

Postwar “Normalization”:
The Reintegration of Disabled Veterans to Civilian Life in Interwar Lviv

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation analyzes how various groups of disabled soldiers, the government, and society in interwar Poland dealt with the traumatic experiences and consequences of the Great War. Treating “disability” as a socially constructed notion, it explores the political, medical, and architectural discourses and how they defined this concept in the Second Polish Republic (1918-1939). It examines the relationship between disabled veterans and the state, focusing particularly on the First World War imperial legacies of disabled veterans, and the ways in which their ethnicity influenced their post-war political and social lives. Poland’s imperial past and the series of borderland conflicts after the Great War, as well as the Soviet-Polish War of 1919-21, resulted in the co-existence in postwar independent Poland of different groups of veterans that had belonged to numerous, sometimes conflicting, armies. The presence of large Jewish, German and Ukrainian minority communities became the most serious challenge for the Polish government and discussions about their place in the national body strongly affected the political climate in interwar Poland. Both ethnicity and army affiliation became important components of disabled veterans’ identities and affected their relationship with the state and society at large. My dissertation argues that the process of defining war disability took place alongside the process of nation-building. The process of defining the category of “Polish war invalid” determined who was a part of the national body. This study uses Lviv as a case study to examine the adaptation of disabled veterans to civilian life. Characterized by its heterogeneous population, this city serves as an ideal site for the study of interethnic relations in the Second Polish Republic. The focus on Lviv not only reveals how disabled veterans re-adapted to “normal” life in a time of severe national and social conflict, but also brings the numerous “disability” discourses created by the emerging welfare state, society, and disabled veterans into high relief. The dissertation argues that the interconnections between

legislative norms, bureaucratic policies, and informal practices were key in shaping the experience of war disability in interwar Lviv. The interplay between various levels of government and various veterans' organizations highlights the complex relationship between bureaucracy and the public sphere in interwar Poland. This research provides a more nuanced picture of state-building processes and contributes to broader discussions on the construction of new national states, the welfare state, and civil society in East-Central Europe.

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INTRODUCTION

In his memoirs, the Polish writer Lew Kaltenbergh ironically acknowledged that in 1920s suburban Lviv, “civilization” was usually represented by gas lamps and disabled veterans’ cigarette kiosks, and only rarely by law and order.¹ These kiosks symbolized modern urban infrastructure, but they also represented the modern welfare system for soldiers disabled in the First World War, a means of steady income and of reintegrating veterans into postwar society. These small enterprises were owned by disabled soldiers and veterans’ organizations, and although veterans sometimes complained about repeated harassment from local bureaucrats, kiosk ownership was highly desirable, and some men even obtained them fraudulently. Kiosk owners were not helpless objects of charity, but productive and self-reliant members of society, and their small shops made them a visible part of the urban fabric. In fact, these kiosks were a part of the local commemorative discourse, symbols of the sacrifice of Lviv’s veterans and the gratitude of their co-citizens. Located on central streets and suburbs, railway stations, near the main city theater, in parks and in markets, they were also mentioned in memoirs and depicted on postcards and in cartoons. Kiosks embodied both modern urbanity and the experiences of war disability that are the principal focuses of this dissertation.

The unprecedented scale of the First World War resulted in an unparalleled number of injured bodies. At the same time, progress in medical science and the growth of healthcare infrastructure made it possible to save more lives. Although we usually equate wartime disability with disfigured bodies, the majority of disabled men did not bear visible signs of impairment, suffering instead from various internal diseases and mental disorders. Governments established

¹ Lew Kaltenbergh, *Ułamki stłuczonego lustra. Dzieciństwo na kresach. Tamten Lwów*. (Warsaw, 1991), 42.

different types of welfare systems that aimed to assist and reintegrate disabled soldiers, and their benefits, medical treatment, and rehabilitation—so crucial for reintegration—meant that the veterans’ relationship with the state largely shaped their experiences of disability. Governments, moreover, often leveraged the symbolic position of disabled soldiers to gain and maintain their legitimacy and popularity, even as they reduced the experiences of disabled veterans to administrative notes onto standardized forms.² Ana Carden-Coyne defines this process as “the bureaucratization of the soldier’s body” and argues that postwar welfare policies inflicted political wounds on top of those sustained in war.³

In this study, disability—following geographers Heather Parr and Ruth Butler—is defined as the interconnection between “the real lived experience of changed/ changing/painful/clumsy/immobile bodies” and “wider social, cultural, economic, political and medical environments.”⁴ Disablement occurs in a lived, geographic context, where space and social relations give meanings—both positive and negative—to one’s bodily difference. Although the understanding of disability changed over time, war disability typically affected adults, who generally did not want to challenge social norms; rather, they preferred to return to conventional, masculine roles and a “normalized existence with ordinary street invisibility.”⁵ The new Polish government shared this goal, and its postwar rehabilitation programs tried to return broken bodies

² David A. Gerber, “Introduction: Finding Disabled Veterans in History,” in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 13, 25; Marina Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs. Living with the Scars of War* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009), 18.

³ Ana Garden-Coyne, *The Politics of Wounds. Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 73, 340.

⁴ Hester Parr and Ruth Butler, “New Geographies of Illness, Impairment and Disability,” in *Mind and Body Spaces: Geographies of Illness, Impairment and Disability* ed. by Hester Parr and Ruth Butler (Routledge: London and New York, 1999), 21.

⁵ David A. Gerber, “Preface to the Enlarged and Revised Edition: The Continuing Relevance of the Study of Disabled Veterans,” in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), xiii.

to productivity.⁶ This dissertation analyzes how various groups of disabled soldiers, the Polish government, and Polish society dealt with the traumatic experiences of the Great War, as well as the factors that shaped lived experiences of postwar disability.

A rich historiography has addressed similar questions about disabled soldiers in Western Europe, North America, and Australia after the Great War, where the demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration of disabled veterans into society were also pressing social problems. Unsurprisingly, most works on disabled veterans address how the modern state dealt with these new challenges and organized (or failed to organize) assistance. These works also demonstrate that the treatment of war veterans can serve as a lens, magnifying key problems and mechanisms of modern society: the structure of class relations, gender roles, racism, family and kinship, social memory, state loyalty and identity, and moral and medical categories.⁷ Among this historiography's central concerns are the meaning of rehabilitation and the different models of its

⁶ Carol Poore, *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 8-13; Ana Garden-Coyne, *The Politics of Wounds. Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 241; Beth Linker, *War's Waste: Rehabilitation in World War I America* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011).

⁷ Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001); Hickel Walter "Medicine, Bureaucracy, and Social Welfare. The Politics of Disability Compensation for American Veterans of World War I," in *The New Disability History. American Perspective*, ed. by Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001), 236-268; Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds. German Victims of the Great War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984); Stephen Carton, *The Costs of War: Australians Return* (Oxford, Auckland, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Jason Crouthamel, "Nervous Nazis: War Neurosis, National Socialism and the Memory of the First World War," *War & Society* 21 no. 2 (October 2003): 55-75; Jeffrey S. Reznick, "Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldiers in Great Britain in the First World War: The Case of Shepherd's Bush Military Hospital, London," in *Disabled Veterans in History*, ed. by David Gerber (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 185-203; Marina Larsson, "Restoring the Spirit: Rehabilitation of Disabled Soldiers in Australia after the Great War," *Health and History* 6, no.2 (2004): 45-59; James M Diehl, "Victors or Victims, Disabled Veterans in Third Reich," *The Journal of Modern History* 59, no. 4 1(987): 705-736; Marina Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs. Living with the Scars of War* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009); Verena Pawlowsky and Harald Wendelin, "Government Care of war Widows and Disabled Veterans after World War I" in *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria* ed. by Günter Bischof, Fritz Plasser and Peter Berger (New Orleans: UNO Press, 2010): 171-191.

organization in various countries,⁸ the role of doctors and bureaucrats,⁹ and the issue of gender norms, particularly masculinity.¹⁰ Masculinity and disability collided particularly in the issue of mental health: during the First World War, doctors recognized various mental disorders resulting from combat experience as medical conditions for the first time. Numerous works examine medical professionals' debates about the nature of such disorders, comparing the status of physically disabled veterans with the status of soldiers carrying "invisible wounds."¹¹

⁸ Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001); Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds. German Victims of the Great War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984); Marina Larsson, "Restoring the Spirit: Rehabilitation of Disabled Soldiers in Australia after the Great War," *Health and History* 6, no.2 (2004): 45-59; Stephen Carton, *The Costs of War: Australians Return* (Oxford, Auckland, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Beth Linker, *War's Waste: Rehabilitation in World War I America* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011).

⁹ Hickel Walter "Medicine, Bureaucracy, and Social Welfare. The Politics of Disability Compensation for American Veterans of World War I," in *The New Disability History. American Perspective*, ed. by Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001), 236-268; Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds. German Victims of the Great War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984); Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001); Stephen Carton, *The Costs of War: Australians Return* (Oxford, Auckland, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); James M Diehl, "Victors or Victims, Disabled Veterans in Third Reich," *The Journal of Modern History* 59, no. 4 1(987): 705-736.

¹⁰ Stephen Carton, *The Costs of War: Australians Return* (Oxford, Auckland, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Ana Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism and the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 160-212; Roxanne Panchasi, "Reconstructions: Prosthetics and the Rehabilitation of the Male Body in World War I France," *The Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 7 (1995): 109-140; Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001); Marina Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs. Living with the Scars of War* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009); Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male. Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (Chicago: The University Chicago Press, 1996).

¹¹ Gregory M, Thomas, *Treating the Trauma of the Great War. Soldiers, Civilians and the Psychiatry, 1914-1940* (Louisiana State University Press, 2009); Peter Lees, "Why They Are Not Cured?' British Shellshock Treatment during the Great War" in *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870-1930*, ed. by Mark S. Micale, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 205-222; Marc Roudebush, A "Battle of Nerves: Hysteria and its Treatments in France during First World War," in *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870-1930*, ed. by Mark S. Micale, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 253-280; Joanna Bourke, "Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Suffering of 'Shell-Shocked' Men in Great Britain and Ireland," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35, no. 1 (2000): 57-69; Caroline Cox, "Invisible Wounds: The American Legion, Shell-Shocked Veterans and American Society, 1919-1924" in *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870-1930*, ed. by Mark S. Micale, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 280-307.

These historians have also used various methodological standpoints. Some works have a factual and descriptive emphasis,¹² but most scholars use social¹³ and cultural¹⁴ approaches and examine disability as a social, political, and cultural phenomenon. As Seth Koven underlines, the “interplay of representation, politics, institutions and social policies” is central for such research.¹⁵ For example, in her influential book *The War Comes Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany*, Deborah Cohen compares the British and German welfare systems and the experiences of individual disabled veterans in these countries.¹⁶ While such comparative works are rare, most historians ask similar, if complex questions: What were the experiences of returning home? How did families cope? What systems of assistance were provided? How was the experience of demobilization and rehabilitation understood? How did these understandings shape responses to, the memory of, and the history of returning and reintegration?¹⁷

¹² Desmond Morton, *Winning the Second Battle: Canadian Veterans and the Return to Civilian Life 1915-1930* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1987); Serge Marc Durlinger, *Veterans with the Vision. Canada's War Blinded in Peace and War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), James M Diehl, “Victors or Victims, Disabled Veterans in Third Reich,” *The Journal of Modern History* 59, no. 4 (1987): 705-736.

¹³ Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001); Seth Koven, “Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers and the Great War in Great Britain,” *American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (1994): 1167-1202; Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds. German Victims of the Great War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984); Jeffrey S. Reznick, “Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldiers in Great Britain in the First World War: The Case of Shepherd's Bush Military Hospital, London,” in *Disabled Veterans in History*, ed. by David Gerber (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012): 185-203; Marina Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs. Living with the Scars of War* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009).

