

CITY ON THE LINE

LVIV IN NOVEMBER

1918

Bullets whistling around us. The rifles rumbling. From time to time, the window-glass reverberates from the sounds of weapons. A real war it is! What is more, it is now when the Great War is over! This "war" in Lviv will be like a historical episode of our turbulent times.

From a diary of Maria Kaspowiczowa

In the aftermath of the First World War and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in November 1918, Lviv was in the epicenter of a new war between Ukrainians and Poles. On the one hand, the Ukrainian-Polish war of 1918-1919 was part of the complex European crisis of 1914-1923. On the other hand, it was a violent interethnic conflict fueled by the clash of two antagonistic national projects on the same territory.

The public program "City on the Line: Lviv in November, 1918" will consider the war through three distinct yet interlinked perspectives: global, local, and individual. Researchers from different countries will discuss the role of the Ukrainian-Polish war in the context of the "long" European crisis of 1914–1923. Considerable attention will be focused on the war in terms of the individual experiences of its participants, such as soldiers, civilians, particularly women, and prisoners of war. Individual lectures will raise the question of what the war meant for the belligerent parties in the city—for the Ukrainian, Polish, and also the officially neutral Jewish community. How and why were the myths of the "November Act" and the "defense of Lwów" shaped within the Ukrainian and Polish symbolic field? The program will conclude with the presentation of an interactive map about Lviv in the First World War, which will offer a new perspective through research of the impact of military conflict on the everyday life in the city.

July 25
18:30

Wars that Finished the War
Violence and Military Conflicts on the "Eastern Front", 1917–1923

For many belligerent countries, November 1918 was a symbol of the conclusion of the First World War. However, for Lviv and for Galicia, it marked the start of a new war between Ukrainians and Poles. It is notable that the Ukrainian-Polish war was not the only conflict that undermined European peace in 1918. In 1917–1923, practically the entire "Eastern Front" became a theater for violent interethnic conflicts, civil wars, as well as national and social revolutions. The lecturer will focus on the Eastern European fields of the war and share her impressions on why the Great War had not ended in peace on the Eastern Front but was transformed into a series of smaller scale but no less brutal armed conflicts. She will also consider the Ukrainian-Polish war of 1918–1919 in the context of war and revolutionary violence in Poland, Belarus, Russia, the Baltic states, and the Balkans.

Oksana Dudko
Center for Urban History / University of Toronto

Conflict that Never Ended.
Second Great War, 1917-1923

The lecture will present a new perspective on the timeline of the First World War. The researcher suggests dividing the timeline of the Great War into two stages: 1914–1917 and 1917–1923. The 1917 crisis destabilized all the belligerent parties, but it was most felt on the Eastern Front where it evolved into an acute armed conflict. Hence, the international war turned into a civil war. The transition from the crisis of war to post-imperial violence was unnoticeable but the events of 1917–1923 became part of the same period of European history that lasted from 1914 to 1923. Nonetheless, the years 1917-1923 mark a different phase of this complex period. It is characterized by a toxic combination of anti-Semitism, anti-Bolshevism, radical nationalism, and ethnic cleansing, paving the way for even worse events to come in the 1930s and after.

Jay Winter
Yale University

Birth of the New World:
Urban Experiences in East Europe after 1917

Events in the East of Europe at the end of the Great War that continued also in the West largely defined further developments on the continent. Revolutions, the collapse of empires, civil wars, the ordeal of the birth of new states—the Eastern European "exits" from the war were diverse. Urban experiences were the same diverse. During the discussion, we shall elaborate on how urban studies could contribute to our understanding of great events recorded into the national narratives of the countries in Eastern Europe termed as revolutions and the establishment of new states. Another question we will address is how violence, the signs of otherness, and the extreme everyday routines that urban citizens survived in this period predicted the further trajectory of the development of the continent, especially in the 1930s. Finally, we shall discuss the problem of order in cities and the ability of authorities to provide it. This was especially striking during the period of collapse of empires in Eastern Europe, became one of the central issues throughout the entire 20th century, and is still relevant today.

Round Table

Discussants: Oksana Dudko (Center for Urban History / University of Toronto), Joshua Sanborn (Lafayette College, USA), Serhiy Yekelchik (University of Victoria, Canada), Jay Winter (Yale University).

