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LOCALNESS, IDENTITY, AND THE HISTORIC CITY. NEW ELITES IN THE AUTONOMOUS GALICIAN LVIV*

Abstract

This article explores the urban elites of Lviv during its autonomous era under Habsburg rule. The elites included not only state and municipal officials but also 'self-proclaimed' groups of local patriots, whose main point of reference was their city and maintaining its respectability. The issue of the preservation of secular monuments in the city (mainly the Old Town) is dealt with, as well as the history of selected grassroots associations, like the Society of the Friends of Old Lviv and the Society for the Embellishment of the City of Lviv and Its Surroundings. The author argues that by investigating the institutions which took care of the physical space of the city and its buildings, it is possible to delve into the identity of the elites in question. He further argues that it was not only the imperial and national identity that was reflected in the sources, but also a purely local one, which points to the issue of localness as an important category of research.

Keywords: nineteenth-century Lviv, urban elites, localness, monument preservation, grassroots associations

I INTRODUCTION

The end of the nineteenth century was a critical time for cities (or, if one would prefer, larger towns) in Central Europe. 'Emerging cities', as they were called in the recent scholarship,¹ still post-feudal and

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¹ See the introduction to: Heidi Hein-Kircher, *Lemberg's "polnischen Charakter" sichern. Kommunalpolitik in einer multiethnischen Stadt der Habsburgermonarchie zwischen 1861/62 und 1914* (Stuttgart, 2020).

poor, multi-ethnic, often crisis-driven and only slowly acquiring the features of their larger and more modern Western counterparts – cities like Pozsony/Pressburg/Prešporok, Brünn/Brno, Lwów/Lviv/Lemberg, or Trieste – witnessed a rapid process of modernisation during that period. This change coincided (or indeed, caused) transformations of the identity of their urban inhabitants. This transformation was multi-faceted and had no clear pattern. However, some common features can be identified, including the building of new ‘spatial formats’ (as it was phrased by Matthias Middell), like the coherent national states, as opposed to the multi-ethnic empires of the time, and new points of reference of the urban elites. As will be shown, these elites also encompassed self-established groups of urban ‘hosts’, or ‘actors’ – represented by single members or whole voluntary associations – formed within the broad scope of possible legitimate actions in this most liberal empire of that time. They regarded themselves as a responsible force driving the process of modernisation and the building of urban esteem. The process of elite-making could develop to include wider groups of citizens of the Austrian Empire, as the second half of the nineteenth century saw a broadening of the scope of interest of the state, going beyond securing the subordination of the subjects and the creation of self-government in urban communes.² The allegiance of the elites is a complicated issue, as their undeniable loyalty to the emperor, or even pride in being a part of the empire,³ often went hand-in-hand with ‘centrifugal’ ideals, like the national one,⁴ as well as more cosmopolitan ones, binding the cities of Central Europe with the remote foreign metropolises which played the role of new points of reference.⁵ This identity can be thus described as ‘hybrid’ (as phrased by Moritz Csáky), or ‘multi-layered’ (as phrased

² Cf. John Deak, *Forging a Multinational State: State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War* (Stanford CA, 2016), 175–214.

³ This topic has been explored in Daniel L. Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism. Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916* (West Lafayette IN, 2005).

⁴ As regards the Ukrainian and Jewish national ideal in Galicia, see e.g. Andrei S. Markovits and Frank E. Sysyn (eds), *Nationbuilding and the Politics of Nationalism. Essays on Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge MA, 1982).

⁵ This aspect was pointed out in the account on Cracow: Nathaniel D. Wood, *Becoming Metropolitan. Urban Selfhood and the Making of Modern Cracow* (DeKalb IL, 2010).

by Markian Prokopovych), being oriented at one and the same time towards different centres, or points of reference, while being clearly set in the local milieu. In this article, I examine this context, and argue that the discourse produced by the elites of Lviv, though it obviously followed the above-mentioned pattern of hybridity, can also be seen as local, and that this localness can be seen as one of the essential categories in the historical research.

My scholarship owes much to the spatial point of view, where the interplay between the physical environment and human mentality is of prime importance. The issue, which will be dealt with in more detail on these pages, is the perception and evaluation of the city *per se*, especially its historical parts, by the urban elites. This organising idea underlies the choices made within the massive body of archival records, causing me to choose those members of the elites and institutions, and those issues that can shed light on the phenomenon of local patriotism, entangled with the spatial, ‘touchable’, or ‘reachable’ aspect of the fatherland. Therefore the archival material explored here comes from the debates of the conservationists, who laid the foundations of the policy towards secular urban architecture only at the turn of the twentieth century, and which could in my view be seen as a reflection of the identity of the elites in question. The other materials are composed of archival sources containing the discourse produced by selected voluntary urban associations of that time, whose activities can be regarded as providing a hint of the way urban elites regarded the space of their city, as well as the memoirs of the urban inhabitants, either published or gathered in the archives of Lviv, Wrocław, and Warsaw.

II

THE CITY AND ITS PUBLIC SPHERE

Lviv, located in Eastern Galicia, was the capital of the whole crownland and grew from around 100,000 inhabitants in 1873 to 160,000 in 1890, and to more than 200,000 in 1910 (including soldiers),⁶ which made it one of the largest cities in the Austrian part of the monarchy.

⁶ Konrad Wnęk, Lidia A. Zyblikiewicz, and Ewa Callahan, *Ludność nowoczesnego Lwowa w latach 1857–1938* (Kraków, 2006), 35.