¹⁴ Stephen Carton, *The Costs of War: Australians Return* (Oxford, Auckland, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Rebecca Scales, “Radio Broadcasting, Disabled Veterans and the Politics of National Recovery in Interwar France,” *French Historical Studies* 31, no 4 (2008): 643-678; Beth Linker, “Shooting Disabled Soldiers: Medicine and Photography in World War I America,” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science*, (July 2010): 313-346; Roxanne Panchasi, “Reconstructions: Prosthetics and the Rehabilitation of the Male Body in World War I France,” *The Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 7 (1995):109-140; Carol Poore, *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* (The University of Michigan Press, 2007).

¹⁵ Seth Koven, “Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers and the Great War in Great Britain,” *American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (1994): 1171.

¹⁶ Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001).

¹⁷ Stephen Carton, *The Costs of War: Australians Return* (Oxford, Auckland, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), viii.

The experiences of war disability in East-Central Europe and the Balkans after the First World War, however, have remained on the intellectual periphery. Only a handful of scholars have examined the topic of the postwar welfare system for disabled veterans in the Polish context.¹⁸ In his short article, Paweł Grata analyzes only the main legislative acts regulating the status of Polish war invalids and determining the government's responsibilities towards disabled soldiers.¹⁹ He argues that economic factors were key in determining state invalid policy. Thus, the Great Depression caused social programs to contract and did not allow the state to fulfill its obligation towards the disabled war veterans.²⁰ Anita Magowska explores the broader context of the existing social security system and the involvement of disabled veterans and broader society in the creation of an alternative model of assistance.²¹ She argues that the Polish state enacted a hybridized Anglo-German model, which was the result of having inherited multiple imperial legal systems. Magowska admits that the Polish state failed to provide adequate social guarantees to disabled soldiers due to economic constraints. At the same time, she argues that by the 1930s Poland had made great "progress" in assisting war invalids.²²

¹⁸ Paweł Grata, "The Polish State's Policy Regarding the War Invalid," *Politics and Society* 8, (2011): 115-124; Anita Magowska, "The Unwanted Hero: War Invalids in Poland after World War I," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science*, no 2 (2014): 185-220; Julia Eichenberg, "War Experience and National State in Poland. Veterans and Welfare in the 20th Century," in *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 20, no. 5 (October 2010): 50-62; Julia Eichenberg, *Kämpfen für Frieden und Fürsorge. Polnische Veteranen des Ersten Weltkriegs und ihre internationalen Kontakte, 1918-1939* (München: Oldenbourg 2011). At the same time, there are quite a few works that analyze the various veterans' organizations and the postwar veterans' movement in general. For example, Aneta Niewęglowska, *Federacja Polskich Związków ojczyzny* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2011); Marek Jabłonowski, *Sen o potęgę Polski. Z dziejów ruchu byłych wojskowych w II Rzeczypospolitej 1918-1939* (Olsztyn: Ośrodek Badań Naukowych im. Wojciecha Kętrzyńskiego, 1998); Elżbieta Kossewska, *Związek Legionistów Polskich 1922-1939* (Warsaw: ASPRA-JR, 2003); Piotr Wróbel, "'Kombatanci kontra politycy': narodziny i początki działania Związku Legionistów Polskich 1918-1925," *Przegląd Historyczny* 76, no.1 (1985): 77-111.

¹⁹ Paweł Grata, "The Polish State's Policy Regarding the War Invalid," *Politics and Society* 8, (2011): 115-124.

²⁰ Paweł Grata, "The Polish State's Policy Regarding the War Invalid," *Politics and Society* 8, (2011): 115-124.

²¹ Anita Magowska, "The Unwanted Hero: War Invalids in Poland after World War I," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science*, no 2 (2014): 185-220.

²² Anita Magowska, "The Unwanted Hero: War Invalids in Poland after World War I," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science*, no 2 (2014): 185-220.

These Polish scholars focus on legislation, but not on the political discourses produced by the various participants of the political process. In contrast, Julia Eichenberg studies the interplay of various discourses involved in the construction of the experience of war disability. Her book explores the participation of Polish disabled activists in the international veterans' movement and the transfer of knowledge in a transnational community of veterans.²³ One of the chapters of Eichenberg's book—as well as a related article²⁴—examines parliamentary debates about the welfare system for disabled soldiers in interwar Poland, though her research has some factual errors that influence the interpretation of sources and her vision of the system of assistance to veterans.²⁵ In his article, “The Dead and the Living: War Veterans and Memorial Culture in Interwar Polish Galicia,” Christoph Mick also briefly analyzes the legislation, disabled soldiers' organizational activities, and the interplay between the ethnic background and army affiliation of disabled veterans in Poland. He also surveys the position of disabled servicemen of the Ukrainian Galician Army, and concludes that although the Polish national discourse prioritized veterans of the Polish army, all disabled servicemen (except soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army) had equal benefits in the 1920s. In the 1930s, however, the situation for soldiers of the imperial armies changed for the worse. Additionally, the exclusion of soldiers of the Galician army from the

²³ Julia Eichenberg, *Kämpfen für Frieden und Fürsorge. Polnische Veteranen des Ersten Weltkriegs und ihre internationalen Kontakte, 1918-1939* (München: Oldenbourg 2011).

²⁴ Julia Eichenberg, *Kämpfen für Frieden und Fürsorge. Polnische Veteranen des Ersten Weltkriegs und ihre internationalen Kontakte, 1918-1939* (München: Oldenbourg 2011), 116-166; Julia Eichenberg, “War Experience and National State in Poland. Veterans and Welfare in the 20th Century,” *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 20, no. 5 (October 2010): 50-62.

²⁵ For instance, she argues that the provisional law (law that regulated the system of benefits before the Parliament passed the Invalid Act in March 1921) did not grant benefits to war invalids of imperial armies, because they did not fit into the national narrative of new-born Polish state. (Eichenberg, “War Experience and National State,” 52; Eichenberg, *Kämpfen für Frieden und Fürsorge*, 128-134, 142) As proof of her argument, Eichenberg quoted the minutes of Parliament which had discussed the bill about the organization of assistance for widows and children of deceased soldiers (Sprawozd. Stenogr. z 33 pos SU, łam 35-36). She extends this bill to war invalids; however assistance for disabled soldiers was regulated by an order issued on 7 February 1919. This order granted benefits for all World War I veterans. (*Zarys działalności Ministerstwa Spraw Wojsk. w przedmiocie opieki nad inwalidami wojskowymi przez Sekcję Opieki od początku je istnienia aż po Dzień 31 Grudnia 1919 R.* (Nakładem sekcji opieki Minist. Spraw Wojsk. w Warszawie), 4.

welfare system deepened the rupture between the Ukrainian community and the Polish state.²⁶ Although Mick's article offers some valuable insights, its schematic approach oversimplifies the relationship between the Polish state and the Ukrainian community.

Indeed, the new Polish state—and its citizens—were in a dramatic position at the end of the Great War. The conflict had changed the political map of Eastern and Central Europe. New nation-states appeared after the dissolution of the Austrian, Russian and German empires, leading some scholars to argue that the collapse of the major powers was part of the region's decolonization process.²⁷ Before 1918, Polish territories were part of these three empires, and the “reborn” Poland had to negotiate its imperial heritage. In 1918, Józef Piłsudski, who headed the Polish Legions, Polish military units in the Austro-Hungarian army, became the Chief of State,²⁸ though he retired in June 1923 after the late-1922 assassination of President Gabriel Narutowicz. The first years of the new state were characterized by economic crises and failure to create an effective democratic political system. Parliament's ideological polarization resulted in ever-changing governments lurching from crisis to crisis. Piłsudski and his circle were deeply disappointed with parliamentary democracy and seized power after a coup in May 1926. The political instability, economic challenges, and moral panic of the early 1920s inspired ideas about the necessity of healing, cleansing, moral rebirth, and reform of broad political, social and cultural contexts. However, the *sanacja* regime, composed of Piłsudskites, many of whom were veterans of the Polish Legions,

²⁶ Christoph Mick, “The Dead and the Living: War Veterans and Memorial Culture in Interwar Polish Galicia,” in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 246-253.

²⁷ According to Joshua Sanborn, the war in the Russian empire resulted in decolonization. It included three stages that overlapped: imperial challenge, state failure and social disaster. These phases were followed by state-building. Joshua A. Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse. The Great War and Destruction of the Russian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1-7, 239-262.

²⁸ The title of the head of the state between the end of November 1918 and the middle of December 1922. During this period Piłsudski had the highest civil and military power in the state. He renounced his position after Gabriel Narutowicz had been elected as the president of Poland.

failed to “heal” Poland; by the mid-1930s the *sanacja* government slipped into authoritarianism.²⁹ Throughout this turmoil, national minorities constituted about one third of the population, and disputes about their place in the national body were a key feature of political discourse. As the ethnonational vision of the nation prevailed over the civic concept in the second part of the 1930s, minority groups grew even more radicalized.³⁰

According to official statistical data gathered in 1933, the Polish government granted the status of “disabled serviceman” to 171,878 citizens, which entitled them to receive state benefits.³¹ These men were key figures in discussions between politicians and various professionals on the meanings of war disability. But they were not just passive bystanders; many were active participants in the struggle for their rights. The reconstruction of male bodies and their reintegration into society meant reconstructing traditional gender roles and returning broken bodies to productive and useful social functions. As disabled female veterans constituted only a tiny fraction of all impaired combatants, men were the only focus of the rehabilitation discourse. Thus, in interwar Poland, the state, veterans’ organizations, and society remained willfully oblivious to women’s experiences of disability.

Like other Eastern and Central European countries, veterans of various ethnic backgrounds and of several (and previously hostile) armies lived in the same territory, in this case the Second Polish Republic.³² The interconnection between the construction of the notion of “Polish war

²⁹ Eva Plach, *The Clash of Moral Nation. Cultural Politics in Pilsudski’s Poland, 1926-1935* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006). The word “sanacja” originates from Latin “sanatio” and means healing.

³⁰ Aviel Roshwald argues that a similar pattern was found in Central Europe, Russia and Middle East and “From the moment the new states were found, therefore, there was a yawning gulf between the official nationalist synthesizing projects and the compartmentalized, ethnonational consciousness that prevailed among the general populace and had been enhanced by war.” Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914-1923* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 220.

³¹ Jan Sobociński, “Inwalidzi wojenni i wojskowi w polsce według pochodzenia oraz przyczyn inwalidztwa,” *Praca i opieka społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 2 (1934): 315-316.

³² About the post-war experience of Habsburg veterans see Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman eds., *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016).

invalid” and the Polish nation was especially visible in ethnically mixed borderland regions such as Eastern Małopolska (former Eastern Galicia). Although Ukrainians constituted the majority of the population, large Polish and Jewish minorities lived in this region. Ukrainians usually populated the countryside while Poles and Jews were urban dwellers. This ethnic division also had social implications. Eastern Galicia was ground zero in the struggle between Ukrainian and Polish national movements in the middle the of nineteenth century. The First World War and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire resulted in the radicalization of these movements and the Ukrainian-Polish war for Eastern Galicia. While soldiers of the Polish Legions and the Polish army, and the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen (the Ukrainian units in the Austrian army) and the Ukrainian Galician army respectively were glorified in national narratives, veterans of the imperial armies were marginalized. Imperial veterans often tried to make sense of their sacrifice.³³ Disabled servicemen were not always devided along ethnic or religious lines; rather, past army affiliation determined the emergence of different veterans’ groups, and both ethnicity and army affiliation, in turn, influenced the postwar experience for many demobilized soldiers. For instance, Jews, who had usually served in imperial armies, fit into neither the Polish nor the Ukrainian national projects. To be a disabled veteran in Poland was to be in the middle of ethnic, historical, and political tension: in spite of their vastly different backgrounds, divided by different commemorative discourses, these ex-soldiers were citizens of one state.

