


<https://doi.org/10.18778/1644-857X.22.01.08>

LIUDMYLA VOVCHUK

PETRO MOHYLA CZARNOMORSKI NARODOWY UNIWERSYTET /

PETRO MOHYLA BLACK SEA NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7201-1388>

## The Diplomatic Corps of German Consulates in Soviet Ukraine (1922–1938)

STRESZCZENIE

### Korpus dyplomatyczny konsulatów niemieckich na sowieckiej Ukrainie (1922–1938)

W artykule przeanalizowano działalność niemieckich instytucji konsularnych na terenie sowieckiej Ukrainy w latach 1922–1938. Niemieckimi przedstawicielami konsularnymi działającymi w ukraińskich miastach byli zawodowi dyplomaci, posiadający wyższe wykształcenie, doskonałą znajomość języków obcych oraz głęboką wiedzę z zakresu historii, geografii, statystyki, ekonomii politycznej i prawa międzynarodowego. Działając na Ukrainie konsulowie niemieccy poważnie traktowali swoje obowiązki służbowe: normalizację dwustronnych stosunków handlowo-gospodarczych, nawiązywanie więzi kulturowych, ochronę i pomoc obywatelom niemieckim mieszkającym w okręgu konsularnym. Jednym z ważnych aspektów działalności konsularnej było pełnienie funkcji „szpiega honorowego”.

**Słowa kluczowe:** konsul, konsulat, stosunki dyplomatyczne, Niemcy, Ukraina sowiecka

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the study of the activity of German consular institutions on the territory of Soviet Ukraine during 1922–1938. German consular representatives operating in Ukrainian cities were career diplomats, who had higher education, a perfect command of foreign languages, and deep knowledge in the



Received: 2023-02-07. Verified: 2023-02-09. Revised: 2023-03-11. Accepted: 2023-04-04

© by the author, licensee University of Lodz – Lodz University Press, Lodz, Poland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

fields of history, geography, statistics, political economy, and international law. While operating in Ukraine, German consuls were taking their official duties seriously: normalization of bilateral trade and economic relations, the establishment of cultural ties, as well as protection and assistance to German citizens living within the consular district. One of the important aspects of consular activity was the performance of the “honorary spy” functions.

**Keywords:** consul, consulate, diplomatic relations, Germany, Soviet Ukraine

German-Ukrainian consular relations have a long history of more than 180 years. From the 19<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Germany had its consular institutions in Odesa, Mykolaiv, Feodosia, Mariupol, *etc.*, which operated in the Black Sea and Azov port cities of the South of Ukraine before the beginning of the First World War<sup>1</sup>. Only after the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918, according to which Germany recognized the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR) as an independent state, did German consulates begin to function again in Ukrainian cities. However, with the establishment of Soviet power in Ukraine in 1920, the activities of the German Diplomatic Mission in Kyiv and the Consulate in Odesa were temporarily suspended.

After the signing of the Treaty of Rapallo (1922) and the conclusion by the USSR and Germany on April 24, 1926, of the Treaty of Berlin (The German-Soviet Neutrality and Nonaggression Pact), the states resumed political and military-technical cooperation, which was beneficial to both parties. As a result of those agreements, diplomatic relations between the states became more active as well. Consular institutions of Germany began to operate in Kharkiv, Kyiv, and Odesa<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> O. Trygub, L. Vovchuk, *Osnovni napriamky diialnosti inozemnykh konsulstv na Pivdni Ukrainy u druhii polovyni XIX – pochatku XX st. (na prykladi Mykolaieva)*, “Eminak” 2007, no. 2, pp. 90–97; L. Vovchuk, *Stanovlennia dyplomatychnykh ustanov u portovykh mistakh Chornomorsko-azovskoho baseinu Rosiiskoi imperii (1785–1919 rr.)*, “Naukovyi visnyk: istorychni nauky” 2013, no. 3(34), pp. 210–218; eadem, *Diialnist konsuliv inozemnykh derzhav u chornomorsko-azovskyykh portakh Rosiiskoi imperii (kinets XVIII – pochatok XX st.)*, [PhD thesis], Mykolaiv: Chornomorskyi derzhavnyi universytet imeni Petra Mohyly 2013; I. Lyman, V. Konstantinova, *Nimetski konsuly v Pivnichnomu Pryazovi*, Dni-pro 2018; eorundem, *Prussian consuls on the Southern Ukrainian frontier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century*, “Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi” 2020, no. 35, pp. 145–173.

<sup>2</sup> V. Marochko, *Nimets’ki dyplomaty i holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini*, “Kyivski istorychni studii” 2015, no. 1, p. 63.

Today, the issue of the diplomatic corps of German consulates in Soviet Ukraine, despite the presence of some studies by I. Matiash<sup>3</sup>, L. Vovchuk and S. Kornovenko<sup>4</sup>, L. Vovchuk, I. Habro and O. Trygub<sup>5</sup>, M. Dornfeld and E. Seewald<sup>6</sup>, and L. Vovchuk<sup>7</sup>, continues to be understudied. Therefore, the *purpose of this study* is to create a general picture of the establishment of consular institutions in the USSR, the characterizing of the German consular staff, their responsibilities, and the principal forms of activity in Soviet Ukraine between 1922–1938.

The first official mission of Germany appeared in Kharkiv. Its establishment was associated with the implementation of the “Treaty of Repatriation” signed on April 23, 1921, by M. Schlesinger and V. Kopp between Germany and the Ukrainian SSR. E. Sasse was appointed the Head of the German Bureau for Prisoners, and A. Richter became the Deputy and Secretary. The same branches of the Bureau began to operate in Kyiv and Odesa<sup>8</sup>.

On April 8, 1922, V. Aussem and Z. Hey signed the so-called “Protocol on the Exchange of Trade Missions” (unofficial title) between the Ukrainian SSR and the Weimar Republic in Berlin. As a result, in August 1922, Siegfried Hey made for Kyiv with the task of getting acquainted with the economic and political dimensions of Ukraine. The Commissioner of the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKZS) in Kyiv, V.D. Torhovets, was given the task from Kharkiv of providing the German Representative with all kinds of assistance in his activities and in searching for the archive of the German Consulate. The information collected by the German Representative actualized the need to speed up the establishment of official relations with the Ukrainian SSR<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> I. Matiash, *Inozemni predstavnytstva v radianskiy Ukraini (1919–1991): protystoiannia i spivpratsia*, Kyiv 2020.

<sup>4</sup> L. Vovchuk, S. Kornovenko, *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. ochyma inozemnykh dyplomativ*, “Eminak” 2019, no. 4(28), pp. 71–82.

<sup>5</sup> L. Vovchuk, I. Habro, O. Trygub, *Holovnyi «sovietoloh» Tretoho Reikhu: Andor Henke – heneralnyi konsul Nimechchyny v USRR*, “Storinky istorii” 2020, no. 50, pp. 166–186.

<sup>6</sup> M. Dornfeld, E. Seewald, *Deutschland–Ukraine. Hundert Jahre diplomatische Beziehungen*, Berlin 2017.

<sup>7</sup> L. Vovchuk, *Foreign consulates in Odesa (1920s–1930s)*, “Eminak” 2023, no. 1(41) [in print].

<sup>8</sup> I. Matiash, *op. cit.*, pp. 134–135.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 83–84.

