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# A Tentative Dissolution of Austria-Hungary: The 1914–15 Russian Occupation of Lviv in Polish Memory

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## Abstract

This article analyzes a collection of narratives concerning the Russian occupation of Lviv (Lwów, Lemberg), the capital of the Austrian Crownland Galicia, between September 1914 and June 1915 in the initial phase of World War I. These narratives were produced and published in Polish and German between 1915, when Lviv was still occupied, and 1935, sixteen years after it had been included in a reborn Poland. One might assume that the relatively uneventful occupation constituted a negligible experience in the context of the dramatic developments of this period: the Great War and the subsequent Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Soviet wars. And yet, memories of the Russian occupation were tenaciously perpetuated and cultivated. In this article I attempt to answer the multipronged question: Why did the occupation attract so much attention, and from whom, and what made its memories survive the subsequent dramatic conflicts and changes of political regimes relatively intact? Hence, my analysis regards the formation of collective memories at the intersection of individual experiences, group and national identities, and strategies of accommodating the unpredictably changing political realities.

**Keywords:** Lviv/Lwów/Lemberg; World War I; military occupation; Austria-Hungary; Russian Empire; loyalty; identity

As Kurt Schneller recollected, it was the policy of the Austrian general staff to avoid overt lies and to prepare the population for bad news when it was known that such news was imminent. Schneller was on duty on the morning of 2 September 1914, and he acted accordingly. He knew that the Austro-Hungarian Second Army had been defeated<sup>1</sup> and had already begun to evacuate Lviv, but he received no information about the Russians having captured the city, so he issued a communique that was to become proverbial in Austria: *Lemberg noch in unserem Besitz*<sup>2</sup>—“Lemberg is still ours.” The Russian army entered Lviv the next day after a delay caused by preparations to attack the city’s fortifications, which were in fact already abandoned by the Austrians. Thus began the occupation, which was to last for 293 days.

In this article I focus on narrative accounts on the occupation by ten authors<sup>3</sup> who belonged to the cultural and political elite of the city. Stanisław Rossowski (1861–1940), Jan Zieliński (1862–1919),

<sup>1</sup>For more on the 1914 battle for Lviv, see Max von Pitreich, *Lemberg 1914* (Vienna, 1929); Tadeusz Pawlik, *Bitwa pod Lwowem* (Warsaw, 1932).

<sup>2</sup>Kurt Schneller, *Der Ruf der Freiheit* (Vienna, 1995), 91–96 (originally published in the Viennese literary weekly “Bunte Woche,” in November 1932).

<sup>3</sup>I will focus on the following: Stanisław Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji. W pierwszą rocznicę wyzwolenia* (Lviv, 1916); Józef Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji rosyjskiej (3 IX 1914–22 VI 1915). Z własnych przeżyć i spostrzeżeń* (Lviv, 1930); idem, *Zakładnicy miasta Lwowa w niewoli rosyjskiej 1915–1918* (Lviv, 1930); Bohdan Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie* (Lviv, 1915); Maria von Gember, “Die Russen in Lemberg,” in *An den Grenzen Russlands*, ed. Sekretariat der sozialen Studentenarbeit (Darmstadt, 1916); Stanisław Przyłuski, *Wspomnienia z rosyjskiej okupacji* (Lviv, 1926); Stanisław Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie. Szkic z niedawnej przeszłości* (Lviv, 1926); Jan Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej. Wrzesień – grudzień 1914. Opowiadanie naocznego świadka* (Vienna, 1915); Marcell Chlamtacz, *Lembergs politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion* (Vienna, 1916); Aleksander Czołowski, *Jak to było we Lwowie? Odpowiedź prof. Stanisławowi Grabskiemu* (Lviv, 1918); Adolf Beck, *Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza we Lwowie podczas inwazji rosyjskiej w roku 1914/15* (Lviv, 1935).

Maria van Gember (1858–1915?), Józef Białynia Chołodecki (1852–1934), and Stanisław Maciszewski were journalists and literati; Marcei Chlamtacz (1865–1947), a lawyer; Aleksander Czołowski (1865–1944), a historian; and Adolf Beck (1863–1942), a physician, were professors of the John Casimir University in Lviv (in the interwar period Chlamtacz served as Lviv’s vice-mayor, and Czołowski<sup>4</sup> as the director of the municipal archive and museum); Bohdan Janusz (1889–1930) was an archaeologist, ethnographer, and journalist; and Stanisław Przyłuski (1852–1944) served as a vice president of the Galician higher (appeal) court.

My selection of authors is limited, but I believe they are representative of the Polish urban intelligentsia of Lviv: the people who considered themselves the true voice of the city, entitled to speak on behalf of the entire population because of their social status, education, and engagement in local politics and various form of social and cultural activism. As I shall demonstrate, one of the aspects of all my selected narratives is precisely that they claim to represent “the city of Lviv,” which was in fact the opinion of its Polish elite. Some of my authors were indeed colleagues, and for men of their status, participation in a number of charitable, cultural, and scholarly public initiatives was a must. Given this, I believe it likely that all of them met at least once.<sup>5</sup> Maria Gember was probably an exception in this respect, but her account of the occupation is a remarkable fit with the others, making the coherence of their voices even more noteworthy.<sup>6</sup>

The narratives under analysis belong to a genre that, as far as I know, has no proper name and yet is as old as history itself: descriptions of historical events witnessed firsthand by the authors, who provide accounts of what they believe should be made public and remembered, quite like Thucydides did. The difference between this kind of narrative and so-called *ego*-documents is thin but not negligible: these *superego*-documents intend to tell a story that is larger than individual memory, a part of the collective experience—that is, *history*. And indeed, as I shall demonstrate, my authors’ accounts of the occupation are similar enough to be considered as representative of a collective experience (or, more precisely, the perception thereof) of the educated Polish elite of Lviv.

The first of the narratives I have selected was published in Vienna in 1915, when Lviv was still occupied; the last was edited in 1935. The idea of commemorating the occupation was partly a response to appeals in the local press, which also resulted in the publication of a selection of documents produced by the occupants.<sup>7</sup> Lviv was the only major Austrian city occupied by the enemy. In light of all the dramatic events of World War I, however—including the violence that occurred in the Galician countryside—the occupation was a relatively undramatic episode.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, it was soon overshadowed by the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918–19 (three weeks of fighting within the city and the subsequent six-month siege by Ukrainian forces)<sup>9</sup> and the Polish-Soviet war of 1920 (when Polish and Ukrainian

<sup>4</sup>For more on Czołowski see: Józef Zieliński, *Aleksander Czołowski. W czterdziestolecie pracy archiwalnej, konserwatorskiej i naukowej 1891–1932* (Lviv, 1932); Iwona Zima, *Aleksander Czołowski 1865–1944: luminarz lwowskiej kultury* (Gdynia, 2011).

<sup>5</sup>A true champion (or indeed a maniac) of this kind of activity was Białynia-Chołodecki, whom a contemporary journalist called “a member of all the committees that have existed or will be established in the future.” Czołowski was not far behind him as far as membership in various, occasionally ephemeral, associations, clubs, and committees is concerned. For more, see Aleksander Łupienko, “Localness, Identity, and the Historic City: New Elites in the Autonomous Galician Lviv,” *Acta Poloniae Historica* 121 (2020): 5–26.

<sup>6</sup>Maria Anna van Gember was a German-Austrian author who married the Polish Habsburg army officer Zygmunt Radnicki. I suppose they settled down in Lviv when he retired. Their son, Zygmunt Radnicki (1894–1969), was a painter and president of the Fine Arts Academy in Cracow (1951–52).

<sup>7</sup>Already in 1916, two selections of the official Russian documents and ordinances were published: *Dokumenty urzędowe okupacji rosyjskiej*, edited by Bohdan Janusz, and *Odezwy i rozporządzenia z czasów okupacji rosyjskiej Lwowa* (no editor). On press appeals, see: Przyłuski, *Wspomnienia z rosyjskiej okupacji*, 6.

<sup>8</sup>Polish historiography on Lviv before World War II virtually ignored the occupation (see Łucja Charewiczowa, *Historiografia i miłośnictwo Lwowa* [Lviv, 1938], 245–46), and to the best of my knowledge the situation did not change until the 1990s.

