

Military Desertion as a Counter-Modernization Response in Austro-Hungarian Society, 1868-1914

La deserción militar en la sociedad austrohúngara como
una reacción contraria a la modernización, 1868-1914

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Abstract: This article is devoted to an investigation of the military desertion phenomenon during the Late Modern period; in particular, it is described as counter-modernization response of European peripheries to state-led violence and modernization. The European Modernization of the 18th and 19th centuries was the process that changed practically all spheres of life, including the transition from agrarian to industrial societies. This modernization had different actors, with the state as the most significant pertinacious factor of change. During the last third of the 19th century, most European regimes began to implement conscription as the most modern military technology in order to protect against possible enemies. The idea of citizen-soldiers was also used for the shaping of nation-building, and the educating of citizens and the propaganda of the achievements of Modernity like literacy, education, hygiene, etc. Military service became an important period of life for most European men, a transition from teenage to maturity in all meanings of this word.

Modernization also had its losers. In contrast to metropolitan areas, in European peripheries modernization often was perceived in the form of additional obligations, not benefits. The process was sometimes complicated by the existence of patriarchal reservations in closed locations that in general were hostile towards changing their centuries-old lifestyle. The examples of military desertion from the Habsburg empire's Northeast (Bukovina, Galicia, Eastern Hungary) to Russia demonstrate the scale of counter-modernization reactions of this peripheral region to imposed modernization and change. Those young men

who could not accept the changes often had to avoid the military by leaving their own country. These people became *perpetual deserters*, i.e. persons, who were trying to stay in the traditional society at any price. Several times they migrated from Austria-Hungary to Russia and vice versa. The case studies of such people demonstrate the military necessities as related to modern armies, the same as the irreversibility of modernization and unenviable fate for those who could not adapt to the changing world.

Keywords: Modernization, conscription, desertion, Austria-Hungary, Galicia.

Resumen: Este texto aborda el fenómeno de la deserción militar durante la última parte de la Edad Moderna, el cual es descrito como una respuesta contraria a la modernización y a la violencia estatal por parte de las periferias europeas. El proceso de modernización europea de los siglos XVIII y XIX transformó prácticamente todas las esferas de la vida, incluyendo la transición de sociedades agrarias a otras de tipo industrial. Esta modernización tuvo diferentes protagonistas, siendo el Estado el factor de cambio más pertinaz. Durante el último tercio del siglo XIX, la mayoría de los regímenes europeos comenzaron a poner en marcha procesos de conscripción, en tanto que la más moderna tecnología militar, con el objetivo de protegerse ante posibles enemigos. Del mismo modo, la idea del ciudadano-soldado fue empleada para dar forma al proceso de construcción nacional, así como para educar a los ciudadanos y canalizar la propaganda de los éxitos de la modernidad, como la alfabetización o la extensión de la educación y la higiene, entre otros. Así, el servicio militar se convirtió en un importante periodo en la vida de muchos varones europeos, una etapa de transición entre la adolescencia y la madurez en todo el sentido de la palabra. No obstante, la modernización también tuvo sus perdedores. En comparación con lo sucedido en las áreas urbanas, en las periferias europeas la modernización fue percibida una serie de obligaciones añadidas, y no tanto como un beneficio. El proceso se vio a menudo complejizado por la existencia de reservorios patriarcales en contextos cerrados que, en líneas generales, se mostraron hostiles a la transformación de unos estilos de vida que habían perdurado inalterados durante siglos. Los ejemplos que ofrecen las deserciones a territorio ruso de individuos encuadrados en el ejército del imperio Habsburgo y oriundos de regiones como Bukovina, Galitzia o el Este de Hungría ponen de manifiesto la escala de esas reacciones contrarias a la modernización y al cambio existentes en esta región periférica. Aquellos jóvenes que no podían aceptar dichas transformaciones tendieron a evitar el servicio militar huyendo del país,

convirtiéndose así en *desertores perpetuos*, es decir, individuos que buscaban permanecer a toda costa en una sociedad tradicional. De hecho, en no pocas ocasiones migraron de Austria-Hungría a Rusia, y viceversa. El análisis de estos casos evidencia las necesidades militares de los ejércitos modernos, así como el carácter irreversible de la modernización y el poco halagüeño destino de aquellos que no pudieron adaptarse a un mundo en proceso de cambio.

Palabras clave: Modernización, conscripción, deserción, Austria-Hungría, Galicia.

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The 19th century is usually described as a time of rise and progress for most European nations. Industrial revolution and technological development brought to life the period of Modernity – European domination and prosperity. In contrary to different aspects of the modernization process, my article concentrates on those strata of society, which can be described as reactionary and were trying to resist the overall process of change and modernization. Such resistance is understood as the impossibility to adapt to the changing world and military service as an important actor of change and state-led modernization.¹

Modernity is undoubtedly one of the most beneficial periods in the history of Europe. In its perception, it can be compared with the period of Antiquity. Europe was on the rise in all aspects of life: science and industry flourished because of scientific and industrial revolutions, the quality of life of the middle class rose permanently, and even the living conditions of the lower classes improved. Here we should add Europe's absolute military-political domination in world policy and practically the complete occupation of the world by the European colonial powers.

The processes of development in Europe triggered a long-standing discussion on progress and backwardness.² In addition to the contrast between Europe and the

¹ I would like to thank Frank Rochow, Alexandra Pulvermacher and anonymous reviewers for their important critical suggestions to the text of this article.

² Due to multiplicity of readings of the 'modernity' term, I would like to concentrate in this article on the classical concept of modernization theory as a historical process of transition from agrarian to industrial civilization during the historical Modern period («the long 19th century») – Alvin TOFFLER: *The Third Wave*, Bantam, Bantam books, 1980; Carl DEUTSCH: "Social Mobilization and Political Development", *The American Political Science Review*, 55:3 (1961), p. 494; Schmuël EISENSTADT: "Pluralism and the Multiple Forms of Modernity: An Interview. Interviewed by Gerard Delanty", *European Journal of Social Theory*, 7:3 (2004), pp. 391-404. Coming back to discussion on the nature of development and backwardness I recommend the book of Andrew JANOS: *East Central Europe in the Modern World: the Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Post Communism*, Stanford, Stanford, University Press, 2000, pp. 15-16; Jan KIENIEWICZ: "Periphery and Backwardness: an Essay in the Interpretation of Colonialism", *17th Congress of Historical Sciences*, Madrid, Comité international des sciences historiques, 1992, pp. 771-779. In this context I emphasize on the concept of *peripherization* as an integral component of modernization in Europe when the center-periphery model was widespread in relations of colonial powers and dependent countries. The process of *peripherization* was also widespread in Europe and in the major European countries. Most of

colonial territories, the European states competed with each other for domination on the continent and in the world. Those European powers, which were not effective enough in their modernization attempts, became the European periphery (Austria-Hungary, Balkan states, Ottoman and sometimes the Russian empire).³ They were often also compared to the Orient – underdeveloped, «wild» and unknown to the «civilized West».⁴ The newly emerged instrument – state-organized statistics – was extensively used for different comparisons of European countries and evaluation of their level of progress, trying to match the most effective countries of the world, i. e. Great Britain and later the United States.

Many regions of Europe did not match to the high level of industrialized and developed Britain, forming different sorts of peripheries in Europe. Here we are talking about not only states that could bear such a title, but also distinct regions, which slowly advanced and retained their patriarchal agricultural structures within Europe with only minor changes during the 19th century.⁵ This study focuses on these underdeveloped regions, which received only partial modernization during this timeframe and often were centers of traditionalism, opposing the state attempts to change.

Progress, as it was seen during the 19th century, should provide Europe with a never-ending capacity of economic growth and permanent improvement of living conditions. For ordinary citizens, progress was often associated with different activities of the state. Starting from the second half of the 18th century most European states turned into bureaucratic empires, and later – nation-states, with attempts of the state apparatus to control its subject populations. State structures, reinforced by a solid scientific basis,⁶ invented new methods and mechanisms to penetrate a traditional society and re-shape it for the state's needs. During a relatively short period, most European states created centralized obligatory systems of primary education, health

them had underdeveloped parts in its continental parts too. That is why we are talking here about internal peripheries of European states. – Curtis MURPHY: *From Citizens to Subjects. City, State and the Enlightenment in Poland, Ukraine, and Belarus*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018, p. 4; Andrea KOMLOSY: “State, Regions and Borders: Single Market Formation and Labor Migration in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1750–1918”, *Fernand Braudel Center*, 27:2 (2004), pp. 135-177.

