

Galicia: A Bulwark against Russia? Propaganda and Violence in a Border Region during the First World War

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Bordering Prussian Germany and Russia, the Austrian province of Galicia had been strategically important since its creation with the First Partition of Poland in 1772. When the Habsburg Monarchy and the German Empire formed the Dual Alliance in 1879, the Austro-Hungarian government began to consider Russia its most likely opponent in case of war. As a consequence, the Habsburg military began accelerating the defense of its Russian border in the 1880s. The fortifications in Przemyśl, Cracow, and elsewhere along the Galician border with Russia were strengthened and enlarged.¹ At the same time, the Cisleithanian Austrian authorities who were responsible for governing Galicia after the 1867 *Ausgleich* considered political stability in these regions indispensable for war preparations. Therefore, they attached great importance to maintaining the loyalty of the local population.

In addition to military preparations, Austrian authorities undertook political measures to turn Galicia into a figurative bulwark against Russia. The Austro-Hungarian military and the general staff, considered both Russian military power and Pan-Slavism to be threats to the survival of the monarchy. At the turn of the century, Austrian civil as well as Habsburg military authorities believed that Russian propaganda undermined Austria-Hungary and encouraged irredentism among the Dual Monarchy's Slavs. Therefore, Galicia was of great concern to all state authorities as its main inhabitants were beside Jews, Poles and Ruthenians. The latter, although Austrian and Habsburg authorities until the dissolution of the monarchy in 1918 referred to them as Ruthenians, since the late nineteenth century more and more of them identified themselves to be Ukrainians. Thus, they looked beyond the Habsburg borders to the Russian Empire where the bulk of their co-nationals lived. These Ruthenians called

their political movement Ukrainian. This Ukrainian political movement cooperated with Russian Ukrainians, but nevertheless, throughout the war loyally supported the Central Powers.

With the outbreak of the First World War, the political situation in Galicia gained renewed attention from Vienna. Habsburg military and Austrian civil, in cooperation with Galician provincial authorities, together with Galician Polish and Ruthenian political organizations sought to prepare the local population for the war against Russia to construct a united home front. I argue that in the end, the mobilization of the Galician home front failed as national conflicts in Galicia intensified. Polish and Ruthenian politicians in Galicia as well as Austro-Hungarian imperial authorities were partly to blame. This article analyzes the sometimes inconsistent political measures the Galician politicians and the Austro-Hungarian Army took to prepare the province for the war against Russia. I analyze here Polish and Ruthenian propaganda as well as the Habsburg government's nationalities policies. These nationalities policies were not unique to Galicia; elsewhere in Austria, policies aimed to encourage Habsburg loyalty. They were, however, often accompanied by oppressive measures at particular, often Slavic, nationalities.

Its location as a border region and war zone increased national and social tensions in Galicia after August 1914. The front line shifted several times erasing the distinction between the home front and the fighting front. The Austro-Hungarian army more often took violent measures against civilians in Galicia, including execution, deportation, and imprisonment, than in other regions of the Habsburg Monarchy.² Both the Habsburg military and the Polish-dominated Galician civil authorities acted aggressively against the province's other nationalities. At the same time, violence among the ethnically mixed Galician residents increased.

This article demonstrates that the national organizations of Galician Poles and Ruthenians cooperated with the imperial government in the effort to mobilize for war. These organizations shared a common political commitment to the war against Russia; moreover, their political interests initially seemed compatible with the war aims of the Habsburg Monarchy. However, the Galician Polish and Ruthenian national ambitions soon clashed. Mutual mistrust and competing political interests thus prevented a unified home front.

The Prewar Political Conflict in Galicia

In the prewar decades, imperial authorities considered Galicia to be a flash point for national antagonisms. During the first half of the nineteenth century fear of potential Polish uprisings had shaped Habsburg politics in Galicia. The Viennese government had initially supported the Ruthenian rural population against an insurgent and political dominant Polish nobility. In the contrary to the Polish aristocracy, the rural population had remained loyal to Vienna during the Cracow Uprising in 1846 and the 1848 revolutions. On the occasion of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, however, Vienna made far-reaching concessions to the Polish elites who used the newly implemented self-government to promote Galicia's Polonization. Polish became the administrative language in Galicia, and Poles dominated the Galician provincial parliament, owing to unequal suffrage. Galician provincial authorities consolidated the dominance of the Polish language and counteracted nascent Ruthenian national ambitions. Consequently, Polish-Ruthenian antagonism in Galicia grew in part, owing to the Austrian government's concessions to the Poles, which fuelled anti-Austrian attitudes among the non-Poles in Galicia.³