<sup>9</sup>The best Polish analysis of this conflict remains Maciej Kozłowski, *Między Sanem a Zbruczem. Walki o Lwów i Galicję Wschodnią 1918–1919* (Cracow, 1990); for a broader and newer picture see Ludwik Mrocza, *Spór o Galicję Wschodnią: 1914–1923* (Cracow, 1998); for an overview of the Ukrainian historiography of the conflict, see Marek Bogdan Kozubel, “Przegląd ukraińskiej historiografii dotyczącej obrony Lwowa i wojny polsko-ukraińskiej w latach 1918–1919,” *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* 1 (2018): 211–23; for an international contextualization, see *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War*, ed. Robert Gerwarth and John Horne (Oxford, 2012).

forces defended the city against Bolshevik attack). The bloody struggles for the city during that time gave rise to a pan-national Polish myth of a heroic Lviv (Polish: Lwów) that resulted in hundreds of patriotic publications.<sup>10</sup> The Russian occupation could not be easily incorporated into this national mythology, and this is perhaps why it has been largely forgotten after World War II. However, as my narratives demonstrate, the image of the occupation remained essentially unchanged for twenty years, and its memory was cultivated because it was regarded as constitutive for the identity of the Polish intelligentsia of Lviv. To sum up, my selected narratives, I argue, are quite revealing about the state of mind of this group—their sense of belonging, their morality, and their combination of local and national patriotism, as well as Habsburg loyalties in Austria-Hungary's final years. Of course, they are also telling as far as the realities of this unique occupation are concerned.

The Russian occupation of Lviv has so far been studied by only a few scholars, most notably Christoph Mick,<sup>11</sup> Mark von Hagen,<sup>12</sup> and Alexander Prusin,<sup>13</sup> and its literary reminiscences by Alois Woldan.<sup>14</sup> They have all focused on the bitter national rivalries in the city and in Eastern Galicia in general (and the violence and suffering they caused), and the problem of to whom the city and the region should belong: the Austrians, Russians, Poles, or Ukrainians. However, while these studies do make reference to the majority of the narratives under study, in fact their authors regarded such questions—and the experiences of any other national or social group but their own—only marginally, and this is probably why the scholars studying the occupation made limited use of them.

Apparently, the idea that any other group might make reasonable claims to Lviv was unthinkable for my authors; it was only under the Russian occupation that they realized that the sociopolitical status quo in the city might change, and they found this perspective truly shocking. The experience of confusion and anxiety, caused by this perspective of what might have happened had the Russians won the war, is a distinguishable and constitutive feature of all my selected narratives, or indeed the reason why some of them were recorded. These narratives, I argue, should be regarded as a peculiar exercise in memory politics, addressed predominantly to the members of a relatively small group of people who shared the same experience (the narratives by Gember and Chlamtacz, addressed to the German readers, apparently stand out in this respect, but they nevertheless echo the other authors in many ways). I shall focus on what my selected authors wanted their readers to remember about the occupation and how they should interpret this episode in light of the dramatic developments that followed it. Hence, in my analysis I should not stress the issues of imperial policies, nationalist rivalries, or ethnic violence. The narratives under study, as noted, will not allow me to comment on the experiences or perception of the occupation by the Jewish and Ukrainian communities,<sup>15</sup> which have recently been analyzed.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup>For the most recent analysis of this trend, see Jagoda Wierzejska, "The Idea of Galicia in the Interwar Polish Discourse," in *Continuities and Discontinuities of the Habsburg Legacy in East-Central European Discourse since 1918*, ed. Magdalena Baran-Szołtyś and Jagoda Wierzejska (Vienna, 2020), 51–76.

<sup>11</sup>Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv 1914–1947: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contested City* (West Lafayette, 2016).

<sup>12</sup>Mark von Hagen, *War in a European Borderland: Occupations and Occupation Plans in Galicia and Ukraine, 1914–1918* (Seattle, 2007).

<sup>13</sup>Alexander Victor Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and Anti-Jewish Violence in East-Galicia, 1914–1920* (Tuscaloosa, 2005).

<sup>14</sup>Alois Woldan, "Andere Stimmen – Protest gegen Krieg und Gewalt in der polnischen und ukrainischen Dichtung über den Ersten Weltkrieg," *Przegląd Humanistyczny* 1, no. 464 (2019): 7–25.

<sup>15</sup>To be sure, these aspects of the occupation also provoked strong contemporary reactions; see, for example, Jakób Schall, *Żydostwo galicyjskie w czasie inwazji rosyjskiej* (Lviv, 1916); Emil Pełczyński, *Prawosławie w Galicji w świetle prasy ruskiej we Lwowie podczas inwazji 1914–15 roku* (Lviv, 1918); Feliks Przysiecki, *Rządy rosyjskie w Galicji Wschodniej* (Piotrków, 1915).

<sup>16</sup>For the Ukrainian point of view, see a recent collection of evidence and studies: *Moskovs'ka okupatsiia Galichini 1914–1917 rr.* (Lviv, 2018); see also Stepan Makarczuk, "Lwów w warunkach rosyjskiej okupacji," in *Lwów. Miasto, społeczeństwo, kultura*, ed. Henryk Żaliński and Kazimierz Karolczak (Cracow, 1995), 1:131–37. The most recent analysis of the Jewish experience may be found in Alois Woldan, "Der Erste Weltkrieg in Galizien – ein Thema der jüdischen Belletristik und Publizistik," in *Blondzhende Stern. Jüdische Schriftstellerinnen und Schriftsteller aus der Ukraine als Grenzgänger zwischen den Kulturen in Ost und West*, ed. Kerstin Schoor, Ievgeniia Voloshchuk, and Borys Bigun (Göttingen, 2020), 46–63; see also Mark von Hagen,

## Constructing History: Confronting the Unknown

The starting point of the history of the Russian occupation, which was also a crucial element of Lviv's drama, was that it came about unexpectedly. It seems hard to believe that the outbreak of the war against Russia in the first days of August 1914 caused no anxiety in Lviv, located some one hundred kilometers from the border. And yet, our narratives mention no such concerns. In contrast, they univocally emphasize the reigning enthusiasm and patriotic upheaval so popular across Europe in the first weeks of the Great War. Apparently, Habsburg loyalism and Polish patriotism merged into an anti-Russian bellicosity. On 18 August, Emperor Francis Joseph's birthday was celebrated with much pomp. The city theater hastily staged a play on the 1863 Polish uprising against the Russians, titled "For Liberty and Faith." The city was flooded with tickets issued by the Polish Military Treasury, an institution organized to support the Polish Legions that were supposed to fight the Russians alongside the regular Austro-Hungarian Army. Several figures, including the president (rector) of the university, announced that they would equip a legionary soldier, others offered their houses for the wounded. Finally, the central railway station was occupied by the Ladies' Committee, which offered sandwiches, drinks, and cigarettes to the soldiers on transports heading toward the front.<sup>17</sup> The press promoted "the red-yellow optimism," which was quickly stymied out of a rising fear on the part of the Austrians of alleged spies and supporters of the Russians.<sup>18</sup>

Our authors differ radically in their assessment of the massive oppression of the suspect populace (mostly Ukrainian) launched by the royal-imperial army.<sup>19</sup> Some believe the rumors accusing large segments of the Ruthenian population of disloyalty and "ingratitude,"<sup>20</sup> while others ridicule the allegations and lament the brutality of their consequences, which "made tree branches top-heavy with horrific fruits"—that is, the bodies of hanged suspects.<sup>21</sup> These observations, however, come only as side remarks introducing the real opening of the war in the city: the panic that followed the rumors of the Russians' imminent arrival on the last day of August. Our authors uniformly emphasize that the panic was an unusual and depressing spectacle: the streets were crowded with vehicles, and the central railway station was full of people desperately attempting to board one of the last trains departing west. Obviously, the scenes they captured and depicted were archetypal, and as such they deserved to be introduced into the narratives because they constituted a necessary stage preceding the imminent doom. The images of chaos and panic include a number of stereotypical elements (which, however, does not make them untrustworthy). The first is their spontaneous and irrational nature, caused by fear. The second consists of the immediate displays of violence and conflict among people fighting to get on trains or any other available vehicle. The third is the observation that the rich and powerful escaped the quickest—an observation that is accompanied by harsh criticism of the most outstanding "refugees," most notably mayor Neumann, who happened to have left for a "business trip" to Cracow<sup>22</sup> just before the panic broke out. "Unfortunately," Bohdan Janusz ironizes, "while transporting his person to the safer and happier city of Vienna, the mayor did not forget to take the municipal treasury with him, in cash."<sup>23</sup> In sharp contrast to the interpretation favored by the Austrian authorities, the majority of our authors, speaking on behalf of "the city," believe the evacuation to have been an act of cowardice, if not treason. Marcelli Chlamtacz, the most pro-Habsburg among the authors, tries to resolve this dilemma in his booklet published in Vienna in German (with the obvious intention to

*Subconscious Irrationality: Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland 1914–1920* (Cambridge, 2018), 61–87; and Alexander Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland*, ch. 2.