The Treaty of Rapallo, ratified by the RSFSR and Germany on December 14, 1922, became the basis for the establishment of official diplomatic relations between the states. As a result, in 1923, the Consulate General of the Weimar Republic in Kharkiv began operating<sup>10</sup>, the first Consul General of which was Siegfried Hey, but he was never granted the allied exequatur and had to leave the position of Consul. Later, the Consulate was headed by: Rudolf Sommer (January 2 – November 22, 1924), Carl Graap (1924 – May 1928), and Carl Walther (1928–1936)<sup>11</sup>.

Among the other employees of the Consulate, who worked at different times and should be mentioned, were Vice Consul and Chancellor Oskar Erde, Secretary Hermann Strecker, Aide Alexander Schmidt, Clerk Walter Klett, Courier Ernst Wendt, Typist Baroness von Frankenberg-Proschwitz Jutta (who had a good command of German, Polish, French, and English), and the Head of the Passport Department, Franz Krause<sup>12</sup>. The leadership of the Consulate tried to hire highly educated employees with German roots, believing that it was the best way to protect themselves from Soviet agents.

On September 17, 1936, the Consulate General in Kharkiv was reorganized and became a Consulate due to the city losing the status of capital. Its consular district was limited to Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Donetsk Oblasts<sup>13</sup>.

In 1924, the German Consulate in Kyiv began its work, which, like the Consulate in Odesa, was legally subordinate to the Consulate General in Kharkiv (between 1919–1934, Kharkiv was the capital of the Ukrainian SSR). The Kyiv Consular District included Kyiv, Podilsk, Chernihiv, and Volyn provinces. At the same time, the German Consulate in Kyiv was conditionally subordinated to the General Consulate of Germany in Kharkiv. Andor Henke, the German consul in Kyiv, later wrote about this in his memoirs.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes, 1871–1945*, Bd. IV (S), bearb. v. B. Isphording, G. Keiper, M. Kröger, Paderborn 2012, p. 290; Derzhavnyy arkhiv Kyivskoyi oblasti (The State Archive of Kyiv Region), fond [f.] 4205, opys [op.] 1, sprava [spr.] 162, p. 30; M. Dornfeld, E. Seewald, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>12</sup> Haluzevyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Sluzhby bezpeky Ukrainy, Kyiv (The Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine, Kyiv) [hereinafter: SSA SSU], f. 1, op. 1, spr. 886, pp. 10–21.

<sup>13</sup> I. Matiash, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

The Consul considered it necessary to contact the Embassy in Moscow or the German Foreign Office directly, while sending only copies of letters to the Consulate General in Kharkiv, and probably had the appropriate permission to do so. Twice a year, German consular representatives operating in Ukraine met at conferences organized at the Embassy in Moscow<sup>14</sup>.

From March 21, 1924, to 1928, the Consulate was headed by Stephany Werner, the former Consular Secretary of the German Embassy in Moscow. The position of Vice Consul was held by Otto Bräutigam, 1<sup>st</sup> Class Secretary – by V. Eisenhardt (until 1928), and Alfons Volnyi was appointed the Secretary of the Consul (until 1935), whose duties were associated with the activities of the Consul and were not limited to diplomatic activity. Later, the Consulate was headed by: Rudolf Sommer (1928–1933), Andor Hencke (1933–1935), and Georg-Wilhelm Grosskopf (1935–1938)<sup>15</sup>.

The German Consulate in Kyiv worked five days a week (Tuesday and Sunday were days off), and from September 1933, they worked for four days (due to the large influx of visitors, Saturday also became a day off)<sup>16</sup>.

In general, the Representation of Germany in Kyiv between 1924–1933, with the status of one of the German consulates in the USSR, performed mainly political functions and provided information about the economic, social, and political situation in the Ukrainian SSR to the government through the Consulate General in Kharkiv and the Embassy in Moscow. Contact between the Head of the Consulate and government bodies was carried out through the Commissioner of the NKZS in the Ukrainian SSR in Kyiv Raion and were performed under the close supervision of the special services<sup>17</sup>.

Since the 1930s, the personnel of the Consulate were as follows: German diplomats (the consul general, his secretary and clerk – “administrative assistant”) and local residents (born in Germany), two stenographers, two representatives of the support staff, and a lawyer. Thus, during the 1930s, the following employees worked at the Consulate: Secretary A. Volnyi (in 1935 he was replaced

<sup>14</sup> A. Hencke, *Erinnerungen als Deutscher Konsul in Kiew in der Jahren 1933–1936: Mit einer Vorbemerkung von Georg Stadtmüller*, München 1979, pp. 8–9.

<sup>15</sup> I. Matiash, *op. cit.*, pp. 84–86.

<sup>16</sup> L. Vovchuk, I. Habro, O. Trygub, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–172.

<sup>17</sup> I. Matiash, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

by Herman Braun), Secretary Gagenmeyer, Legal Adviser Leonid Sarando, File Clerk and Typist Erna Apryshchenko (her brothers Emil and Leonid Gerndt also worked at the German consulates, the first – in Kyiv, and the second from 1927 in Kharkiv), Driver Erna Schmidt (her cousin O. Schmidt served at the General Consulate of Germany in Kharkiv), Porter Georgii Streis (Strese), and Janitor Semen Hryshchenko<sup>18</sup>. The latter was probably the only employee of non-German origin.

On September 17, 1936, the Consulate in Kyiv was reorganized into a Consulate General with a consular district covering the entire territory of the Ukrainian SSR, and the Consulate in Kharkiv and Odesa Consular Section was subordinate to it<sup>19</sup>.

The German Consulate in Odesa began its activities in 1923 and was headed by Philipp Vassel on July 4<sup>20</sup>. The following personnel worked at the Consulate with him: Carl Hahn – who served as an Adviser and Secretary of the Consulate, Wilhelm Buchholtz – who was in charge of issuing passports, and the Porter of the Consulate – Ivan Hurinov<sup>21</sup>.

In 1925, Philipp Vassel left Odesa and returned to Germany. Between 1925–1928, the functions of the Consul were temporarily performed by Carl Dienstmann. From 1926 onwards, the Courier of the Consulate was a German, a Soviet subject, named Oscar Yundt.

Between 1928–1935, the professional diplomat Paul Roth held the position of Consul, while Carl Hahn, who remained the Secretary of the Consulate, was later suspected by the Soviet special services as an organizer of sabotage groups at Mykolaiv plants<sup>22</sup>. In October 1933, another employee of the German Consulate, Conrad Nitert, who worked there later as a teacher, arrived in Odesa<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> SSA SSU, f. 1, op. 1, spr. 886, pp. 26–31.

<sup>19</sup> M. Dornfeld, E. Seewald, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>20</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. V (*T-Z*), bearb. v. B. Isphording, G. Keiper, M. Kröger, Paderborn 2014, p. 114.

<sup>21</sup> SSA SSU, f. 1, op. 1, spr. 886, pp. 34–35, 38.

<sup>22</sup> L. Vovchuk, *Nimets'ki dyplomaty v Ukraini (1918–1938 rr.): prosopohrafichni portret, [in:] Ukrayina ta Nimechchyna: mizhderzhavni vidnosyny*, ed. V. Verstyuk, Chernihiv 2018, p. 208.

<sup>23</sup> SSA SSU, f. 1, op. 1, spr. 886, p. 36.