³ Stella HRINIUK: “Polish Lords and Ukrainian Peasants: Conflict Deference and Accommodation in Eastern Galicia in the Late Nineteen Century”, *Austrian History Yearbook*, 24 (1993), pp. 119-136.

⁴ Clemens RUTHNER: *Habsburgs ‚Dark Continent‘: Postkoloniale Lektüren zur Österreichischen Literatur und Kultur im langen 19. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen, n. p., 2018.

⁵ Andrea KOMLOSY: op. cit., pp. 135-177; Stella HRINIUK: op. cit., pp. 119-136.

⁶ Robert FRIEDEL: *A Culture of Improvement: Technology and the Western Millennium*, Cambridge, Mass./London, MIT Press, 2007; Serhij CHOLIJ: “Die Modernisierung der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Streitkräfte (1868-1914) – eine Chance für die Galizischen Rekruten?”, in Elisabeth HAID, Stephanie WEISMANN and Burkhard WÖLLER (eds.), *Galizien: Peripherie der Moderne – Moderne der Peripherie? (Tagungen zur Ostmitteleuropaforschung/ Hrsg. vom Herder-Institut für historische Ostmitteleuropaforschung – Institut der Leibniz- Gemeinschaft, #31*, Marburg, Verlag Herder-Institut, 2013, pp. 109-122; Reinhart KÖSSLER: *Auf dem Weg zu einer kritischen Theorie der Modernisierung*, Frankfurt, IKO-Verlag Laslett, 1998, pp. 13-21.

care, and universal military service, etc. All these processes were started in the 19th century, but only a few were finished during the Modern period.

The process of military modernization is an example of the state-led process of change that was completed during this epoch. In contrary to different aspects of modernization, which often were bottom-up or just partially initiated by the state activities, the military sphere has always been crucial for the state's existence. That is why military modernization programs were launched by most European states during the 19th century and fulfilled with a high level of formalism.⁷ The universality of military service for all citizens was the factor of change for everyone, notwithstanding the regional or national peculiarities of any country.

This article contributes to the scientific discussion on the topic of counter-processes in Central Europe during the Late Modern period. For instance, Laurence Cole who describes Austria-Hungary as a center of counterreformation and Catholic religious and political movements raised this topic.⁸ It adds to the image of the Habsburg Empire as one of the peripheral European nations. Religion and its reinforced influence also could be described as one of the processes of anti-modernization and conservative movement, so characteristic for the Habsburg Empire, and later – the Austrian republic. The idea of counter-modernization and counter-development is a popular social science theory nowadays. Its followers declare strong counter-modernization processes (*demodernization*) in contemporary history.⁹ Trying to expand this theory to a longer timeframe, we already must better acknowledge the existence of counter-processes during the 19th century.

This article investigates the societal reaction of the less developed parts of North-Eastern Austria-Hungary – Bukovina, Galicia, Eastern Hungary, to state-led

⁷ On the examples of implementation of new staffing technology and its influence on European societies: Eugen WEBER: *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1976; Werner BENECKE: *Militär, Reform und Gesellschaft im Zarenreich: die Wehrpflicht in Russland: 1874-1914*, Paderborn-München-Wien-Zürich, Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006; George FLYNN: *Conscription and Democracy: The Draft in France, Great Britain, and the United States*, Westport-London, Greenwood Press, 2002; Alan FORREST: “Conscription as Ideology: Revolutionary France and the Nation in Arms”, in Lars MJØSEN and Stephen VAN HOLDE (eds.), *The Comparative Study of Conscription in the Armed Forces. Comparative Social Research*, Vol. 20, 2002, pp. 95-115; Ute FREVERT: *A Nation in Barracks. Conscription, Military Service and Civil Society in Modern Germany*, Oxford-New York, Berg, 2004.

⁸ Laurence COLE: “The Counter-Reformation’s Last Stand: Austria”, in Christopher CLARK and Wolfram KAISER (eds.), *Culture Wars: Secular–Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Cambridge, University Press, 2009, pp. 310-312; to similar counter-processes in the Habsburg Army – Peter BROUCEK: “Konservatismus in den Armeen des Hauses Österreich und der Republik Österreich”, in *Konservatismus in Österreich: Strömungen, Ideen, Personen und Vereinigungen von den Anfängen bis heute*, Graz-Stuttgart, Leopold Stocker Verlag, 1999, p. 173.

⁹ Orit BASHKIN: “Reborn Savages: Demodernization in Modern Iraq”, in Yakov RABKIN and Mikhail MINAKOV (eds.), *Demodernization: A Future in the Past*, Stuttgart, ibidem Press, 2016, pp. 139-162; Mikhail MINAKOV: *Development and Dystopia: Studies in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Eastern Europe*. Stuttgart, ibidem Press, 2018, p. 117ff. Stella HRINIUK: op. cit., pp. 119-136.

modernization processes. In contrary to the rest of the empire, where modernization was represented in the first place by economic progress and urbanization, in the Habsburg's east, there were only minor flashes of it.¹⁰ Peripheral regions often reacted antagonistically to new initiatives implemented by state authorities. I do understand the desertion and flight to the neighboring country here as an attempt to avoid forced modernization. The extent of this process represents the unreadiness of many peripheral societies to the rapid process of change and spontaneous attempt to stop modernization.

I base this article on the analysis of approximate 300 dossiers of Habsburg soldiers who actually escaped from their duty, either inside the borders of Austria-Hungary or abroad, namely to the Russian Empire. The data was collected in three main archival institutions – the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv and in L'viv respectively as well as the Russian State Military-Historical Archive.¹¹ This combination of archival institutions provides complementary documents of the investigated cases from both sides of the Habsburg-Romanov border.¹²

Conscription and desertion during Late European Modernity

One of the key questions of this article is what did it mean to desert during late European modernity? If we are talking about Europe of 1900, prior to WWI, it actually means to leave your country and society. There was a direct correlation between military service and society because of active militarization in the second half of the 19th century. '*Volk in Waffen*' or '*Nation in arms*' became the European trend in the middle of the 19th century. The large Prussian army that consisted of conscripts devastated several well-trained, but smaller armies of professionals during the second third of

¹⁰ Clemens RUTHNER: op. cit.; Robert DONIA: "The Proximate Colony: Bosnia-Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian Rule", *Kakanien revisited*, 11:09 (2007), <http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/fallstudie/RDonia1.pdf> (last accessed 16/02/2019); Elisabeth HAID: "Galizien: 'Östliche Peripherie' oder 'Bollwerk des Westens'? Mediale Darstellungen von 'Rückständigkeit' und 'Modernität' im Ersten Weltkrieg", in Elisabeth HAID, Stephanie WEISMANN and Burkhard WÖLLER (eds.), op. cit., pp. 61-76.

¹¹ For reasons of convenience, I will use the shortened version of archival citation in this article: Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv (Центральний державний історичний архів України, м. Київ, henceforth CDIAK) and L'viv (Центральний державний історичний архів України, м. Львів, henceforth CDIAL) and Russian State Military-Historical Archive (Российский государственный военно-исторический архив, г. Москва, henceforth RGVIA). Furthermore I will apply the following system of organization of archival material, which is used by most post-Soviet archival institutions: Фонд (Fund) xxx, опись\опись (inventory) ууу, справа\дело (zzz), аркуш\страница (page). In this article, I would indicate the archival sources in format xxx.ууу.zzz, page number. This will spare much place in footnotes and will not violate the rules of scientific quotation. Full entries are quoted in the bibliography.