<sup>17</sup>Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 20–22.

<sup>18</sup>Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 4–5.

<sup>19</sup>The most comprehensive analysis of Austria-Hungary's oppressive policies against both its own inhabitants and those of the occupied territories is Anton Holzer, *Das Lächeln der Henker. Der unbekannte Krieg gegen die Zivilbevölkerung 1914–1918* (Darmstadt, 2008). For the legal aspects of the military regime see Tamara Scheer, *Zwischen Front und Heimat. Österreich-Ungarns Militärverwaltungen im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt, 2009).

<sup>20</sup>Gember, "Die Russen in Lemberg," 154; Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 10–15.

<sup>21</sup>Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 5.

<sup>22</sup>Józef Neumann left the city to join the *Naczelny Komitet Narodowy* (Supreme National Committee), a body coordinating the activities of all Polish parties in Galicia for the time of the war that was formed on 16 August in Cracow.

<sup>23</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 57.

repel potential charges of disloyalty), arguing that although the evacuees did not enjoy a good reputation in the city, their departure should be considered primarily as a consequence of their being highly civilized. As such, he claims, they had to leave because they were horrified by the prospect of being governed by the Russian barbarians.<sup>24</sup> Eventually, the substantial exchange of populations—with thousands fleeing west and many refugees coming from eastern Galicia—turns out to have been one of the main factors shaping Lviv’s landscape during the occupation.<sup>25</sup> And our authors are as angry with the Poles and Jews who left before it as they were with the Ukrainian peasants who came during the occupation.

What happened next (on the second and third days of September) was no less archetypal, as if the scenario was written by a dramatist: it was a time of a fearful and anxious stillness, a moment of silence before the storm. Those who did not make it to the trains and those who never intended to leave now sought shelter in their homes, expecting a siege—and that the streets of Lviv would run with blood. The fear of this moment is emphasized in almost all our narratives, although it is not based solely on the upcoming Russian occupation in and of itself, as will be described in the next paragraph. This is the moment in which some of our authors interrupt their descriptions to note that the inhabitants of Lviv did not know what to expect from the Russians. As Maciszewski observes, the knowledge of educated Poles from Galicia concerning Russians was chiefly informed by what they read in patriotic Polish literature, which demonized the Russians’ rule in the so-called Congress Kingdom of Poland, and in Austrian propaganda, which “terrorized us with Russian barbarism like children being threatened with the devil.”<sup>26</sup> This was paralleled by the dreadful image of the Cossacks, a military formation notorious for their brutality during the Russian Revolution of 1905–7, and the anti-Jewish pogroms in the so-called Pale of Jewish Settlement from the 1880s onward. All this made many inhabitants of Lviv believe that they should expect plundering by the bloodthirsty “barbarians,” and the only precaution they could think of was to put Orthodox icons in their windows, which was supposed to tame Russian cruelty.

Apparently, however, the Russian generals could not believe that Lviv’s fortifications had been abandoned without a shot fired in its defense, so they postponed entering the city. This was exactly what frightened our authors the most, and their unanimity in this respect most probably reflects the feelings of the entire urban elite. There was not a single policeman or soldier on duty in the city, and hence what this elite was afraid the most of was not the Russian army but their own proletarians, whom they expected to make use of this opportunity to plunder and rob.<sup>27</sup> “One can start trembling with fear even today,” Stanisław Rossowski notes in 1916, “if one realizes the terrible danger we were exposed to in those days, if only the mob had been gifted with quicker orientation.”<sup>28</sup> Clearly, the “we” he had in mind meant both the city and the community of its respectable citizens.

This was the moment in which the authorities—and the city of Lviv as a community—for the first time had shown its capacity to face the challenge, a capacity that our authors praise many a time in their narratives. The city council (with exactly half of its one hundred members present in the city), with Vice-Mayor Tadeusz Rutowski as its head, took the initiative.<sup>29</sup> A guard was immediately formed of respectable citizens, armed with ancient swords as they recalled the conflicts of bygone epochs. Some plundering of the army magazines and houses, left unattended by the Austrians and by their owners who had fled, took place, but nothing like an anarchic revolution or pogrom happened. Lviv remained remarkably peaceful in comparison with a number of smaller towns and the

<sup>24</sup>Chłamtacz, *Lemberg’s politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion*, 7.

<sup>25</sup>According to data cited by Makarczuk, the population of Lviv fell to 157,000 in August 1915 (as compared to some 215,000 a year earlier); Mick estimates that before the occupation up to 50,000 inhabitants had left the city (Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L’viv 1914–1947*, 23).

<sup>26</sup>Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 7.

<sup>27</sup>Przyłuski, *Wspomnienia z rosyjskiej okupacji*, 9.

<sup>28</sup>Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 24.

<sup>29</sup>For an analysis of the Lviv municipal authorities’ functioning during the war see Henryka Kramarz, *Samorząd Lwowa w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej i jego rola w życiu miasta* (Cracow, 1994); for more on Rutowski see idem, *Tadeusz Rutowski. Portret pozytywisty i demokracji galicyjskiego* (Cracow, 2001).

countryside. The reasons for anxiety and excitement, however, were still there: during the following week the Austro-Hungarian army counterattacked, and the exchange of gunfire was audible for several days, its results visible at night. Moreover, on the fourth day of the occupation, Lviv witnessed an ominous novelty: a duel between two airplanes. They were unarmed, and yet the Russian plane crashed while attempting to attack the enemy. Beaten on the ground, the Austrians prevailed in the air for a time, bombing the city with leaflets that assured its inhabitants that Paris and Warsaw had already fallen and the imperial-royal troops were to be expected soon. Still, the inhabitants of Lviv could hardly enjoy the invigorating news because the Russian infantry angrily responded with fire.<sup>30</sup>

### Negotiating with the Occupier

Frightened by the prospect of popular turmoil, representatives of the city council looked on the Russians with a mixture of anxiety and a sliver of hope. When representatives of the two parts met on the outskirts of the city, the Russians demanded hostages that would guarantee the city would remain calm as the invading army was entering. The hostages were to represent the four nationalities of Lviv: Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, and the “old Ruthenians”—that is, the pro-Russian part of what we would today call the Ukrainian community. This demand clearly testified to the oppressive nature of the occupation and was therefore uniformly emphasized by our authors. As a matter of fact, however, Russian brutality in this case was rather limited: the hostages (four from each national group) were placed in the apartments of Hotel George, the best hotel in the city, alongside the elite of the Russian officer corps.<sup>31</sup> After three days of this hardship and a conversation with the city governor, Colonel Sheremetev, they were released home under a condition carefully noted by our authors: when going out they were obliged to leave a note informing where they could be found (so that in the event of popular resistance against the occupiers they could be recaptured). Moreover, the Austrian prisoners of war employed for public services in the city by the victorious Russians were allowed to walk freely on the streets under an oath that they would not conspire or attempt to escape.<sup>32</sup> However, soon after Count Bobrinsky arrived as the newly nominated governor of Galicia on 21 September, a number of regulations were issued that gave the occupation its grim face: all clubs and associations were dissolved, educational and cultural institutions closed, spectacles and public gatherings banned, and publications and film screenings censored.