The aggravation of the Czechoslovak crisis led to the deterioration of Soviet-German relations. During the summer and autumn of 1937, questions regarding the number of diplomatic personnel on the territory of the host country began to be actively raised between the German Embassy in Moscow and the NKZS of the USSR. The Soviet government emphasized the inappropriate proportionality between Soviet diplomatic missions in Germany and German missions in the USSR, and as a result, insisted on the closure of five German consulates, in Odesa in particular. The German government did not agree. Therefore, the Soviet side began to actively hinder the work of some of them by harassing and pressuring Soviet citizens who brought service to the German consulates<sup>24</sup>.

Werner von der Schulenburg, the Ambassador of the German Reich to the USSR, noted that “the Soviet government is quite frightened at the moment, it sees spies, murderers and saboteurs everywhere, and it considers foreign consulates to be the center of all these crimes”<sup>25</sup>. On November 3, 1937, Deputy People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs, B.S. Stomoniakov, informed him that the “achievement of parity” should be completed within two months and offered to choose two consulates that would continue their work. Those two consulates were German representations in Kyiv and Novosibirsk<sup>26</sup>.

Thus, by the end of 1937, the consulates in Odesa and Kharkiv ceased to exist.

At the same time, on October 28, 1937, M. Yezhov signed operational order No. 00698 which regarded increasing pressure on the embassies and consulates of Germany, Japan, Italy, and Poland, the main purpose of which was to apply broad repression against Soviet citizens who were somehow associated with the embassies and consulates of those states. A large-scale struggle broke out. All complaints of the German Embassy in Moscow regarding pressure on the consulates in Kyiv and Novosibirsk were completely ignored by the Soviet government.

---

<sup>24</sup> «*Velykyy teror*» v Ukrayini: *Nimetska operatsiya 1937–1938 rokiv*, eds A. Aysfeld, N. Serdyuk, Kyiv 2018, pp. 173–175.

<sup>25</sup> M. Dornfeld, E. Seewald, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–63.

<sup>26</sup> I. Matiash, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

As a result of that confrontation, on March 2, 1938, Germany demanded the closure of Soviet consulates in Hamburg and Königsberg by May 15, and the USSR, in turn, demanded the closure of German consulates in Kyiv and Novosibirsk, which had ceased operations by May 15<sup>27</sup>.

Being aware of the inevitability of the closure of the German Consulate General in Kyiv, G. Grosskopf a few days before, in accordance with instructions, burned the documentation of the Consulate General: files of newspapers and magazines, materials on trade relations with the USSR, agriculture, industry, correspondence, passport cases, materials on the evacuation of prisoners of war between 1922–1928, about “Hitler’s aid”, and so on. The property of the Consulate General was sold and G. Grosskopf left Kyiv.

To a limited extent, the Consular Section of the Embassy in Moscow was to take over the functions of the eliminated consulates. In particular, it was about the authentication of the passports of official Soviet missions’ members. All other citizens were deprived of the right to leave the country<sup>28</sup>. The signing of the Munich Agreement on September 30, 1938, did not affect the development of the institutional history of diplomatic relations between the Third Reich and the USSR, and international actors were soon drawn into World War II.

Germans have always been famous for their pedantry, professionalism, and hard work. This feature could also be observed in the selection by the German government of diplomatic and consular employees who worked on the territory of Soviet Ukraine between 1922–1938. When appointed to the position in the German Foreign Office, preference was given to “career diplomats” who had extensive experience in the diplomatic field, had a perfect command of foreign languages, and deep knowledge in the fields of history, geography, statistics, political economy, and international law. All German consular representatives who worked in Soviet Ukraine, before their appointment in that republic, had a significant career path of activities abroad. Many of them could speak the Russian language, as they were associated with the Russian Empire in the past.

Consul General *Carl Graap* (1870–1959) was born in Moscow in the family of a merchant, politician, and Professor of Economic

---

<sup>27</sup> «Velykyy teror» v Ukrayini..., pp. 173–175.

<sup>28</sup> I. Matiash, *op. cit.*, pp. 191–192.



Law, Detlef Frederik Graap. He graduated from the König-Albert-Gymnasium in Leipzig and the Technical University in Charlottenburg, Berlin.

Between 1892–1914, he worked as an engineer and director for a number of European companies. In 1896, he was sent to Russia to oversee the construction of industrial facilities financed by a consortium headed by Krupp<sup>29</sup> (between 1902–1905, he was a Plant Director of the Russian machine-building company Hartmann Aktiengesellschaft in Luhansk, Ukraine). At the same time, he was a member of the Russian Imperial Commission for Labor Legislation and a member of the Board of Directors of the Russian Factory Owners' Association<sup>30</sup>.

While staying in the Russian Empire, it was probably there that he met and married Princess Ekaterina Gagarina, who definitely influenced Graap's attitude to Russian culture and his command of the language. His profound knowledge of German and Russian industries, his fluency in the Russian language, as well as wide acquaintanceship among economic representatives of the elites of the two states, allowed him to become one of the leading experts in the field of economic relations with Russia at the German Foreign Office.

C. Graap's diplomatic career began in 1914 in the Russian Empire and later continued in the USSR. Having started as an Advisor to the War Raw Materials Department in Moscow, on May 7, 1920, he took the position of Speaker of the Foreign Trade Department of the German Foreign Office, and from August 16, 1921 – a Business Consultant of the German Diplomatic Mission in Moscow. He played a key role in the preparation for the conclusion of the Treaty of Rapallo in 1922 from the German side<sup>31</sup>.

C. Graap began his career as a consul immediately from the position of Consul General of Germany in Leningrad (March 27 – May 7, 1924), and on May 21, 1924, he was posted to Kharkiv, where he worked from December 16, 1924, to July 31, 1928.

<sup>29</sup> M.A. Klyshevich, *Eksperty Ministerstva inostrannyh del Germanii o perspektivah ustanovleniya otnosheniy s Sovetskoy Rossiey (1919–1922 gody)*, "Istoricheskie, filosofskie, politicheskie i yuridicheskie nauki, kulturologiya i iskusstvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki" 2013, no. 8(2), p. 81.

<sup>30</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. II (G–K), bearb. v. G. Keiper, M. Kröger, Paderborn 2004, p. 73.

<sup>31</sup> D.J. Cameron, *Carl Graap and the formation of Weimar foreign policy toward Soviet Russia from 1919 until Rapallo*, "Diplomacy & Statecraft" 2002, no. 13(4), pp. 75–95.

An interesting fact is that on March 3, 1928, C. Graap was transferred to a temporary pension, but he continued to hold the position of Consul General in Kharkiv until the end of July 1928.

After returning to Berlin, between 1928–1931, he worked in the Representative Office of Germany at the League of Nations. From 1931 to 1935, he took the position of Consul General of the German Consulate in Košice (Czechoslovakia). C. Graap finished his diplomatic career as a Commercial Attaché in the German Mission in Prague (1936–1937)<sup>32</sup>. That was the end of his diplomatic career.

*Carl Heinrich Walther* (1881 – after 1943) was born in 1881 in Bielefeld (Germany) into an aristocratic family. After finishing school he studied Philosophy, and in 1907 he received a doctorate in Juridical Science.