¹² I would like to thank the scholarship program of the German historical institute Moscow and personally Dr. Andrej Doronin for the possibility to stay in Moscow during Fall 2015 in order to research in Russian archives and libraries.

the 19th century. Henceforth, citizens and subjects were turned into the new role of conscripts or citizen-soldiers¹³. The subsequent introduction of the most advanced military machinery, namely small-caliber repeating rifles and machineguns, put warfare on a new level. Now fighting parties had to provide extensive quantities of trained soldiers to replace high losses due to the massive usage of new equipment.

Many countries also made compulsory military service an important element of the complex of civil rights and obligations, emphasizing the correlation of military service and citizenship. Serving in the military became a compulsory component of the citizen's maturity process. Here we should mention the example of France with its long tradition of glorification of *Levée en masse* during the French revolution. After the French example during late 18th century, serving in the military became an important obligation for every male citizen, a component of enjoying full rights. A decade after its implementation, compulsory military service became also a component of male maturity and masculinity.¹⁴ Those men who had not served in the army were considered unmanly and defective individuals.¹⁵

The third important component of military service was its universality and importance for the integration and education of the population. The imperial or republican regimes of this period introduced complex programs of nation building into the military service, which not only consisted of shooting and marching practice but also comprised a complex attempt to educate and improve the subject population for the need of the state. The main result of military service should not only be a citizen-soldier but also a 'good citizen' – educated, well-mannered, with knowledge of hygiene and bureaucratic structures, ready for modern life. Big poly-national empires invented the most interesting strategies for integration into the modern state. In the cases of the Habsburg and the Ottoman empires, we see the emergence of a supranational ideology with military service as an important means to demonstrate to citizens their place within the state structure.¹⁶ Citizens, for instance, had no other choice but to

¹³ Richard CHALLENGER: *The French Theory of the Nation in Arms*, New York, Russell&Russell, 1965, pp. 14-19.

¹⁴ Ute FREVERT: "Das Militär als Schule der Männlichkeiten", in Ulrike BRUNOTTE and Rainer HERRN (coords.), *Männlichkeiten und Moderne. Geschlecht in den Wissenskulturen um 1990*, Bielefeld, Transcript, 2008, pp. 57-77.

¹⁵ George FLYNN: op. cit., pp. 3-6; Richard CHALLENGER: op. cit., p. 46; Ralph ADAMS and Philip POIRIER: *The Conscription Controversy in Great Britain, 1900-18*, Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, 1987, pp. 20-31; Walter DIERK: "Meeting the French challenge. Conscription in Prussia, 1807-1815", in Donald STOKER et al., *Conscription in the Napoleonic Era: A Revolution in Military Affairs?*, London-New York, Routledge, 2009, p. 30.

¹⁶ Serhij CHOLIY: "Die Modernisierung...", pp. 111-115; Serhiy CHOLIY: *The Mobilization at the Periphery. Universal Conscription as Modernization Factor of the Habsburg Empire 1868-1914*, Kyiv, Gramma, 2016; Teresa RAKOWSKA-HARMSTONE: "'Brotherhood in Arms': The Ethnic Factor in the Soviet Armed Forces", in Nandor DREISZIGER: *Ethnic Armies: Polyethnic Armed Forces from the Times of the Habsburgs to the Age of the Superpowers*, Waterloo, Wilfried Laurier University Press, 1990, pp. 132-139, 152-

adapt to this new strategy of the state. Military service was a challenge for many citizens and sometimes turned out to be a disaster for those who could not follow its holistic standards. This challenge was even more burdensome for those who were not accustomed to the new lifestyle, especially for the inhabitants of rural peripheries.¹⁷ That was the main reason why the population of the peripheries was overrepresented among the violators of military law. Ukrainians and Poles of Galicia, Romanians of Transylvania and Bukovina, as well as Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina were those who usually had difficulties with the new modern practices in Austria-Hungary, as they were not accustomed to it.

What were the realities of the Habsburg conscription during the last third of the 19th century? Most young men went through a process of selection during the last years of their teenage. Their following fate was decided by a lottery. Depending on the lot number, they were assigned to different branches of military service. Freshmen were uniformed and settled into barracks. From the first day of their service, they were subjected to a strict military discipline and a daily routine according to the military service manual. They were subjects of their non-commissioned officer (NCO), mostly the corporal, and the junior officer, both responsible for their drill and military education. Actually, both, soldiers and officers, indicate that it was a very boring process with only little variation in it.¹⁸ The commanders were trying to achieve a relatively simple goal – to make all the soldiers equal in their level of mastering military skills. Here military service correlated with the general ideal of modernization – to

154; Joshua SANBORN: *Drafting the Russian Nation. Military Conscription, Total War, and Mass Politics, 1905-1925*, DeCalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 2003, pp. 20-130; Christa HÄMMERLE: “Die k. und k. Armee als ‘Schule des Volkes’? Zur Geschichte der Allgemeinen Wehrpflicht in der multinationalen Habsburgermonarchie 1866-1914 (1918)”, *Frieden und Krieg: Beiträge zur Historischen Friedensforschung*, Bd. 3, Essen, n. p., 2004, pp. 176-213; Karl MEGNER: *Beamte: Wirtschafts- und sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte des k. k. Beamtentums*, Wien, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1986, pp. 231-235; Karen BARKEY and George GAVRILIS: “The Ottoman Millet System: Non-Territorial Autonomy and its Contemporary Legacy”, *Ethnopolitics*, 15:1 (2016), pp. 24-42; Fikret ADANIR: “Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Army and the Ottoman Defeat in the Balkan War of 1912-1913”, in Ronald SUNY, Fatma GÖÇEK and Norman NAIMARK (eds.), *A Question of Genocide. Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 113, 124; Mehmet HACISALIHOĞLU: “Inclusion and Exclusion: Conscription in the Ottoman Empire”, *Journal of Modern European History*, 5:2 (2007), pp. 264-286.

¹⁷ Serhiy CHOLIY: “Die Modernisierung...”, pp. 109-122; Castro CELSO: “The Army as a Modernizing Actor in Brazil, 1870–1930”, in Patricio SILVA (ed.), *The Soldier and the State in South America. Essays in Civil–Military Relations*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001, p. 53; Meyer KESTNBAUM: “Citizen-Soldiers, National Service and the Mass Army: The Birth of Conscription in Revolutionary Europe and North America”, *The Comparative Study of Conscription in the Armed Forces. Comparative Social Research*, 20 (2002), p. 118.

¹⁸ James LUKAS: *Fighting Troops of the Austro-Hungarian Army 1868-1914*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1987, pp. 22-27; Istvan DEÁK: *Beyond Nationalism: a Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848-1918*, New York-Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 105-109; Michał BACZKOWSKI: *Pod czarno-złotymi sztandarami: Galicja i jej mieszkańcy wobec austro-węgierskich struktur militarnych 1868-1914*, Krakow, Historia Jagellonika, 2003, p. 141.

educate a citizen into a person with universal skills, equal for everyone within the Monarchy. I will group the main factors of influence into three clusters that confronted with the usual living conditions of regular soldiers.

The first group of factors comprises discipline and order of the day. All soldiers were subjects of military regulations and duties. Officers and NCOs had full and direct control over them. Due to the lack of pedagogical skills, beating and abuse were important methods of communication with subject soldiers.¹⁹ The whole military of the Habsburg Empire was subject to the very strict Theresian articles of war, which provided for strict punishment for disobedience, including corporal punishments of different sorts. Austria-Hungary as a super-bureaucracy tried to regulate everything. Those who could not follow these regulations were the first candidates for the role of a black sheep with unenviable consequences.²⁰

Living conditions were also the subject of bureaucratic routine. During the second half of the 19th century, the Habsburg government initiated a full-scale program of barrack construction throughout the empire. The main prerequisite for that was the formation of several tens of new military units during the 1880s.²¹ At the begin of the 20th century most of the units of Habsburg army were located in modern stone-wall buildings with the latest technological infrastructure like water supply and sewerage systems. Military units were located in two widespread types of garrison cities: metropolitan or provincial. The former type was represented by such big cities as Vienna, Budapest or Prague. These cities were not only centers of military territorial districts but also concentrated different forms of political administration, economy, culture, etc. The life in these cities can be described as modern, distinct from their rural surroundings. Provincial garrison towns were looking practically always the same, with

¹⁹ Istvan DEÁK: op. cit., pp. 114-119; Steffen BRUENDEL: *Zeitenwende 1914. Künstler, Dichter und Denker im Ersten Weltkrieg*, München, Herbig, 2014, p. 220. At the same time, militaries always used not only oppression to motivate soldiers. Military modernization included many benefits for those who could adapt to changing world and receive direct advantages because of military service. The integrative effects of military service are well known in different case studies of European and global history - Serhij CHOLIY: "Die Modernisierung...", pp. 109-122. As an example, many citizens of Austria-Hungary took part in state-organized veterans' organizations as part of loyalist movement after finishing their military service – Laurence COLE: *Military Culture and Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria*, Oxford university press, 2014. Ilya Berkovich demonstrated numerous examples of existence what he called «networks of loyalty and acceptance» – collective perception of soldiery as noble and prestigious trade. In his opinion, such collective perception was the main motivation factor for soldiers of 17th-19th centuries that kept them from desertion – Ilya BERKOVICH: *Motivation in War. The Experience of Common Soldiers in Old-Regime Europe*, CambridgeCambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 195-211.