Moreover, our authors unanimously stress that the Russian rule in Lviv was based on terror. The role of the *Okhrana* (the tsarist political police), which began operating later in the fall of 1914 and quickly built up a network of informers, is particularly emphasized, so that, as Chlamtacz argues, “nobody going to bed in the evening could be sure whether his conscience would be clear in the morning.”<sup>33</sup> Others, however, claim that the true aim of the police was typically to extract bribes from those who could afford them; Zieliński even indicates the fixed and apparently ruinous sum for restaurant owners selling alcohol illegally as three thousand rubles.<sup>34</sup> Eventually, even though both suppositions seem to be based on the stereotype of Russians as both brutal and corruptible, they also seem credible as, in the end, the head of the Lviv police, Colonel Skallon, was officially charged with corruption.<sup>35</sup> Yet, at the same time, one can also suppose that what our authors had to say about the Russian oppressions were just rumors because in the end they did not name any individual belonging to the urban elite who was arrested or prosecuted. This may suggest that either the rumors were exaggerated,<sup>36</sup> or that the *Okhrana* simply focused on other social groups. There was one notable exception that confirms this interpretation, and one that does not. Both are discussed in the following.

<sup>30</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 99–100; Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 158–59.

<sup>31</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 25, 77; Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 47–57.

<sup>32</sup>Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 105.

<sup>33</sup>Chlamtacz, *Lemberg's politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion*, 97.

<sup>34</sup>Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej*, 27.

<sup>35</sup>Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 103; *Zakładnicy miasta Lwowa w niewoli rosyjskiej*, 56.

<sup>36</sup>A contemporary pamphlet published under the German occupation also claimed that “numerous politicians and industrialists were arrested and deported to Russia,” without, however, providing any details. See Feliks Przysiecki, *Rządy rosyjskie w Galicyi Wschodniej* (Piotrków Trybunalski, 1915), 40.

The first concerns professor Beck, a physiologist who acted as rector of the university and who indeed was arrested in the first weeks of the Russian rule. As he recalls in his testimony elucidating the atmosphere of anxiety and uncertainty of the fall of 1914, Professor Beck was visited by a policeman (who had earlier served with the Austrian police) and was requested to follow him to the police headquarters, which were located in the building of an evacuated bank. Having arrived there, however, they found nobody who knew why Beck was supposed to come, so the two men went to a nearby café. While on their way, Beck asked the policeman to wait in front of the house of his lawyer, whom he visited for a consultation (obviously, his main concern at this point must have been the reason for which he was supposed to be arrested) and to leave some papers he considered potentially dangerous. On his return to the police headquarters, Beck was finally arrested, and he was locked up in the apartment of the bank director (who had fled the city). His alarmed lawyer and his wife arrived soon thereafter, with a warm supper, clothing, and sheets. Still, Beck could not have his meal because the head of the police, General Eiche, also showed up shortly thereafter and explained that the detention was in fact a misunderstanding. For Beck, this rather trivial if not comic story was still worth recounting twenty-one years after it happened, which demonstrates how desperately our authors wanted to elevate their experiences to the status of trauma.<sup>37</sup>

All the grotesque details of this story of a much-expected oppression that never materialized may also be illustrative because Beck was indeed to become a victim of the Russian political retaliation policies. He was one of thirty-seven hostages that the Russians took as they were evacuating Lviv on 18 June 1915, and he spent some two years in Kiev under police surveillance. This operation—in which, along with three of our authors (Beck, Chołodecki, Czołowski),<sup>38</sup> all three vice-mayors, including Rutowski, were deported—was eventually the single and most spectacular act of political violence against the elites of Lviv.<sup>39</sup> It was, however, overshadowed by the subsequent repressive actions of the Austrians against all those suspected of collaboration with the enemy during the occupation.

Before all this happened, however, the city council, and particularly Rutowski as its representative, played a cat and mouse game with the Russians. Their main partner in this game was Count Bobrinsky (brother of an influential conservative member of the Duma in St. Petersburg), who replaced Count Sheremetev, supposedly because of the latter's excessively liberal stance.<sup>40</sup> Bobrinsky initiated his governorship with a speech delivered in the city hall that must have been shocking to the audience. The idea was to familiarize the council with the tsar's plans concerning Galicia: the province was to be divided into two parts, the eastern one with Lviv being incorporated into Russia proper, and the western one with Cracow into an autonomous Poland that was to be established by victorious Russia *after* the war. Eastern Galicia, Bobrinsky emphasized, had always been a part of Mother Russia, and his task was to reestablish the Russian character of the province by all possible means. The Poles were to be removed from the majority of senior positions in the administration, education, and judiciary and replaced with Russians who would pursue russification policies.<sup>41</sup> This was devastating news for the Poles, who had become accustomed to their unquestionable domination in Galician politics and culture during the half-century of the province's autonomy within the Habsburg monarchy.<sup>42</sup> The news, moreover, was soon followed by rumors regarding a scheme to relocate the Russian university of Warsaw to Lviv, and the John Casimir University to Warsaw. As Janusz comments, "We

<sup>37</sup>Beck, *Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza*, 28–30.

<sup>38</sup>Czołowski had also supposedly been arrested briefly in late fall 1914 and released quickly because of Rutowski's intervention. Unfortunately, he did not elaborate on this experience, which might have resembled that of Beck. For more, see Iwona Zima, *Aleksander Czołowski*, 120–23.

<sup>39</sup>Beck, *Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza*, 43; Białynia-Chołodecki, *Zakładnicy miasta Lwowa w niewoli rosyjskiej*.

<sup>40</sup>See Hagen, *War in a European Borderland*, 24–25; Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv 1914–1947*, 26–27.

<sup>41</sup>According to Mick (27–33), Bobrinsky was criticized in St. Petersburg and constantly under pressure from the army to introduce further anti-Polish and anti-Jewish regulations. Hagen argues that the Russian officials he hired instead of the Poles were those most eagerly delegated from Warsaw, Kiev, and Odessa by their superiors (*War in a European Borderland*, 27–28).

<sup>42</sup>For more on the policies of polonization in Lviv in the period of Galician autonomy see Heidi Hein-Kircher, *Lemberg's "polnischen Charakter" sichern. Kommunalpolitik in einer multiethnischen Stadt der Habsburgermonarchie zwischen 1861/2 und 1914* (Stuttgart, 2020).

were supposed to believe that the power that had oppressed all its peoples for ages intended to liberate those who enjoyed more liberty than their liberators.”<sup>43</sup> The Polish prejudice against tsarist rule, shaped by the tradition of the nineteenth-century uprisings, Czołowski adds, was too strong to consider this idea seriously.<sup>44</sup> It seemed apparent at that time that doom was imminent.<sup>45</sup>

And yet, if doom was coming, it was only doing so slowly and haltingly. The city administration was allowed to take care of its business, the governor regularly negotiated his ordinances with the city hall. The negotiations were mostly held in French and typically led to compromises. For example, Mayor Rutowski refused to remove the Austrian eagle from the city hall tower because of the technical difficulties such an operation would require, and it took several months to replace Polish street names with Russian ones—officially until March 1915. It was only then that Francis Joseph’s bust in the city hall, which had been covered with a sheet when Governor Bobrinsky paid his visits to the mayor, was replaced with the bust of the Polish national poet Mickiewicz.<sup>46</sup> Our authors emphasize such “details” with great satisfaction, presenting them as evidence of the Polish authorities’ great diplomatic skills, and perhaps of the Russian inefficacy as well. It was, again, the archetypical satisfaction of the defeated, who, forced to yield to the will of the victors, were still able to outsmart them in some cases and take a step forward in between two steps back.