Rogers Brubaker defines interwar Poland as a “nationalizing state,” characterized by the existence of an imagined “core” nation and the idea that the interests of the core nation are not

³³ Christoph Mick, “The Dead and the Living: War Veterans Culture in Interwar Polish Galicia,” in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 233-257.

fully realized.³⁴ As a result, ideas about the core nation's language, culture, economic welfare, demographic predominance, and political hegemony dominated political discourse. Brubaker studies the Polish government's policies towards the German, Jewish, Ukrainian, and Belarusian minorities in its western and eastern borderlands as examples of the politics of "nationalization."³⁵ By contrast, Brian Porter-Szücs argues that the source of tension lay not in a conflict between the "core" nation and minorities, but between competing concepts of "Polishness." The first understanding, developed by Roman Dmowski, leader of the National Democrats, defined the Polish nation ethnically. The second considered "Polishness" as an inclusive concept, according to which all citizens of the state, regardless of their ethnic or religious background, belonged to the national body. Piłsudski and his supporters were advocates of the second vision of the Polish state. Tensions between the supporters of these contested visions of Polish nation defined the Second Republic's political life.³⁶ Informed by Porter-Szücs' approach, my research explores the tension between these different concepts of the nation and examines how it shaped the experiences of war disability in interwar Poland.

My dissertation builds on works that have studied the experience of war disability after the First World War, placing the city at the center of my analysis. I argue that specific urban social spaces shaped both experiences of disability and those who experienced disability. I conceptualize urban space as social space, which, according to Henri Lefebvre, consists of various natural and

³⁴ Rogers Brubaker, "Nationalizing States in the 'Old-New Europe' – and the New", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 19, no 2 (1996): 415-416.

³⁵ Rogers Brubaker, "Nationalizing States in the 'Old-New Europe' – and the New", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 19, no 2 (1996): 416, 418-430. Irina Livezeanu takes a similar approach, analyzing the process of integration of the Romanian nation after the First World War and exploring the politics of Romanianization in Bukovina, Bessarabia, and Transylvania. Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania. Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995).

³⁶ Brian Porter-Szücs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 93. Timothy Snyder explores this tension between two conceptions of nationalism in his book about Henryk Józefowski: Timothy Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War: A Polish Artist's Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005).

social objects, including the networks and pathways that promote the exchange of things and information. These objects are not only things but also relations.³⁷ In order to study social space, one needs to study “factors such as the action of the groups, factors within knowledge, within ideology, or within the domain representation.”³⁸ The focus on Lviv allows me to study how disabled veterans reintegrated into “normal” life in a time of severe national and social conflict and also to unpack the numerous “disability” discourses created by the welfare state, society, and disabled veterans. This analysis of the interactions between various governmental institutions and disabled (in some case able-bodied) activists emphasizes the complex relations between the state and the public sphere in the Second Polish Republic.

The City

After the first partition of Poland in 1772, Lviv (Lemberg, Lwów) belonged to the Habsburg monarchy and was the capital of the crownland known as the “Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria.” As a large administrative centre modelled on Vienna, the city grew into the metropolis of the Eastern borderlands.³⁹ The turn of the twentieth century witnessed the rapid growth of Lviv’s urban infrastructure. In 1894, the city became the first in Cisleithania (the Austrian half of the Austro-Hungarian empire) with electric trams, and four years later a telephone line connected Lviv with Cracow and Vienna. In 1901, the beginnings of a modern plumbing and sewer system as well as an electrical grid were installed throughout the city.⁴⁰ At the same time,

³⁷ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991), 77, 83.

³⁸ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991), 77.

³⁹ For instance, the Lviv House of Invalids was built by Theophil Hansen at the middle of nineteenth century as a replica of the Viennese Arsenal. Ihor Zhuk, “The Architecture of Lviv from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Centuries,” in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 113; Jacek Purchla, “Patterns of Influence: Lviv and Vienna in the Mirror of Architecture,” in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 134-135.

⁴⁰ Jan Gierynski, *Lwów nie znany* (Lwów: Nakładem księgarni A. Krawczyńskiego, 1938), 16-18, 64-66, 69-73.

some experts considered busy modern cities like Lviv to be ill-suited for life. They emphasized overcrowding's attendant social problems and the dark side of urban existence.⁴¹

The city was home to Polish, Jewish, and Ukrainian communities. Statistics indicate that 206,113 people lived in Lviv in 1910 (51.17% were Roman Catholics, 19.07% Greek Catholics, 27.84% Jewish and 1.91% other). In 1931, the population had increased to 312,231 and 50.44% of Lviv dwellers were Roman Catholics, 15.93% Greek Catholics, 31.90% Jewish, and 1.69% other. It was also a linguistically diverse city: 63.5% spoke Polish as their mother tongue, 24.1 Yiddish or Hebrew, 7.8% Ukrainian, and 3.5% Ruthenian.⁴² Although Polish culture dominated Lviv's public sphere, the rapid development of the Ukrainian national movement in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century complicated relations between these two groups, as both claimed the city as an essential part of their national projects.⁴³

The First World War dramatically changed the rhythm of everyday life in Lviv, especially as the Russian army briefly occupied the city from September 1914 to June 1915. For Lviv, unfortunately, the war did not end in November 1918; rather, the city became a battlefield in the Ukrainian-Polish War of 1918-19. Fierce street fighting divided the city. Serving as the conflict's

⁴¹ Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919); Roman Feliński, "Wojna a stosunki mieszkaniowe," *Kurjer Lwowski*, August 19, 1918, 2; See also Chapter 2.

⁴² Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 211; Andrzej Bonusjak, *Lwów w latach 1918-1939. Ludność – Przestrzeń – Samorząd* (Rzeszów: Wydawn. Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Rzeszowie, 2000), 191-195. It was the first census when authorities allowed declaring Ukrainian as a native language but "Ruski" (Ruthenian) also remained as a separate category. Moreover Polish officials encouraged the Ukrainian population to choose the "Ruthenian" language as native.

⁴³ Philipp Ther, "War versus Peace: Interethnic Relations in Lviv during the First Half of the Twentieth Century," in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 251-257; Anna Veronica Wendland, "Neighbors as Betrayers: Nationalization, Remembrance Policy, and the Urban Public Sphere in L'viv," *Galicia: A Multicultural Land* ed. by Christopher Hann and Paul Robert Magocsi (University Toronto Press: Toronto, Buffalo, London, 2005), 139-143; Anna Veronica Wendland, "Post-Austrian Lemberg: War Commemoration, Interethnic Relations, and Urban Identity in L'viv, 1918-1939," *Austrian History Yearbook* 34 (2003): 83-85. At the same time, Markian Prokopovych argues that "Lemberg remained a Habsburg city where individuals held multiple identities until the outbreak of World War I. Markian Prokopovych, *Habsburg Lemberg: Architecture, Public Space and Politics in the Galician Capital, 1772-1914* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2009), 291.

front line for three weeks in 1918, the city was also besieged by the Ukrainian Galician army for four months afterwards. Moreover, after the Ukrainian troops left the city at the end of November, dozens of Jews were killed during a pogrom. Yet, this was not the last time violence would engulf the city; during the Polish-Soviet War of 1919-1921, Lviv again was at the center of military operations.

Because of its complex history, the city was a focal point for clashes between several memory discourses during the interwar years.⁴⁴ Certainly Lviv was not unique; many regions that belonged to the former Habsburg Empire experienced similar counter-memory conflicts after the Great War.⁴⁵ But the city was also caught between rebuilding and decay. In the early 1920s, Lviv's municipal authorities repaired the infrastructure damaged by the war. As the capital of a voivodeship and Poland's third most populous city, it was an important administrative, political, and cultural centre. However, after Austro-Hungary ceased to exist, Lviv lost its status as a crown land capital, contributing to the city's slow decay. Many professionals, scholars, and artists left for Warsaw or other Polish cities, further aggravating the process of provincialization. Various economic crises and insufficient government investment also hindered the city's economic

⁴⁴ Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 17-214; William W. Hagen, "The Moral Economy of Ethnic Violence: The Pogrom in Lwów, November 1918," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 2 (2005): 203-226; Philipp Ther, "War versus Peace: Interethnic Relations in Lviv during the First Half of the Twentieth Century," in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 257-260; Anna Veronica Wendland, "Neighbors as Betrayers: Nationalization, Remembrance Policy, and the Urban Public Sphere in L'viv," in *Galicia: A Multicultural Land* ed. by Christopher Hann and Paul Robert Magocsi (University Toronto Press: Toronto, Buffalo, London, 2005), 143-153; Anna Veronica Wendland, "Post-Austrian Lemberg: War Commemoration, Interethnic Relations, and Urban Identity in L'viv, 1918-1939," *Austrian History Yearbook* 34 (2003): 85-96.

⁴⁵ Mark Cornwall, "Introduction. Conflicted and Divided Habsburg Memory" in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 1-15; Franz Sz. Horváth, "The Divided War Remembrance of Transylvanian Magyars," in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 75-97; Laurence Cole, "Divided Land, Diverging Narratives: Memory Cultures of the Great War in the Successor Region of Tirol," in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 258-287; John Paul Newman, *Yugoslavia in the Shadow of War: Veterans and the Limits of State Building, 1903-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

development.⁴⁶ Although members of the city council had been elected since 1870, authorities suspended elections after the war. As a result, until May 1934, members of the prewar council worked together with the appointed representatives of the government.⁴⁷ Despite the modernization of Lviv's urban infrastructure, the city remained a second-tier industrial centre, having only a well-developed food processing cluster.⁴⁸ There were other signs of decline, too: the *Targi Wschodnie* (Eastern Trade Fair), first launched in 1921, was the most important event promoting Lviv as a centre of international trade.⁴⁹ By the end of the 1920s, however, the Fair had declined in size and importance.⁵⁰ The Great Depression, moreover, caused mass unemployment and increased social tensions in the city. In 1931, 12,681 citizens were unemployed, while 24,056 were retired or disabled. At the beginning of 1936, thousands of Lviv dwellers participated in demonstrations and strikes. In mid-April 1936, more than a dozen workers were killed by police during street fights.⁵¹

Despite its provincialization, Lviv was still the regional metropolis and a major administrative centre. The municipal and voivodeship administrations created a complicated bureaucratic network that spread their authority over the region. Additionally, the city was famous

⁴⁶ Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 213; Andrzej Bonusjak, *Lwów w latach 1918-1939. Ludność – Przestrzeń- Samorząd* (Rzeszów: Wydawn. Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Rzeszowie, 2000), 23-25; Philipp Ther, "War versus Peace: Interethnic Relations in Lviv during the First Half of the Twentieth Century," in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 261.

⁴⁷ Andrzej Bonusjak, *Lwów w latach 1918-1939. Ludność – Przestrzeń- Samorząd* (Rzeszów: Wydawn. Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Rzeszowie, 2000), 83-90.

⁴⁸ Jan Gierynski, *Lwów nie znany* (Lwów: Nakładem księgarni A. Krawczyńskiego, 1938), 105-106.

⁴⁹ Jan Gierynski, *Lwów nie znany* (Lwów: Nakładem księgarni A. Krawczyńskiego, 1938), 108-115.

⁵⁰ Andrzej Bonusjak, *Lwów w latach 1918-1939. Ludność – Przestrzeń- Samorząd* (Rzeszów: Wydawn. Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Rzeszowie, 2000), 163-165; Wiktor Chajes, *Semper Fidelis. Pamiętnik Polaka wyznania moźeszowego z lat 1926-1939* (Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1997), 94, 118.