Until 1919, he held the positions of Vice Consul and Consul in St. Petersburg and Saratov<sup>33</sup>. According to intelligence data from Soviet counterintelligence, “with the beginning of the First World War in 1914, he was arrested and exchanged for Russian prisoners. During the war, he did not serve in the army, but worked in a special institution, where he could probably perform intelligence work for the benefit of the German Empire”<sup>34</sup>. From 1918 onwards, he worked as a member of the German Mission in Bilshovyk Russia. Between 1919–1924, he worked in the Office of the President of the Reich in Berlin.

He began his consular activity in 1924 when he was appointed German Consul in Leningrad. In 1928, he took the position of Consul General in Kharkiv. He arrived there only in May 1929 and officially performed his duties until 1936. In a political sense, he was a nationalist and, accordingly, a member of the nationalist organization “Auslandsdeutschen” (Association of Germans of Foreign Lands). According to Soviet special services, that organization was a vivid example of an intelligence institution, and all its members were German spies. It was on the initiative of that organization that Carl Walther was posted to Leningrad<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. II, pp. 73–74.

<sup>33</sup> W. Ehberger, *Das Kabinett Hoffmann II, Teil 1: 31. Mai – 1. September 1919 (Die Protokolle des Bayerischen Ministerrats 1919–1945)*, Munchen 2017, pp. 241–242.

<sup>34</sup> SSA SSU, f. 1, op. 1, spr. 886, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 8–9.

From 1937 to 1939, he held the position of Consul General in Poznań (Posen, Poland). Later, he held various positions in the Foreign Office of the Third Reich. The fate of Carl Heinrich Walther after 1943 is unknown<sup>36</sup>.

Consul Rudolf Sommer (1877 – after 1938) was born on December 1, 1877, in Naumburg (Saale) into the family of mechanic and optician Emil Sommer. On February 17, 1893, he finished the “Dom gymnasium” and Real gymnasium, having got a legal education. From April 1893 to December 1898, he worked as a Secretary in the court service, and from 1902 to 1905, as an office worker.

In 1905, R. Sommer began his diplomatic career, having got the position of Diplomatic Representative of the German Embassy in Genoa, where he worked until 1912. From October 8, 1912, R. Sommer became a secret assistant to the Secretary of the German Foreign Office and until October 1, 1913, he worked in the Encryption Department of the German Embassy in Constantinople<sup>37</sup>.

Later, R. Sommer worked in the German Representative Office in Tehran, which was established on January 27, 1913, and officially operated until December 21, 1923. It is worth noting that, between 1915–1917, Sommer temporarily performed the duties of German *chargé d'affaires*. Despite the fact that, between 1917–1920, the Embassy in Tehran was closed and German interests were officially represented by the Spanish Ambassador, in January 1918 R. Sommer resumed the work of the German Mission in Iran<sup>38</sup> and from June 1920 to January 1923 he headed the German Representative Office in Tehran<sup>39</sup>. Thus, by 1923, Rudolf Sommer rose from a Chancellor of the Embassy to a Secretary of the Mission, proving himself to be a true professional.

With the establishment of German-Soviet diplomatic relations, in January 1924 he headed the Consulate General of the German government in Kharkiv. From April 23, 1924, he was appointed to the acting office of the Consulate General of Germany in Tiflis,

<sup>36</sup> C.H. Walther, *Das Bundesarchiv. Biographien*, [https://www.bundesarchiv.de/aktenreichskanzlei/19191933/0000/adr/adrsz/kap1\\_5/para2\\_33.html](https://www.bundesarchiv.de/aktenreichskanzlei/19191933/0000/adr/adrsz/kap1_5/para2_33.html) (accessed: 13 XII 2022).

<sup>37</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. IV, p. 290.

<sup>38</sup> O. Bast, *German-Persian diplomatic relations*, “Encyclopedia Iranica”, 5 X 2001, p. 510.

<sup>39</sup> L. Gielhammer, *Deutsche Gesandte in Teheran, zur Geschichte der diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und Iran*, “Mitteilungen des Instituts für Auslandsbeziehungen” 1960, no. 3–4, pp. 273–275.

where he stayed until June 4, 1924. On October 6, 1924, he was posted to the German Consulate in Vladivostok, which in 1925 became a Trade Representation.

On February 29, 1928, Rudolf Sommer headed the German Consulate in Kyiv, where he worked until 1933. From April 6, 1933, to October 19, 1937, he was the General Consul in Leningrad. Returning to Germany in October 1937, he continued his diplomatic career in the state's Foreign Office, working in the Press Department. On March 29, 1938, he was temporarily retired, but six months later, Rudolf Sommer officially resigned<sup>40</sup>. The further fate of the diplomat is unknown.

An interesting personality was Andor Hencke (1895–1984), who had a long career path (for a detailed biography based on Soviet counterintelligence materials, see<sup>41</sup>. A. Hencke was a military officer and took part in the First World War. After that, he served in the new German army, the “Reichswehr” (the official name of the German professional army at the time of the Weimar Republic).

On October 17, 1922, he was appointed to the German Foreign Office, and from November 2, 1922, to September 8, 1928, he served as a Secretary of the German Embassy in Moscow, where he proved himself to be a high-quality expert on “Russian” life. Having access to secret materials, he was well informed about bilateral relations between Germany and the USSR and the states' policy towards Poland. He also knew the pros and cons of the Red Army very well, being well informed about the organization of the Soviet Army's armament by the Germans and the coordination of the military industry between 1924–1925. Between 1928–1933 he held various positions (mainly the Secretary) in the system of the German Foreign Office<sup>42</sup>. Between 1933–1935, he held the position of German Consul in Kyiv.

Between 1939–1945, he was in the diplomatic service in the German Foreign Office. After the war, he was sentenced to 5 years in prison. From 1951, Henke lived in Munich, serving as an Advisor for Eastern Europe in the German Federal Intelligence Service (Bundesnachrichtendienst, BND).

Georg-Wilhelm Grosskopf (1884–1942) was born in the Latvian city of Venden (now Cēsis). While studying at the Political,

<sup>40</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. IV, pp. 290–291.

<sup>41</sup> L. Vovchuk, I. Habro, O. Trygub, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–172.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 170.

Economic, and Commercial Departments of Riga Polytechnical Institute, in 1906, he started working as a clerk at the German Consulate in Riga. Since then, he gained professional experience holding the positions of Secretary of the German Consulate in Moscow (1909–1913) and Dragoman of the German Embassy in St. Petersburg (1913–1914).

During the First World War, he served in the headquarters of the 84<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, performing the duties of Commandant and Interpreter. He received a number of awards, including the Iron Cross 1<sup>st</sup> Class. In March 1918, Grosskopf left military service as an Ober-Lieutenant and returned to work at the German Foreign Office.

From January 1920, at the rank of Chancellor, Grosskopf headed the Office of the German Embassy in Finland. On May 12, 1922, G. Grosskopf was appointed to the position of Vice Consul in Petrograd, and in less than a year he headed the newly created Novosibirsk Consulate, where he had to serve for almost 13 years (1923–1935)<sup>43</sup>.

The “excellent management of affairs by Grosskopf” did not go unnoticed by the leadership. On August 19, 1933, he received the rank of Consul 1<sup>st</sup> Class and was awarded the Honour Cross of the World War 1914/1918 for combatants (January 12, 1935) and the Swedish Knight Cross of the Royal Order of the Polar Star (September 2, 1935). In September 1935, he was personally introduced to A. Hitler at the NSDAP Congress and was admitted into the Party.