In Galicia, the two largest ethnic groups were almost equal in size. According to statistical data on language and religion of the census of 1910, 45.5 percent of the residents

self-identified as Poles, 42.9 percent as Ruthenians, and 10.9 percent as Jews in the 1910 census. Poles predominated in the western part of the province, and Ruthenians formed a majority in the east.⁴ But it was more than language and religion which divided Poles and Ruthenians in eastern Galicia.⁵ The Polish gentry ruled the rural Ruthenian population, while Poles and Jews predominated in the cities. From the mid-nineteenth century, Polish-Ruthenian national antagonism progressively overlapped with social and religious conflict, especially in ethnically mixed eastern Galicia.⁶ The beginning of a politically organized Ruthenian “national awakening” in the mid-nineteenth century added a new dimension to these conflicts. Owing to its geographic location, the nationality question in Galicia was not only a matter of Austrian domestic politics, but also an important factor of foreign affairs and the diplomatic relationship between Austria-Hungary and Russia. Whereas the Russian government suppressed the Ukrainian national movement on its soil, Austrian politics encouraged the Ruthenian-Ukrainian national movement in Galicia to avoid a growing support for Russia as they already questioned their loyalty.⁷ At the same time, contemporary Austrian sources still referred Galician Ruthenians as the “Tyrolians of the East” because of their loyalty to the imperial house during the Polish nobility’s mid-nineteenth century rebellions. After the outbreak of the war they were more and more suspected of sympathizing with Russia as Russian nationalists supported the Ruthenian Russophile movement in Galicia.

While during the nineteenth century the Polish-dominated Galician provincial government had mainly prosecuted people for alleged Russophile activities, at the beginning of the twentieth century the imperial authorities took the initiative. The General Staff and the War Ministry distrusted not only members of the Russophile movement but increasingly, all Ruthenians. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had urged tougher action against Russophile societies even before 1914. These suspicions resulted in treason trials of Russophiles in 1913

and 1914, although at the beginning of the twentieth century only a fraction of Galician Russophiles had radicalized and promoted a political union with Russia. The Habsburg government overestimated the influence of this group and its propaganda in Galicia. The politically dominant Galician Ruthenian-Ukrainian nationalists explicitly distanced themselves from Russia because of discrimination against the Ukrainian language in Russia. Clearly, Russophile sympathies were not widespread among Galician Ruthenians.⁸

Because political stability in this border region was an important factor for military operations, Habsburg authorities sought to counteract the assumed threat from Russia. On the one hand, the Austro-Hungarian military secretly cooperated with Polish paramilitary organizations in Galicia under Józef Piłsudski in order to weaken Russia. On the other hand, the recent treason trials of suspected Galician Russophiles reflected increasingly repressive measures in this province. At the same time, the Austrian government became more supportive of Ruthenian political claims and advocated a compromise between Galician Poles and Ruthenians in order to stabilize the political situation. This so-called “Galician Compromise” negotiated by the provincial parliament in February 1914 never went into effect because of the outbreak.⁹

Mobilizing for War against Russia

During the mobilization at the war’s outbreak, the Habsburg authorities focused on the military’s needs. The Austrian government had ruled by decree since the suspension of Parliament in March 1914. Emergency laws, enacted in July 1914, restricted freedom of speech and enabled the government to introduce censorship for the duration of the war. These measures were widely exercised, both by military and political authorities.¹⁰ In addition, a War Press Office (*Kriegspressequartier*) was established.¹¹ It operated both inside and

outside the Monarchy, and propagated a fighting morale and “keeping up hopes for the ultimate victory.”¹²

In addition to official institutions, such as the War Press Office and the War Archive (*Kriegsarchiv*), civil society, and political organizations contributed to the propaganda aimed at helping with wartime mobilization, not only in Galicia but also elsewhere across the Habsburg Monarchy.¹³

Although Habsburg military authorities distrusted them even before the war, the bulk of Galician citizens remained loyal to the Monarchy in 1914. In August, patriotic demonstrations took place in the streets of Galicia as elsewhere across the monarchy.¹⁴ Galician Poles and Ruthenians established national organizations to support the war against Russia and promoted the formation of military units volunteering in the Habsburg forces. Most Polish politicians in Galicia united in the Supreme National Committee (*Naczelny Komitet Narodowy*), headquartered in Cracow. It became the political representative of the Polish Legions (*Legiony Polskie*) for which Galician and to a lesser extent Russian Poles also volunteered. These Polish Legions became part of the Austro-Hungarian Army.¹⁵ The Ruthenian parliamentarians formed the Supreme Ukrainian Council (*Holovna Ukraïns'ka Rada*) in Lemberg (today Lviv, Ukraine). In 1915, the council was reorganized into the General Ukrainian Council (*Zahal'na Ukraïns'ka Rada*) by extending its mandate to permit Ukrainian émigrés from the Russian Empire to become members. These émigrés, who had established the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (*Sojuz Vyzvolennja Ukraïny*) in August 1914, espoused more radical political objectives than most of the Austrian-Ruthenian political representatives.¹⁶ Despite these conflicts Ruthenians and Russian Ukrainians agreed to build a political alliance. The Supreme Ukrainian Council organized volunteer units to be included into the Habsburg forces. The Ukrainian Riflemen (*Sičovi Stril'ci*), later called the Austrian