When we look at the districts, we can assume that this growth was generated mainly in the new leading administrative and residential areas in the southern (Halickie) and south-western (Krakowskie) suburbs. At the same time, the central historic core of the city (its Old Town), still home to almost 19 per cent of the population in 1857, stopped growing around 1880 with around 16,000 inhabitants; and then proceeded to decrease in size to 12,500, home to only 6.42 per cent of the whole population, in 1910.⁷ The pace of building activity increased after 1905, and the city saw an average of 300 buildings a year erected in the period 1906–13.⁸ The nearest parts of the districts abutting the centre were the most affected. The parcels around the main public space of the Hetman Ramparts (*Wąły Hetmańskie*), which were arranged along the defunct walls and bastions, were quickly built up, and a business district of financial and administrative institutions developed to the south-west. This was the context of the debates concerning the Old Town, which will be described below.

The Lviv elites were heterogeneous and consisted of different groups. Obviously, the most visible part of the elites included the municipal officials, elected or co-opted, who represented the city or ran its affairs.⁹ More interesting, however, is the ‘self-proclaimed’ part of them, people who can be called grassroots activists, engaged in urban initiatives either as their initiators or proponents, and reacting energetically to the problems of the city and fighting for its respectability. The Polish-speaking elites constitute the subject of examination in this paper, since this language, as the primary official language in Galicia after the 1860s, dominated in the public discourse in the city. The sessions of the municipal council were conducted in Polish, the majority of associations chose Polish as their working language, and a large part of the available Lviv memoirs from the Belle Époque is in Polish. To be sure, there were also many organisations which used Ukrainian and Yiddish, although the scope of their interests was less connected with the spatial issues of the city, and more with, for

⁷ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁸ Mikola Bezv and Jurij O. Birjul’ov *et al.*, *Arhitektura L’vova: čas i stili XIII–XXI st.* (Lviv, 2008), 387.

⁹ This group has already been the subject of scrutiny in Łukasz Tomasz Sroka, *Rada Miejska we Lwowie w okresie autonomii galicyjskiej 1870–1914. Studium o elicie władzy* (Kraków, 2012).

example, educational, financial or political conditions and projects in Galicia.

A good path to establishing oneself as a part of the elite was through membership in associations. There were plenty of them available because the political climate in Galicia was favourable and social institutions had much more leeway. These associations were an important feature of civic life in the city and a sign of its democratisation.¹⁰ To be sure, not everyone was enthralled with them. As Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński, a Polish publicist and himself a member of the self-proclaimed elite, wrote ironically in his memoirs, that in Lviv there was a “real mania for establishing associations, committees, companies, and the work around them is minimal: one elects the presiding body, department, and here these efforts often end”.¹¹ The number of associations, whether as single organisations, or groups of sub-organisations, reached about seventy in 1907,¹² and although many of them were not especially active, there were also contrary examples, which will be described below. By looking at the member lists of some of them, we can gain an insight into how widespread was the idea of being associated among the wider population. For example, the Archaeological Society, a scholarly body, counted as members, among others, private officials, artists, professors, as well as merchants, confectioners, watchmakers, or curates.¹³ To be sure, only a fraction of the members mentioned above can be described as a self-proclaimed elite. In this respect, one has to be cautious and try to find those who coupled their membership in societies with other types of social activity. Nevertheless, these associations did play a role in shaping people’s identity and expressing their commitment to public affairs.

As an example of such kind of activist, one can point to Józef Białynia-Chołodecki. This writer and high financial official at the

¹⁰ Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Dział Rękopisów (hereinafter: ZNiO DR), Stefan Uhma, *Moje wspomnienia z lat 1888–1914*, Part 2: *Lwów na początku XX wieku*, ref. no. 14446/II, 243.

¹¹ Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński, *Ludzie i czasy mego wieku. Wspomnienia, wypadki, zapiski (1892–1914)*, ed. by Eugeniusz Koko (Gdańsk, 2012), 128.

¹² Józef Wiczkowski, *Lwów. Jego rozwój i stan kulturalny oraz przewodnik po mieście* (Lwów, 1907), IV–VI.

¹³ Tsentral’niy derzhavniy istorichniy arkhiv Ukraïni, m. Lviv (hereinafter: TsDIAL), Towarzystwo archeologiczne krajowe we Lwowie (hereinafter: Archaeological Society), f. 192, op. 1, d. 6 (hereinafter: 192/1/6), p. 43.

Post left a notebook wherein he collected dozens of press clippings concerning his activities in Lviv.¹⁴ His initiatives covered a wide range of affairs. He supported an amateur theatre and chaired the Society of the Friends of the Stage, and, from 1901 on, the Association of the Folk Theatre, as the theatre became a permanent institution in the city, enriching Lviv's artistic life. He was active as a member of the Post Office Club, which organised carnival gatherings and collected money for the Polish minorities abroad. He was active in the department of the Galician Association of the Defence of Animals. He was a member of the League of Industrial Help, the Catholic industrial-artisan association *Skala* (Rock); the Society of Assistance for Polish Writers and Artists; the Heraldic Society; the Society of Polish Student Shelter; Vice-chair of the Lviv branch of the Society of the Folk School (a national body); the Society of the [moral] Defence of the Youth; and the Consumer Society of Officials. He also belonged to committees engaged in building new monuments like the one devoted to the poet Adam Mickiewicz and was active in the efforts to erect a monument to another poet, Juliusz Słowacki, as well as in other Polish commemorative initiatives.¹⁵ He was also a member of the Municipal Council, close to the National League. When he left the council, one journalist described him as “an official at the office, a writer outside the office, a Polish nobleman of the old school and an Austrian official of the newest fashion, an ingenious initiator of gatherings of all sorts ... ; member of all the committees which were, are, and will be created”.¹⁶ The example of Białynia-Chołodecki can help understand how the elite in question shaped its image, what formed the basis of its identity, and how it viewed the issue of its social legitimacy. Here the obvious national inclinations were combined with the passion of a local activist, whose real fatherland was his city, to which Białynia-Chołodecki also devoted several of his popular books.