Overall, our authors’ image of the occupants is remarkably ambiguous.<sup>47</sup> Most of them draw a sympathetic picture of the common Russian recruits, stressing their sensitivity toward poverty and their cheerfulness and friendliness.<sup>48</sup> Apparently, this image had much to do with the stereotype of the good-spirited Slavic peasants, recalling their characteristics as presented by the German Enlightenment philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder. This supposition becomes evident when confronted with the fearful and even more stereotypical images of the non-European soldiers of the Russian Empire and, most strikingly, with those of the Cossacks—the formation notorious for its brutality against civilians, and particularly against the Jewish population during the 1905–7 Revolution and the numerous pogroms of the “Black Hundreds.” The non-Slavic troops, our authors argue, were less disciplined and more violent.<sup>49</sup>

To be sure, some stories from the occupation are permeated with the traditional Polish sense of superiority over the Russian barbarians, whose conduct might, at its best, *resemble* the European one.<sup>50</sup> Thus, Chołodecki ridicules the occupiers’ obsession with espionage, and particularly their search for the imagined cables connecting Lviv with Vienna.<sup>51</sup> What best illustrated the Russian cultural inferiority, however, was their inclination toward antisemitic violence and their consistent action against the Uniate (Greek Catholic) Church. The latter, our authors note anxiously, clearly aimed at a total annihilation of a separate Greek Catholic identity and its incorporation into the Russian Orthodox Church. The first step in this direction was the deportation of the Greek Catholic archbishop Andrey Sheptytsky, who refused to acknowledge the superiority of Muscovite Orthodoxy—the first important person in the city arrested by the Russians. However, two attitudes of our authors clash while commenting on these issues. On the one hand, the religious discrimination and intolerance

<sup>43</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 43.

<sup>44</sup>Czołowski, *Jak to było we Lwowie*, 19.

<sup>45</sup>Włodzimierz Borodziej and Maciej Górny suggest that what was happening in the countryside (their analysis focuses on Przesmyśl and other provincial towns) was a social revolution in which Jews and Poles were massively expropriated by Ruthenian peasants. See Włodzimierz Borodziej and Maciej Górny, “Ouverture der Revolution? Der ‘Klassenkonflikt’ in Galizien 1914–15,” in *Schlachtfeld Galizien* (Vienna, 2015), 187–205.

<sup>46</sup>Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 138.

<sup>47</sup>For a different recent analysis of Polish attitudes toward the Russian occupiers in all Eastern Galicia (including three of my authors), see Ilona Florczak, “Obraz armii rosyjskiej w okupowanej Galicji w świetle dzienników i wspomnień (1914–1915),” *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Historica* 102 (2018): 75–87.

<sup>48</sup>Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 54; Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 132; Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 19; Gember, “Die Russen in Lemberg,” 161.

<sup>49</sup>Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 108, 116; Gember, “Die Russen in Lemberg,” 61–62.

<sup>50</sup>Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 20; Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej*, 5–10

<sup>51</sup>Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 50–52.

clearly testified to the “medieval notions”<sup>52</sup> of the barbaric Russian invaders and provoked some sympathy for their victims.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, however, this sympathy was limited by a sense of antagonism and alienation toward the victimized groups—the Jewish and Ukrainian communities. While our authors deplore the Russian brutality, they are certainly glad it was not aimed at their own community.<sup>54</sup> This ambivalence is evident in their accounts of the incident that confirmed their accusations of Russian brutality most tragically: the pogrom in the Jewish district on 27 September. The riot followed a scheme familiar in other Galician towns: a Russian soldier was allegedly shot, and his comrades “responded” with gunfire and beatings, causing an unspecified number of fatalities (with estimates of between four and forty-seven killed). Chołodecki repeats the official Russian interpretation of the event without comment; Zieliński dismisses it as absurd; and Janusz ridicules it as a symptom of the Russian fear of a “Jewish uprising.”<sup>55</sup>

Finally, our authors also emphasize the willingness to negotiate and some of the merits of a number of top figures—particularly Count Sheremetev, whom they present in the most favorable light as honest, gallant, and courteous.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, some of our authors seem to have been delighted while describing the aristocratic figures from St. Petersburg delegated to Lviv, whose titles, manners, and positions in the Russian capital they recall with a truly bourgeois, or perhaps provincial, accuracy and awe.<sup>57</sup> It was Czołowski who had more contact with such persons than any of our other authors. He was the guide for an official Duma delegate and a number of Russian art historians who inspected Galicia’s cultural treasuries and monuments. Rumor had it that he was the only Pole in the city who had an automobile at his disposal.<sup>58</sup>

The author who had the most experience in dealing with Russian officials based in Lviv was Stanisław Przyłuski, the vice president of the principal court of Galicia. The collaboration of the Lviv judiciary with the Russian administration was, as he recalls, going “smoothly” for months, and all conflicts with the administration were settled through negotiations with Bobrinsky. Until the conflict that caused our author’s resignation, that is. Eventually, the governor requested that Przyłuski take an oath of allegiance to the Russian tsar. Przyłuski presents the problem in his narrative as a cultural misconception: in his view, his official loyalty to Francis Joseph was a matter of his personal honor, and he remarks on his surprise that a respectable man like the governor could insist on this point at all. Still, his narrative seems a notable eulogy for the Russian rule as it carefully reconsiders its advantages and disadvantages in comparison to the Austrian one. He explains his favorable opinion as follows:

I wish not to be confused with an enthusiast of the Russians. I realize it is not all of them who are like that, and not always. At that time, they were advancing triumphantly, it was the time of their successes, and their conduct would be different in a time of failures. The Austrian scheme of behavior was the opposite. As long as she suffered from the military and political disasters, Austria was tolerable. All constitutional liberties were consequences of her immense difficulties

<sup>52</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 199–200.

<sup>53</sup>The most sympathetic Polish account of the Russian anti-Uniate campaign is Emil Pelczyński’s *Prawosławie w Galicyi*. Gember dismissed the idea that Uniate priests converted en masse to Orthodoxy (Gember, “Die Russen in Lemberg,” 164); Chlamtacz lamented the repressions against both the Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics (Chlamtacz, *Lembergs politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion*, 81).

<sup>54</sup>For contemporary Austrian and Russian press reports about Galicia and its inhabitants’ attitudes toward the occupiers see Elisabeth Haid, “Im Blickfeld zweier Imperien. Galizien in der österreichischen und russischen Pressenberichterstattung während des Ersten Weltkrieg (1914–1917)” (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 2016), esp. 190–92. Mick argues that the Russians won the sympathy of most Ukrainian peasants by paying for the requisitioned food and by expropriating the Poles and Jews (Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L’viv 1914–1947*, 59–61).

<sup>55</sup>Białynia -Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 91; Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 175; Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej*, 20.

<sup>56</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 38; Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej*, 15–16; Gember, “Die Russen in Lemberg,” 58.

<sup>57</sup>Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 89–92; Chlamtacz, *Lembergs politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion*, 78.

<sup>58</sup>Zima, *Aleksander Czołowski*, 122.

in 1848, 1854, and 1866. Once she received Prussian support and started prevailing, she became nasty, brutal, and in the end horrible.<sup>59</sup>

To be sure, Przyłuski was not the only one to make such comparisons and conclude that the Russian occupation “cured us of our uncritical Austrophilia.”<sup>60</sup> Obviously, however, our authors could only arrive at conclusions of this sort if they published during the Polish Second Republic, after the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, when arguing that both Russia and Austria were foreign oppressors became politically correct and indeed popular. As long as Austria was still in the game, it was more appropriate to claim, like Chlamtacz, that Lviv “demonstrated loyalty to the Austrian state—a loyalty close to martyrdom.”<sup>61</sup> One can sense opportunism in such bombastic expressions of allegiance, which were eventually needed after Austria recaptured Lviv and started hunting for the alleged collaborators with the Russians. While changing loyalties as a result of the collapse of Austria-Hungary and regaining of independence by Poland certainly influenced our authors’ memories, it still seems that the crucial turning point was the Austrian policy of repression against alleged traitors after June 1915,<sup>62</sup> which our authors regard as unjust, irrational, and indeed scandalous. Eventually, insofar as their narratives are concerned, this policy may be considered the single most important factor that undermined their loyalty to the Habsburgs. In their view, Austria-Hungary had let them down, and hence it did not deserve their fidelity anymore.

### The Stench of Treason and Revolution

Our authors might have been justifiably proud of the Lviv administration’s ability to outsmart the occupants, but relations with the Russians were not always innocent. It was evident that part of the population collaborated with the occupiers all too eagerly, and one of the principal goals of our authors’ narratives was to interpret this behavior. More precisely, this was a twofold task. Immediately after the occupation, the idea was to identify the traitors because the Austrian authorities were hungry to investigate this problem. After the war, the question arose as to whether the collaboration was to be considered treason at all; and if not, what was it and why did it happen?