Ukrainian Legion (*k.k. Ukrainische Legion*) became part of the Austrian territorial defence (*k.k. Landwehr*).¹⁷

Although the political parties of Galician Poles and Ruthenians swore loyalty to the Habsburg Monarchy, an important purpose of their wartime organizations was to represent own national interests, and both appealed to the national enthusiasm of their people. The Galician Polish National Democratic newspaper *Ślowo Polskie* committed itself to the struggle for the “existence of the Polish people” in its August 6 edition.¹⁸ Likewise, the leading Ruthenian newspaper in Galicia, *Dilo*, quoted a declaration of the Supreme Ukrainian Council with “At the present time there is no sacrifice, which could be too great for us. [...] With arms in the hands, we’ll pit our strength against our centuries-old enemy, Russian tsarism. With arms in our hands, we advocate our rights, honour and future.”¹⁹ In mid-August 1914, *Dilo* would title several editorials “War for Ukraine.”²⁰ Both newspapers appealed to their readers to take charge of their destiny by fighting against Russia.²¹ Both represented the war as a sacrifice for the nation, and a struggle for liberation from the “Russian yoke.” These declarations advocated solidarity of the Galician Poles and Ruthenians with Russian Poles and Ukrainians. In subsequent articles, both *Dilo* and *Ślowo Polskie* directly addressed Russian Poles and Russian Ukrainians. They advocated the Habsburg Monarchy as the guarantor of Polish or Ruthenian/Ukrainian nationality rights, and as a protector and an ally in the struggle against Russian oppression.²²

The national declarations of the Galician Poles and the Ruthenians often included calls for loyalty to the Habsburg Monarchy, appealing to civic duty and state patriotism. Polish Galician conservatives regularly highlighted the duty to the Emperor.²³ Even *Ślowo Polskie*, a daily associated with the Galician National Democrats, who usually stressed Polish national interests, called on its readers to support the Central Powers:

At the time when the [Habsburg] Monarchy was in danger of war, each Pole in the country felt and understood that it is a duty of Polish honour to spare no sacrifice of blood and property and stand up for the defense of the state from which we experienced so many good deeds in times of peace.²⁴

In the same article, *Słowo Polskie* asserted:

But the people can do more and want to do more than civic duty demands of them, if they are convinced that national autonomy, which they experienced under the sceptre of the Habsburgs, will also be granted to the other Polish territories that are still under terrible Russian oppression.²⁵

Ruthenian manifestos and newspaper articles frequently combined Ukrainian national aspirations with loyalty to the Habsburg Monarchy. The Greek Catholic clergy in Galicia (the faith of the majority of Ruthenians) reiterated calls for loyalty to the Emperor. In a pastoral letter from late August, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Lemberg, Andrey Sheptytsky, stressed gratitude to the Emperor for his benevolence to the Ruthenian people, while also expressing hopes for the fulfilment of Ruthenian/Ukrainian national aspirations for the future:

Being associated to the Austrian monarchy and the Habsburg dynasty by divine destiny, we willingly share the same fate and if the glorious army of our Emperor carries off the victory – what will happen with God’s grace – a better future will await our people! Remain loyal to our Emperor until the last drop of blood! Remain loyal, sons of our people!²⁶

Sheptytsky asserted that the struggle for Ruthenian/Ukrainian liberty was consistent with the fulfilment of duties to the state or the Emperor. The hostility towards Russia was palpable, and implied the defense of Polish or Ruthenian/Ukrainian nationality rights, the defense of the Habsburg Monarchy, and even the defense of Europe against “Asian barbarism.”²⁷

Both Galician Poles and Ruthenians declared the Habsburg Monarchy to be a protector against Russia; at the same time they pointed out the role of their national fellows in this struggle.²⁸ Polish propaganda often incorporated *Antemurale Christianitatis*. This longstanding tradition presented Poland as a bulwark of Christianity and of European civilization in the east. Ruthenian/Ukrainian wartime manifestos also highlighted the contrast between Ukrainian-European culture and Russian-Asiatic barbarism. This argument was designed to foster national pride by whipping up enthusiasm for the war against Russia, and was an important element of Polish and Ruthenian propaganda, which was directed at not only the Habsburg authorities but also the German ally. By pointing out the role of their national fellows in the struggle against Russia, they justified their own political and national claims.²⁹

Indeed, all Galician political organizations used the war to promote their own political goals and national interests.³⁰ However, in doing so, both Polish and Ruthenian/Ukrainian protagonists remained loyal to the Habsburg Monarchy, whether out of conviction or expediency to win over the Central Powers for their own political interests. The national interests of Poles and Ruthenians and Habsburg state interests initially coincided to the benefit of the Monarchy³¹ as national enthusiasm seemed to strengthen the loyalty of Austrian citizens and of Russia's national minorities towards the Central Powers.