Moderated by Olena Betliy (Center for Urban History / Kyiv Mohyla Academy National University)

Between the Frontlines: Prisoners-of-war and the Interned Persons in the Context of Ukrainian-Polish War in East Galicia in 1918–1919

The Ukrainian-Polish war in East Galicia in 1918–1919, in addition to the battle line, had another front—the home front. The belligerent parties applied repressive measures to civilians—they interned activists of the enemy. However, this is a little-known page of history that reveals an important humanitarian aspect of the conflict. Due to the initiative of the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi and the archbishop Józef Bilczewski, representatives of the governments met in Lviv on 1 February 1919 and concluded an Agreement on Treating Prisoners-of-war and the Interned Persons. The agreement, the only positive result of Polish-Ukrainian negotiations, made possible the implementation of measures under the auspices of the International Red Cross. The parties initiated the process of releasing the interned and the exchange of the most famous figures. The humanitarian activities of Ukrainian and Polish commissions and the facilitation of their work by the military command of the belligerent parties testified to the civilized nature of the conflict in the context of complying with the 1907 Hague Convention.

Oleh Pavlyshyn
Ivan Franko National University in Lviv

"Nice Weather and Clear Blue Sky but Lviv has a Sad and Disappointed Face":
November Days in 1918 in Experiences of Women

November 1918 was a turning point in the real and imagined life of Lviv. The changes were described by female citizens in their diaries and memories. Reflecting on those events was a sort of mainstream, while recording the battle of 1 November 1918 usually changed the narrative and tone of a diary. This period of life in Lviv was described by many women as a battle for the national identity of a city where Poles and Ukrainians were creating their own myths within the city's space. Women also described the changes in everyday life that the battles of November 1918 brought and that transformed the city into the front line. The lack of communications, no possibilities to get any essentials, and the need to stay inside all the time due to street fighting were perceived as a real disaster. November disrupted the usual rhythm of the city and interrupted cultural life and human communication, as well as taught women to rely only on themselves.

Maryana Baydak
Ivan Franko National University in Lviv

The Ukrainian November 1918:
From Take-over to Symbolic State?

The lecture will discuss the new inclusion in the Ukrainian political-intellectual discourse of the events in November 1918 in Lviv. This new interpretation, or rather instrumentalization, took place in the 1920–1930s. The shift in the discourse was stipulated by the appearance of a radical nationalist youth wing that advocated the rejection of the methods of parliamentary struggle. An important element in the implementation of November 1918 into a historical fabric was an "unity-based" rethinking of these events. The substitution of the concept of the "Ukrainian movement" with the concept of "national liberation struggle" largely radicalized the interpretations of the recent past. In accordance with the concept of revolutionary Ukrainian history, the terminology also changed: the "November take-over", as the 1918 events were formerly called, was transformed into the "November Deed."

Vasyl Rasevych
Center for Urban History

Why the Battle for One City Could be More Important for the Nation than the World War, or the Myth of "Defense" of Lviv in the Interwar Poland

The lecture will focus on the analysis of a Polish myth of the "defense" of Lviv based on different kinds of the interwar Polish discourse from literary to artistic, publicist, and political one. The myth of "defense" glorified the battle of Lviv as a symbol of unification of the Polish people and the Polish state, it also raised the deeds of "defenders," known as the Eagles, to the rank of role model of patriotic behavior for the future generations of Poles. Due to such a representation, the "Lviv defense" myth served as a symbolic response to the most painful problems of the reviving and then revived Second Polish Republic. As a result, it became a founding history of the new postwar Polish society. However, while strongly appealing to the Poles, it equally stigmatized the enemies and excluded the Others – Ukrainians, Jews, and Germans. It helped thus to integrate the Polish nation around shared ideals, but it divided the multinational society of the entire Second Polish Republic.

Jagoda Wierzejska
University of Warsaw

1918 in the Biographies of Lviv Jews

This lecture explores the complex attitudes of the Jewish community in Lviv in the turbulent year 1918. In particular, it examines the points of view of the Jewish communal leadership and intelligentsia regarding the political changes that occurred as both the Polish and Ukrainian national movements emerged during this period for the city. What did the city mean for its thousands of Jewish inhabitants, its religious, cultural, and political institutions? How did various Jewish organizations seek to navigate and negotiate during this thorny period of tensions and violence? Beyond communal leadership, individual Jews, both men and women, found their identities and loyalties challenged. For the Jewish inhabitants of Lviv the November pogrom became a traumatic watershed. The memory of it underscored continued Jewish vulnerability in the aftermath of the Great War.

Natalia Aleksium
Touro College, New York

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Center for Urban History

Series of public lectures and presentations
Lviv, July–December 2018
Center for Urban History

Ratusha Restaurant,
1 Rynok sq.

Grand session hall
of Lviv city Council

Center for Urban History
6 Bohomoletsia Str. Conference Room

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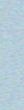



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More details on the program
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