⁵¹ Jan Gierynski, *Lwów nie znany* (Lwów: Nakładem księgarni A. Krawczyńskiego, 1938), 50-55; Grzegorz Mazur, *Życie polityczne polskiego Lwowa 1918-1939* (Cracow: Księgarnia akademicka, 2007), 407-409. Christoph Mick quoted the reports given by the communist activists (49 killed and 3000 arrested workers). Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 243-244. It is not clear whether the official statistics or higher numbers were closer to number of victims.

for its vibrant public sphere, consisting of numerous organizations and publishing houses. Some authors painted a narrative of contemporary Lviv as a story of progress and development, especially as the city's population grew and statistics showed an increasing number of marriages and births during the interwar era. New streets were built and, for example, 400 new buildings were constructed in 1937 alone. In the 1930s, the city recorded roughly two million monthly tram rides.⁵² Among other modern innovations brought to Lviv were radio shows—programs like *Wesoła Lwowska Fala* (Lviv's Merry Wave), for instance, produced in Lviv, were enormously popular throughout the whole country.⁵³ The Association of Blind Soldiers in Małopolska "*Spójnia*" spent more than 9,000 złoty in 1930 to provide free radios to its members.⁵⁴ Disabled residents of the Lviv House of Invalids not only listened to the radio—a few claimed to have invented it!⁵⁵ Indeed, Anna Veronica Wendland argues that despite the radicalization of the national discourses and filtered into the entertainment sphere in the 1930s, there was room for common urban identity. Frequently, ordinary dwellers remained apolitical and simply preferred to enjoy popular culture and urban entertainment.⁵⁶ Modern ideologies, bureaucracies, economic crises, popular culture and technological inventions changed daily urban life in Lviv. These changes impacted both disabled and able bodies.

The Primary Sources and Structure of the Thesis

⁵² Jan Gierynski, *Lwów nie znany* (Lwów: Nakładem księgarni A. Krawczyńskiego, 1938), 8-9, 14-15, 56-63.

⁵³ Czesław Halski, *Polskie radio Lwów* (London: Oficyna Poetów i Malarzy, 1985).

⁵⁴ "Działalność 'Spójni' Małopolskiego Związku Ociemniałego Żołnierza we Lwowie," *Ociemniały Żołnierz* 7 (November 1930): 13.

⁵⁵ Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939): 12.

⁵⁶ Anna Veronica Wendland, "Neighbors as Betrayers: Nationalization, Remembrance Policy, and the Urban Public Sphere in L'viv," *Galicja: A Multicultural Land* ed. by Christopher Hann and Paul Robert Magocsi (University Toronto Press: Toronto, Buffalo, London, 2005), 146-147; Anna Veronica Wendland, "Post-Austrian Lemberg: War Commemoration, Interethnic Relations, and Urban Identity in L'viv, 1918-1939," *Austrian History Yearbook* 34 (2003): 96-101.

This research is based on a variety of primary sources. It includes such published sources as minutes and various publications of the Polish parliament, legislative acts, governmental projects, instructions for medical military commissions, periodicals published by Polish, Jewish and Ukrainian organizations of disabled veterans or for disabled veterans (*Inwalida Polski, Inwalida Żydowski, Inwalida, Front Inwalidzki, Biały Orzeł, Kalendar Ukrainского Invalida, Ukrain's'kyi invalid*), the Lviv popular press (Polish newspapers *Gazeta Lwowska, Kurjer Lwowski, Wiek Nowy, Gazeta Poranna, Gazeta Wieczorna, Słowo Polskie, Dziennik Ludowy, Lwowski Ilustrowany Express Wieczorny, Sprawedliwość*; Ukrainian – *Dilo, Hromads'ka dumka, Novyi Chas, Slovo, Sel'rob, Hromads'kyi Visnyk*; Jewish – *Chwila*), the Ukrainian newspaper in the USA, *Svoboda*, and fiction published in the literary journals, periodicals for disabled veterans, and collections. The most valuable archival sources are deposited at the State Archive of the Lviv Region and mostly constitute documentation from the city council (fond 2, op. 26), Lviv county (fond 7, op. 1) and the special departments for war invalids in the Lviv Voivodeship (fond 1, op 33, 34). These files contain numerous reports, orders, correspondence with different governmental bodies, institutions and organizations, applications and letters of disabled veterans, files of individuals, and files of various institutions for disabled veterans. The small number of files that reflect the work of Ukrainian activists are preserved in the fond of The Association of Ukrainian Disabled Veterans in Lviv (fond 262) at the State Archive of the Lviv Region and also in fond of the Ukrainian Citizens' Committee in Lviv (fond 462) and the collection of the Greek-Catholic metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky (fond 358) held at the Central State Historical Archive in Lviv. I also used some supplementary materials that allowed me to study the work of military and civilian bureaucrats, and which are located at the Archive of Modern Records in Warsaw and the Central Military Archive in Warsaw.

The first two chapters of this dissertation examine how the notion of war disability was constructed by officials, politicians and professionals in interwar Poland. They focus on biopolitics in the Second Polish Republic; on how bodies impaired by war were defined, classified, and managed by the state in order to return them to productive existence.⁵⁷ As Chapter 1 shows, the construction of the legal term “the Polish war invalid” took place simultaneously with the construction of the Polish national body. In other words, state officials, politicians, and disabled activists discussed not only what groups were entitled to receive state benefits, but also who belonged to the Polish nation. Chapter 2 explores how the interplay between expert knowledge and various political and economic factors shaped the professional discourse of war disability. In the first two chapters, I argue that war disability was not considered a purely physical (or mental) impairment, but, rather, as a complex political-spatial construct.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine how urban social space formed experiences of war disability. Lviv, as a large administrative centre with a heterogeneous ethnic, religious and social structure and conflicted memory discourses, produced a complex network of institutions, relations, and spatial practices. Chapter 3 examines the tension between governmental management strategies (implemented by central and local authorities) and the work of Lviv’s disabled veterans’ organizations. I explore the gap between legislative norms and local practices, and study the influence of economic and ideological (ethnic versus army affiliation) factors on the experience of disability in Lviv. Chapter 4 focuses on how this experience was shaped by “the architecture of injury” in interwar Lviv. Various state institutions for disabled veterans were located in the House of Invalids, which had been a part of Lviv’s urban fabric since the middle of the nineteenth century.

⁵⁷ On biopolitics/biopower see Shelley Tremain “Foucault, Governmentality, and Critical Disability Theory Today,” in *Foucault and the Government of Disability*, ed. by Shelley Tremain (University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2015), 9-23.

The House was established as an institution for disabled veterans by the Austrian emperor in 1855-63, and Polish disabled soldiers continued to believe that they had a “right” to reside in this facility; they opposed attempts to relocate the House of Invalids and to purge Lviv urban space of traces of war disability. The chapter also demonstrates how these special spatial arrangements both included and excluded disabled residents from daily urban practices.

As noted above, both ethnic and army affiliations had enormous influence on the experience of war disability in interwar Poland. Due to its heterogeneous population, Lviv provides an ideal site for the study of interethnic relations in the Second Polish Republic. Both Polish and Ukrainian communities perceived Lviv as “their” city, and urban space became a place of physical and symbolic struggle. Increasingly oppressive policies towards minorities and a reluctance from the government to reach a compromise with Ukrainians led to both Ukrainian radicalization and the crystallization of Ukrainian civil society, which we might define, following Gary Cohen, as “the sphere of individual and group discourse and action, formally independent of the state, that addresses issues of public affairs, politics, and governance.”⁵⁸ “Self-constitution and self-mobilization” are necessary components for the emergence of modern civil society.⁵⁹ Injured ex-servicemen from the Ukrainian Galician army were officially deprived of state benefits until March 1932 (and even longer in practice) and government policy galvanized the further development of Ukrainian civil society. The Lviv intelligentsia constructed the Ukrainian national narrative and the notion of “the Ukrainian war invalid” by establishing a system of assistance to disabled soldiers of the Galician army. Chapter 5 analyzes the relations between the state and Ukrainian civil society, and further explores the minority policy of the Polish government.

⁵⁸ Gary B. Cohen, “Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914,” *Central European History* 40 (2007), 245.

⁵⁹ Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), ix.

Chapter 6 includes, but is not limited to, three of the most popular representations of disabled veterans' narratives: a negative and pacifist image of war disability, a remasculinization narrative, and a heroic image of disabled soldiers as patriots who had served their nation.⁶⁰ I focus mainly on the (self-)representation of war disability in the public sphere, especially in Lviv's popular press, fiction, and Polish and Ukrainian memory discourses. The case studies, based on Jan Kos' public suicide and a brutal murder committed by Hieronim Cybulski, demonstrate how the image of "war disability" was constructed, used, or purged from public space.

This research suggests a new approach to writing the history of ethnically, religiously and socially diverse Eastern European cities. Looking at veterans from all armies and ethnicities across a shared space through a local case study, rather than focusing only on a nation or nationality, for example, provides new insights into the history of Poland in the 1920s and 1930s, and on the experience of disability, which was more complex than simply physical or mental injury. This focus on war disability and urban space allows for a more nuanced study of the complex Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish experiences in interwar Poland and challenges the notion of a "nationalizing state," and provides a more nuanced picture of state-building processes in interwar Poland. It also contributes to broader discussions on disability and state-building in Eastern and Central Europe by showing the complex relationships between state and civil society.

⁶⁰ On these "traditional" representations see David A. Gerber, "Preface to the Enlarged and Revised Edition: The Continuing Relevance of the Study of Disabled Veterans," in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), xiv.

CHAPTER ONE

DEFINING THE “WAR INVALID”: POLITICAL DISCOURSE ABOUT DISABLED VETERANS IN INTERWAR POLAND

After World War I millions of demobilized soldiers returned home injured and traumatized by trench warfare. Disabled veterans faced changed bodies and changed circumstances, and in an ableist society they seemed to pose a challenge. Families, and society as a whole, had to negotiate their care and diminished employment opportunities, and states, political parties and voluntary associations all asked how these injured men might be reintegrated into society. Many states passed special legislation that guaranteed financial and medical assistance to disabled veterans. My thesis focuses on the reintegration of disabled soldiers to civilian life in Lviv, but in order to analyze the local discourses and processes, it is necessary also to explore the broader national context affecting disabled veterans. This will allow a better understanding of the interplay between national and local discourses. In this chapter I investigate the laws that became the basis of the welfare system for disabled soldiers, as well as the political and economic factors that influenced its development. I also focus on the public political discourses that emerged during discussions about the welfare system, and explore the interaction of these discourses and how they changed during the interwar period. This complex approach allows us to study not only the formation of the welfare system but also what meanings were attached to the concepts of “disability” and “Polishness.” In the fledgling country of Poland, disabled soldiers were not a homogeneous group. Instead, they belonged to different armies and ethnic and religious groups. This reality complicated the process of defining the concept of the “Polish war invalid” and organizing state assistance. For this chapter I primarily use parliamentary minutes and periodicals published by organizations of disabled veterans.