The Austrian state's wartime propaganda went hand in hand with the activities of Galician national organizations. Polish and Ruthenian/Ukrainian national manifestos in addition to Jewish expressions of loyalty were consistent with the objectives of Austria's wartime propaganda. Not only did they evoke fear and hatred of Russia- depicting it as both an oppressor of Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews living in Russia, and as a threat to European civilization. Manifestos also referred to countering the "Mongolian invasion" by highlighting

the Austrian nationality rights. Therefore, they enabled Vienna to even more present itself as a guarantor of nationality rights, and as a beloved multinational Monarchy standing united against the Russian threat.

Articles in Galician newspapers contributed to the Habsburg “discourse of unity.”³² Austrian wartime propaganda emphasized the enthusiasm for war throughout the Habsburg Monarchy and the loyalty of all its peoples in order to strengthen the confidence of victory at home and to demonstrate the strength of the Monarchy abroad. Therefore, the manifestos of Galician Poles and Ruthenians appeared not only in the province, but also in Vienna’s newspapers.³³ While reprinting many of these manifestos, Austrian official wartime propaganda ignored the often contradictory aims of Galician Poles and Ruthenians by referring only to their common goals. Austrian censorship supported these efforts by suppressing reports about national antagonisms.³⁴ However, these representations of unity and the image of the Habsburg Monarchy as a guarantor of nationality rights during the war more and more ceased to reflect the Galician political reality.

Wartime Violence: Oppressive Measures and Ethnic Conflict

The repeated public statements of loyalty by all leading political parties in Galicia could not entirely dispel imperial authorities’ mistrust of national movements in Galicia. Indeed, Habsburg military and Austrian political authorities sought to use Slavs’ national ambitions for the war against Russia. At the same time, they suspected that the enemy was seeking to employ Habsburg Slavic national movements as a weapon against Austria-Hungary. Already before the war, Austrian and Hungarian authorities had been concerned about Russian espionage in Galicia. When the war started, these fears increased dramatically. Military defeats encouraged this hysteria about possible treason at the local level. Habsburg

soldiers often blamed Russian ambushes on locals whom they alleged supplied the enemy with information.³⁵

The Galician population suffered under the Austro-Hungarian military administration, which was implemented because of the close proximity to the front line. Indeed, Galicia became an important site of Austro-Hungarian administrative and military wartime excesses.³⁶ Because Galicia was designated a war zone, civilians were under military jurisdiction. Those suspected of treason were court-martialed. Summary executions were regular occurrences on the home front and the fighting front, although the number of these summary executions is unknown. The historian Hannes Leidinger has written that the deaths of 620 Galicians executed by the Austro-Hungarian military in 1914 and 1915 can be confirmed by archival and written sources. However, the number of victims must have been much higher, even if the claims of Ruthenian and Polish parliamentarians in Vienna's *Reichsrat* about the deaths of 30,000 civilians in Galicia were exaggerated. In any case, the records show the arbitrariness of many of these executions.³⁷ In addition to the executions, persons classified as unreliable were arrested and sent to internment camps. As elsewhere in the Habsburg borderlands, distrust was directed at members of Habsburg nationalities whose co-national also lived in neighboring belligerent states, such as Serbs, Romanians, and Italians.³⁸

Austro-Hungarian authorities aimed repressive measures in Galicia mainly at alleged Ruthenian Russophiles. Pro-Russian institutions were closed as soon as war was declared. Some Russophile activists fled to Russia, while those who remained were arrested on charges of high treason. These measures were not confined to Russophile activists. Although Russophiles were a minority in Galicia, the majority of Ruthenian political parties were anti-Russian and pro-Habsburg, Austrian authorities, however, overestimated Ruthenians

sympathies for Russia. Thousands of Ruthenians were deported from the war zone and interned in camps in the Monarchy's interior. The largest of these was Thalerhof near Graz, where some 5,700 Ruthenians were interned from the first months of the war. Thus the camp became a symbol of Austro-Hungarian persecution for Ruthenians.³⁹