Identifying the traitors was quite easy. They were represented by a daily newspaper, *Słowo Polskie*,<sup>63</sup> which was associated with National Democracy (ND)—one of the most popular Polish political parties, also active in the Polish lands under Prussian and Russian rule. Even though the Galician branch of the party had declared loyalty to the Habsburgs before the occupation (as did *Słowo Polskie*), their pro-Russian stance seemed a natural consequence of the attitude represented by the Russian branch of the party, which supported the tsarist empire in its conflict against the Germanic Central Powers for the sake of Slavic unity. Hence, the pro-Russian attitude of the newspaper—and of the most powerful Galician ND politician, Andrzej Grabski—came as no surprise. However, our authors main goal in narrating these developments was to offer assurances that Grabski and *Słowo Polskie* represented only a minor, if not negligible, part of Lviv’s actual public opinion. The majority, Aleksander Czołowski argues, found this rapid *reversement des alliances* a purely opportunistic maneuver and deplored it, whereas the tiny pro-Russian minority “was motivated by their desire for financial benefits rather than any true ideological solidarity.”<sup>64</sup> Chlamtacz goes even further in his rhetoric, denying any importance of the pro-Russian group and claiming that it consisted mainly of Polish and Russian activists who arrived in Galicia with the tsarist army.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>59</sup>Przyłuski, *Wspomnienia z rosyjskiej okupacji*, 15.

<sup>60</sup>Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 20.

<sup>61</sup>Chlamtacz, *Lemberg’s politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion*, 62.

<sup>62</sup>For more, see Henryka Kramarz, “Nastroje i niepokoje narodowościowe w Galicji Wschodniej po ustąpieniu Rosjan (1915) i po pokoju brzeskim (1918),” in *Galicyjskie dylematy*, ed. Kazimierz Karolczak and Henryk Żaliński (Cracow, 1994), 65–75.

<sup>63</sup>For more on this journal, see Justyna Maguś, “*Słowo polskie*” w latach 1918–1938, *organ prasowy Narodowej Demokracji* (Lublin, 2018). Regrettably, the time under Russian occupation is only briefly discussed in the first chapter.

<sup>64</sup>Czołowski, *Jak to było we Lwowie*, 19–20.

<sup>65</sup>Chlamtacz, *Lemberg’s politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion*, 30–36.

However, the question of collaboration, with all its turbulence in the period in question, was more than just a political one. Our authors were unanimously devastated by the fact that some of their co-citizens did well under Russian rule, that they profited from it and did not seem very ashamed about their actions. The first group the authors targeted were merchants, whom they deemed responsible for the rise in the prices of consumer goods—particularly food—and the consequent misery of the rest of the population. Speculation, accelerated by the shortage of supplies caused by the war, was considered immoral, and our authors viewed everyone who profited from war-related business, and particularly from supplying the Russians, with disgust.<sup>66</sup> This moralistic attitude, however, was overtly related to their antibourgeois prejudices in general, which was typical of the Polish intelligentsia of that time and in some cases was also combined with antisemitism.

The other group whose behavior was regarded as morally unacceptable consisted of people, especially women, who socialized or indeed fraternized with Russians. Most of our authors draw a picture of Lviv under occupation as full of licentious debauchery performed in public, so that a decent person—and particularly a lady—could hardly enter a café anymore for the fear of being confused with one of the women seeking soldierly company. In their eyes, most such women were the equivalent of prostitutes, and so in their narratives the difference between actual prostitutes (whose number in the impoverished city full of soldiers most likely grew remarkably) and other women socializing with Russians, including nurses, is purposefully blurred.<sup>67</sup> This kind of behavior was as shocking as it was confusing for our authors, for it implied that their moral standards (or more precisely, what they presented as the moral standard) of strict social separation between the occupants and the locals were not as universally acknowledged as they believed. Our authors, like so many Europeans all over the continent, believed that the war was supposed to be a test of one's virtues and moral strength, and thus they expected their city to show more decency and dignity under the occupation than it did in peacetime. As far as women's behavior was concerned, one of the authors had already addressed this "problem" before the occupation even started, publishing an appeal to ladies in a daily newspaper in mid-August 1914 in which he advocates decent and modest dresses for "this so serious a time, so great a moment on the clock of history."<sup>68</sup> Accordingly, the same author notes with satisfaction that Christmas of 1914 was celebrated with great piety, which he optimistically interpreted as evidence of a moral upheaval.<sup>69</sup> As a matter of fact, however, our authors had to acknowledge that a large number of their co-citizens fraternized, traded with, socialized, or had sex with the occupiers. As Maria von Gember recalls, the streets of Lviv were full of "perfumed ladies and fat gentlemen in cars and vehicles circulating madly, so there was almost no single day without an accident."<sup>70</sup>

In the end, our authors had no good explanation for this paradox, which can be best seen in Rossowski's desperate argumentation that the women who socialized with Russians must have been temporarily unemployed servants of the refugees who had fled the city, or indeed some mysterious strangers. "These ladies have either not grown up in our city," he claims, "or they have nothing to do with our women."<sup>71</sup> Again, as in the case of political collaborators with the Russians, this was an attempt to marginalize the black sheep of Lviv, or to exclude them from the community of its citizens.

Finally, the occupation questioned the standards of decency and public morality of the patriotic intelligentsia in Lviv for reasons that had little to do with the occupants and more to do with their own miserable situation. Lviv was not a large industrial center but an important administrative, commercial, cultural, and educational one. As the capital of Galicia, it had a disproportionately high number of clerks, public officials, teachers, journalists, academics, and other white-collar employees—most

<sup>66</sup>Gember, "Die Russen in Lemberg," 162; Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 59–60; Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 60–63; Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 147–55.

<sup>67</sup>Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej*, 30–32; Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 16; Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 105; Gember, "Die Russen in Lemberg," 163–64; Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 94–95, 121–22.

<sup>68</sup>Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 27 (the appeal was published in *Gazeta Wieczorna* on 19 August 1914).

<sup>69</sup>Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 119.

<sup>70</sup>Gember, "Die Russen in Lemberg," 163–64.

<sup>71</sup>Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 146–47.

of whom lost their source of income with the rapid evacuation of the Austrian institutions from which they drew their salaries. The educated class, which had enjoyed a privileged social and economic position before the war, was quickly pauperized. Among the many consequences of this process, which I shall discuss in the following text, was the painful collapse of the social hierarchies based on income and prestige. Doctors, lawyers, and teachers were less fit than physical workers or petty bourgeois for a struggle for emergency income, nor were their wives good at housekeeping when their unpaid cooks and servants left. The municipal initiative to distribute timber in wintertime was halted because of notorious robberies and fights in the queues, in which “clerks yielded to the mob.”<sup>72</sup> The city’s elites were on their knees, desperately selling their furniture, jewels, and furs; and they were no longer able to dictate their moral standards to the other social classes, whose situation did not change so dramatically. This was a painful humiliation they remembered as an overt prelude to the doom that was to come.

### The Splendid Self-Mobilization

Obviously, the war and occupation caused enormous logistical and economic problems for Lviv. As mentioned, the Austrian evacuation left thousands of clerks and public officials without their regular income, and the same was true of teachers and academicians as all educational institutions remained closed for months (until the Russians agreed to reopen a limited number of schools in the beginning of 1915). With the core of its middle class jobless, Lviv’s economy collapsed: shopkeepers, restaurant owners, and various craftsmen lost their best clients, and most people simply ceased paying their rent. Hence, it should come as no surprise that the issues of impoverishment and the struggle for survival occupy a central position in our authors’ narratives.<sup>73</sup> What seems remarkable, however, is the role city authorities play in this story.