Though the independent Polish state emerged in November 1918, its actual borders were set only in 1922 after a series of wars. The first Polish government, led by Jędrzej Moraczewski’s

Polish Socialist Party, was committed to social reforms and the creation of a welfare state. Even though a politically center-right party took the reins of government three months later in January 1919, Moraczewski's ideas about the relationship between state and society had already taken hold. Considering the political instability in Poland and neighboring states, the new government continued the policy of its predecessors. At the same time, local conflicts in various borderland regions, the Polish-Soviet War, and economic crises made the task of social reform extremely challenging.⁶¹

During the interwar period the Polish state underwent several different stages of political development. Although established as a pluralistic parliamentary democracy, after the coup of May 1926 organized by Piłsudski and his supporters, Poland began to transition to authoritarianism. The strong disillusionment with the democratic parliamentary system and the various political groups that put party interests before the good of the state forced him to return to political life. The government restricted gradually the influence of Parliament and often resorted to brute force to cope with the political opposition. Democracy's death knell was sounded in spring 1935 with the implementation of the April Constitution, which limited the power of the Parliament and increased the influence of the president, as well as Piłsudski's death in May 1935. Some of the most significant challenges to the interwar Polish state were economic and ethnic in nature.⁶² Financial troubles limited social assistance to disabled veterans while the existence of ethnic minorities (constituting 30% of Poland's population) who had fought for different armies raised questions about the meaning of "the Polish war invalid." In other words, it raised the question of

⁶¹ Brian Porter-Szücs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 75-88; Piotr J. Wróbel, "The Rise and the Fall of Parliamentary Democracy in Interwar Poland," in *The Origins of Modern Polish Democracy*, ed by M. B. B. Biskupski, James S. Pula and Piotr J. Wróbel (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 117-119.

⁶² Brian Porter-Szücs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 126-127.

whether all citizens of the Second Republic were entitled to receive state benefits as “Polish” disabled veterans. These factors influenced Poland’s social policies and the organizations of the state’s welfare system for disabled demobilized soldiers.

Although some scholars have argued that World War I veterans on Polish territory “had been defined in defending against the state,”⁶³ disabled veterans of imperial armies were, in fact, defined and granted the same rights as demobilized soldiers of the Polish army a few months after Polish independence. The government institution responsible for providing assistance to disabled soldiers was the Department of Assistance of the Ministry of Military Affairs. It paid temporary allowances to disabled veterans until the Constitutional Assembly passed official legislation. The author of a 1919 report on the work of the department admitted that there was no “tradition” of such policies on “Polish ground”—instead, they had to model their system on Western prototypes.⁶⁴ According to Józef Piłsudski’s order of February 1919, the program that aimed to return war invalids to society was divided into four areas: treatment, prosthetics, re-education, and social care. All citizens of the Polish state who had served in imperial or Polish armies after 28 June 1914 and who had partly (at least 15%) or fully lost the ability to work had the right to an allowance. Special military medical commissions defined the percentage of disability, which determined the size of allowance. Compensation for most veterans was usually temporary. Changes to disabled veterans’ health, their education and skills training, or their employment at special facilities for disabled soldiers could all influence the allowance amount. At the same time, veterans lost their rights if they lost their citizenship, left Poland, were sentenced for serious

⁶³ Julia Eichenberg, “War Experience and National State in Poland. Veterans and Welfare in the 20th Century,” in *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 20, no. 5 (October 2010): 60

⁶⁴ *Zarys Działalności Ministerstwa Spraw Wojsk. w Przedmiocie Opieki nad Inwalidami Wojskowymi przez Sekcję Opieki od Początku je Istnienia aż po Dzień 31 Grudnia 1919 R.* (Nakładem sekcji opieki Minist. Spraw Wojsk. w Warszawie), 4

crimes, or evaded re-education or medical treatment or refused prostheses. According to official reports, by 1920 the government had made significant progress in the organization of state assistance for disabled soldiers.⁶⁵

Development of the Disabled Veterans' Movement

While the state tried to establish a system of assistance, demobilized soldiers started to self-organize and the movement for the rights of disabled veterans grew rapidly. The first organization of disabled Polish soldiers was established during the First World War in Cracow and it became the foundation for the movement of Polish war invalids. During the congress of war invalids that took place in Warsaw in April 1919, representatives of various organizations decided to create the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. The main purpose of this organization was to represent disabled veterans and defend their rights. Among its main principles were ethnic, religious, and political neutrality, as well as the inclusion of every demobilized disabled soldier regardless of the army with which he had been affiliated.⁶⁶ Such an inclusive approach was very different, for instance, from the experience of the Yugoslav veteran movement. Similar to Polish disabled veterans, Yugoslav disabled soldiers had belonged to various armies. However, unlike in Poland, in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes before 1929) the diversity of military experiences precluded a unified veterans' movement.⁶⁷ Though imperial veterans were marginalized groups within the Polish veteran movement and they did not usually belong to the

⁶⁵ *Zarys Działalności Ministerstwa Spraw Wojsk. w Przedmiocie Opieki nad Inwalidami Wojskowymi przez Sekcję Opieki od Początku je Istnienia aż po Dzień 31 Grudnia 1919 R.* (Nakładem sekcji opieki Minist. Spraw Wojsk. w Warszawie), 4.

⁶⁶ "Związek Inwalidów Wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polski," *Inwalida*, November, 1928, 33-37.

⁶⁷ John Paul Newman, "Forging a United Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes - The Legacy of the First World War and the 'invalid question'," in *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia: Key Issues and Controversies*, ed. by Dejan Djokic and James Ker-Lindsay (London: Routledge, 2010), 47-61; John Paul Newman, *Yugoslavia in Shadow of War: Veterans and the Limits of State Building, 1903-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 52-53.

other all-Polish veteran organizations, organizations for disabled servicemen were willing to include them fully. The Union was the largest veteran organization and the majority of its members had in fact served in imperial armies.⁶⁸ It had a tense relationship with the government in the 1920s, which tried to control it from the beginning of its existence.

The Union spent its early years struggling to establish a system of state assistance for disabled veterans.⁶⁹ The Polish Union of Disabled Veterans became the major lobby group for disabled soldiers' rights in the early 1920s, and the organization's leaders claimed that it represented the interests of all of Poland's disabled veterans. Although the implementation of the Invalid Act was delayed because of a severe economic crisis, the movement's activists were able to prevent changes to the legislation that could have reduced benefits for some groups of disabled veterans.

The first schism within the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans appeared in the mid 1920s when two groups of disabled veterans separated.⁷⁰ The first to leave were Jews. The leaders of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans declared that all invalids regardless of their ethnic or religious background were equally deserving of state support. Yet, according to the newspaper *Inwalida Żydowski*, a separate Jewish organization of disabled veterans emerged in 1924 due to anti-Semitism in the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and other All-Polish invalid organizations. Jews felt like second-class members of these organizations. They decided to create the Union of Organizations of Jewish Disabled Veterans, Widows, and Orphans, which would defend their

⁶⁸ Christoph Mick, "The Dead and the Living: War Veterans Culture in Interwar Polish Galicia," in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 247.

⁶⁹ "Rzut oka w stecz," *Inwalida*, January 2, 1921, 1; "Tajemnica przewłkania zatwierdzenia naszego statutu," *Inwalida*, February 13, 1921, 1-4; "Cośmy zrobili?" *Inwalida*, February 20, 1921, 1-2; "Zwiazek Inwalidów Wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polski," *Inwalida*, November, 1928, 33-37.

⁷⁰ Ebi, "Dalszy etap walki," *Inwalida*, July 13, 1924, 1-4; "Dwukrotne zwycięstwo," *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 1-3; "Z Legji Inwalidów Wojsk Polskich," *Inwalida*, October 16, 1927, 4-5; L. S., "Jedmością silni," *Inwalida Żydowski*, December 1, 1926, 1-2.

rights specifically.⁷¹ In contrast to the leaders of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, which considered the Jewish organization threatening to the unity of the broader movement, representatives of the Jewish organization understood “unity” as the union of Jewish disabled veterans, not of all disabled soldiers in Poland.⁷² The tense relationship between both organizations frequently flared up in the press. By the late 1920s, however, the Jewish association had started to believe again in the importance of cooperating with the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans in order to create a united front to work for the benefit of all disabled veterans. The leaders of the Union, however, were less than accommodating as they saw themselves as the only rightful representatives of all disabled soldiers.⁷³

In 1926, a second group of veterans who were dissatisfied with the Union’s policies decided to form the Polish Army Legion of Invalids. This organization united the disabled veterans of the Polish Army and those invalids of the Imperial armies who were Polish patriots and who had fought for Polish independence. This organization emphasized the moral superiority of disabled veterans of the Polish army and their loyalty to Piłsudski. The Legion was supported by the sanacja regime as a counterbalance to the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans; however, the Polish Army Legion of Invalids united a much smaller group of veterans. The activists of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans accused the founders of the Legion of divisiveness and they conducted a dirty campaign against it in the press.⁷⁴

⁷¹ L. S., “Jednością silni,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, December 1, 1926, 1-2; J. B., “Sprawedliwości,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, February 1, 1927, 1-2.

⁷² L. S., “Jednością silni,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, December 1, 1926, 1-2.

⁷³ H. Sch., “Sanacja,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, March 1, 1927, 1-2; Herman Schwarz, “Na marginesie zagadnień nowelizacyjnych,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, April, 1929, 2-3; “Pod przęgierz! Opinji inwalidzkiej,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, January-May, 1932, 20-22; H. Sch., “Na marginesie aktualnych spraw inwalidzkich,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, May, 1934, 2-3.

⁷⁴ “Szkielet organizacyjny Legji Inwalidów Wojsk Polskich,” in *General Józef Sowiński patron inwalidów wojsk Polskich*, (Warszawa: Sekcja Propagandy Zarządu Głównego Legji Inwalidów Wojsk Polskich, 1928), 27-31; “Z gregorowskiej izby,” *Inwalida*, February 13, 1927, 2; “Współdziałanie ‘Legji’ ze ‘Związkiem Żydowskim,’” *Inwalida*, March 20, 1927, 2; “Z Legji Inwalidów Wojsk Polskich,” *Inwalida*, October 16, 1927, 4-5.

After the May Coup of 1926, the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans took a very cautious position towards the new political authorities and announced that: “It is difficult for us to make a judgment about what has happened; everyone should think for himself, but only history will judge and its judgment will be definitive.”⁷⁵ Later, Ludwik Stachecki, one of the leaders of the movement, underlined that a new government of “moral rebirth” had to correct the injustices endured by disabled veterans.⁷⁶ But the relationship between the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and the new sanacja authorities was even more tense than the Union’s relationship with the previous government. In January 1927, the leaders of the organization were publicly accused of fraud and misappropriating the organization’s finances. Marjan Kantor, the president of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and the movement’s most prominent leader, rejected all accusations.⁷⁷ Although the actions taken against Kantor were motivated by “the moral cleansing” associated with sanacja, official denunciations of active movement members were considered a direct attack on the organization. During the May Coup, the Union’s leaders were apolitical. This proved to be a mistake. After the coup, authorities tried to discredit the Union’s leadership and appoint loyal activists to positions of power in the veteran’s movement.⁷⁸ The leaders of the organization, including President Kantor, also believed that Jews were plotting against them.⁷⁹ Nonetheless, the conflict between the Union and the state worsened, accentuated by the Union’s refusal to join the new pro-Piłsudski organization the Federation of Polish Associations for the Defense of the Fatherland.⁸⁰ The final assault on the movement’s leaders took place in November

⁷⁵ “Historja wyda sąd,” *Inwalida*, May 23, 1926, 3

⁷⁶ Ludwik Stachecki, “Ustawa o zaopatrzeniu inwalidów, a opieka społeczna,” *Inwalida*, September 5, 1926, 9-10

⁷⁷ “Oszczytstwa w świetle faktów,” *Inwalida*, January 23, 1927, 3-7; “Zarzuty w świetle rzeczywistości,” *Inwalida*, February 6, 1927, 3-5

⁷⁸ “Snopy światła na rzeczywistość,” *Inwalida*, January 30, 1927, 3-4; Edmund Bigoński, “Nasza siła,” *Inwalida*, February 13, 1927, 1-2

⁷⁹ Ludwik Stachecki, “Choć burza huczy wkoło nas, do góry wzniesmy skroń,” *Inwalida*, February 7, 1927, 1-2

⁸⁰ Marek Jabłonowski, *Sen o potęgę Polski. Z dziejów ruchu byłych wojskowych w II Rzeczypospolitej 1918-1939* (Olsztyn: Ośrodek Badań Naukowych im. Wojciecha Kętrzyńskiego, 1998), 59, 76-81.