On November 7, 1935, the German Foreign Office decided to transfer G. Grosskopf to Kyiv to take the position of Consul General<sup>44</sup>. The consul arrived in Kyiv only on February 4, 1936<sup>45</sup>. He worked in Kyiv until the Consulate was closed in 1938.

From August 15, 1938, he served in the Cultural and Political Department of the German Foreign Office, and from May 17, 1941, in Department D (Germany). In 1941, he received the rank of Envoy. Georg-Wilhelm Grosskopf died in Berlin on October 26, 1942<sup>46</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> L. Belkovets, *Istoriya germanskogo konsulstva v Novosibirske*, “Sibirskie ogni” 2013, no. 6, pp. 161–162.

<sup>44</sup> I. Matiash, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>45</sup> SSA SSU, f. 13, op. 1, spr. 429, vol. IX, p. 11.

<sup>46</sup> *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii v gody Vtoroy mirovoy voyny. Dokumenty*, vol. II (1944–1945), ed. A.N. Artizov, Moskva 2012, p. 1026.

Consul Philipp Vassel (1873–1951) was born on August 26, 1873, in Berlin into a family of merchants. In 1892, he graduated from the French gymnasium in Berlin. In 1895, after graduating from the University of Freiburg, he received a qualification as a specialist in the Arabic language, and on March 30, 1896, he received a doctorate in law. P. Vassel was fluent in Latin, Greek, English, and French, as well as twelve dialects of Arabic. He also spoke Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, and Polish.

After obtaining his doctoral degree, he started his diplomatic service in the German Foreign Office, which began his diplomatic career: Dragoman of the German Diplomatic Mission in Tangier (June 19, 1896 – April 3, 1897, August 25, 1907 – September 4, 1908); German Consul in Casablanca (March 25, 1897 – February 11, 1904); Consul in Fez (January 24, 1904 – July 17, 1911)<sup>47</sup>.

From July 1911 he worked in the Political Department of the German Foreign Office studying the first and second Moroccan crises, and from June 1912 he was engaged in the preparation of the Boundary Commission in Congo. On December 4, 1913, he became a member of the Turkish Financial Reform Commission in Constantinople and later transferred to the Turkish civil service. On October 25, 1915, he was appointed as German Ambassador to the Commander-in-Chief of the 6<sup>th</sup> Ottoman Army.

On December 14, 1915, the German Foreign Office appointed Philipp Vassel as an Envoy of an Extraordinary Diplomatic Mission in Persia. He arrived in Baghdad on December 27 and stayed there until July 18, 1916. After that he returned to Constantinople, where until 1918 he dealt with the issues of the Turkish Financial Reform Commission.

On February 21, 1919, P. Vassel again returned to the diplomatic service of Germany, working in the Passport Department of the German Foreign Office. Later, he was the German Consul in Galați (July 31, 1921 – March 16, 1923), in Odesa (July 4, 1923 – December 4, 1925), Consul General in Poznań (February 26, 1926 – July 10, 1928), and Consul General in Smyrna (modern day Izmir) (June 29 – October 24, 1928).

From August 27, 1931, he was the German Representative in the Stratification Office for Upper Silesia Citizenship Issues; on February 23, 1932, he was a delegate to the German-Polish Arbitration Commission and the first delegate to the German-Lithuania

---

<sup>47</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. V, p. 113.

Arbitration Commission for Disputed Citizenship Issues. After a break, between 1937–1939, he again represented the interests of Germany in those commissions. On April 4, 1941, he was appointed Consul 1<sup>st</sup> Class to Paris, where he worked until June 16, 1944, when he retired due to illness. P. Vassel died on December 19, 1951 in Bünde in Westfalen<sup>48</sup>.

P. Vassel was the author of several scientific works, one of which was devoted to the analyses of the Moroccan judicial system, and the other was his biographical essay, where he talked about his experience as the German Consul General between 1911–1951. The mentioned work<sup>49</sup>, edited by his son Klaus Vassel appeared in 1977.

Paul Roth (1885–1967), who was born on September 5, 1885, in Leipzig into the family of the Director of a private secondary school, Frederick Roth, was the respectable heir to the Consular position in Odesa. In 1903, Paul Roth graduated from the Nikolaischule in Leipzig. Between 1903–1907, he studied mathematics, physics, and philosophy in Leipzig, Strasbourg, and Göttingen. On January 31, 1907, he passed the state exam and received a higher pedagogical qualification; on July 31, 1907, he received a doctorate in philosophy. From 1906 to 1908, he worked as a teacher's assistant at the Teichmann Rothschen private high school in Leipzig. In 1915, he began his journalistic activities, working as a co-editor in the "Akademische Rundschau". On March 15 of the same year, he enlisted in military service, and from October 1, 1915, to November 11, 1918, he was an Adviser to the Press Department of the Chief of Staff of the current government in Warsaw<sup>50</sup>.

P. Roth's diplomatic career began in 1918. While working in the German Foreign Office, he maintained contacts with Pavlo Skoropadskyi and journalists who supported the declaration of an Independent Ukraine<sup>51</sup>. On November 20, 1918, Paul Roth headed the Diplomatic Mission of the German Empire in Warsaw, where he worked until the severing of diplomatic relations between the states on December 15, 1918. From September 11 to October 3, 1919, he held the position of Vice Consul of the German Diplomatic Mission

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, Bd. V, pp. 114–115.

<sup>49</sup> *Philipp Vassel: Generalkonsul (1911 bis 1951)*, ed. K. Vassel, Selbstverlag 1977.

<sup>50</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. III (L–R), bearb. v. Gerhard Keiper und Martin Kröger, Paderborn 2007, p. 732.

<sup>51</sup> SSA SSU, f. 1, op. 1, spr. 886, p. 33.

in Prague. From October 1919, he was the Head of the Passport Department in Mährisch-Ostrau (Moravia, Czechoslovakia), where he worked until September 1921. Later, he was the Press Secretary of the German Diplomatic Mission in Warsaw (September 17, 1921 – March 14, 1923), and the Secretary of the Fourth Department of the German Foreign Office, which dealt with Eastern Europe and Scandinavia (1923–1925).

In 1925, P. Roth began working in the USSR as a Consul and Official Adviser of the German Embassy in Moscow (1925–1926). As an expert in Eastern European issues, on July 9, 1926, he was invited to the Press Department of the German Foreign Office, whose functional duties included analyzing the situation in the USSR, the Caucasus, Poland, and the border territories.

From June 28, 1928 to November 19, 1935, his life was associated with Odesa, where he headed the German Consulate. In parallel with that, he temporarily served as a Diplomatic Officer of the Fourth Department of the German Foreign Office, which dealt with issues of Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, and Eastern Asia, where he would move to take a permanent position after returning from Odesa (November 19, 1935). In 1936, he worked in the First Department of the German Foreign Office, and from 1940 – as the Speaker of the Legation Council<sup>52</sup>.

Like most of the diplomats of the German Reich era, he was a member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (1919 and 1924), and from March 1, 1940, he was a member of the NSDAP. It is worth noting that Paul Roth was a man of many talents. He successfully combined diplomatic activity with the work of a publicist and translator. In 1928, he translated the authentic French version of the book *Kemal Pasha – New Turkey* into German; and he was the author of four monographs, of which the *Political Development of Polish Congress: during the German Occupation* and the *Emergence of the Polish State: International Legal and Political Study* (1926) deserve special attention.