To be able to pay its own employees and support some of the temporarily unemployed, the city issued its own “currency cards,” one of which equaled a hundred Austrian crowns. The lists of those who were considered eligible for this support included the wives and widows of absent soldiers. By the end of February 1915, the city subsidized some thirty to thirty-five thousand people in the amount of 887,000 crowns.<sup>74</sup> Next to the network of city shops with basic goods, which has already been mentioned, the city also co-organized a network of canteens called “city kitchens” that offered lunches for free or for a symbolic sum of money. In the winter of 1914/15, these canteens provided between thirty-nine thousand and forty-six thousand lunches per day. In other words, they fed up to a quarter of Lviv’s war population, and one may reasonably assume that without this help many if not most of these people may well have starved.<sup>75</sup> In wintertime, a parallel initiative to provide timber for fuel was undertaken; however, as mentioned in the preceding text, it was much less successful. Much more timber was obtained illegally from city parks and forests outside the city by energetic proletarians. Still, the activities of the administration, and particularly Rutowski, were unanimously praised in the most apologetic manner. Our authors claim that it was Providence that placed Rutowski as mayor in this dark hour, that he was loved and admired by all classes of the population, and that during the occupation the city hall cared for the city like its true mother, and Rutowski like a father.<sup>76</sup>

It seems apparent that what helped our authors appreciate these initiatives was that they were aimed primarily at their own social class: the Polish or Polonized middle and upper classes that were directly hit economically by the war but still could quite easily get on one of the lists prepared by city officials. Thus, our authors viewed the city as their benefactor and efficient protector in both the political and economic sense. What was crucial for this image of the occupation, moreover, was that city policies

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 137.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 110–30; Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej*, 30–33; Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 16–18; Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 205–21; Gember, “Die Russen in Lemberg,” 158–61; Białynia-Chołodecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 80–85.

<sup>74</sup>Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L’viv 1914–1947*, 37.

<sup>75</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 205; Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 45–55.

<sup>76</sup>Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 21–26; Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 12–14; Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 67, 204; Gember, “Die Russen in Lemberg,” 158.

were in unison with the expectations and moods of Lviv's middle classes, and so too were the municipal and social initiatives. For example, Białynia-Chołoddecki proudly emphasizes that a number of donations received by the city hall from Lviv's most prominent citizens were strictly earmarked for the aid of the intelligentsia, "whose situation was much worse than that of other classes."<sup>77</sup> The networks of municipal shops and "city kitchens" could only function due to the massive participation of temporarily unemployed clerks, and particularly their wives and sisters. Parallel initiatives followed, such as a cheap café opened by some of the city's most prominent intellectuals. The sense of common purpose, commitment, and engagement was one of the best-remembered aspects of the experience of occupation.<sup>78</sup> A crucial element of this experience was its democratic character. In the queues for bread or timber, and in the "city kitchens," everyone was equal, and everyone received the same portion. The shared experience of pauperization, fear, anxiety, and everyday struggle for survival made people forget about the "normal" social divisions and hierarchies for a while and made them feel like a community. As Gember notes, "Poverty made us all brothers."<sup>79</sup>

As indicated in the preceding text, those who were regarded as profiteers of the war conditions—from agents of the *Okhrana* to the promiscuous mistresses of Russian officers, and perhaps most importantly, the food sellers—were excluded from this community. Hence, the democratic experience had its limits, and these limits also happened to overlap with national divisions. The ubiquitous tendency to strengthen national ties and identifications and to regard all "others" as suspicious and potentially dangerous affected the Polish community of Lviv as well, because in this multiethnic city national and class divisions overlapped. It was the Ukrainian peasants from the countryside who provided food and the Jewish merchants who were usually involved in the process, whom the educated Polish middle class regarded with contempt as profiteers from their own misery, eagerly confirming their ethnic and religious prejudices. This ambiguity may be best seen in the interpretations of the Russian policy against the Greek Catholic Church. On the one hand, as already noted, the Russian persecution of Greek Catholics was unanimously viewed with contempt: religious intolerance was interpreted as barbaric and, moreover, as an element of the general policy of russification, which provoked much anxiety in our authors.<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, however, some of them viewed the Ukrainian Greek Catholics with suspicion. Rumors about their pro-Russian inclinations before the invasion, when they had been the main target of the Austrian spy mania, found some understanding. This suspicion was confirmed by the successes of the Russian initiative to convert Greek Catholics to Orthodoxy; in the eyes of some of our authors, their Greek Catholic neighbors abandoned their religion all too easily, proving their treacherous nature.<sup>81</sup>

To be sure, ethnic and religious differences were not of primary importance for our authors. In their narratives, these differences simply emerge as parallel to those of cultural and class, which defined the educated elite as the "proper citizens" of Lviv—the group that our authors proudly and consciously represented. This group was predominantly defined in contrast to the proletariat—occasionally defined as "the mob"—and those businesspeople who profited from the occupation, both of which groups were composed of all three nationalities: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians. The proletarians, Maciszewski notes sadly, had little self-respect and were therefore easily won by the Russians when offered free food, timber, or other goods—or indeed an opportunity to plunder public property.<sup>82</sup> If class and ethnic differences overlapped, our authors eagerly employed popular antisemitic and anti-Ukrainian clichés to emphasize the cultural and political distance (most likely epitomized by the allegedly different moral standards) between their own group and the others. In other cases, our authors proudly

<sup>77</sup>Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 113.

<sup>78</sup>Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 86–88; Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 11; Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 65–72.

<sup>79</sup>Gember, "Die Russen in Lemberg," 159.

<sup>80</sup>Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 55–56, 199–200; Pełczyński, *Prawosławie w Galicyi*, 24–28; for more, see Anna Wendland, *Die Russophilen in Galizien. Ukrainische Konservative zwischen Österreich und Russland, 1848–1915* (Vienna, 2001).

<sup>81</sup>Zieliński, *Lwów po inwazji rosyjskiej*, 25; Chlamtacz, *Lembergs politische Physiognomie während der russischen Invasion*, 61; Gember, "Die Russen in Lemberg," 54; Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Lwów w czasie okupacji*, 28–29.

<sup>82</sup>Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 18.

emphasize their unprejudiced attitudes, particularly in contrast to the Russians. For example, Białynia-Chołoddecki, whose narrative is full of antisemitic sarcasm against Jewish shopkeepers who profited from the occupation, vehemently stresses that he protested against racial segregation of the hostages deported by the Russians to Kiev in June 1915.<sup>83</sup> In his view, people like our other author Professor Beck were not the kind of Jews to whom his antisemitic prejudices might have referred; rather, they were members of the social elite, his own membership of which he held most dearly, and as such they deserved to be treated accordingly.

### Conclusions, Including a Happy Ending

Obviously, there are some striking differences between our author's narratives. Those of Rossowski, Janusz, and Białynia-Chołoddecki claim to provide a broad and complete account of the occupation, bordering on historiography proper. Those of Gember, Chlamtacz, Maciszewski, and Zieliński are pamphlets, much more concise and shorter of details and facts. Przyłuski, Czołowski, and Beck considered themselves to be figures important enough to offer personal testimonies that were still supposed to shed light on some crucial aspects of the occupation. Chlamtacz and Gember published in German: Chlamtacz in defense of Lviv's reputation in Vienna, Gember in a collection of wartime propaganda stories. Finally, they can be divided by their date of publication: those written during the war—before and after Austria-Hungary recaptured Lviv—and those written when Lviv was included into the reborn Poland. The dissolution of Austria-Hungary marked a caesura determining official declarations of loyalty. And yet, the conclusions all our authors offer are strikingly similar. They all vehemently stress that Lviv, despite having been tempted and oppressed, had always remained loyal, that this loyalty was a natural consequence of its Polish patriotism, and that the Russian collaborators were few, unimportant, and most likely non-Polish or non-Galician. These kinds of conclusions may be considered tactical because they were clearly aimed at dispelling any doubts concerning this loyalty, some of which doubts were angrily expressed by the Austrian war administration after June 1915.<sup>84</sup> If Austria was to remain the master of Galicia, which seemed highly likely if not indisputable until late 1918, it was desirable to have Vienna sympathetically disposed rather than vengeful. It may be assumed that such an interpretation might have seemed opportunistic, but it was still acceptable to its Polish readers from Lviv. After all, it stressed their suffering, their commitment, and their morale. One needs to bear in mind that Lviv was the only major city of Austria-Hungary occupied by the enemy during the Great War—a war that the monarchy, despite some temporary difficulties, was desperately expecting to win. Thus, the morale of its citizens facing a temporary failure was a sensitive issue;<sup>85</sup> the Galician Poles were interested in confirming their loyalty to the monarchy, and the monarchy had no great interest in questioning this allegiance.<sup>86</sup>

Moreover, the invigorating nature ascribed to the occupation experience was based on its temporary character. The citizens of Lviv were supposed to have faced the harsh conditions of occupation by demonstrating great stamina and proudly resisting the enemy's offers for collaboration because they believed it was an emergency situation that could not last for long. "Our only hope," Czołowski notes, "was that this was a temporary state of affairs that would soon be terminated."<sup>87</sup> Luckily for

<sup>83</sup>Białynia-Chołoddecki, *Zakładnicy miasta Lwowa*, 51.