²⁰ Christoph JAHR: *Gewöhnliche Soldaten. Desertion und Deserteure im deutschen und britischen Heer*, Göttingen, Vandenhöck&Ruprecht, 1998, p. 142; Volodymyr KULCHYCKYI et al.: *The Austro-Hungarian Apparatus for Administration of Galicia*, L'viv, L'viv University Press, 2002, p. 61.

²¹ James LUKAS: op. cit., pp. 22-27; Michal BACZKOWSKI: op. cit., S. 142, 279-286; Scott LACKEY: *The Rebirth of the Habsburg Army. Friedrich Beck and the Rise of the General Staff*, Westport and London, Greenwood, 1995, pp. 105-112, 133-134, 151.

military barracks often being the only or one of several stone buildings there. Garrisons, located in the South or East of the Monarchy, differed not much from rural settlements and were seen by many officers as internal exile. There were tens of such places throughout the Monarchy, where soldiers continued their service in closed communities of semi-rural type inside modern barracks in rural surroundings. We should exclude from the latter category such cities as Krakau, Lemberg, and Przemysl on the imperial Northeast as important administrative, political and infrastructural centers with rapid lifestyle changes.

If we take into account that most imperial soldiers still were peasants, the transfer to new living conditions already could be a challenge. Here we should also add practices of mismanagement, which were widespread within the Monarchy. Barrack buildings could be impressive for those recruits who had entered stonewall buildings for the first time. However, the main difficulties were connected with material security and supply problems. Many soldiers recounted the problem of stale bread. According to the existing system, soldiers received their bread ration in advance for the whole week. That is why they had to eat stale bread during most of their service time. The rations, as well as the menu, often were poor and inadequate to the domestic and biological needs of the soldiers.²² Often senior NCOs and junior officers, responsible for food provision, pulled their ranks to earn money on the cost of the soldier's supply and provision. Similar stories were told about hay mattresses and bedclothes.²³ Corruption and mismanagement became a key problem for the everyday survival of the common serviceman in the Habsburg army.

Last, but not least, was the language problem.²⁴ Austria-Hungary was a country of many languages. Regarding the sphere of usage, the Habsburgs divided the languages due to their purpose.²⁵ The diverse population received the opportunity to use their native languages in places where it had a majority in the population. As an example, in addition to official German in bureaucracy, Poles and Ruthenians (Ukrainians) in Galicia or Czechs in Bohemia could use their native language for official needs and communication within the population. Actually, each province managed its own complicated system of language usage that allows researchers to describe the Habsburg Monarchy as the Tower of Babel.²⁶ Habsburg multilingualism was reflected with-

²² CDIAK 1335.1.1469, p. 88.

²³ Franziscek SCHUHMEIER: *Bodaj to byc zolnierzem: stosunki w szpitalach garnizonowych. – Mowa posla, wygloszona w parlamencie dnia 9 marca 1905*, Wien, n. p., 1905.

²⁴ Tamara SCHEER: "Habsburg Languages at War: 'The Linguistic Confusion at the Tower of Babel Could not be Much Worse'", in Christophe DECLERCQ and Julian WALKER (eds.), *Languages and the First World War*, Vol. 1, London, Palgrave, 2016, pp. 62-78.

²⁵ Rosita SCHJERVE (ed.): *Disglossia and Power: Language Policies and Practice in the 19th Century Habsburg Empire*, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2003, pp. 3, 44, 78.

²⁶ Tamara SCHEER: op. cit., pp. 62-78; Michael WOLF: *The Habsburg Monarchy's Many-Languaged Soul. Translating and Interpreting, 1848–1918*, Philadelphia, Palgrave, 2015, pp. 33-47.

in its armed forces.²⁷ Most soldiers received an opportunity to use their native language during service. Of course, this system was not ideal, but it was already much better than the situation in other armies at that time, like in the neighboring Russian army where there was strong assimilative practices and the absence of opportunities to use any other language except Russian.²⁸

As we can see from the preceding analysis, the main factors that were challenging for a soldier were the changing environment, with discipline and bureaucracy as its main components. Every soldier had to adapt to these new circumstances as quickly as possible. This was much easier for those individuals who had gone through the social transformation process as evoked by modernity, with its changes in an everyday life, including new technology and education.²⁹ For those, who still descended from a traditional society, especially from the imperial periphery, it was much harder. The latter category was more stressed by the new environment and living conditions, and usually had communication problems with their superiors due to a lack of foreign language skills. Thus, they were more likely to confront regulations of military life and to become victims of mobbing or scapegoating during their service.

How do soldiers become deserters?

Desertion is a feature that destroys the general foundations of military service: subordination, discipline, and sacrifice³⁰. Soldiers and officers are not free to leave the army as if it was a workplace. Even if we speak about the all-volunteer force, soldiers have a choice if they want or do not want to enter the army. After entering the colors, however, they do not have the opportunity to leave without the commander's sanction or at least during some pre-arranged term of service. This kind of coercion is a necessary condition for the functioning of the army. Soldiers are not allowed to leave a war if they are bored, scared or even injured. They have to accept all the risks of the military service including even the risk of being killed.³¹

²⁷ Istvan DEÁK: op. cit., pp. 99-107.

²⁸ Joshua SANBORN: op. cit., p. 206; James LUKAS: op. cit., pp. 30-34; The file of military deserter Dmytro Gudyma indicates that his personal inability to master and use German was his key problem during service in the 24th Infantry Regiment of the Austrian army stationed in Kolomea. Due to language problems, he made too many mistakes during his service and was often punished for that. It became the main reason for his dissatisfaction with service and following desertion to Russia on May 24, 1912. CDIAK 336.1.3901, p. 2-44.

²⁹ Ulrich BRÖCKLING and Michael SIKORA: "Einleitung", in Íd. and Íd. (eds.), *Armeen und Ihre Deserteure. Vernachlässigte Kapitel einer Militärgeschichte der Neuzeit*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 1998, pp. 7-15.

³⁰ Charles TILLY: *Coercion, Capital, and European States AD 990-1990*, Cambridge, Basil Blackwell, 1990; Jan LUCASSEN and Eric ZÜRCHER: "Conscription as Military Labour: The Historical Context", *International Review of Social History*, 43, (1998), pp. 405-419.

³¹ Ulrich BRÖCKLING & Michael SIKORA: op. cit., pp. 7-15.

This is the main reason why desertion always has been a widespread practice during world history. Human beings react differently to ever-changing life conditions, especially to the hardships of the military service during either peace or wartime. Ruling regimes recognized the risks of desertion and were always trying to limit the scale of this phenomenon. During most times in history, there was only one possible punishment for desertion – death.³² Only during the second half of the 19th century, we can see a change in this matter. Capital punishment and periodical amnesties to return ‘lost sheep’ to the army were replaced by relatively mild punishment (imprisonment). This change was also connected with a much stricter search for deserters and the implementation of the punishment.³³

The armies of the second half of the 19th century differed substantially from their predecessors of the 17th and 18th centuries. Now they consisted of citizen soldiers.³⁴ It was not possible anymore to terrify soldiers with the death penalty while desertion received new motivations. The bureaucratic apparatus was trying to construct the legal foundations, stimulating people to choose military service for two to three years instead of similar prison terms³⁵.