1928, when a government commission exposed financial mismanagement within the Union. As a result, the leaders' illegal actions caused great material losses for the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. Authorities removed the old executive and "imposed" a board that would remain until the next Union election.⁸¹ This was a turning point after which the disabled veterans' movement developed under government control.

Between 1918 and 1926, the Second Polish Republic went through a period of a parliamentary democracy. This involved the development of a civil society. Among the consequences of this process was the growth of the public sphere and the increasing role of various organizations that represented different social groups, which frequently criticized government policy. This relationship between the state and society changed after May 1926. The sanacja regime tried to control the public sphere and limit political and social pluralism. It aimed to control public organizations, political parties, state ideology, and memory. Since leaders of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans were not enthusiastic supporters of sanacja, the government conspired to remove them from positions of leadership. The new president Antony Snopczyński and his successor Jan Karkoszka were Piłsudski loyalists and were members of Parliament from the Nonpartisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government (BBWR).⁸² The Polish Union of Disabled Veterans thus turned from representing disabled veterans and being critical of the government to acting as a loyal supporter of the sanacja authorities. Leaders of the movement publicly campaigned for the BBWR during the 1930 election.⁸³ After the government imposed a new

⁸¹ "Zarząd przymusowy," *Inwalida*, December 2, 1928, 1. After temporary board took control over the organization it joined the Federation of Polish Associations for Defense of the Fatherland in March 1929. (Marek Jabłonowski, *Sen o potęgę Polski. Z dziejów ruchu byłych wojskowych w II Rzeczypospolitej 1918-1939* (Olsztyn: Ośrodek Badań Naukowych im. Wojciecha Kętrzyńskiego, 1998), 80).

⁸² Ente, "Zainteresujmy się tą sprawą," *Polska Zbrojna*, June 18, 1930, 8.; "Zmiana warty," *Inwalida*, December 24, 1933, 2

⁸³ Ente, "Inwalidzi a wybory," *Polska Zbrojna*, October 9, 1930, 3; S-ki, "O Pierwszeństwo dla inwalidów – przy wyborach," *Polska Zbrojna*, October 16, 1930, 6.

leadership on the Union, the latter started unity negotiations with the Legion of Invalids. These efforts were futile, however, and both organizations continued to attack each other in the press. As the relationship between the government and the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans improved and it did not need the Legion of Invalids to weaken the Union, the Legion lost the support of the authorities and its influence on the disabled veteran movement.⁸⁴ The Legion continued to exist as a separate organization and occasionally clashed with the Union; however, it was a marginally important organization for disabled veterans of the Polish army.⁸⁵

Constitutional Assembly and Disabled Veterans Question

In 1919, the Ministry of Military Affairs introduced the magazine *Inwalida Polski*, which served as a mouthpiece for the government. In its first issue the author of the introductory article declared that neither disabled soldiers themselves nor separate organizations would be able to manage the manifold consequences of war disability alone. The ideal disabled veteran, as imagined by the state, showed fidelity to and trust in the Polish government. Only the state could provide the broad spectrum of policies and programs required to overcome wartime injury:⁸⁶

Some of you will be relocated to shelters, as you bear visible scars of the nation's suffering from the days of the Fatherland's birth. You deserve this. Others will be led to industrial

⁸⁴ "Gdy chcesz zgody, szykuj zgodę," *Inwalida*, February 10, 1929, 4-5; T. M. Nittman, "Czego się spodziewa Legja W. P. od kongresu," *Inwalida*, March 3, 1929, 7; "Kto sieje niezgodę (Na marginesie uchwał Legji)," *Inwalida*, February 14, 1929, 2; "Legję Inwalidów rozbijaczy jedności inwalidzkiej ostrzegamy," *Inwalida*, January 12, 1930, 3-4; "Już czas zlikwidować działalność Legji Inwalidów Wojsk Polskich," *Inwalida*, April 20, 1930, 7-8; "Nowe sztuczki t. zw. Legji Inwalidów W. P.," *Inwalida*, July 27, 1930, 5; T. M. Nittman, "Tak zwana Legja..." *Polska Zbrojna*, January 24, 1929, 6; "Nowe przesilenie w Legji Inwalidów," *Polska Zbrojna*, June 18, 1930, 8.

⁸⁵ "Legja i żydowki zw. inwalidów pod pręgierzem opiniji inwalidzkiej," *Inwalida*, March 27, 1932, 3-4; "Front inwalidzki' ostregamy," *Inwalida*, March 1, 1938, 17.

⁸⁶ "Invalidzi Wojenni!," *Inwalida Polski* no. 1 (1919): 1.

centers to work hand in hand with fellow workers as equals. This road will go through Parliament, Government, and the Justice System.⁸⁷

Inwalida Polski would continue to advance the view that disabled veterans could be a boon for and not a burden to society. As wise citizens, they would not become instruments of anarchy.⁸⁸ Whereas in Austrian Galicia disabled veterans had scrounged and worked in undignified professions, disabled soldiers in newborn Poland would be respected and productive members of society. The Polish government would organize assistance despite economic difficulties. The state needed veterans as much as they needed the state.⁸⁹ However, reality differed from the propaganda. Not all disabled servicemen fit the ideal image constructed by the authorities. Meanwhile, the relationship between the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and the government deteriorated and the Union's leaders harshly criticized the authorities for their failure to provide assistance for demobilized disabled soldiers.⁹⁰

The Constitutional Assembly that established the basic principles of the new political system met at the beginning of February 1919. This was the first time that suffrage was granted to most Poles and the electoral process was chaotic. The borders of the new state were still unsettled and the struggle for the borderlands continued, resulting in several additional elections. In February 1919, 338 deputies assumed their seats in the Constitutional Assembly. By November 1922, the number had increased to 442. Ideological divisions among deputies also varied over time: the right-wing coalition led by the National Democrats had 34% of seats in 1919 but only 19% in 1922. In

⁸⁷ "Invalidzi Wojenni!," *Inwalida Polski* no. 1 (1919): 2.

⁸⁸ "Co każdy inwalida powinien wiedzieć o organizacji sekcji opieki M. S. W.," *Inwalida Polski* no. 2 (1919): 4; "Jak to się czasy zminiają," *Inwalida Polski* no. 3 (1919): 16.

⁸⁹ "Jak to się czasy zminiają," *Inwalida Polski* no. 3 (1919): 16.

⁹⁰ Tajemnica przewłknięcia zatwierdzenia naszego statutu," *Inwalida*, February 13, 1921, 1-4; "Cośmy zrobili?" *Inwalida*, February 20, 1921, 1-2; "Związek Inwalidów Wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polski," *Inwalida*, November, 1928, 33-37.

contrast, PSL-Piast (the agrarian party) started with 13% of seats but increased their share to 22% in 1922.⁹¹

On 20 February 1919, the third meeting of the Constitutional Assembly dealt with the issue of legislation that would regulate state assistance to disabled ex-servicemen, widows, and orphans. Herman Lieberman, a Polish Socialist Party deputy and a former representative in Vienna, submitted a proposal to establish the necessary legislation immediately. He argued that it was the state's duty to care for the roughly 500,000 disabled veterans living in Poland who had served in the First World War. As a former citizen of Austria-Hungary, Lieberman informed his colleagues that, for instance, "the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had made a significant progress in arranging the system of assistance to war invalids, widows and orphans."⁹² He insisted that the Polish Parliament had an obligation to ensure the well-being of war victims in Poland.⁹³ When the Ministry of Military Affairs proposed a law in May 1919 that assisted only the widows and orphans of soldiers of the Polish army and Polish units, some deputies protested against it. Wincenty Witos, a leader of PSL-Piast, argued that there was no difference between disabled soldiers and their families. In fact, all Poles who had fought and suffered during World War I had a right to appropriate care.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Por Brian Porter-Szücs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 80-81; Piotr J. Wróbel, "The Rise and the Fall of Parliamentary Democracy in Interwar Poland," in *The Origins of Modern Polish Democracy*, ed by M. B. B. Biskupski, James S. Pula and Piotr J. Wróbel (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 120-123.

⁹² Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Druk 15*. Although imperial bureaucrats started to work on the new legislation, the law that regulated assistance to disabled veterans in Austria was passed only in April 1919. (Verena Pawlowsky and Harald Wendelin, "Government Care of War Widows and Disabled Veterans after World War I" in *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria* ed. by Günter Bischof, Fritz Plasser and Peter Berger (New Orleans: University of New Orleans, 2010), 171-191).

⁹³ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Druk 15*.

⁹⁴ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 42 posiedzenie*, łam 23-24; Paweł Grata, "The Polish State's Policy Regarding the War Invalid," *Politics and Society* 8, (2011): 116.

During the next few months, discussions about assistance to disabled veterans continued in the Constitutional Assembly. In their parliamentary interpellations and remarks, deputies reported that they had received numerous letters and complaints about impoverished veterans. Moreover, the overall situation for disabled veterans was deteriorating. Since the majority of deputies who participated in discussions and queried the government about disabled veterans' issues were from Galicia, they emphasized the need to pay special attention to Poland's borderlands. An inability to meet the needs of returning veterans could heighten social tensions and aid the spread of "bolshevism." Representatives of all stripes suggested that disabled veterans be given special permission to trade tobacco or run railway restaurants and that the government should pass legislation to establish hiring quotas for disabled veterans in the bureaucracy.⁹⁵ Additionally, the deputies of the People's Party insisted that only agrarian reform would adequately address and solve the problems faced by disabled veterans.⁹⁶

The Polish state inherited not only three different legal systems, but also politicians who were trained and experienced in working in those systems. According to the minutes and other documents of the Constitutional Assembly, deputies often referred to previous Austrian laws and experiences. Most deputies involved in the debates on veterans represented the former Galicia; they frequently referenced the constant violation of disabled veterans' rights in this region.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ In the Habsburg Monarchy, disabled veterans had similar concessions for monopoly goods and the other states of the region (for instance, Czechoslovakia) also granted such economic privileges to ex-soldiers. (Julia Eichenberg, *Kämpfen für Frieden und Fürsorge. Polnische Veteranen des Ersten Weltkriegs und ihre internationalen Kontakte, 1918-1939* (München: Oldenbourg 2011), 104-105, 131).

⁹⁶ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 819-828; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Druk 15*; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 49; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 261.

⁹⁷ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 819-828; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Druk 15*; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 49; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 227; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 261; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 541; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 580; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 591; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 621; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 650; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 677; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 706; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 713; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 736; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 834; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 867; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 940; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 956.

Disability was a matter of strategic national interest, particularly in regions vulnerable to political upheaval, defection, and even annexation by other nations. Some also believed that this region was inherently different from others. The deputy from Przemyśl, Father Kazimierz Kotula, stated that there were 60% more disabled soldiers in Galicia than in any other territory of the former Austria-Hungary.⁹⁸ This was explained because “Austria always sent Poles to the most dangerous places, exposed them to death and wounds, but failed to organize proper care for Polish invalids.”⁹⁹ This was an opportunity for the Polish state to make amends for earlier mistreatment. Representatives of the Ukrainian Temporary Committee for Aid to Invalids used the same rationale in their Ukrainian- and English-language reports. However, the reports emphasized that Ukrainians had suffered the most: “The Central Powers regarded Ukrainian soldiers as material destined to be immolated. No wonder that official Austrian statistics prove that half of all Austrian disabled soldiers are from Galicia, and the lion’s share from Eastern Galicia.”¹⁰⁰ Representatives of both Polish and Ukrainian societies constructed competing narratives of victimization in order to claim more legitimacy over land and people than the other side.