He died on April 25, 1967 (though, according to many sources, the date of his death is 1964) in the town of Trier, in the Middle Mosel region (Germany)<sup>53</sup>.

Having been established as an institution of the legal protection of trade and navigation, the consular service had become

---

<sup>52</sup> M. Keipert, P. Grupp, *op. cit.*, Bd. III, p. 732.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*.



more complicated with the broadening and deepening of international communication. Although, among the variety of consular functions there were always two main ones – ensuring the rights and interests of the subjects of one's state living abroad, as well as the development and strengthening of trade and economic ties, but until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the activities of the consuls were multifunctional.

The primary task of German consulates was the establishment and normalization of bilateral German-Soviet relations, where the emphasis was placed on the trade and economic sphere. The German government periodically sent circulars to German consuls operating in the USSR, where their tasks for improving bilateral Soviet-German trade relations were well-defined. A similar circular was sent from the German Foreign Office to the German Consulate in Kyiv on January 16, 1937, which stated the position to be followed when covering Soviet-German economic cooperation. The fact was emphasized that Germany increased loans to the USSR by only 30 million marks, and not by 200 million marks, as was written in the newspapers of the time. Such an increase was entirely a technical measure, and the subsequent increase in credits did not correspond to German economic policy. Germany was more interested in purchasing Soviet raw materials than in importing its own to the USSR. Therefore, further granting of loans would have harmed the German economy, because the USSR could rapidly reduce the export of raw materials to Germany to pay for current purchases<sup>54</sup>.

One of the most important functions of consulates was the protection and assistance of German citizens living within the consular district. Several examples of such work will be given, which were especially intensified in the early 1930s, which could be explained by mass collectivization in the USSR, famine, epidemics of typhus and dysentery, political repression, *etc.*

Almost every German family living in a village or city of the Ukrainian SSR at that time needed welfare or food assistance. The Germans applied for protection to the German Consulates in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa. A. Hencke put a great deal of effort into collecting funds for the purchase of food, for the Germans affected by the famine, which was later distributed to the villages

---

<sup>54</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 87, pp. 41–42.

where ethnic Germans lived<sup>55</sup>. The German Consulate in Kyiv spent about 8,000 rubles per month (the equivalent of a thousand loaves of bread) to assist the German peasants<sup>56</sup>.

But, starting from 1934, getting such assistance could cost the German colonists their freedom, and even their lives, as it was considered by the Soviet authorities a “counter-revolutionary activity”. For instance, Albert Frelke, a resident of the village of Pokoshcheve, Yemilchene Raion (Zhytomyr Oblast), submitted a petition to the Management Board of the collective farm and Village Council, stating that in 1934 he received a transfer from Germany of 8 marks of “Hitler aid”, which he had refused because he realized the counter-revolutionary nature of that aid and called on other German colonists to do the same. Friedrich Becker, a resident of the village of Toporyshche, Volodarsk Raion (Kyiv Oblast), did the same, giving his 10 marks for the construction of an airplane named after Kirov<sup>57</sup>.

The Consulate also took care of the religious sphere of life of Ukrainian Germans, because the church existed thanks to the meager donations of its parishioners<sup>58</sup>. Not being able to help the entire network of Catholic and Lutheran parishes in Soviet Ukraine, which were leading a miserable life after the anti-religious campaign of 1929–1930, the German Consulate tried to help at least the nearest German parishes of Kyiv and its outskirts. The amount of assistance to each parish and its parishioners was assessed. In December 1933, Hencke sent a letter to the Embassy in Moscow, asking for 830 marks to be earmarked for Kyiv, Henmtal (Volyn), and Novohrad-Volynskyi parishes (which included assistance to pastors and operating expenses), and received 700 marks on the same month<sup>59</sup>.

It is necessary to note that not only did representatives of Catholic or Lutheran parishes ask for assistance but also the Orthodox clergy, who wrote letters both to the German consulates operating on that territory and to various German nationalist organizations with a request for help. Among them was the Russian priest, Dmytro Hulyi (from the village of Novo-Bohdanivka, Melitopol Raion), who

---

<sup>55</sup> A. Hencke, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>56</sup> SSA SSU, f. 13, op. 1, spr. 429, vol. XI, p. 302.

<sup>57</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 39, pp. 19–20.

<sup>58</sup> A. Hencke, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>59</sup> SSA SSU, f. 13, op. 1, spr. 429, vol. XVIII, p. 6.

in his sermons repeatedly mentioned Hitler and Germany, which helped not only the Germans but also the Soviet people. In addition, he urged the parishioners not to be silent and to write as many letters as possible to Germany about the famine. From November–December 1934, 11,123 such letters were revealed. As a result, 417,794 rubles were transferred to Ukraine from Germany during the 11 months of 1934 through the Torgsin system<sup>60</sup>.

For the German consuls in Soviet Ukraine, the issue of the forced involvement of Germans in collective farms was especially acute, because, like the majority of Ukrainians and Poles at the time, the Germans did not want to renounce the status of “individual farmer”. By the end of 1933, about 40% of German farm owners located in the Kyiv Consular District were such individual farmers<sup>61</sup>.

Attempts were also made to solve the issue of the forced eviction and arrest of German colonists, which became more frequent from the beginning of 1934. The German Consulate in Kyiv received several letters with requests to solve similar issues. Among those were letters from Germans living in the Lodzianivka colony in Pulyny Raion (Zhytomyr Oblast), to which they received the following reply: “in the spring of 1935, there will be a war. That is why the USSR clears the border of unwanted elements [i.e. German colonists – Author]”. Luise Richter, a German from the village of Chervona Richka in Volodarka Raion (Kyiv Oblast), wrote about the arrests in the colonies and was told that the consulate could do nothing about it<sup>62</sup>.

One of the most difficult areas of the German consulates’ work was complying with the wishes of Germans to leave for Germany. Despite the fact that Germans had a right to leave the USSR at any time, in practice it was quite difficult to do so, especially for those who had Soviet citizenship. Between March–April 1933, 14 German colonists left Volyn, twice as many as in January and February, when the Consulate issued only 5 exit visas. When applying to the local authorities of the Raion, the German Consul noted that the main motivation for the departure was the desire of those persons to “relocate” from the USSR to Germany, and in this respect, he repeatedly requested the Administrative Departments of the NKVD to assist those who wanted to leave<sup>63</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 39, pp. 4–5.

<sup>61</sup> A. Hencke, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>62</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 39, p. 18.

<sup>63</sup> L. Vovchuk, I. Habro, O. Trygub, *op. cit.*, pp. 180–181.

At the beginning of 1937, it became even more difficult to leave for Germany. In practice, the NKZS provided such an opportunity to very few people. All those who were refused were often accused of anti-Soviet crimes against the USSR. M.H. Svitalskyi, Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, was among such people. He was not allowed to leave the country despite a request from the German ambassador in Moscow. Svital'skyi was named as a suspect in the case of a counter-revolutionary and national-fascist organization, where, according to the Soviet special services, he was among the organizers<sup>64</sup>. On the night of June 29, 1937, the Academician was arrested, and a search was conducted in his Kyiv apartment where he lived with his family. On September 15, 1937, M.H. Svitalskyi was shot, being accused as the Head of the "Ukrainian branch of the fascist terrorist and espionage organization among geologists"<sup>65</sup>.