Most bureaucracies of this time made a distinction between desertion – leaving the army unit without permission – and evasion from military service – attempts not to be recruited according to military laws.³⁶ Austria-Hungary went through three main stages of military reform.³⁷ New versions of military law were issued for each of them: in 1868, 1889, and 1912. Military laws included also lists of the most important crimes including different forms of desertion.³⁸ The general principles of penalties for military deserters were the same: one additional year of service for those who returned back voluntarily and two years for those delivered by the police.

³² The Ancient Romans introduced the term *desertores* and foresaw *decapitatio* as the most widespread punishment for this crime - VERBLOVSKIY: “About Extradition of Criminals and Deserters”, *Juridicheskiy Vestnik*, 7, 1868, p. 12.

³³ Christoph JAHR: op. cit., p. 55.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 105-106.

³⁵ In contrary to the armies of previous centuries, citizen-soldiers’ armies lost their elite status and perception of soldiers as members of closed part of society. This also changed the motivations to serve and desert for simple soldiers, although Habsburgs and Franz Josef itself were trying to keep the image of the army as the best part of society until the last days of existence of Austria-Hungary. See Laurence COLE: *Military Culture...*, pp. 11, 39; Ilya BERKOVICH: op. cit., pp. 55-60, 229.

³⁶ Christoph JAHR: op. Cit., p. 88; Michał BACZKOWSKI: op. cit., pp. 95-97; Dieter KNIPPSCHILD: “Deserteure im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Der Stand der Debatte”, in Ulrich BRÖCKLING and Michael SIKORA (eds.), op. cit., pp. 225-230.

³⁷ Scott LACKEY: op. cit., pp. 105-121, 129-136; James LUKAS: op. cit., pp. 45-52.

³⁸ “Gesetz, womit für die im Reichsrath vertretenen Königreiche und Länder die Art und Weise der Erfüllung der Wehrpflicht geregelt wird”, in *Reichs-Gesetz-Blatt (RGB) für Kaisertum Österreich*, 61, (1868), pp. 437-448; “Gesetz, betreffend die Einführung eines neuen Wehrgesetzes”, *RGB*, 15, (1889), pp. 93-108; “Gesetz, betreffend die Einführung eines neuen Wehrgesetzes”, *RGB*, 54, (1912), S. 411-438.

The Austrian system of military punishment was one of the toughest in Europe.³⁹ Punishment for desertion or evasion of military service was almost equal to the duration of normal service. Such harsh actions were supposed to force all citizens of the conscription era to obey the law, but it actually never stopped those who wanted to desert.

Depending on the personal and social peculiarities, future enlisted persons and soldiers chose different options. Most of them were not ready to become a soldier. A rather high percentage of citizens were trying to avoid enlistment. Those soldiers who wanted to leave the service by any means could act in a passive or active way: they could choose either self-injury and suicide or direct confrontation with the military regulations.⁴⁰

The quantity of suicides, suicide attempts, self-injuries and accidental deaths in Austria-Hungary was practically static during a 30-year period (1869-1897).⁴¹ The general level of suicides in the Austro-Hungarian army was the highest in Europe. From 1876 to 1890 the suicide rate was 12.53 per 10,000 soldiers. The second-highest rate was Saxony with 8.11, while the British army had only 2.09. In 1903, the general suicide level in Austria-Hungary was lower, but still relatively high – 10.5, while only 2.6 in the German army and 2.3 in the British.⁴²

The second statistical category, reflecting desertion within the Habsburg army, is the number of punished servicemen. For the years from 1889 to 1895, archival findings provide detailed statistics about the quantity of punishment on the territory of the North-Eastern military corps # I, X and XI (Cracow, Przemyśl, L'viv). These military corps included the territories of Southern Moravia, Silesia, Galicia, and Bukovina.⁴³ The general quantity of evaders from military service here was 8,065 persons for six years. During this period, 1,393 persons received one additional year of service, and 345 – two years. Fifty persons injured themselves, but 21 of them were nevertheless qualified as eligible for military service. The general quantity of offender cases rose year by year. In 1884, there were 931 cases of violation of military law, while in 1887 – already 2,004.⁴⁴ The most widespread offenses were absence in time of recruitment, desertion from the troops, desertion abroad, evasion; abscond from recruitment,

³⁹ Volodymyr KULCHYCKYI et al.: op. cit., p. 61.

⁴⁰ Elena SENIAVSKAJA: *The Psychology of War in 20th Century: the Historical Experience of Russia*, Moscow, ROSSPEN, 1999, pp. 4, 44-45, 67; Gudrun EXNER: *Deserteure im Vormärz. Eine computerunterstützte Untersuchung der Grundbuchblätter des vierten Infanterieregiments (Hoch- und Deutschmeister) für die Jahre 1820 bis 1840*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Universität Wien, 1997, p. 4.

⁴¹ Serhiy CHOLIY: op. cit., pp. 243-245.

⁴² Istvan DEÁK: op. cit., p. 107.

⁴³ Serhiy CHOLIY: op. cit., pp. 243-245; based on CDIAL, 146.54.225, pp. 3-7; 146.54.228, pp. 3-7; 146.54.229, pp. 3-7; 146.54.232, pp. 3-7; 146.54.236, pp. 3-5; 146.54.241, pp. 3-5.

⁴⁴ CDIAL 146.54.212, pp. 1-4; 146.54.219, pp. 1-3.

and self-injury. Contrary to the quantity of very serious penalties, which fell, the number of low-level offenses rose.

How to be a deserter?

Different forms of military service evasion and deferment demonstrate to us the choice of those people who were trying to stay in their environment but avoid military service. I found very interesting examples of deserters, who were so discontented with the prospect of serving in the army, that they were ready to leave their common living environment forever. These people usually chose to emigrate to avoid recruitment as well as ongoing military service. In my interpretation, these cases reflect the societal reaction of peripheral societies to universal recruitment during the period of conscription. We should take into account that in the North-Eastern part of the Monarchy up to 1,5% of the whole quantity of men, liable for military service was punished for its evasion, while the real quantity of evasions was five to ten times higher than the number of punished persons depending on the year. Another important statistical trend is a much higher percentage of evasion of military service in peripheral regions than overall in the empire.⁴⁵ The statistics, presented by Christa Hämmerle, reinforces my general conclusions for this process.⁴⁶

My current research is still not finished and I base my preliminary conclusions on approximately 300 deserters' dossiers. At the same time, the existence of a complex bureaucratic framework of regulations in the Russian Empire regarding the procedure of deserters' reception indicates high numbers of such cases every year (more precise information below). Confronted with the system in general, deserters were not just trying to avoid military service but were also forced to leave their country. Here I must admit that emigration was a common feature for Austria-Hungary and especially – for its peripheries. Due to the complexity of emigration reasons, I will only partially discuss the military motivation of this process.⁴⁷

Contrary to migration, which often was an uncontrolled process,⁴⁸ military desertion abroad was shaped by numerous international agreements. Common extradi-

⁴⁵ Serhiy CHOLIY: op. cit., pp. 162-3, 244, 258

⁴⁶ Christa HÄMMERLE: op. cit., pp. 211-213, if general quantity of not present persons at the moment of recruitment in 1910 was 2-3% of liable for military service only for Lower or Upper Austria or Salzburg, it rose up to 34-36% for Dalmatia, Galicia and Krajina with a peak of 45% for Croatia-Slavonia. Desertion and evasion rates were much higher in peripheral regions of the Monarchy.

⁴⁷ Grzegorz KOWALSKI: *Przestępstwa emigracyjne w Galicji 1897-1918. Z badań nad dziejami polskiego wychodźstwa*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2003; Dorota PRASZALOWIC, Krzysztof MAKOWSKI and Andrzej ZIEBA: *Mechanizmy zamorskich migracji lancuchowych w XIX wieku: Polacy, Niemcy, Żydzi, Rusini*, Krakow, Księg. Akademicka, 2004.

