reveals the challenging situation on the front, complicated by a typhus epidemic, poverty, and a lack of resources. Special emphasis is placed on the strategic significance of Uman as an essential transportation and economic base for supplying food, ammunition, and other necessary resources for the Ukrainian army. The occupation of the city allowed for reinforcing the personnel, mobilizing the local population, and establishing contact with the partisan groups operating in Ukrainian Right Bank.

The article provides a detailed analysis of the battles in Uman in January 1920 and the active participation of the local population, which provided vital support to the Ukrainian army by supplying food and intelligence. The author describes the tactics of the Ukrainian army as consisting of sudden and rapid attacks that successfully broke through the defenses of the Bolshevik forces. An important element is the description of the impact of these battles on the morale of the army and the further development of the First Winter Offensive.

The study also analyzes the political impact of the occupation of Uman on the internal situation in Ukraine. The occupation of the city was an important signal for Ukrainians and the international community that, despite all the difficulties and defeats, the UPR troops were still capable of resistance. This victory became a powerful factor in mobilizing the local population, supporting the national movement, and activating the uprising against the Bolsheviks. The moral boost caused by this victory played a significant role in further military operations of the UPR forces. However, ultimately, the city could not be held for long due to a lack of resources and constant pressure from the enemy.

In the conclusions of the study, it is emphasized that, despite the temporary nature of the first winter campaign, it became a symbol of the indomitable spirit of the Ukrainian soldiers and their devotion to the cause of independence. The Battle of Uman and the entire operation demonstrated a high level of organization and heroism of the UPR forces and became an important step in the strengthening of the national movement, which culminated in Ukraine's independence in 1991.

**Key words:** Ukrainian People's Republic, Uman, First Winter Campaign, UPR army, Bolshevik troops, war.

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