<sup>84</sup>Accordingly, the occasional leaflet *Pamiętką zdobycia Lwowa 22 czerwca 1915* cheerfully suggested that the editor of *Słowo Polskie*, Wasilewski, commit suicide as soon as he could because he should be hanged by either the Austrians or Russians.

<sup>85</sup>According to Borodziej and Górny, in the Viennese parliament Ignacy Daszyński, the leader of the Polish Socialists, argued that three thousand people were prosecuted. The authors reduce this number to 620 persons (*Ouverture der Revolution*, 203). Mick, in sharp contrast, provides the figure of 32,498 people arrested until the end of 1915 (in all Galicia?) (Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, Lviv 1914–1947*, 63–69). What certainly made this "father's revenge" controversial were the charges against all Lviv's vice-mayors and the many others deported by the Russians, and, again, the Greek Catholics.

<sup>86</sup>The classic studies concerning Austria's ultimate failure to secure its citizens' loyalty are: Z. A. B. Zeman, *The Breakup of the Habsburg Empire: A Study in National and Social Revolutions* (Oxford, 1961); Mark Cornwall, *The Undermining of Austria-Hungary: The Battle for Hearts and Minds* (New York, 2008), which focuses on military propaganda, with ch. 3 covering the Russo-Austrian conflict; Henryk Batowski, *Rozpad Austro-Węgier, 1914–1918* (Cracow, 1982).

<sup>87</sup>Czołowski, *Jak to było we Lwowie*, 20.

the coherence of our authors' narratives, it seems this was the case. At least until the capitulation of the fortress of Przemyśl in March 1915, the hopes for an imminent victory of the Central Powers were ubiquitous, and they were soon reinvigorated by the successful Austro-German offensive in May. Hence it was possible to present the nature of the occupation experience in a way that perfectly fit into the contemporarily dominant image of war as a spiritual and mental contest—an image so dear to intellectuals all over Europe and so mercilessly exploited by the war propaganda of all belligerents.<sup>88</sup> The war was supposed to be a test of moral strength, stamina, and tenacity, and Lviv claimed to have passed this ordeal admirably.

The situation changed surprisingly little with the dissolution of Austria-Hungary and the establishment of an independent Polish Second Republic, which included Lviv and eastern Galicia as a result of the bloody Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918–19. As I argue in the introduction, one of the most striking aspects of the Polish narratives on the occupation is that they were produced over the span of twenty years, and despite a total change of the political situation they showed notable continuity and steadfastness. Lviv's stubborn loyalty and resistance against the Russian occupation was still emphasized, only in the later narratives it was a loyalty exclusively to Poland instead of to Poland and the Austrian emperor.

The tactical or, if you like, conditional nature of our authors' declared allegiance to Austria seems remarkable with respect to the discussion surrounding imperial versus local versus national identity is concerned—a discussion dating back to István Deák's 1967 comments in the *Austrian History Yearbook*.<sup>89</sup> First, what is notable about our authors' attitude to Austria is that their loyalty to Vienna did not contradict their Polish patriotism, identity, or nationalism. The two complemented each other smoothly until Austria "betrayed" Lviv (i.e., the city's elite) with its repressions against the alleged traitors in 1915. Second, the nature of this loyalty was clearly contractual: it was considered legitimate as long as Austria represented what it ought to represent—the rule of law and other aspects of what our authors considered as Western civilization. Their sense of identification with Poland was much deeper and less conditioned, probably because it was also more abstract and sentimental. Moreover, as a matter of fact the war policies of both empires did strengthen national affiliations because both Austria and Russia clearly differentiated the Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians/Ruthenians as either potentially loyal and trustworthy or as suspected scapegoats. And yet, in contrast, these policies scarcely helped our authors to sustain their belief that Austrian and Russian rule was essentially different: Austria failed to save its reputation as a highly civilized and tolerant power, nor did Russia fully confirm its image as a barbarian and brutal one.

If my authors' loyalty to Austria was conditional and their loyalty to Poland was sentimental, their fierce love for Lviv combined these two aspects, for, as I have argued, what they considered to be Lviv was its educated Polish elite. Indeed, one can hardly find any remarks in their narratives regarding the situation outside of the city. Vienna and Przemyśl mattered to them only in so far as they desired the imperial-royal armies to push the Russians out of Lviv; Warsaw served as an example of what a major Polish city might expect from the Russians. Nor did they pay attention to the dramatic developments in Galicia's countryside and smaller towns. Their local patriotism eventually bordered on chauvinism, of which Rossowski's eulogy for the charitable societies of Lviv may be the best example. These

<sup>88</sup>See, for example, Jeffrey Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth, and Mobilization in Germany* (Cambridge, 2004); Helmut Fries, *Die grosse Katharsis. Der Erste Weltkrieg in der Sicht deutscher Dichter und Gelehrter* (Konstanz, 1995); Almut Lindner-Wirsching, *Französische Schriftsteller und ihre Nation im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Tübingen, 2004); Wolfgang J. Mommsen and E. Müller-Luckner, eds., *Kultur und Krieg. Die Rolle der Intellektuellen, Künstler und Schriftsteller im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 1996).

<sup>89</sup>István Deák, "Comments," *Austrian History Yearbook* 3, no. 1 (1967): 303; for more, see idem, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps* (New York, 1990). Another classic study stressing the idea of national indifference is Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861–1914* (Princeton, 1981); the idea of a Galician identity is advocated in Larry Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture* (Stanford, 2010); and the recent voice (over)emphasizing the idea of the imperial identity is Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, 2016). For an overview of loyalist attitudes and imperial patriotism, see Laurence Cole and Daniel Unowsky, eds., *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy* (New York, 2007).

societies, he proudly argues, had little to do with those supported by aristocratic ladies: they cared neither for starving Blacks in Africa, nor for the bankrupt noblemen under pressure to sell their ruined manors. Their attention, he emphasizes, “rarely reached beyond the city gates” because it was there where their aid was most practical, and because the bourgeois ladies of Lviv “loved their city the most, next to God and fatherland.”<sup>90</sup> Surely, such statements are rhetorical. In times of trouble, however, rhetoric easily fuses with practice.

However, after the events following the end of the Great War, the Russian occupation of Lviv needed to be integrated into the bigger picture. Everyone now realized that the troubles Lviv had faced in 1914–15 were moderate in comparison with the bloody events of the 1918–20 Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Bolshevik wars. Thus, our authors still emphasized that it had been a test for the city; but it was no longer a *final* test but rather a preparatory one, one that left the city united, determined, confident in its authorities, more democratic, and better prepared for the challenges to come.<sup>91</sup> This interpretation skillfully combined Polish nationalism with local patriotism and the particular exclusiveness of the urban elite that was simultaneously both the main protagonist and the audience of the narratives analyzed in this article. It safely transformed their memories of the catastrophe that had been expected but did not happen into a story full of drama—but still crowned with a happy ending.

My authors’ narratives tell a story of an unexpected menace and the threat of immediate annihilation by a supreme power—a threat that forces the community to unite, compromises the traitors and cowards, and ends with the victory of determination and faithfulness. The threats faced and the virtues of the protagonists might have been exaggerated, although the fear and anxieties were probably most real, and it was to commemorate them that our narratives were written. If it is not universal, such a scenario is certainly rooted in the biblical imagination, which typically presents the faithful as physically or numerically weaker than the forces of evil to stress their moral virtues and the importance of divine intervention. And as the Hollywood example demonstrates, this scenario sells well in its secular version too. Hence, it should come as no surprise that it was in this way that the memories of the Russian occupation of Lviv were shaped, even though the audience was limited. The story, however, was soon forgotten as it was a deceitfully optimistic one for a city that was to face a truly traumatic experience in the near future.

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<sup>90</sup>Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 45–51.

<sup>91</sup>Maciszewski, *Rosjanie we Lwowie*, 20; Rossowski, *Lwów podczas inwazji*, 6–7; Janusz, *293 dni rządów rosyjskich we Lwowie*, 10–12.