⁴⁸ Rudolf AGSTNER: *Austria (-Hungary) and its Consulates in the USA Since 1820*, Wien, LIT Verlag, 2012, pp. 49-54.

tion was usually foreseen only for criminal cases, while ‘usual deserters’ mostly received a status that was similar to contemporary political asylum.⁴⁹ Some states like Great Britain and the USA never extradited any criminals, while Russia, Austria, and German states usually did.⁵⁰ The Russian Empire signed numerous treaties on extradition of emigrant criminals including deserted soldiers. These were the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca with the Ottoman Empire in 1774; the treaties with Prussia on February 6, 1834, May 20, 1844 and July 27, 1857; the treaties with Austria on June 5, 1815, June 14, 1822 and February 6, 1834; the same as with Denmark on October 14, 1866. Most of them included stipulations concerning the immediate extradition of deserters and criminals with an indication of the statute of limitation.⁵¹ Starting from 1873 these treaties were only partially recognized by Russia.⁵² The execution of these treaties always depended on the current international situation. As an example, around ten thousand Russian deserters arrived in Galicia during the Russian revolution of 1905 and the local administration did not extradite them to Russia.⁵³

So, what was the fate of these Habsburg soldiers, who nevertheless decided to desert the army? They usually took the risk because in the case of failure they would be returned to their home unit and continue confrontation on even a higher degree than before. I will exclusively discuss here the cases of deserters to Russia, which was the main destination for deserters in this period. According to international treaties, the Russian empire had to extradite those people back to Austria-Hungary, but it usually did not do it. Due to the high number of deserter cases, it seems that it was not a problem to cross the border at that time.⁵⁴ For instance, there were no significant geographical borders between Russia and Galicia. The border river Zbruch was neither wide nor deep enough to stop smugglers or migrants. There are numerous regulations of the provincial governors of Kyiv, Podolia, and Volhynia, which indicate that unauthorized border crossing was widespread at that time.

In 1881, there was a decision to simplify the procedure of extradition of those persons caught at the border without permission to cross it. Such persons had to be immediately extradited to the settlement next to the point of border crossing. Local

⁴⁹ VERBLOVSKIY: op. cit., pp. 1-16.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, pp. 31, 34.

⁵¹ Ibidem, pp. 35-36.

⁵² CDIAL 442.833.2, p. 105.

⁵³ Karin BACHMANN: *Ein Herd der Feindschaft gegen Russland: Galizien als Krisenherd in den Beziehungen der Donaumonarchie mit Russland (1907-1914)*, Wien-Oldenburg-München, Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 2001, p. 65.

⁵⁴ Svjatoslav PACHOLKIV: “Entstehung, Überwachung und Überschreitung der Galizischen Grenze 1772-1867”, in Christoph AUGUSTZNOWICZ and Andreas KAPPELER (eds.), *Die Galizische Grenze 1772-1867: Kommunikation oder Isolation?*, Wien-Berlin, LIT, 2007, p. 192; Paulus ADELGRUBER, Laurie COHEN and Börries KUZMANY: *Getrennt und doch verbunden. Grenzstädte zwischen Österreich und Russland: 1772-1918*, Wien-Köln-Weimar, Böhlau, 2011, pp. 113-125.

foreign authorities in either Prussia or Galicia were supposed to be informed about these cases.⁵⁵ However, neither Austrian nor Russian border guards seized most of the deserters. Usually, deserters came to the neighboring villages or towns on Russian territory and searched for a gendarme to surrender themselves as prisoners. Some of them even reached Kyiv city, which was quite far from the border.

During the second half of the 19th century, a general sentencing practice for deserter's cases took shape. In the end, however, the decision of the governor was decisive for each case. There were several regulations of the ministry of interior regulating deserters' cases.⁵⁶ In 1883, the police department issued a regulation indicating that foreign deserters should be sent to the interior and kept under police supervision. The regulation indicated a very high percentage of incomers who provided false information, as they were trying to avoid criminal prosecution in their home country. Those people who claimed deserter status had to prove it. Those who had no proofs were supposed to be transferred abroad or to the penitentiary.⁵⁷ In 1900, a document emerged, issued by the chancellery of the Kyiv general-governor, regulating the sentencing of deserters. It was entitled "About the proper order of settlement of deserters and military turncoats to Russia".⁵⁸

According to the document, all deserters from abroad should be incarcerated and questioned by the local civil and military administrations. The Russian military authorities were trying to acquire as much military intelligence information from these people as possible. Subsequently, deserters were handed over to police and the civil administration, which had to decide how to proceed.⁵⁹ Depending on their personal motivation, some deserters could be settled in border areas or in the Kyiv general-governorship, if they agreed to cooperate with the Russian authorities and be guides in case of war.⁶⁰ The Russian consulates and embassies abroad were supposed to make a request in the deserter's home country regarding the factual background of the desertion case. There were three options depending on the results of the investigation.

A portion of the deserters were sent back home against their will and officially transmitted to the Austrian authorities at the border.⁶¹ This category mostly included those deserters who were simultaneously criminals and were trying to avoid responsibility in their home country. The Austrian authorities and the Russian consulates

⁵⁵ CDIAK 442.831. 218, pp. 1-23.

⁵⁶ RGVIA 1759.3.1194, p. 7; 1759.3.1350, p. 39; 1759.3.1377, pp. 205-206.

⁵⁷ CDIAK 442.833.2, p. 105.

⁵⁸ CDIAK 442.851.183, p. 1-39; similar regulations were issued for deserters from Germany or Prussia, the same as Romania: RGVIA 1759.3.1195, pp. 14-15, 38-40; 1956.1.1904, pp. 12-53.

⁵⁹ RGVIA 1759.3.1194, pp. 7-10.

⁶⁰ CDIAK 442.851.183, p. 5; RGVIA 1759.3.1195, pp. 14-15, 38-40; 1956.1.1904, pp. 12-53.

⁶¹ The same model worked with Russian deserter in Prussia in 1878 – RGVIA 1956.2.2320, p. 1-14; Rudolf AGSTNER: *Austria (-Hungary)...*, p. 49; Rudolf AGSTNER: *Von Kaisern, Konsuln und Kaufleuten. Österreich und die Ukraine 1785-2010*, Wien, LIT Verlag, 2011, pp. 218, 336.

usually reported about such cases to Russia. There was usually sufficient ground to deport such persons. From 1908 to 1909 and from 1912 to 1913 Austria-Hungary initiated several partial mobilizations (*Teilmobilisierungen*) due to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Balkan wars.⁶² In these periods masses of men, who had received their call-up papers, deserted to Russia. According to reports, the Russian authorities in Kyiv decided to send back around twenty such deserters against their will due to high quantity (several hundreds) of such cases.⁶³ This was a sole exception from a general policy of polite treatment of foreign deserters in Russia.

The 24-year-old deserter Tomkin came to Russia in 1912 after two years of active service. After a short interrogation, the Russian authorities received a letter from Austria indicating that Tomkin was not just a deserter. Several days before his desertion offense, he had committed thefts and burglary. That is why his main motivation to leave the 80th Infantry Regiment was to evade penalties for his crimes. On March 22, 1912, he was delivered to the Austrian border crossing point in Brody.⁶⁴

The second option was the possibility to return home for those who wished to, even though they could stay in Russia. Some deserters chose this option due to family or personal reasons after understanding the fact that they would otherwise never see their relatives again.⁶⁵ After their return to Austria-Hungary, they usually received one additional year of service as a charge for the possibility to return to their customary social environment. Some deserters also asked for permission to be sent abroad to the third states, like the USA, which was usually granted.