Improving assistance and increasing allowances in Galicia were political tactics designed to increase the loyalty of local populations. The new Polish government simply could not allow borderland residents to think that “a foreign (Austrian) state had taken better care of them.” Some deputies also stressed that any future attempts at mass conscription would only be successful if the

⁹⁸ According to the official statistics at the end of 1919 the number of registered disabled soldiers was much higher in Małopolska (61385) than in former Congress Poland (22351) (*Zarys Działalności*, 9) but the Western borderland became part of Poland only in 1922 and it dramatically changed the number of war invalids. There are no precise statistics on disabled veterans in the different regions of Poland in the 1920s but according to statistics published in 1934, the highest number of war invalids lived in the former Prussian territory (68 849), in second place was the former Austrian territory (61 598) and the fewest disabled veterans lived in former Russian provinces. Jan Sobociński, “Inwalidzi wojenni i wojskowi w Polsce według pochodzenia oraz przyczyn inwalidztwa,” *Praca i Opieka Społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 3 (1934): 313.

⁹⁹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 826.

¹⁰⁰ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180, ark. 16.

state organized adequate assistance for disabled veterans.¹⁰¹ However, reports also revealed the state's failure to provide adequate assistance to the region's demobilized disabled soldiers. For instance, according to the deputies Józef Putek and Antoni Chudy, disabled Polish soldiers were starving in the Cracow School for Disabled Veterans in March 1919. This institution, although founded by Austrian authorities, continued to accept demobilized soldiers after the establishment of the Polish state. At the same time, Chudy blamed the local military authorities and not political leaders for the horrible situation faced by many disabled veterans.¹⁰²

Numerous interpellations to the government from parliamentary deputies noted the myriad problems facing the nascent welfare system for disabled soldiers. Deputies tried to influence government policy and emphasized the violation of laws and the indifference or reluctance of state officials to organize adequate social assistance.¹⁰³ Among the issues raised were the military medical commission's decisions to reevaluate (and usually reduce) the disability percentage of veterans, delays in approving the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans' statutes and in paying disability allowances, and refusals to allow disabled servicemen to sell monopoly goods. At the same time, these interpellations demonstrated that the Union and other veterans' groups were able to lobby the Constitutional Assembly for favourable political outcomes.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 822, 825.

¹⁰² Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 821, 824-825; Anita Magowska, "The Unwanted Hero: War Invalids in Poland after World War I," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science*, no 2 (2014): 200.

¹⁰³ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1168; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1422; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1434; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1455.

¹⁰⁴ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1168; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1422; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1434; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1455; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1714; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1847; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1864; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 2217.

Most members of parliament thought it was the state's duty to care for disabled veterans; they also vigorously critiqued the government when the provision of care was inadequate.¹⁰⁵ In response to their cries of negligence, parliament created a special committee tasked with drafting suitable legislation to aid disabled veterans by the end of January 1920.¹⁰⁶ This committee suggested increasing supplementary payments for veterans with a high percentage of disability (more than 60%) and decreasing such compensation for those with a low percentage of disability (between 15 and 40%).¹⁰⁷ In December, the deputies changed the law removing the clause that allowances should only be granted to "invalids in need." The previous iteration of the law denied payments to disabled veterans and disabled veterans-turned-government-officials if they owned real estate or property that generated income greater than the average income of an unskilled worker in the region in which the property was located.¹⁰⁸

External threats to Poland's security and domestic political instability resulted in legislation for disabled veterans. A renewed Red Army offensive put the Polish forces on their heels, creating a critical manpower shortage. In response, the Council of National Defence, a temporary body established in July 1920 and invested with decision-making authority, declared that disabled soldiers who reenlisted for military service would continue to receive an allowance in addition to wages for active military service. Disabled veterans who reenlisted before 20 June 1920, however, would not receive their allowance.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 821, 824-825; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 107 posiedzenie*, łam 30-32.

¹⁰⁶ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 107 posiedzenie*, łam 31-33.

¹⁰⁷ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 161 posiedzenie*, łam 54-55; "Ustawa z dnia 26 marca 1920 roku poz. 182," *Dziennik Ustaw* 31, 1920, 485; "Ustawa z dnia 9 lipca 1920 roku poz. 385," *Dziennik Ustaw* 61, 1920, 1059.

¹⁰⁸ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 199 posiedzenie*, łam 17-25.

¹⁰⁹ "Rozporządzenie Rady Obrony Państwa poz. 602" *Dziennik Ustaw* 92, 1920.

As Poland was located between Germany and Russia, assistance for disabled veterans was often connected in public discourse to the necessity of state militarization. Some deputies emphasized that the establishment of buffer states (for instance, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus and Ukraine) would not stabilize the situation, as Warsaw would be forced to defend these new states. In other words, the new Polish state needed soldiers and in order to bolster recruitment the state needed a generous and guaranteed program of financial assistance for disabled veterans.¹¹⁰ Moreover, many deputies believed that some states were using Poland's unsolved problems against it. In its report, the Committee for Invalids wrote that "the hostile German government" used the lack of legislation before March 1921 for anti-Polish propaganda. For instance, the Germans spread leaflets that accused the Polish government of abandoning disabled soldiers in Silesia.¹¹¹

In light of the government's inactivity on disabled veterans' issues, *Inwalida* (the official newspaper of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans) published articles about material hardship and starvation faced by disabled veterans. The articles accused the government and parliament of willful negligence in failing to assist soldiers who had sacrificed their health struggling for an independent Polish state.¹¹² Some articles rejected the government's claim that the anemic welfare system for disabled veterans stemmed from financial exigency. They pointed out that the government paid, for example, enormous amounts of money to Roman Catholic bishops. Moreover, everyone noticed the luxurious lifestyle of many Polish citizens whom *Inwalida* often described as speculators; the author of the article saw regulating them as an untapped revenue stream.¹¹³ The newspaper often published articles about social cleavages and injustice. It

¹¹⁰ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Druk* 1262; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 2758.

¹¹¹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 199 posiedzenie*, łam 55.

¹¹² K. J. "Obiecanka cacanka," *Inwalida*, January 30, 1921, 5; "Państwo nie ma pieniędzy," *Inwalida*, March 20, 1921, 5-6.

¹¹³ "Państwo nie ma pieniędzy," *Inwalida*, March 20, 1921, 5-6.

contrasted impoverished disabled heroes who fought for Polish independence with rich opportunists who had profited at the expense of the state.

On 18 March 1921, after two years of work, the Constitutional Assembly passed the Invalid Act, which provided state assistance to veterans, their families, and the families of soldiers who had died in battle. The representative of the Committee for Invalids admitted that this Act had to walk a fine line between meeting the needs of disabled veterans and not placing an excessive burden on state finances. The act defined “war invalids” as those who were injured fighting in the Polish Army, in Polish military units during the First World War, in the armies of the partitioning states after 1 August 1914 and those who participated in battles against hostile states for Polish independence (for instance, the defence of Lviv or battles for Upper Silesia or Cieszyn Silesia).¹¹⁴

Czesław Meissner, a deputy from the Popular National Union who presented the bill to the parliament, stressed that the legislation was “modern” and derived from the *zeitgeist*. He admitted that the committee had modelled Poland’s legislation on examples from other European countries, particularly Germany. Despite the fact that the Ministry of Military Affairs suggested that an allowance should be tied to military rank (the higher the rank, the higher the allowance), the committee decided that the only relevant factor determining the size of an awarded allowance would be a veteran’s percentage of disability. Those who had lost at least 15% of their ability to work were entitled to receive benefits and those whose ability was reduced by more than 45% received additional payments accordingly. The criterion “ability to work” also included an educational component. In other words, soldiers with advanced education or specialized skills who lost the ability to work in their previous profession received additional compensation. Other

¹¹⁴ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 222 posiedzenie*, 54-58, “Ustawa z dnia 18 marca 1921 roku poz. 195,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 32, 1921, 414-415.

supplementary benefits depended on the veteran's family size and location of residence.¹¹⁵ Some deputies reacted negatively to this part of the Act and demanded that educational and residential criteria be excluded. They insisted that the legislation's authors had aimed to create more comfortable conditions only for the intelligentsia and middle-class, so that those "who had eaten buns with butter before the war would continue to eat them while others would eat only potatoes."¹¹⁶ Moreover, Bolesław Witkowski, a National Democrat deputy, argued that these clauses would reduce the Polish influence in Upper Silesia, since the Germans were well-educated while the Poles were working class.¹¹⁷ Though these changes to the Act were debated, the majority of deputies did not support them.¹¹⁸

The second part of the Act aimed to facilitate veterans' reintegration to civilian life. The government guaranteed access to medical services, which included orthopedic devices and surgery, employment, and skills training. The Act also stipulated that veterans could take a lump sum advance allowance to purchase land, establish a business, or pursue education. The authors of the Act considered this part particularly "progressive." It was designed to ensure that disabled veterans would not be "parasites," but rather equal members of Polish society who would work for themselves, their families, the nation, and the state. Although they did not receive an allowance, veterans with less than 15% disability were guaranteed health care if they could demonstrate a link between their disability and military service. Blind veterans were issued special typewriters, other technological aides, or a guide dog after receiving specialized training. Affirmative action hiring policies for government positions benefitted disabled soldiers—so too did special permits to sell

¹¹⁵ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 222 posiedzenie*, łam 57-60, "Ustawa z dnia 18 marca 1921 roku poz. 195," *Dziennik Ustaw* 32, 1921, 414-416.

¹¹⁶ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 222 posiedzenie*, łam 63.

¹¹⁷ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 222 posiedzenie*, łam 63-64.

¹¹⁸ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 222 posiedzenie*, łam 65-66.

monopoly goods or run railway restaurants. Private enterprises had to hire one war invalid with at least 45% disability for every 50 able-bodied workers. Though disabled veterans who could neither perform paid work nor access appropriate home care could be institutionalized, forced institutionalization was possible only in cases of mental disease or mendicancy.¹¹⁹

Although disabled veterans waited more than two years for the legislation, the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans was disappointed by it. The Invalid Act passed by the Assembly differed from the bill proposed by the organization. Bolesław Kikiewicz criticized the Act and enumerated the many demands of disabled veterans that had been ignored. He was particularly galled by the 15% disability threshold at which veterans could access benefits and the subordination of the medical commissions to the Ministry of Military Affairs and not to the Ministry of Labour and Welfare. Demobilized soldiers insisted that they were civilians and the Ministry of Military Affairs could not be responsible for organizing assistance to civilians.¹²⁰

Yet the hyperinflation and economic crises of the early 1920s stalled Poland's attempt to build even a modest welfare state. Although the Invalid Act was passed in March 1921, it was not implemented because of shortfalls in the state budget.¹²¹ The press reported that some disabled veterans committed suicide because of desperate material conditions.¹²² Dissatisfied veterans were compelled to use more radical methods. On 14 August, 3,000 disabled veterans and war widows marched in central Warsaw and demanded the practical implementation of the Invalid Act. The police intervened but after short clashes columns of veterans and widows continued to move

¹¹⁹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 222 posiedzenie*, łam 62-63, "Ustawa z dnia 18 marca 1921 roku poz. 195," *Dziennik Ustaw* 32, 1921, 416-422.

¹²⁰ Bolesław Kikiewicz, "Czy ustawa inwalidska dała inwalidom wojennym i pozostałym to, czego się spodziewali?" *Inwalida*, May 1, 1921, 1-2.