Another singular example of a member of the elite was Władysław Bełza, a poet and writer who was born in Warsaw,¹⁷ and worked briefly in Prussia. His fate – that of an exceptional personality who searched

¹⁴ Notebook of Józef Białynia-Chołodecki, *TsDIAL*, 81/1/9, 48.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 8–10, 60, 68–9, 88, 97, 107, 114, 117.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁷ Władysław T. Wislocki, *Władysław Bełza*, in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, i (Kraków, 1935), ed. by Władysław Konopczyński *et al.*, 413.

for his place in different parts of Polish partitioned lands, only to settle down in Galicia, where people aspiring to the elite had the best opportunities – was quite typical. I will not list all the associations to which he belonged, but rather point out two organisations which were co-founded by him: the Literary Circle (1880) and the Adam Mickiewicz Literary Society (1886). He was not only active in organising literary life in the city but was also an ‘accelerator’ of other societies. As the famous Lviv memoirist Kazimierz Chłędowski pointed out: “Bełza was visible everywhere: if the ‘nation’ needed a skilful director; he then ran through the city, gathered signatures for public subscriptions, coaxed and persuaded: in the town hall, in the theatre, on the street; a real person full of beans”.¹⁸ His new local *patria* was indeed dear to his heart, and his influence permeated into the urban masses, as can be seen in the testimony of Tadeusz Garczyński, a descendant of the ancient ‘political nation’ of the nobility. As a young man, Garczyński travelled in Italy and met Bełza in Florence. He was deeply touched by the fact that the skyline of that Italian city reminded Bełza of Lviv, and that Lviv was apparently always the main point of reference for the poet.¹⁹

Another member of the elite was Aleksander Czołowski, a historian and the main municipal archivist of that time.²⁰ He collaborated with the City Council, was an active member of not only historical but also artistic associations, and – what is crucial here and will be dealt with in more detail later on – looked after the historical monuments in the city. As the memoirist Mieczysław Opalek pointed out, Czołowski was the man behind the initiative of beautifying the Old Town Square through getting rid of the anaesthetic signs and advertisements. He was also a person who was visible in the public space of the city, taking part in the pageants of the artisans, etc.²¹ He knew the history of each old house in the Old Town almost by heart, using this knowledge to support opinions favouring their preservation. These three men can serve as examples of the ‘self-made-man’ of the new urban elite.

¹⁸ Kazimierz Chłędowski, *Pamiętniki*, i: *Galicja* (Kraków, 1957), 355.

¹⁹ Biblioteka Narodowa, Zbiory Specjalne (hereinafter: BN ZS), Tadeusz Garczyński, *Wspomnienia*, i, ref. no. 10562 III, 139–40.

²⁰ Cf. Iwona Zima, *Aleksander Czołowski 1865–1944. Luminarz lwowskiej kultury* (Gdynia, 2011).

²¹ Mieczysław Opalek, *O Lwowie i mojej młodości. Kartki z pamiętnika 1881–1901* (Ossolineum, 1987), 124, 175.

Besides municipal officials, another part of the elite included people hired in the field of education. Notably, the University and Polytechnic professors were deemed to be that part of the urban community which should be (and was) most active in the city. As one of the memoirists put it, by sheer virtue of their scholarly status, they were destined to preside over the cultural life of the city.²² As we shall see, the academic professors were indeed active in the various associations and institutions.

III URBAN CONSERVATIONIST MOVEMENT

Now let me look at the attitude towards the physical space of the city and the public policy conducted by the members of the Lviv elite. Therefore, to begin with, it is necessary to describe the ‘main institutional actor.’ In 1850–3, in the wake of new centralistic reforms in the Austrian monarchy, the Imperial and Royal Central Commission for Preservation and Research of Artistic Heritage (*K.K. Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Kunst- und Historischen Denkmale*) was established in Vienna, with separate Main Conservationists in each of the crownlands.²³ Galicia was divided into two parts, with centres in Cracow and Lviv. Owing to financial considerations, the focus of conservationists was obviously narrow at that time. Their main concern was with churches and castles, along with old sculptures.²⁴ It was only in 1888 that special Groups of Conservationists were established in each part of Galicia. The Eastern one, based in Lviv, brought together more than a dozen intellectuals trained in history and later in art history, who made up part of the city’s elite.²⁵ This body, initially loosely connected with Vienna,²⁶ and later increasingly

²² ZNiO DR, Michał Browiński, *Com widział i słyszał... Wspomnienia*, ref. no. 13341/II, 89.