In 1877, there was an exemplary case of desertion with the motivation to join the Russian army in its war against the Ottoman Empire. Two Austrian officers, Ludwig Limberger, and Jaroslaw Korny, deserted from the Austrian army to take part in active warfare on the Russian side. Both of them were one-year volunteers – persons, who had finished secondary education before army service and who received the rank of officer during their one-year active service. Limberger was a 24-year old Roman Catholic from the town of Rozdil in Zhydachiv County in Eastern Galicia, who received the lieutenant rank in 1876. Korny was a 23-year old Greek Catholic from Bil'che village in Zaliszczyki County, also with an officer rank. Both of them were motivated by romantic wish to fight against the ‘enemies of Christianity’.⁶⁶ The Russian authorities were embarrassed by this situation because they actually had no idea what to do with these two volunteers from abroad. At first, they were put under police surveillance. After several months, the Russian authorities decided to persuade

⁶² Karl SCHÖLLER: *Das Mobwesen Österreich-Ungarns 1914*, Salzburg, n. p., 1966, pp. 69-74.

⁶³ CDIAK 442.851.183, pp. 29, 31, 35-39.

⁶⁴ CDIAK 442.862.59, p. 2, 5, 20.

⁶⁵ CDIAK 442.851.183, pp. 35-39.

⁶⁶ CDIAK 442.827.129, pp. 1-10.

both of them to return to Austria-Hungary ‘voluntarily’.⁶⁷ In this case, we can see that in exceptional cases deserters could be sent back home even without any criminal records.

The third and most widespread option was to submit an application for residence in Russia. In contrary to those deserters who were ready to cooperate and usually settled in border provinces, most of them were banished to the interior provinces of Russia. The abovementioned regulation from 1900 indicated four gubernias for this purpose: Astrakhan’, Vologda, Samara, and Ufa.⁶⁸ The banished persons were kept under police surveillance for decades and received the status of second-class citizens. The reason was often a general suspicion of espionage by foreigners.⁶⁹

In 1873 Nikola Il’kov, a 21-year old Greek Catholic originating from Suceava, Bukovina, fled to Russia. His motivation to emigrate was a result of the religious will to join coreligionist Russia as the center of the world's Orthodoxy. After a short-term interrogation and detention, he was sent to the province of Samara for settlement.⁷⁰ This case is a typical and indicates the most widespread practice of Russian authorities on the issue of deserters.

The materials of the chancellery of the Kyiv general-governorship provide us the general statistics of individuals who deserted during the prewar years (November 21, 1912, to July 2, 1914). From 124 cases, most people were sent to the interior, usually to the province of Samara. The permission to settle in border regions (Podolia and Kherson provinces) was given only twice, as the family members of the deserters were living there. Nine persons were returned to Austria during the aforementioned period.⁷¹ Such statistics indicate the main agenda of the Russian authorities to keep foreign deserters instead of extraditing them.

Nevertheless, those deserters who settled in the four above-mentioned provinces of Russia found themselves in a bureaucratic limbo, characteristic of bureaucracies of that time. According to Russian legislation, any person could be subjected to police supervision. Supervision could last for five years maximum. After this time, the person should receive a new sentence or the status of a free citizen. This schema did not work for deserters. Most deserters tried to apply for Russian citizenship after the five-year probation term, but local authorities requested their birth certificates for this purpose. That deserters had no possibility to receive birth certificates from Austria-Hungary, as they were wanted there as military criminals.⁷² For this reason, many

⁶⁷ CDIAK 442.827.129, pp. 11-15.

⁶⁸ CDIAK 442.851.183, p. 5.

⁶⁹ CDIAK 442.833.2, p. 105; 442.851.183, p. 39.

⁷⁰ CDIAK 442.823.49, pp. 1-6.

⁷¹ CDIAK 442.862.303.

⁷² RGVIA 1759.3.1377, pp. 205a-206.

deserters stayed in Russia illegally as stateless persons. Many of them tried to change their place of residence after the five-year term and applied for permissions or even escaped from police surveillance.⁷³

In this paper, I am analyzing approximately 300 desertion cases. I definitely require further archival research in order to prove my hypothesis. This, and considerations of space mean that some aspects of the phenomenon cannot be considered within the scope of this article, for instance the national composition of deserters. The most important generalization now is that most of the deserters have similar reasons for their delinquency.⁷⁴ Ninety percent of the deserters claimed socialization problems as the main reason for desertion. Of course, their desertion was not a direct reaction to modernity and modernization, but living conditions and living situations. Nevertheless, such a situation was a direct outcome of universal state-led modernization and compulsory military service. The dossiers indicate the following reasons for desertion were most widespread:

1. Beatings, corruption, and hazing by senior conscripts and NCOs.
2. Language problems.
3. Pain of punishment.
4. Living conditions.

All these four groups of reasons are interrelated.⁷⁵ All freshmen came through a painful process of socialization within the new environment, with discipline, new living conditions and communications problems due to a foreign language as its components. Like in other armies, hazing was an important component of discipline and initiation of new recruits. Most soldiers went through these processes with only minor problems while there was a small group of those who required more time for adapta-

⁷³ RG VIA 1759.3.1205, pp. 130, 150; 1759.3.1377, p. 6; CDIAK 361.1.224, p. 88.

⁷⁴ The reasoning for desertion is practically the same during different historical periods: Reinhard BAUMANN: "Protest und Verweigerung in der Zeit der klassischen Söldnerheere", in Ulrich BRÖCKLING and Michael SIKORA (eds.), op. cit., pp. 16-48; Michael SIKORA: "Das 18. Jahrhundert. Der Zeit der Deserteur", in Ulrich BRÖCKLING and Michael SIKORA (eds.), op. cit., pp. 94-111; Sabrina MÜLLER: "'Lieber für Freiheit sterben als den Fürsten zum Spott' Desertionen während der Revolution von 1848/49", in Ulrich BRÖCKLING and Michael SIKORA (eds.), op. cit., pp. 141-160; Ulrich BRÖCKLING: "Truppenflüchtler und Totalverweigerer. Fahnenflucht, eigenmächtige Abwesenheit und Dienstentziehung in der Bundesrepublik", in Íd. and Michael SIKORA (eds.), op. cit., pp. 288-320; Rüdiger WENZKE: "Die Fahnenflucht in den Streitkräften der DDR", in Ulrich BRÖCKLING and Michael SIKORA (eds.), op. cit., pp. 252-287; George FLYNN: op. cit., pp. 97-100; Gudrun EXNER: op. cit.

⁷⁵ Ilya Berkovich demonstrated the complexity of desertion reasons in his study, with harsh discipline as only one of several reasons to desert: «There were probably as many motives to desert as there were individual deserters». According to my sources, the most of desertion cases during an era of mass citizen-soldier armies were caused by socialization and integration problems. Such problems often originated from soldiers 'backwardness' (inability to learn) or 'otherness' (language or cultural misunderstandings) with variety of other reasons for desertion. I discuss some of them below. Ilya BERKOVICH: op. cit., pp. 93, 55-61.

tion.⁷⁶ The soldiers in this small group were usually the main victims of hazing. Confrontation with modern practices within the military service and inflexibility of traditional societies often made its members scapegoats of military service with a large degree of outrage.

The main problem of many deserters who fled to Russia was their direct or indirect confrontation with military discipline. The hierarchic military system with strict subordination made soldiers directly inferior and dependent on their NCOs. The corporal or sergeant had personally organized training with every soldier and served as a communication link with officers who often did not master the soldier's language. Due to low pedagogical skills, direct violence was usually the key pedagogical means to motivate soldiers to train harder.⁷⁷ Those soldiers, who were awkward and untrainable, became victims of permanent violence as "unit's disgrace". The same situation emerged if the soldier could not understand or master the language of instruction. Scapegoating, however, did not motivate soldiers to become better, but stigmatized them. Soldiers also were dependent on their officer and NCO as they were the persons responsible for granting leaves of absence, provision with new uniforms and equipment, etc. Senior conscripts also contributed to constraint and beatings using its privileged position and forcing freshmen to train better and work harder.

All soldiers were subjects to strict military laws. The punishments were often so harsh that soldiers decided to desert in order to avoid its execution. In theory, soldiers had a right to complain to the higher command, but the effectiveness of complaint was not high while in case of failure the appellant was severely punished. This was the reason why fresh soldiers deserted because of beatings while senior conscripts deserted after they had badly damaged a freshman and were now afraid of punishment.⁷⁸ Many soldiers deserted if they lost or had their equipment or munitions stolen because they could go to jail for this. The same situation emerged for those who were negligent enough to cut a horse's mane or tail too short. These were often reasons for soldiers fled in order to escape a heavy punishment.