Although in 1914 Austro-Hungarian suspicion centred on Ruthenians, Austrian Poles and Jews were also affected by these "strategic evacuations" and executions.⁴⁰ During the Habsburg retreat from Galicia in autumn 1914, Habsburg state and military violence towards civilians intensified. The army high command blamed its defeat on the disloyalty of the local civilians. In fact, there had been Galicians - voluntarily or under pressure - who supported the Russian Army, but the Austro-Hungarian military authorities exaggerated the numbers.⁴¹ Correspondents sent by the War Press Office spread rumors about Galician Ruthenians providing the Russian army with information on Austro-Hungarian positions. They reported, for example, that Ruthenians carried mirrors rather than icons during a religious procession to signal Russian troops.⁴² "Ruthenian traitors" were scapegoated for military defeats in 1914, when the Russian Army advanced into western Galicia.⁴³

During the Russian occupation of a large part of Galicia from autumn 1914 to summer 1915, violence against civilians continued. The Russian military authorities particularly mistrusted Galician Jews, whom they suspected of spying for Austria-Hungary. Owing to anti-Semitic policies and mistrust of Jews, who were had long been regarded as an alien element, the Russian military persecuted Russian Jews at the front following the outbreak of the war. After the Russian occupation of Galicia, local Jews were subjected to treatment by the occupying forces similar to how they treated Russian Jews. Jews were regularly victims of physical violence in Russian-occupied Galicia. Indeed, one of the most violent wartime pogroms occurred in Lemberg at the end of September 1914. Some Russian commanders

confiscated Jewish property and handed over to Ruthenian peasants. Sometimes these peasant were allowed to accompany Russian soldiers when they looted Jewish property.⁴⁴ However, the Russian authorities took action against all pro-Habsburg Ruthenian/Ukrainian political activists in Galicia. Many of them, together with Greek-Catholic priests, were accused of Austrian/Habsburg sympathies, arrested, and deported to Russia, among them, Metropolitan Archbishop Sheptytsky.

One reason for these draconian measures was the Russian occupying forces' fear of espionage and sabotage in support of Austria-Hungary. Another was the Russian occupying regime's aim of preparing Galicia for "reunification" with Russia. Russian nationalists claimed that Galicia was "primordial Russian land," inhabited by "Russian" people (they referred to Ruthenians/Ukrainians as Russians or Little Russians). Russification efforts targeted the Ruthenian-Ukrainian language, which Russia did not recognize as a language, but rather considered a Russian dialect. The Ruthenian/Ukrainian national movement and the Greek Catholic clergy opposed these efforts.⁴⁵ Galician Ruthenians were thus in a predicament: on the one hand, the Austro-Hungarian authorities accused them of sympathizing with Russia, while on the other, Russian authorities accused them of having "Austrian orientation" and restricted their cultural institutions. In the course of the occupation, the Russian authorities operating in Galicia confirmed anti-Russian proclivities among the Ruthenians.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the Russian occupation regime won some sympathy from Galician Ruthenians. Some of them followed the Russian army when it retreated from Galicia in 1915 owing to their fear of Austro-Hungarian retaliation after the Russian occupation.⁴⁷

The Russian occupation regimes' promotion of the "Russian character" of the region, however, turned against the Poles. Russian nationalists regarded the Poles as "foreign elements" in eastern Galicia. Consequently, they intended in the long term to ban Polish from

the Galician administration and schools. Nevertheless, the Russian governor-general's administration decided for practical reasons to keep most of the Polish civil servants in office during occupation. The occupying regime had close contacts not only with the Galician Russophiles but also with the Polish National Democrats, who were willing to collaborate with Russia. The Russian supreme commander, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich, promised the re-unification of the Polish lands, including western Galicia, under the aegis of the Russian Czar, with autonomy for the Poles. Whereas at the beginning of the war most of the Polish politicians in Galicia supported the Austro-Hungarian war efforts, some of them now changed their attitudes to Russia due to the changed political situation.⁴⁸

After the liberation of Galicia by Austro-Hungarian and German forces in the summer of 1915, military authorities turned their attention to Galician civilians who supposedly have collaborated with the occupation regime. Several Austro-Hungarian officials expressed concerns about the blanket assumptions against Ruthenians and the repressive measures taken in Galicia.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the returning Austro-Hungarian Army took up their severe measures against potential traitors, whether Poles or Ruthenians.