²³ Walter Frodl, *Idee und Verwirklichung: das Werden der staatlichen Denkmalpflege in Österreich* (Wien, 1988). This book encompasses the first decade of the Commission’s activity. The crownland of Galicia is almost absent in the narration.

²⁴ Lvivs’ka Natsional’na Naukova Biblioteka Ukraini imeni V. Stefanika, Viddil rukopisiv (hereinafter: LNNBUiVS VR), Protocol of the actions of the imperial-royal Conservationist (hereinafter: Conservationist office), 26/1/1, 26, 28 and 47.

²⁵ Marzena Woźny, ‘Początki Grona Konserwatorów Galicji Zachodniej w świetle krakowskich materiałów’, *Rocznik Krakowski*, lxxvii (2011), 77–88.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 84–5.

dependent on the Central Commission, fought to regain sovereignty. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Group also began to concentrate on the fate of the secular monuments in the Old Town of Lviv, which constituted a field of activity which until 1918 fell outside the focus of the Viennese institution.²⁷ Looking at the minutes of the Group, we can see that members of the elite came mainly from the academia, and although the institution also included grassroots activists, it remained primarily a scholarly and highly professional body, at least in terms of its members' qualifications. The list included, *inter alia*, Władysław Abraham, a lawyer and researcher in the field of canon law; historian Ludwik Finkel; architects Julian Zachariewicz and Tadeusz Obmiński; art historian Jan Bołoz-Antoniewicz; archaeologist Karol Hadaczek; classicist Ludwik Ćwikliński; archivist Wojciech Kętrzyński, the archivist mentioned above Aleksander Czołowski, and Władysław Łoziński, a writer, historian and promoter of Lviv's cultural development. There were also members of Ukrainian origin, like literary historian Oleksandr Kolessa (Олександр Колесса; in the minutes listed as Aleksander Kofessa); or historian Izydor Śaranevyč (Ізидор Шараневич; in the minutes listed as Izydor Szaraniewicz). They gathered together during the official meetings to discuss current affairs, where they expressed their concern about the often worrying effects of urban development.

One of the famous Cracow-based writers, Tadeusz Żeleński, complained in his memoirs about the nearly divine status of historical monuments in Cracow, the former capital of Poland. In his view Cracow's history showed clearly that often the city buildings and monuments 'won' against the physical existence of its inhabitants, meaning that they were deemed so precious that the needs of the current urban life had to be subordinated to their preservation. He pointedly asked: Since there were movements to preserve the 'walls' from the people – where was the defence of the people from the 'walls'?²⁸

²⁷ The published budgets of the Commission in 1903–14 hinted only at a very few secular monuments in Lviv as objects of intervention: the Metropolitan Palace's walls in 1904; the Janowski cemetery in 1907 and 1909; and the central archive in 1910, according to the official periodical *Mittheilungen der k. k. Central-Commission für Erforschung und Erhaltung der Kunst- und historischen Denkmale* (from 1911 on, as *Mitteilungen der k. k. Zentral-Kommission für Denkmalpflege*).

²⁸ Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, *Znaszli ten kraj?* (Warszawa, 1956), 11, 15.

This trend turned out to pertain also to Lviv in the nineteenth century, albeit to a lesser extent. The capital of Galicia, in itself a bureaucratic and political hub, competed with Cracow in terms of its cultural influence, especially after the latter was incorporated into the Austrian Empire in 1846, and after the autonomous status was granted to Galicia. Cracow's Old Town was definitely conceived of as an important cultural symbol and touristic attraction since at least 1816–17, when broader discussions about demolitions of the old military architecture began.²⁹ It was only at the beginning of the twentieth century that the trend towards appreciation of the historic centre of the dynamically developing Lviv emerged. As the already cited Garczyński aptly noted, it was the crisis of the Art Nouveau architecture which triggered the widespread re-enchantment with the historic architecture.³⁰ The rejection of that style and that way of thinking, the aim of which was to find an alternative to the historicist architecture that drew from the old formal vocabulary, paradoxically led to the new appreciation of the historicist architecture.

IV

THE 'DISCOVERY' OF THE OLD TOWN

The Old Town of Lviv (officially called *Śródmieście*) was 'discovered' artistically by the urban activists, mainly by the members of the Group of Conservationists. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the Main Conservator (and later the Group) was preoccupied with the Lviv churches, their furnishings, sculptures, and chapels. Secular art was limited to statues. The fate of one of them is worth mentioning: the statue of Hetman Stanisław Jabłonowski, an important figure in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the turn of the eighteenth century, and also a local Lviv hero who led the military defence of the city. The old statue was 'discovered' in a private garden in 1857,³¹ to which it had been transported from the Jesuit convent after the dissolution of the order in 1773. It was then placed in 1859 in the middle of the Hetman Ramparts, which drew its name from the person in

²⁹ See e.g. Maria Borowiejska-Birkenmajerowa, *Serce Polski: zabytki i świadomość narodowa* (Kraków, 1991).

³⁰ Garczyński, *Wspomnienia*, 33.