Considerable attention by the German consuls was paid to information activities, which was evidenced by the preparation of various analytical notes and reports, which were sent to the German Embassy in Moscow. The gathered information related to the general political situation in the state, military issues, the situation in the sphere of heavy and light industry, agriculture, *etc.* A. Hencke systematically informed the embassy about the political and economic situation in the country, and the physical extermination of Ukrainian peasants, scientists, educators, writers, and other strata of Ukrainian population by organizing an artificial famine<sup>66</sup>.

The reports on the consequences of collectivization, carried out by the USSR, by the German Consul in Odesa P. Roth, who described the results of that terrible policy in sufficient detail, were quite thorough<sup>67</sup>. He thoroughly monitored the activities of state farms and collective farms of Odesa Oblast (the territory of the whole Northern Black Sea region) and focused on the life of German colonies in the region<sup>68</sup>.

---

<sup>64</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 87, pp. 87–95.

<sup>65</sup> H. Ivanushchenko, *Mykola Svitalskyi*, <http://aokornus.at.ua/index/svitalskiy/0-181> (accessed: 13 XII 2022).

<sup>66</sup> L. Vovchuk, I. Habro, O. Trygub, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–178.

<sup>67</sup> L. Vovchuk, S. Kornovenko, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>68</sup> V. Marochko, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

The German Consul General in Kharkiv, Carl Walther, defined the Famine of 1932–33 as “a victory of the socialization of agriculture”. Its components were a tough fight against the theft of collective farm property, collection of grain for the State grain stockpile, party purges, and fighting organized resistance<sup>69</sup>.

In the context of the Holodomor of 1932–33 and the subsequent industrialization, the views of German diplomats toward the state of internal trade in Soviet Ukraine and the role of the Torgsin system in expropriating Soviet citizens in “Bilshovyk-style” were quite interesting. Thus, on the basis of German reports on the economic situation in the USSR, the Ukrainian historian O. Trygub showed the perception of Torgsin by foreign benefactors, who saw in that organization a system of deception and speculation. The reports of the German consuls testified to the complete shortcomings of the Soviet trade system of the 1930s and its detachment from economic laws<sup>70</sup>.

German diplomats continued to conduct intelligence activities. The Ukrainian historian, S. Bilokin, noted that the German Consul General in Kyiv, Stephany Werner, according to the materials of the investigatory case-form started on him in 1925 by Soviet counter-intelligence, was engaged in intelligence activities in Kyiv and Odesa, where he actively gathered information on the economic development of the region, its agriculture and industry, as well as was engaged in speculative operations on the purchase and sale of foreign currency, gold, and various jewels<sup>71</sup>.

Full-time staff agents of the German Great General Staff were also former officers of the intelligence service – German consuls in Kyiv: Rudolf Sommer, Andor Hencke, Georg-Wilhelm Grosskopf<sup>72</sup>; and the German consul in Odesa, Paul Roth<sup>73</sup>, who, having organized a wide network of informants, gathered all possible information about plans, intentions, development, and problems of the USSR.

<sup>69</sup> L. Vovchuk, S. Kornovenko, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>70</sup> O. Trygub, *Vnutrishnia torhivlia v USRR pershoi polovyny 1930-kh rokiu (za materialamy nimetskykh konsulstv)*, “Starozhytnosti Lukomoria” 2021, no. 2, pp. 116–123.

<sup>71</sup> S. Bilokin, *Nimetske konsulstvo. In Bilokin S. V oboroni ukrainskoi spadshchyny: Istoryk mystetstva Fedir Ernst*, Kyiv 2006, <http://www.s-bilokin.name/Personalia/Ernst/Culture/GermanConsulat.html> (accessed: 13 XII 2022).

<sup>72</sup> SSA SSU, f. 13, op. 1, spr. 215, p. 12.

<sup>73</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 39, pp. 48–53.

The issue of the involvement of German consuls in the organization of intelligence and sabotage groups is somewhat complicated (taking into account the method of obtaining information by the Soviet special services during interrogation), though today there is a large amount of archival materials on that aspect of the activities of the consulates. For example, in the “Translator” case, it is said that a German intelligence and sabotage organization, which directly cooperated with the German Consulate, was extirpated in Kyiv. 16 people were arrested, 12 of whom confirmed the previously gathered intelligence materials. The organization was supervised by the Secretary of the German Consulate in Kyiv, Hermann Baun, and Clerk Erna Apryshchenko. It carried out extensive intelligence activities, aimed at the military industry, railway transport, and sugar industry<sup>74</sup>. On the other hand, the issue of the intelligence activities of German diplomats requires a more thorough study, given the specifics of the criminal cases of the Soviet special services during the “Great Terror”. At the same time, it is impossible to reject the possibility that there was a network of German agents operating on the territory of the USSR because Ukrainians and German colonists were often told that “the savior of Ukraine, which became a colony of Russia, is Germany [...]”<sup>75</sup>.

\* \* \*

Given the long history of German-Ukrainian diplomatic relations, Ukraine has always been in Germany’s sphere of interest. The period between the 1920s–1930s was no exception when, with the restoration of bilateral relations between Germany and the USSR, the German government promoted the establishment of consular institutions in strategically important cities of Soviet Ukraine. Thus, between 1923–1924, German consular institutions began to operate in Kharkiv, Kyiv, and Odesa.

German consular representatives operating in Ukrainian cities were career diplomats, had higher education, were fluent in foreign languages, and had deep knowledge in the fields of history, geography, statistics, political economy, and international law. Practically all the Heads of consular institutions spoke Russian, and some (for example, A. Hencke) studied Ukrainian in their free time in order to better understand the social and economic environment.

---

<sup>74</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 87, p. 311.

<sup>75</sup> SSA SSU, f. 16, op. 1, spr. 24, p. 38.

After being established, the German consulates began to cultivate trade relations and cultural ties, which fully corresponded to their mission. Protection of the interests of German citizens, organization of welfare assistance for them, and support in their departure to the homeland were important spheres of activity for the consulates. In the process of gathering information about the social and political situation in the Ukrainian SSR, the consuls recorded the unfolding of the Holodomor, pointing out its culprits, noted the negative consequences of collectivization and industrialization, *etc.* The consulates also carried out intelligence activities on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR, which took on increasing importance in the 1930s. From the very beginning of their work, all employees of the German consulates were considered spies and were subject to external and internal surveillance.

Between 1937–1938, German-Soviet relations became badly strained, which led to the termination of the consular network in both states.

## **Bibliography**

### **ARCHIVAL SOURCES**

Derzhavnyy arkhiv Kyyivs'koyi oblasti (The State Archive of Kyiv Region)

fond 4205, opys 1, sprava 162

Haluzevyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Sluzhby bezpeky Ukrainy, Kyiv  
(The Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine, Kyiv) [SSA SSU]

fond 1, opys 1, sprava 886

fond 13, opys 1, sprava 215; sprava 429, vol. IX, XI, XVIII

fond 16, opys 1, sprava 24, 39, 87

### **SECONDARY LITERATURE**

Bast O., *German-Persian diplomatic relations*, “Encyclopedia Iranica”, 5 X 2001, p. 510.

Belkovets L., *Istoriya germanskogo konsulstva v Novosibirske*, “Sibirskie ogni” 2013, no. 6, pp. 142–162.