Reflecting on the Russian occupation in Galicia, Austro-Hungarian observers such as the Austrian diplomat and envoy in German-occupied Warsaw, Leopold von Andrian-Werburg, criticized the attitudes of the Polish elites toward the Russian occupation regime. They pointed to the pro-Russian attitudes of the Polish National Democrats.⁵⁰ Furthermore the Austro-Hungarian military authorities often blamed the Galician officials and civil servants for their collaboration with the Russian authorities.⁵¹ Jews, as always, suffered retaliation. Although the Jews could scarcely be accused of Russian sympathies, Poles, Ruthenians, the Austro-Hungarian military often accused them of profiteering. Jewish tradesmen were accused to have profited from the collaboration with the Russian authorities. They were also

accused of spying for Russia. These accusations mirrored the socioeconomic rivalries between Galician Poles and Ruthenians on the one hand and Jews on the other, as well as the growing anti-Semitism in Galicia.⁵²

Although Austrian authorities tried to calm national rivalries between Poles and Ruthenians in Galicia, these rivalries intensified over the course of the war. It can be assumed that the violence sanctioned by the Austro-Hungarian military contributed to the escalation of these conflicts. Although the goal of these measures was to counteract centrifugal trends among Galician national groups, they even more alienated Poles and Ruthenians from Vienna. Whereas at the beginning of the war their nationalism backed the officially propagated Habsburg patriotism, as the war dragged on, the confidence in the Austrian state was lost among the two most decisive Galician nationalities.⁵³ The war and the Russian occupation in Galicia 1914/15 fuelled the conflict.

Both, Galician Poles and Ruthenians became in the course of the war at the same time victims and perpetrators of state violence. Both Austro-Hungarian and Russian military authorities relied on civilian denunciations when search out opponents of their regimes. The Habsburg Army's High Command was interested in a diligent examination of denunciations addressed to Ruthenians by their political adversaries. In most cases the military officials employed in Galicia did not doubt these accusations. Consequently, the Polish dominated Galician provincial authorities were important in the prosecutions of Ruthenians throughout the war.⁵⁴ Polish officials often intended to harm their Ruthenian political opponents, accusing them of harboring pro-Russian sympathies and exaggerating the strength of the Russophile movement in Galicia. The participation of some local civilians in Russian looting and pogroms worsened the relations among Galicia's ethnic groups.

After the recapture of Galicia in summer 1915 by the Central Powers, Galician Poles and Ruthenians accused one another of collaboration with the Russian occupation regime. Both sides accused the Jews of treason, who found themselves in the crossfire of the Galician Polish-Ruthenian conflict. Ruthenians, Poles and Jews pointed to denunciations made by the others, playing down denunciations made by their own fellows. In contrast to the discourse of unity that dominated Austrian wartime propaganda in the beginning of the war, the Polish-Ruthenian conflict intensified and anti-Semitism grew in the course of the war.⁵⁵ When the Austrian Reichsrat reconvened in May 1917, national conflicts soon erupted. In the parliament the delegates of the different Galician nationalities sought to blame one another for the situation in Galicia. Galician politicians complained about the imperial government's dictatorial policies and the Austro-Hungarian army's violence directed at civilians. They, too, accused their political opponents of denouncing innocent citizens. The Ruthenian deputies directed most of their rancor at the Polish provincial authorities.⁵⁶ The violence that occurred in Galicia as well as political promises from both the Central Powers and Russia during the war contributed to the Polish-Ruthenian rivalry following the dissolution of Austria-Hungary in November 1918. The Central Powers' wartime promises to Poles and Ukrainians in Russia in addition to the promises of the Entente probably inspired national demands on both sides. On November 5, 1916, the German and Habsburg emperors proclaimed the creation of a Kingdom of Poland carved out of Congress Poland. At the same time, Emperor Francis Joseph promised the extension of Galician self-government.⁵⁷ Plans for an independent Ukraine were vaguer and took form only in 1917 and 1918. However, as early as 1914 the Central Powers, primarily Germany, supported the anti-Russian propaganda of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine.⁵⁸

The incompatibility of Polish and Ruthenian/Ukrainian national desires exacerbated the already existing conflicts between these two groups in Galicia. Ruthenians demanded the partition of Galicia and the creation of a Ruthenian province within Austria-Hungary, consisting of the predominantly Ruthenian territories of eastern Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia. Habsburg Poles claimed all of Galicia as Polish, and insisted on an autonomous, Polish-dominated Galicia or even an independent Polish state that included Galicia. The national conflicts that surfaced during the First World War resulted in the Polish-Ukrainian war of November 1918.⁵⁹

Conclusion

Propaganda played an important role for Austro-Hungarian authorities in governing the Galician home front. Not only imperial authorities played an influential role in propaganda efforts. Political organizations run by Galician Poles and Ruthenians also contributed by encouraging Galicians' nationalist sentiments and demands for the liberation of Poles and Ukrainians from Russian oppression. These nationalist appeals, however, were usually combined with Austrian and Habsburg state patriotism. Polish and Ruthenian politicians long respected the Habsburg Monarchy as a guarantor of nationality rights and as a symbol of "European civilization" in contrast to "Russian-Asiatic barbarism." Austrian propaganda called for the unity, support, and loyalty of all the nationalities of Austria-Hungary against Russia. The residents of Galicia, as a border population, were decisive in this discourse for unity, although the propaganda on Galicia usually ignored local political conflicts between Polish and Ruthenian national ambitions.