³¹ TsDIAL, Papers of Franciszek Jaworski, 101/1/6, 8.

question.³² Its renovation became a matter of concern of the Conservator in 1869. Another statue was religious, devoted to St Michael. It used to stand at the City Arsenal, and after taking it over from the military authority, its new location became the subject of debates in 1866. The deciding body was the Latin Consistory, which first proposed more remote locations, either near the St Mary Magdalene Church or the Seminary. It was the municipal council which opted for the *parvis* in front of a more centrally-located church like the Cathedral, but the Consistory preferred its interior instead.³³ In the end, it was located at the same Hetman Ramparts, which had already become the most important public space.³⁴ These excerpts from the debates show how important was the issue of adornment of the city already before the autonomous era. It also shows that one of the primary addressees of the conservationists' letters were church institutions. Acting since the Middle Ages as an important art patron and the institution which took care of the memory of the state and urban elite, churches found themselves in the position of owner or administrator of the historical monuments which – in the post-partition age – acquired legal protection. The public character of these buildings, now believed to be the possession of the whole nation, was subject of attention of the conservationists. In the same year 1866, the Main Conservator sent a letter to the Consistory mentioned above asking it to stop the practice of selling parts of historic church furnishings by parish priests and monastery superiors.³⁵ The Central Commission also insisted that appropriate art history lectures should be held in the Catholic seminaries to raise the art consciousness of young priests.³⁶ There were also plans in 1877 for the Archaeological Society mentioned above to use parish priests as a tool in preparing the lists of ecclesiastical, historical monuments in Galicia.³⁷ These documents show the impulses emanating from the central institutions, which prepared the climate for a conscious building policy in the historic environment in Lviv, modelled by the urban elites.

³² Stanisław Schür-Peplowski, *Obrazy z przeszłości Galicji i Krakowa (1772–1858)* (Lwów, 1896), 71.

³³ TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/3, 42.

³⁴ Schür-Peplowski, *Obrazy*.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 118.

³⁷ TsDIAL, Archaeological Society, 192/1/14, 18.

The issue of secular buildings in the city was virtually beyond the focus of the conservationists until the beginning of the twentieth century. According to the later testimony of the conservationists, owners of houses altered and even demolished their properties almost at will, without usually asking for permission. Initially, the very fact that the Main Conservator resided not in Lviv but in his family estate was symbolic in this context. Nevertheless, already in 1875 the first sign of a change appeared, when a documented intervention was conducted by the municipal architect Juliusz Hochberger on behalf of the Conservator. The issue pertained to an allegedly planned alteration of the façade of a house at the Old Town Square. Eventually, the owner assured Hochberger that he had no intention of doing so.³⁸ Another intervention by an architect, stemming already from the period after the establishment of the Group of Conservationists, concerned the view of a part of the city. In the early 1880s, the owner of an apartment house near the Bernardine Church decided to build a wing on it. The conservationists fiercely opposed the plan, as it would block the view of one of the apses. A letter by Julian Zachariewicz stated that the conservationists should prohibit such an investment.³⁹ The issue saw its continuation at the end of the nineteenth century, which also involved the Bernardines themselves, who permitted the construction. Zachariewicz stopped the building process to revise the plan.⁴⁰

Of course, the discovery of the beauty of the hitherto neglected old part of the city was not exceptional if one takes into account the situation in other cities, e.g. in Germany. However, at the same time, this process was not a simple transfer of trends, as it always involved the social and historical context unique to each city. The Old Town of Lviv was a place where an ethnically-mixed community has lived since the fourteenth century. Part of it had been granted to Jews, who were active merchants. During early modern times Jews tried to cross the boundaries marked out for them and to settle outside the ascribed streets until, finally, the Austrian authorities forced them to remain in their quarter.⁴¹ This was evidenced in memoirs by Polish inhabitants in the first half of the nineteenth century, where the Old

³⁸ LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/1, 64.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Conservationist office, 26/1/2, 37.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Conservationist office, 26/1/5, 3–4, 6.

⁴¹ Majer Bałaban, *Dzielnica żydowska. Jej dzieje i zabytki* (Lwów, 1909), 52.

Town Square was described as stately and with artistic values, 'even though' it was located near the hated Jewish district.⁴² The Jews expanded after they were freed from spatial restrictions during the reforms of the monarchy, in December 1867, so the Old Town Square also changed its character. In the eyes of Polish witnesses from the last three decades of the nineteenth century, the Square was ugly and alien, especially in comparison to that of Cracow.⁴³ That began to change, in part as a consequence of a new trend in monument conservation and the accompanying change in the press discourse, and later because of actual changes within the Old Town itself, like the above-mentioned beautification policy conducted by Czołowski.

First of all, the Group of Conservationists started to block the Municipal Council's decisions to demolish or make significant alterations to the ancient burghers' houses. The opinions expressed and the decisions made by the Conservationists were based on informal legal foundations and appeared chaotic and arbitrary in the eyes of investors. This led to Aleksander Czołowski's initiative in 1906 to prepare a formal list of the houses the demolition of which had to be agreed on with the Group. The list included not only the undisputed monuments but also those newer houses which were built on the old foundation stones or were built of old re-used materials.⁴⁴ The presentation of this list to the City Council provoked an outcry on the part of some of the councillors, especially architects. Nevertheless, during the coming years, a *modus operandi* was worked out, whereby the investors wishing to tear down an Old Town building had to fill out forms to be sent to the Group of Conservationists.⁴⁵

There are many petitions for demolitions of the Old Town houses preserved in the archives stemming from the first years of the twentieth century. The reasons which inspired this increased activity on the part of owners of the houses in question arose from the new financial conditions – which involved the rapid increase in land prices in the city along with the practice of building-up whole quarters around the Old Town. The primary condition to be met in such demolition cases was

⁴² BN ZS, *Przypomnienia o Jazowsku spisane dla kochanych siostrzeńców i siostrzenic przez Franciszka Wyszkowskiego w roku 1860-tym*, ref. no. 17621, 237–8.