Cameron D.J., *Carl Graap and the formation of Weimar foreign policy toward Soviet Russia from 1919 until Rapallo*, “Diplomacy & Statecraft” 2002, no.13(4), pp. 75–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/714000346>

Dornfeld M., Seewald E., *Deutschland-Ukraine. Hundert Jahre diplomatische Beziehungen*, Berlin 2017.

- Ehberger W., *Das Kabinett Hoffmann II, Teil 1: 31. Mai – 1. September 1919 (Die Protokolle des Bayerischen Ministerrats 1919–1945)*, München 2017.
- Gielhammer L., *Deutsche Gesandte in Teheran, zur Geschichte der diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und Iran*, “Mitteilungen des Instituts für Auslandsbeziehungen” 1960, no. 3–4, pp. 273–275.
- Hencke A., *Erinnerungen als Deutscher Konsul in Kiew in der Jahren 1933–1936: Mit einer Vorbemerkung von Georg Stadtmüller*, München 1979.
- Keipert M., Grupp P., *Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes, 1871–1945, Bd. II (G–K)*, bearb. v. G. Keiper, M. Kröger, Paderborn 2004.
- Keipert M., Grupp P., *Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes, 1871–1945, Bd. III (L–R)*, bearb. v. G. Keiper, M. Kröger, Paderborn 2007.
- Keipert M., Grupp P., *Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes, 1871–1945, Bd. IV (S)*, bearb. v. B. Isphording, G. Keiper, M. Kröger, Paderborn 2012.
- Keipert M., Grupp P., *Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes, 1871–1945, Bd. V (T–Z)*, bearb. v. B. Isphording, G. Keiper, M. Kröger, Paderborn 2014.
- Klyshevich M.A., *Eksperty Ministerstva inostrannyh del Germanii o perspektivah ustanovleniya otnosheniy s Sovetskoy Rossiey (1919–1922 gody)*, “Istoricheskie, filosofskie, politicheskie i yuridicheskie nauki, kulturologiya i iskusstvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki” 2013, no. 8(2), pp. 81–85.
- Lyman I., Konstantinova V., *Nimetski konsuly v Pivnichnomu Pryazovi*, Dnipro 2018.
- Lyman I., Konstantinova V., *Prussian consuls on the Southern Ukrainian frontier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century*, “Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi” 2020, no. 35, pp. 145–173. <https://doi.org/10.26650/gaad.794409>
- Marochko V., *Nimets'ki dyplomaty i holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini*, “Kyivski istorychni studii” 2015, no. 1, pp. 62–66.
- Matiash I., *Inozemni predstavnytstva v radianskiy Ukraini (1919–1991): protystoiannia i spivpratsia*, Kyiv 2020.
- Philipp Vassel: Generalkonsul (1911 bis 1951)*, ed. K. Vassel, Selbstverlag 1977.
- Trygub O., *Vnutrishnia torhivlia v USRR pershoi polovyny 1930-kh rokiv (za materialamy nimetskykh konsulstv)*, “Starozhytnosti Lukomoria” 2021, no. 2, pp. 116–123. <https://doi.org/10.33782/2708-4116.2021.2.68>
- Trygub O., Vovchuk L., *Osnovni napriamky diialnosti inozemnykh konsulstv na Pivdni Ukrainy u druhii polovyni XIX – pochatku XX st. (na prykladi Mykolaieva)*, “Eminak” 2007, no. 2, pp. 90–97.
- Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii v gody Vtoroy mirovoy voyny. Dokumenty*, vol. II (1944–1945), ed. A.N. Artizov, Moskva 2012.
- «Velykyy teror» v Ukraini: *Nimetska operatsiya 1937–1938 rokiv*, eds A. Aysfeld, N. Serdyuk, Kyiv 2018.
- Vovchuk L.[A.], *Diialnist konsuliv inozemnykh derzhav u chornomorsko-azovs'kykh portakh Rosiiskoi imperii (kinets XVIII – pochatok XX st.)*, [PhD thesis], Mykolaiv: Chornomorskyi derzhavnyi universytet imeni Petra Mohyly 2013.
- Vovchuk L., *Foreign consulates in Odesa (1920s–1930s)*, “Eminak” 2023, no. 1(41), [in print].



- Vovchuk L., *Nimets'ki dyplomaty v Ukraini (1918–1938 rr.): prosopohrafichnyi portret*, [w:] *Ukrayina ta Nimechchyna: mizhderzhavni vidnosyny*, ed. V. Verstyuk, Chernihiv 2018, pp. 207–218.
- Vovchuk L., *Stanovlennia dyplomatychnykh ustanov u portovykh mistakh Chornomorsko-azovskoho baseinu Rosiiskoi imperii (1785–1919 rr.)*, “Naukovyi visnyk: istorychni nauky” 2013, no. 3(34), pp. 210–218.
- Vovchuk L., Kornovenko S., *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. ochyma inozemnykh dyplomativ*, “Eminak” 2019, no. 4(28), pp. 71–82. [https://doi.org/10.33782/eminak2019.4\(28\).343](https://doi.org/10.33782/eminak2019.4(28).343).
- Vovchuk L., Habro I., Trygub, O., *Holovnyi «sovietoloh» Tretoho Reikhu: Andor Henke – heneralnyi konsul Nimechchyny v USSR*, “Storinky istorii” 2020, no. 50, pp. 166–186.

#### NETOGRAPHY

- Bilokin S., *Nimetske konsulstvo. In Bilokin S. V oboroni ukrainskoi spadshchyny: Istoryk mystetstva Fedir Ernst*, Kyiv 2006, <http://www.s-bilokin.name/Personalna/Ernst/Culture/GermanConsulat.html> (accessed: 13 XII 2022).
- Ivanushchenko H., *Mykola Svitalskyi*, <http://aokornus.at.ua/index/svitalskiy/0-181> (accessed: 13 XII 2022).
- Walther C.H., *Das Bundesarchiv. Biographien*, [https://www.bundesarchiv.de/aktenreichskanzlei/19191933/0000/adr/adrsz/kap1\\_5/para2\\_33.html](https://www.bundesarchiv.de/aktenreichskanzlei/19191933/0000/adr/adrsz/kap1_5/para2_33.html) (accessed: 13 XII 2022).

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Prof. Liudmyla Vovchuk** – is employed at the Department of International Relations and Foreign Policy of Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University, Mykolaiv, Ukraine. Candidate of Historical Sciences (2014), associate professor (2020). Author of 110 publications, co-author of 2 monographs, 2 textbooks. Deputy editor-in-chief of the scientific journal “Antiquities of Lukomorie”. Chief editor of the scientific journal “Acta de Historia & Politica: Saeculum XXI”, member of the Editorial Board of the specialized historical journal “Kraeznavstvo” and historical journal “Analele Universității ‘Dunărea de Jos’ din Galați”. Member of the History of Diplomacy and International Relations Society. Member and secretary of the Expert Council of Young Scientists at the Ministry of Education and Culture of Ukraine in the field of “Security society: protection of freedom, national security and cultural heritage of Ukraine and its citizens”.

**Research interests:** the consular institute of foreign states in Ukraine between the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century until the 1920s–1930s, as well as the foreign policy activity and diplomacy of the countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe in the post-bipolar period.



[luda\\_vovchuk@ukr.net](mailto:luda_vovchuk@ukr.net)