In contrast to the discourse for unity, the Austro-Hungarian military administration suspected the Ruthenians of sympathizing with and spying for Russia. Suspicions were often based on the nationality of the accused, and not on evidence. Acts of violence by the Austro-

Hungarian military against those suspected of treason contradicted the propaganda of unity and the loyalty of the monarchy's peoples. Although the state authorities intended to calm down national conflicts, their mistrust and fear of spies antagonized the populace. The participation of Galician civilians in the state's violent measures increased the scale of ethnic conflicts in Galicia. Instead of consolidating a sense of unity in view of the common enemy, the war alienated the different Galician ethnic groups not only from one another but in the end also from the Austrian state.

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¹ On the strategic importance of Galicia for the Habsburg Monarchy see Maner, *Galizien*, 168-201; on the military preparations see also Lein, "Strategische und taktische Vorbedingungen."

² Cf. Leidinger et al., *Habsburgs schmutziger Krieg*, 51-91.

³ On the political situation in Galicia see Maner, *Galizien*, 127-165. On the nationalities and their relations see Himka, "Dimensions of a Triangle."

⁴ See Magocsi, "Galicia," 7f.

⁵ Poles were predominantly Roman Catholic and Ruthenians Greek Catholic. This dates back to the sixteenth century, when the Orthodox hierarchy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth decided to unite with the Roman Catholic Church by preserving the Eastern rite. The Uniate Church was renamed the Greek Catholic Church under Habsburg rule. In the nineteenth century the Greek Catholic Church became a quasi-national institution for Ruthenians in Galicia, whereas it was repressed in Russia.

⁶ See Himka, "Dimensions of a Triangle.," 27-31.

⁷ The Russian government, which supported Russian nationalism as an underlying principle of the Russian Empire, considered the Ukrainians part of the Russian nation. From a Russian point of view, the Ukrainian national movement in Galicia and the nationality rights in Austria compromised the policy of Russification in the Ukrainian-speaking part of the Romanov Empire. Moreover, Polish influence in the Austrian parliament and in Galicia alarmed the Russian government, arousing concerns about Polish national ambitions in Russian Poland. See Wendland, *Die Russophilen in Galizien*.

⁸ On the role of Galicia in the tensions between Austria and Russia see in detail Bachmann, *Herd der Feindschaft*; cf. Mitter, "Galizien"; on Galician Russophiles, see Wendland, *Die Russophilen in Galizien*; on the suspicions of Russophilism see *ibid.* 514-524; on Russian politics concerning the "Ukrainian Question," see Miller, *Ukrainian question*.

⁹ See Bachmann, *Herd der Feindschaft*, 65-127; 234-258; on the details of the Polish-Ukrainian compromise see Kuzmany, "Der Galizische Ausgleich."

¹⁰ On the press and censorship see Scheer, *Ringstraßenfront*, 108-129; Spann, "Zensur in Österreich."

¹¹ On propaganda activities of the *Kriegspressequartier* see Džambo, "Armis et litteris."

¹² Demm, *Ostpolitik und Propaganda*, 7.

¹³ See Saueremann, *Literarische Kriegsfürsorge*; Buxbaum, *Des Kaisers Literaten*.

¹⁴ See Szlanta, "Unter dem sinkenden Stern," 142.

¹⁵ See Szlanta, "Der Erste Weltkrieg," 154-158; Milewska et al., *Legiony Polskie*.

¹⁶ The "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine" (*Sojuz Vyzvolennja Ukraïny*) was an organization of Ukrainian émigrés from the Russian Empire, which sought to use the war as a means of gaining Ukrainian independence. They made propaganda for their ideals in several German-language publications. When the Austro-Hungarian government treated them with greater reserve (mainly out of consideration for the political interests of the Poles), the Ukrainian émigrés found support in the German Empire. See Bihl, "Bund zur Befreiung der Ukraina."

¹⁷ Compared to the Polish Legions, however, the Ukrainian volunteer units faced much more distrust and opposition from the Austro-Hungarian military authorities. See Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 102-106; Rutkowski, *k.k. Ukrainische Legion*.

¹⁸ "Do społeczeństwa polskiego!," *Słowo Polskie*, August 6, 1914, morning edn., 1.

¹⁹ "Holovna Ukraïns'ka Rada do vseho Ukraïns'koho Narodu!," *Dilo*, August 6, 1914, 1.

²⁰ See for example "Viïna za Ukraïnu," *Dilo*, August 10, 1914, 1; "Viïna za Ukraïnu," *Dilo*, August 12, 1914, 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*; "Holovna Ukraïns'ka Rada do vseho Ukraïns'koho Narodu!," *Dilo*, August 6, 1914, 1.