⁴³ BN ZS, Władysław Ryszkowski, *Wspomnienia*, ref. no. 10189 IV, 367; Garczyński, *Wspomnienia*, 102.

⁴⁴ 'Reskrypt c.k. Namiestnictwa...', *Dziennik Lwowski*, i, 9 (1 Nov. 1906), 185.

⁴⁵ LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/5, 75–76.

to preserve at least the historic parts of the houses, and to re-use them in parts of the building not affected by the renovation, e.g. by inserting it in the courtyard wall⁴⁶ or the upper part of the house.⁴⁷ The owners were sometimes instructed to carefully take out all of the architectonic details to re-use them in the new house, which should in itself follow the 'general outline' of the old one. Other methods of preserving the old parts of buildings that could not be re-used was to store them in the municipal archive.⁴⁸ In any event, the authorities demanded that photos of the altered parts of the houses should be taken and occasionally also requested that plans be drawn up in order to store them in the archive. These demands sometimes met with opposition from the owners, who asked the archivists to cover the related costs.

In many cases, the conservationists did not hesitate to take command by designing parts of the new façades. This was the case of the house at 12 Old Town Square in 1906, where the vaults and portals had to be added to the design according to the proposal of the conservationist body.⁴⁹ A more well-known example from 1912 involved a decorative stone motif of a swan in the house at 10 Halicka Street (using the then-official Polish name of the street), which had been defended by the 'city fathers' since at least 1894, ultimately without success. It had to be eventually redesigned by the conservationists and inserted into the upper part of the façade, and the remaining parts of the authentic relief transported to the archive; in this case, the argument that the house had already been subject to renovation earlier played a role.⁵⁰ The house at 4 Old Town Square, a venerable monument, was also remodelled, this time according to specific instructions delivered by the Group.⁵¹ This practice of redesigning the old parts to adapt them into a new building produced in fact a new

⁴⁶ As with the portal of the house at 12 Old Town Square, LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/7, p. 73.

⁴⁷ As in the case of 10 Halicka St.: the details from the ground and first floors were to be re-used on the second floor, LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/7, 216–17.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Conservationist office, 26/1/6, 105.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Conservationist office, 26/1/5, 84.

⁵⁰ TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/12, 3; LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/7, 216–17; TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/71, 35.

⁵¹ TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/68, 42.

architecture, at least in line with the old, thus assuring that the city did not lose its identity.

The refusals by the conservationists were generally based on the argument of the exceptional status of a house, or of the sheer boldness of a proposal. For example, the new shop window of the house at 2 Old Town Square went too far in 1903, covering the old portal.⁵² The proposal in 1912 to remove the seventeenth-century portal from the house at 10 Ruska Street was rejected because of the age of the portal, although in part also due to the indecisiveness of the owner himself.⁵³ The owners' reactions to a refusal were usually accepting if not positive, although there were some exceptions.

Consents for demolitions increased significantly in number towards the end of the period in question. In 1912, the houses at 13 and 15 Skarbkowska Street,⁵⁴ then number 31 on the same street,⁵⁵ 25 Blacharska Street⁵⁶ and 9 Serbska Street,⁵⁷ to name just a few examples, were sacrificed in the name of progress.

There were also decisions to get rid of historical elements in the Old Town houses without informing the conservationists. These occasionally resulted in fines,⁵⁸ or judgments ordering restoration of the previous forms. The 1911 case of the house at 12a Old Town Square serves as an example. The owner removed the old window and entrance frames and built an additional mansard floor and a roof lantern higher than allowed, which changed the façade of the house. This triggered an immediate reaction from the Group of Conservationists. They ordered him to hide the lantern behind a new stylistic attic, remove the mansard floor, and rebuild the historic frames according to prepared drawings.⁵⁹ The conservationists were there to judge whether the new frontages still recalled the historic styles.

⁵² LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/6, 88.

⁵³ TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/71, 11.

⁵⁴ LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/7, 213, TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/71, 9.

⁵⁵ LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/7, 217, TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists 616/1/71, 28.

⁵⁶ TsDIAL Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/68, 36.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁵⁸ The case of the house at 13 Old Town Square, where the vaults of the front hall were removed, which entailed a fine of 600 crowns, LNNBUiVS VR, Conservationist office, 26/1/7, 200.

⁵⁹ TsDIAL, Circle of Conservationists, 616/1/68, 3.

This form of control over the changes made within the limits of the Old Town did not, in fact, stop changes from being made. To be sure, some of the streets there were to be broadened according to the new regulatory plans (like the Ruska or Blacharska Streets), which made it easier for the owners to obtain approvals for the demolition of old houses along those streets. Nevertheless, the extensive efforts made to save them or minimise the optical effects of the changes show how much the elites were emotionally attached to the city. No arguments connected with the economy or touristic values were used in the discourse. Rather, it was the arguments of the historical heritage, the 'role' and 'mission' of the city, or indeed the national character of the architecture that were involved. Another real value that was at stake here was also the impact that the architecture could have on the identity of the Lviv inhabitants. This was also one of the primary forces driving the founders of voluntary associations.