A relatively low percentage of dossiers indicate bad living conditions as the reason for desertion. Most of the units of the Austro-Hungarian army already had their own barracks at the beginning of the 20th century. However, soldiers still indicated, that they had to 'sleep in stables together with horses' as rather inconvenient and un-

⁷⁶ Istvan DEÁK: op. cit., pp. 105-108; George FLYNN: op. cit., p. 97-100; Elena SENIAVSKAJA: op. cit.

⁷⁷ On the topic of violence and motivation for military service please see Charles ESDAILE: "Conscription in Spain in the Napoleonic Era", in Donald STOKER et al.: op. cit., pp. 102-106, David FRENCH: *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People, c.1870-2000*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

⁷⁸ RGVIA 1759.3.1188, p. 59; Michał BACZKOWSKI: op. cit, S. 148-153.

pleasant.⁷⁹ In many cases, hunger was a reason to desert, with no wish to eat ‘the same dishes every day’ with ‘soup that had no body at all’ and ‘three coffees instead of three meals a day’.⁸⁰

A perpetual deserter

In the last section of my article, I address another phenomenon of deserters’ lifespan after the commitment of their leave and emigration to Russia. Approximately 5% of all deserters who were settled in the interior provinces of Russia returned home after several years. These people were usually incarcerated by the Habsburg authorities and later forcefully sent into the military.⁸¹ I would like to call such people *perpetual deserters* and discuss their fate in the context of the Late Modern desertion phenomenon.

As an example, Wasyl Bolożjak, dragoon of the 9th Dragoon Regiment, deserted for the first time on May 12, 1913. He was transferred to the Russian interior, but after a short time there, he returned to Galicia, was seized by local authorities and forced to continue his service there. Already on February 6, 1914, he deserted for the second time.⁸²

The most incredible story that I found is the file of Kondyk Andrejczuk. He was born in the village Biały Potok in Czortkow County, Galicia. On December 8, 1888, he deserted from the 10th Dragoon Regiment due to heavy beatings. He was questioned at the border and resettled by Russian authorities to village Krasnyj Jar in the Astrakhan’ province. After eight years in Russia, he decided to return home, accompanied by three other Austro-Hungarian deserters from Galicia. The Habsburg authorities incarcerated him and later returned him to his Dragoon Regiment number

⁷⁹ RGVIA 1759.3.1188, p. 2; Istvan DEÁK: op. cit., pp. 104-108; Michał BACZKOWSKI: op. cit., S. 112-118.

⁸⁰ Bad provision and living conditions even became a basis for folk songs and folklore *spivanky* of Ukrainian soldiers from Carpathians – Yaroslava VYSHPINS’KA: “The reflection of the tragic events of WWI in Ukrainian chronicle songs”, *The WWI. Tragic fates of the Central- and Eastern’European nations*, Chernivtsi, 2000, pp. 280-286; Spivanky-hroniky (*Chronicle songs. News*), Kyiv, n. p. 1972, pp. 277, 280-282; CDIAK 442.862.153, p. 123B., compare to Istvan DEÁK: op. cit., pp. 105-106: Translation from Russian: «There is a heavy routine in the regiment: soldiers wake up at 5 AM, drink a glass of cocoa with milk and black bread and go to the training. The training continues until 11 AM. From this time and until 1 PM they have a dinner and clean their uniforms and ammunition. After the dinner, training lasts until 6 PM. At 9 PM, the soldiers go to bed. A period from 6 to 9 PM is spent for supper and again cleaning of ammunition and uniform. We usually have soup, borsch and kasha for supper. Dinner consists of two dishes: soup or borsch and kasha that is sometimes replaced by rice. Every soldier receives 10 pounds of black bread for each five days. Bread becomes sale and unpleasant to eat during this period. The food is often tasteless, raw and it’s never enough while soldiers have to work hard during the day. Such circumstances provoke hidden dissatisfaction against NCOs and officers that strike soldiers in the face for any offence... Desertions from the regiment are oft-repeated.»

⁸¹ RGVIA 1759.3.1188, p. 17, 24-25, 273B, 443B; CDIAK 442.862.303, p. 5, 56, 61.

⁸² CDIAK 442.862.303, p. 19, 45.

10. After several incidents in his unit - his belongings and military equipment were stolen and he was perpetually beaten - he decided to leave service. To achieve this goal without desertion he cut off his index finger on the left hand. He was sentenced to 10 months of incarceration for mutilating himself. Nevertheless, he was recognized eligible for further service. In December 1897, he deserted to Russia for the second time and was iteratively settled in Astrakhan' province.⁸³

Any desertion case could be explained by personal motivation, bad luck, offense or pathological insubordination. One important component that is present in all cases of *perpetual deserters* is that all of them are trying to return to habitual living conditions in Austria-Hungary. Those individuals confronted with the conditions of military service and were trying to escape from it, but were still not satisfied with the conditions of their 'new life' in Russia. It was the main reason for them to try to return home after years spent in Russia. Actually, there was no place for people who were confronted with modernization in these circumstances. While trying to find traditional and unmodernized territory in East-Central Europe and to return to the patriarchal conditions of their native periphery, they turned into *perpetual deserters*. Their examples demonstrate the impossibility to avoid the modernization process. Trying to avoid modernization represented by military service, they found themselves in a foreign country with similar attributes of modernization like a bureaucratic state and its negligence for the subject population. In an attempt to avoid the experience of going to a foreign country and to return to their usual living conditions, these people are balancing between two bureaucratic powers. Actually, this traditionalistic element would never find their patriarchal oasis in a changing world. These people could be implicitly described as losers of modernization, with their home country trying to change its citizens into loyal subordinates, and the neighboring country accepting them without any clear goal. Populations had to adapt to state attempts while history gave them no free choice.

Conclusions

The period of European Modernity was a time of great changes that appeared at first in Europe and then – in the other parts of the world. These changes, called modernization, usually are described as a positive process of state-led or bottom-up improvement of life and technology. I have tried to find out gaps in this overoptimistic vision of the European past.

Depending on the country and territory, modernization had different meanings. In the case of Austria-Hungary with the processes of economic and political

⁸³ RGVIA 1759.3.1188, p. 183B.

transformation, nation-building, and technological innovation we have the same phenomena as everywhere. At the same time here, we have a much deeper process of regionalization of the state in metropolitan areas and peripheries, than in Western Europe. Metropolitans usually received both the benefits and losses of modernization, state-led and bottom-up, while peripheral regions were only subjects of state-led modernizations. Military conscription was one of such universal technologies, applied almost everywhere and to everyone in Europe in the late 19th century.

By analyzing the fates of deserters from military service, I demonstrated the scale of the counter-modernization process during the Late Modern period. Desertion had different reasons, but often it was a component of a personal or societal reaction to the universalistic attempts of the state to modernize and equalize all of its citizens. Counter-modernization was the reality of the 19th century and an inseparable component of overall progress and development. State peripheries often demonstrated the highest level of counteraction and perceived modernization attempts as hostile actions. In some cases, it provoked massive societal reactions of people who refused to take part in modernization, including the phenomenon of *perpetual deserters*. These individuals were trying to avoid modernization in the form of universal military service by any price and return to their usual traditional lifestyle. The irreversibility of historical conditions gave such people only limited possibilities, as the world they were trying to keep was gone. National and religious components played only a minor role in these processes that also contributed to the vision of Austria-Hungary as a nationally indifferent state. National activists penetrated the armed forces only at the end of WWI while the armed forces of Austria-Hungary most of its existing time had an ‘ideal’ supranational structure.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ More information on the topic of national indifference in the Habsburg Monarchy: Pieter JUDSON: *The Habsburg Empire: A New History*, Cambridge, Mass./London, Harvard college, 2016; Laurence COLE (Ed.): *Different Paths to the Nation: Regional and National Identities in Central Europe and Italy, 1830–70*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.