²² See for example *ibid.*

²³ Z. Tarnowski, "Do rolników," *Czas*, August 6, 1914, afternoon edn., 1.

²⁴ "Do społeczeństwa polskiego!," *Słowo Polskie*, August 6, 1914, morning edn., 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ "Eine Kundgebung des Erzbischofs Grafen Szeptycki von Lemberg," *Reichspost*, August 30, 1914, morning edn., 2.

²⁷ See for example "Manifest Koła polskiego," *Czas*, August 17, 1914, morning edn., 1.

²⁸ See for example "Wojna moskiewska," *Słowo Polskie*, August 7, 1914, afternoon edn., 1.

²⁹ See Wöller, "Europa" als historisches Argument, 257-367.

³⁰ This conduct was unexceptional. In other regions of the Habsburg Monarchy similar lines of action can be found. Sabine Schmitner's article in this special issue describes how political parties in Wiener Neustadt used the war to gain a political advantage.

³¹ Alexander Watson describes this as "double mobilization": official patriotic mobilization was combined with a semi-official national mobilization. Watson, *Ring of Steel*, 94.

³² Ernst et al., "Zeitenbruch und Kontinuität," 17f.

³³ See for example: "Ein Manifest der Ruthenen Galiziens. Für eine 'freie Ukraina'," *Reichspost*, August 12, 1914, morning edn., 6; cf. "Aufruf des ukrainischen Nationalrates," *Neue Freie Presse*, August 18, 1914, morning edn., 6; "Der Krieg im Osten. Mazeppas Geist," *Reichspost*, August 15, 1914, morning edn., 2; cf. "Viïna za Ukraïnu," *Dilo*, August 10, 1914, 1; "Die 'Ukrainischen Sitschower Schützen'," *Reichspost*, August 17, 1914, morning edn., 3; "Ein Aufruf der russischen Ukrainer," *Neue Freie Presse*, September 10, 1914, morning edn., 6; cf. "Die Ukrainer gegen den Zarismus. Ein Aufruf an Europa," *Reichspost*, September 10, 1914, morning edn., 2.

³⁴ See Spann, "Zensur in Österreich", 250-320, 289-297.

³⁵ Cf. Leidinger et al., *Habsburgs schmutziger Krieg*, 89f.

³⁶ See Leidinger et al., *Habsburgs schmutziger Krieg*; Hagen, *War in a European Borderland*, 10-18.

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- ³⁷ See Leidinger, "Einzug des Galgens und des Mordes," 245f; cf. Watson, *Ring of Steel*, 152-155. On Austro-Hungarian military justice, see for example, Hautmann, "Kriegsgesetze".
- ³⁸ See this special issue's contributions by Alessandro Livio on Trentino, and Ionela Zaharia on Habsburg Romanian military clergy.
- ³⁹ See Hoffmann et al., *Thalerhof*; Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 99.
- ⁴⁰ See Mentzel, "Kriegsflüchtlinge," 57-91.
- ⁴¹ See Watson, *Ring of Steel*, 151.
- ⁴² See for example Roda Roda, "Die russophile Spionage in Ostgalizien," *Neue Freie Presse*, September 6, 1914, morning edn., 4; Roda Roda, "Die Spionage von galizischen Russophilen für die russischen Truppen," *Neue Freie Presse*, September 3, 1914, evening edn., 2.
- ⁴³ See Mentzel, "Kriegsflüchtlinge," 92-94.
- ⁴⁴ See Prusin, *Nationalizing a borderland*, 13-42; Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 79-82; 104-111 .
- ⁴⁵ See Hagen, *War in a European Borderland*, 32-42; Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 111-127.
- ⁴⁶ See Hagen, *War in a European Borderland*, 41.
- ⁴⁷ See Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 130-133; Bachturina, *Politika*, 187-192.
- ⁴⁸ See Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 86-96; Hagen, *War in a European Borderland*, 31f.
- ⁴⁹ See Hautmann, "Kriegsgesetze," 83; Mentzel, "Kriegsflüchtlinge," 89f.
- ⁵⁰ See Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 137-146.
- ⁵¹ See Rydel, "Poljaki," 174; for some examples see also Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 141.
- ⁵² See Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 242-249.
- ⁵³ See Cornwall, *Undermining*, 18; Szlanta, "Unter dem sinkenden Stern," 145-148; Binder, *Galizien in Wien*, 493-507.
- ⁵⁴ See Tamara Scheer's article in this special issue.
- ⁵⁵ See Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 73-167.
- ⁵⁶ See Leidinger, "Einzug des Galgens und des Mordes;" Cornwall, *Undermining*, 18f.; 30.
- ⁵⁷ See Watson, *Ring of Steel*, 411-413; Wargelin, "Austro-Polish Solution", 261.
- ⁵⁸ See Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 66-128.
- ⁵⁹ See Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 69-202.