V

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF OLD LVIV

In 1906, a crucial year in the history of the preservation of the Old Town houses, the Society of Friends of Old Lviv (*Towarzystwo Miłośników Starego Lwowa*, SFOL) was founded. Along with Czołowski the initiators also included Tadeusz Rutowski, an important municipal politician. He was a proponent of the liberal movement in Galicia and served as the vice-president of Lviv starting from 1905.⁶⁰ He was the sort of personality who had considerable influence in the urban milieu with which he identified. He was also a newcomer to Lviv (from Tarnów in West Galicia), a politician deeply engaged into his new home city's affairs, and active in many initiatives related with the literary culture and the arts. The establishment of SFOL involved that kind of discourse, which was already present among the elite. The SFOL statute mentioned the people who were not indifferent to the issue of the 'six-century long national tradition of the city' and its burghers, as well as its cultural and historical mission.⁶¹ Among its first members

⁶⁰ Henryka Kramarz, *Tadeusz Rutowski. Portret pozytywisty i demokracji galicyjskiego* (Kraków, 2001).

⁶¹ Derzhavniy arkhiv L'vivs'ko oblasti (hereinafter: DALO), Society of Friends of Old Lviv, 97/1/9, *passim*.

one could meet such historians as Ludwik Kubala, Oswald Balzer, Jewish chronicler and historian Majer Bałaban, historian and archivist of Ruthenian origin Evgen Barvin'skiy (Евген Барвіньський; in sources: Eugeniusz Barwiński), as well as Finkel mentioned above, Abraham, Białynia-Chołodecki and Rawita-Gawroński, to name just a few. In the manifestos published by the society, the national 'spatial format' comes to the fore, as the society was initially meant to be one of many, which could encompass 'the territories of the [Polish] Fatherland.' The statute stressed the centrality of the urban heritage, that is, not only the history of the city but also its historical monuments which had to be preserved and the knowledge about them – popularised.⁶² When viewed through the discourse produced by the society, its tasks were quite similar to those of the conservationists, but the most significant merit of the organisation turned out to be its book publishing. The series published by the SFOL (23 volumes before 1914) brought to life the old history of the city. They were written by the members, among them Franciszek Jaworski, a young regional historian and a local patriot, as well as Józef Białynia-Chołodecki and Majer Bałaban. The efforts of the society were also put into the popularisation of these books, by, e.g. including them in the list of school awards for pupils, or sending them as an exchange for the books published by other organisations in Galicia and Congress Poland. The SFOL was a democratic and popular organisation, which is reflected in the membership list (more than 200 of them in 1910), a list which included members of the Municipal Council, other officials, merchants, scholars, bankers, landed nobility, engineers, factory owners, priests, artists, pharmacists, architects, journalists, physicians and artisans.⁶³ In addition to the books, articles praising old parts of Lviv and the beauty of its medieval streets also emerged in the press,⁶⁴ changing public attitudes towards the Old Town, a task which was much harder to accomplish by an elite institution like the Group of Conservationists. This also reflects the sensitivity of the issue, which stemmed from the complexes of the Lviv elites, conscious of the lesser cultural status of the city than the centres it aspired to follow.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 97/1/2, 4.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 97/1/1, 1–7.

⁶⁴ Cf. 'Ze starego Lwowa', *Czasopismo Techniczne*, xxx, 28 (15 Oct. 1912), 366–7.

VI
SOCIETY FOR THE EMBELLISHMENT OF THE CITY OF LVIV
AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The last organisation to be described here was the Society for the Embellishment of the City of Lviv and Its Surroundings (SECLIS, *Towarzystwo Upiększania Miasta Lwowa i Okolicy*), established only in 1911. Here the national ‘spatial format’ also played a role, this time based more firmly on the German template of organisations close to Bund Heimatschutz. Here again the ‘country’, or as it was otherwise designated, the ‘Fatherland’, i.e. the vaguely defined former-or-future Poland, was supposed to be covered by a network of grassroots institutions standing on guard over the beauty of the landscape, to which also the urban environment belonged. The main task of the society was to defend the city against ‘ugliness’, with which the nineteenth-century urban development was increasingly being associated, especially the ongoing trend of tightly built urban plots, and the haphazard way of organising space with anaesthetic elements introduced into it (advertisements, signs, etc.). SECLIS’s activity initially included the mission of dissemination of knowledge through public lectures and debates – similarly to SFOL. The leading members of the society were specialists in art history, history, architecture, and urban planning. First lectures on urban aesthetics were given by Count Leon Piniński, a conservative politician and an art-lover, who authored a book on the preservation of the historical heritage, and a group of invited Cracow specialists: a botanist and later urban planner Stanisław Goliński, artist Marian Olszewski, and architect and producer of stained glass Stanisław Żeleński.⁶⁵ Attention was paid to less impressive forms of urban adornment, like greenery and flowers planted in public spaces, or forms of public advertisements and signs. The methods were more ‘mature’ than in other associations, including the practice of dividing the city into ‘wards’, or ‘patches’, which were subject to the control of particular society members.⁶⁶ Activists also officially took part in the discussions concerning some new public buildings to be erected in the centre, along with the monument to the Polish democratic politician Franciszek Smolka. The villa district along St Sophia Street

⁶⁵ *Miesięcznik Artystyczny*, ii, 1 (15 Jan. 191), 7.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, ii, 4 (15 Apr. 1912), 42–3.

was also defended against the introduction of more extensive types of apartment houses.⁶⁷

VII CONCLUSIONS

These sketches, drawn from the history of the social stratum which consisted of the urban elite, along with that part which I call the 'self-proclaimed elite', had the aim of raising awareness of the fact that large Central-European cities' elites did not limit themselves only to the people elected in the municipal elections or sent from the centres of power. It obviously comprised also intellectuals, and more 'ordinary' burghers – grassroots activists, who, thanks to an excellent educational system and dozens of initiatives to raise the historical, social and political consciousness amid the urban population, aspired to play a leading role in the local urban environment. These self-proclaimed 'city sons' were ready and eager to become members of the continually growing associations and societies. Here the creation of mass culture and mass politics was clearly reflected, and with it also mass consciousness, not only cultural but also national. The question is whether we can also talk about 'mass elites' in cities, which were not merely the product of nation-building, but of a more general urban modernisation and democratisation?

