

## East African (Askari) Member of the Lettow-Vorbeck *Freikorps* in Munich (May 1919)

### Abstract

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*Freikorps* were volunteer military units composed of former front-line soldiers; they were first recruited in November 1918. They were supposed to serve as protective troops for the new government during a period of radical political upheaval. The Supreme Army Command was largely responsible for their recruitment. In total, there were about 120 different *Freikorps*, each with a troop size of between 2,000 and 10,000 soldiers. For the most part, the *Freikorps* soldiers harbored predominantly anti-revolutionary and anti-democratic views, which is why they ultimately proved hostile to the Republic. This photograph shows an African soldier who belonged to a *Freikorps* unit named after General Lettow-Vorbeck, who had led some 14,000 East African troops against the Entente powers in Africa during World War I. Some of those soldiers, called Askari, were sent to Germany after the war to serve in the *Freikorps Lettow-Vorbeck* unit. The photograph was taken in Munich in May 1919, suggesting that the Lettow-Vorbeck unit was involved in the suppression of the Bavarian Soviet Republic [*Räterepublik*].

### Source

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Source: Bavarian State Library Munich/Image Archive. Suppression of the Revolution. Fighting in mid-May 1919. Photo archive Heinrich Hoffmann C. 3, hoff-5250.

Bavarian State Library Munich/Image Archive/Heinrich Hoffmann

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