Here also, the interrelationships between different social or professional groups were clearly visible. They comprised the municipal council as one of the actors; and the members of institutions and grassroots organisations (who also partially comprised the councillors) as the other; both conducted the debates, sometimes finding themselves on opposite sides. Both formed the urban elites, which shows the complexity of the group. There were also outside groups, like the ecclesiastical institutions, which sometimes needed to be convinced of the urban 'patriotic' ideals, which was not always possible. To be sure, the religious bodies were often located in Lviv, like the monasteries or the Consistory, and some clerics could be members of the urban elites in question (like the future archbishop Józef Bilczewski, who was briefly a member of the Group of Conservationists). However,

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, ii, 5 (15 May 1912), 53.

the spatial imagination of the clerical elite differed from that of those elites which have been described, involving such 'spatial format' like a diocese or indeed the whole Roman Catholic world, with Rome as its spiritual centre.

In this article, I have explored the issue of the spatial entanglement of urban institutions and associations trying to work out a possible answer to the question of the interrelation between the physicality of a specific place, in this case, the stones of a large and old city; and the changing identity of its critically thinking inhabitants. Life and imagination of the majority of the early modern burghers had been connected with the place where they lived. It differed much from the spatial imagination of the landed nobility, which was more complicated, relying on estates stretching over larger areas of land or located in different regions, along with the often distant locations to which they could afford to travel regularly. With the rising level and social scope of the nineteenth-century education system, the horizons of the burghers, along with their geographic consciousness, incrementally developed. In Lviv the points of reference stretched far, from Vienna as the centre of the empire to other Austrian, Czech, or German cities where one happened to study, to fellow Galician Cracow as a rival city of culture, to the imagined capitals of possible new states in the new national 'spatial format', like Warsaw or Kyiv.⁶⁸ This was in line with the tradition of an earlier 'format', the networks of merchant towns, where the points of reference for the trading urban elites of the early modern times stretched beyond one state. It was nevertheless the local context of the little *patria*, the city of birth or choice, where the real allegiance often lay. The commitment of the members of the elites in question to the urban spatial issues which have been described here, explains how localness could become the crucial, albeit often implicit, category of reference. If, to name one possibility, Lviv had to play the role of the capital of an imagined new Poland (even if a temporary one), should the efforts to raise it culturally and to establish it as a dominant city in the whole of Galicia be viewed as something more than a local patriotism, i.e. a part of the 'real' patriotism, defined as fidelity to a multiregional community based on ethnicity?

⁶⁸ Mikola R. Lytvyn (ed.), *Proekt 'Ukraina'. Avstrii'ska Halychyna* (Khar'kiv, 2016), 10–11.

The cherished ideal of an orderly, clean, and thus respectable city, which the urban elite explicitly embraced, can be seen as a symptom of this 'real' patriotism, which in the case of the elites in question and the actual lack on the maps of their Polish fatherland, could be described as more local than national, but nevertheless not devoid of the socially dividing elements, characteristic for the mature nationalism (which could amount to the whole feeling in question being sometimes called 'local chauvinism').⁶⁹

In contrast to this expression, this sort of patriotism was characterised by its relative ubiquity, obviousness and adaptability. As argued above, it did not deny other loyalties and ideals, and in contrast to the 'real' patriotism, its claims were based on the quality of being less idealistic, and more realistic. The subject of patriotic loyalty was not distant – it was the city itself, conceived of as a symbol and reality at one and the same time. It had something in common with the concept of organic work, a positivistic ideal of combined efforts to lift the country from economic decline, particularly popular within the circles of Austrian loyalists like the memoirist Marian Rosco-Bogdanowicz.⁷⁰ It cherished the *real* possibilities in the city, perceived, approved of, or opposed to the *real* changes in the city, and tried to shape the (not only urban) future by single everyday steps. The physical space within which it operated and envisioned the future was obviously limited and by the same token more concrete, which lent it the virtue of practicality and deprived it of the traits of hard to control mysticism, characteristic for the ideologies based on imagined reality. The problem with this sort of patriotism turned to be the fact that it became rare in its pure form, usually being mixed with the ethnic, national, and later nationalistic, points of view.

proofreading James Hartzell

⁶⁹ ZNiO DR, Klaudiusz Hrabyk, *Po drugiej stronie barykady. Spowiedź z kłęski (lata 1902–1959)*, ref. no. 15352, 19.

⁷⁰ His commitment to the loyalist agenda went hand-in-hand with his genuine love for the city and affirmation of its history and inhabitants, Marian Rosco-Bogdanowicz, *Wspomnienia*, i (Kraków, 1959), 73, 156.

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