¹²¹ "Uderzenie pięścią w stół," *Inwalida*, June 26, 1921, 1-2; "Pytania i Odpowiedzi," *Inwalida*, July 3, 1921, 3

¹²² "Nowa ofiara niewykonania ustawy z 18.3.1921 r.," *Inwalida*, August 14, 1921, 6.

through the city; they also sent delegates to meet with the government.¹²³ A similar demonstration also took place in Poznań.¹²⁴

Despite this pressure, the government did not implement the Invalid Act, which only further radicalized the veterans' movement. Disabled veterans gathered on 9 November 1921 in Warsaw to protest and to remind the government of their demands. They planned to march to the Parliament after meeting in the Colosseum Cinema; however, the police met the crowd on *Plac Trzech Krzyży* [Three Cross Square] and beat them severely.¹²⁵ Disabled veterans were indignant that they could not march on Parliament and that "they had to be ashamed of the evidence [wounds and scars] of their bravery as signs of their inferiority and degradation."¹²⁶ They stressed that political rituals that paid tribute to the Unknown Soldier were especially hypocritical given the police violence they had just endured.¹²⁷

On 18 November 1921, the Constitutional Assembly held a heated discussion about the clashes during the disabled veterans' demonstration. Deputies repeatedly stressed that the government was ignoring the Invalid Act. In fact, some deputies went so far as to claim that the Act, which was passed on 18 March, was designed to gain the support of disabled veterans in Upper Silesia just in time for the region's plebiscite (about the future incorporation of the ethnically mixed region by Poland or Germany) on 20 March. In this light, the passing of the legislation could be viewed as an act of anti-German propaganda. At the same time, deputies were outraged by the police reaction to the peaceful demonstration and demanded an explanation from the government.¹²⁸

¹²³ "Demonstracja inwalidska w Warszawie," *Inwalida*, August 21, 1921, 1-3.

¹²⁴ "Wielkopolski zjazd inwalidów i demonstracja w Poznaniu," *Inwalida*, August 28, 1921, 1-3.

¹²⁵ "Krwawa środa," *Inwalida*, November 13, 1921, 3-5; "Walka o wykonanie ustawy," *Inwalida*, November 27, 1921, 1-2.

¹²⁶ "Inwalidzi, policja i państwo," *Inwalida*, December 11, 1921, 1.

¹²⁷ "Inwalidzi, policja i państwo," *Inwalida*, December 11, 1921, 1.

¹²⁸ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 262 posiedzenie*, łam 43-48.

However, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, Juliusz Dunikowski, described the events differently. He argued that the meeting of disabled veterans, organized by the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans in the Colosseum Cinema, was not related to disabled veterans' concerns. Rather, it was a forum to discuss political issues. Moreover, the government had already cautioned that marches and protests near Parliament were prohibited; this was ostensibly why the police had tried to stop the crowd at Trzech Krzyży. Dunikowski even argued that the demonstrators were drunk and that the protest did not include disabled veterans. He emphasized that the police showed considerable restraint and were actually attacked first; among those injured were 28 policemen, but only three protesters. Additionally, he stated that the government was working on changes to the Invalid Act but would in the meantime pay disabled soldiers 100%, 75% or 50% of their entitled benefits depending on their disability percentage.¹²⁹

Dunikowski's report did not persuade the deputies, who continued to accuse the government of negligence, brutality, and violating the rights of veterans. Deputies argued that during their meeting at Colosseum Cinema the war disabled soldiers discussed the implementation of the Invalid Act. Tomasz Dąbala, a Communist deputy, had tried to discuss political issues but was asked to leave. Emil Bobrowski reported that, according to the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, 41 demonstrators were injured (among them three women) and that the nature of those injuries indicated that police had used steel batons.¹³⁰

Public opinion, however, generally supported the government. Only one left-wing newspaper criticized the government's actions. Many in Warsaw, in fact, associated the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans with Bolshevism; journalists even exacerbated the situation by

¹²⁹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 262 posiedzenie*, łam 48-51.

¹³⁰ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 262 posiedzenie*, łam 51-56.

demanding that its leadership be arrested.¹³¹ In a critical response to an article in *Kurjer Warszawski*, disabled veteran Janusz Kornacki implored the original author “not to awaken in young invalids’ souls a hatred of the state and society.”¹³²

The lobbying efforts of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans bore little fruit.¹³³ In fact, the government suggested changes to the legislation that further stripped disabled servicemen of their allowance. Obviously, the Union protested. Polemicists in *Inwalida* continued to accuse the authorities of supporting speculators, and the authors promised tongue-in-cheek that disabled soldiers would give their last penny to the state as soon as speculators and thieves did the same.¹³⁴ Such rhetoric was, unintentionally, one of the reasons why many suspected that Bolshevism was spreading among disabled veterans.

The delay in implementing the Invalid Act was not the only issue that dissatisfied disabled soldiers; registering and acquiring war invalid status was very bureaucratic. According to the government, disabled soldiers who did not have documents that connected their disability to military service had to present two witnesses who could testify with firsthand knowledge to the origins of a veteran’s disability. Such proceedings inevitably deprived many veterans of benefits because witnesses often lived in different countries. Moreover, according to reports, the courts stopped proceedings in summer 1922 because they had not received appropriate instructions from the government. At the same time, some deputies advocated for changes to the procedure. In their

¹³¹ “Walka o wykonanie ustawy,” *Inwalida*, November 27, 1921, 1-2; Janusz Kornacki, “W obronie honoru inwalidów,” *Inwalida*, November 27, 1921, 2.

¹³² Janusz Kornacki, “W obronie honoru inwalidów,” *Inwalida*, November 27, 1921, 2.

¹³³ “Groźne niebezpieczeństwo,” *Inwalida*, January 15, 1922, 1.

¹³⁴ “Zamach p. Michalskiego na ustawę inwalidzką,” *Inwalisa*, January 22, 1922, 1-2; “Pan Michalski jako novelista,” *Inwalida*, January 29, 1922, 3; “Nowela pod obradami sejmowej Komisji Inwalidzkiej,” *Inwalida*, March 5, 1922, 1.

proposal, a statement from a community leader stipulating that a veteran had left home healthy and returned disabled could establish a connection between military service and disability.¹³⁵

Public discussions and attempts to define the term “Polish war invalid” illuminated the construction of the concept(s) of “Polishness” and the place of national minorities in interwar Poland. They also revealed a tension between different concepts of “Polishness” which, according to Brian Porter-Szücs, became a source of political instability in the Second Polish Republic.¹³⁶ The main question was whether to extend the notion of “disabled Polish veterans” to demobilized soldiers of former imperial armies or grant the status of “war invalids” only to veterans of the Polish army and Polish units in some imperial armies. The imperial armies had included significant numbers of soldiers who belonged to minority groups: Ukrainians, Jews and Germans. Other countries faced similar challenges, though they developed different approaches. For instance, in Romania, Hungarian disabled veterans from Transylvania, who served in the Austrian-Hungarian army, received lower benefits than soldiers of the Romanian army.¹³⁷

Deputies employed both inclusive and exclusive discourses. The majority of them underlined the need to provide assistance to disabled soldiers of the former imperial armies as they had also implicitly struggled for Polish independence.¹³⁸ The government needed the support of its borderland residents, especially as conflict and instability continued into the 1920s. The authorities were concerned about the spread of Bolshevik ideology and possible social unrest. Those factors shaped an inclusive discourse and opinions on granting rights to demobilized

¹³⁵Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 333 posiedzenie*, łam 51-52, Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 11-13, 24, Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja nr 3594*

¹³⁶ Brian Porter-Szücs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 93.

¹³⁷ Franz Sz. Horváth, “The Divided War Remembrance of Transylvanian Magyars,” in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 86.

¹³⁸ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 42 posiedzenie*, łam 23-24; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 21; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 107 posiedzenie*, łam 31-32.

invalids of the imperial armies. At the same time, some representatives of right-wing parties lobbied for laws that prioritized disabled veterans of the Polish army. They believed that this category of disabled soldiers was entitled to priority access for government jobs, concessions, and land.¹³⁹ Yet, right-wing deputies occasionally protested publicly against the violation of rights of imperial armies' soldiers. In November 1921, Stanisław Michalak stated that even though the Invalid Act did not categorize disabled soldiers, local authorities often did not pay allowances to World War I veterans.¹⁴⁰ In August 1922, Edmund Bigoński reiterated this accusation: "War invalids complain that authorities respond to letters by writing: What do you want from us? Go to Berlin, Vienna, or Moscow. Go to the places where you have served."¹⁴¹ The first attempt to change the Invalid Act and give special privileges to the former soldiers of the Polish army was made in mid-June 1923. Deputies from PSL "Piast" and Adolf Dubrownik, a former soldier of the Polish army, suggested that disabled veterans of the Polish army should have priority when applying for concessions. However, only a minority of deputies voted for this amendment and it did not pass.¹⁴²

The discussion of assistance to disabled veterans revealed the tension between the Polish majority and other ethnic minorities. Ordinary Ukrainians and Jews, for example, were presented as "others" who often threatened the position of Polish disabled veterans.¹⁴³ The same story about

¹³⁹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 34 posiedzenie*, łam 17-18, Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Druk* 462.

¹⁴⁰ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 262 posiedzenie*, łam 64.

¹⁴¹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie* łam, 24. John Paul Newman mentioned similar stories told by Croatian disabled veterans. When a bureaucrat in Belgrade learnt that one of them had fought for Austria-Hungary he replied that "then go to [deposed Habsburg emperor] Karl, maybe he will give you something." (John Paul Newman, "Silent Liquidation? Croatian Veterans and the Margins of War Memory in Interwar Yugoslavia" in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 197).

¹⁴² Sejm II RP. I kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 47 posiedzenie*, łam 43-44.

¹⁴³ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 819-828, Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 621, Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja* nr 1086; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 21.

a Jewish shop owner who had received a concession illegally or as payment for collaboration with a hostile state was often repeated. This was the most common image of the “other” during parliamentary discussions about the status of disabled veterans.¹⁴⁴ Similar tropes were used in almost every issue of the newspaper *Inwalida* in the early and mid-1920s.

Most narratives described disabled veterans as both victims and heroes.¹⁴⁵ The newspaper *Inwalida* intensively developed the “heroic” mythology. Such a discourse also emerged during debates in the Constitutional Assembly. Some delegates understood allowances for disabled veterans as both material compensation and as a badge of honor. Allowances were to be both a moral reward and provide an opportunity for social mobility; they acknowledged that disabled veterans had sacrificed a “normal” life and their health for the fatherland.¹⁴⁶ Others presented war invalids as both national heroes and the embodiment of morality. Bigoński, an activist of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, resented that government permission to open new cinemas was usually granted to people who intended to profit by showing “immoral” films. In contrast, disabled veterans who promised not to show such content could not receive concessions. He described this situation as dangerous for society: “we can say without exaggeration that this business is connected to the moral life of our country because it influences the upbringing of our whole society, especially the youth.”¹⁴⁷

At the same time, the war-invalid-as-hero discourse was opposed by a counternarrative that presented disabled veterans negatively. The state’s failure to provide assistance in the early 1920s

¹⁴⁴ Sejm II RP. 1 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 47 posiedzenie*, łam 51; Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 48 posiedzenie*, łam 99.

¹⁴⁵ It was also typical representations of disabled veterans in other countries. See Carol Poore, *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 13-18.

¹⁴⁶ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 325 posiedzenie*, łam 20; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 16.

¹⁴⁷ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 22.

resulted in vocal and dissatisfied veterans, who were often unfairly associated with Bolshevism.¹⁴⁸ Some politicians emphasized that the brutality of the authorities had caused the veterans' shift to the left. For instance, the beating of disabled soldiers by police during their march to the Parliament was considered harmful for the Polish state. One commenter claimed that even a "hundred agitators paid by the Bolsheviks could not harm Poland so much."¹⁴⁹

The specter of Bolshevized disabled veterans was a common refrain in both Assembly speeches and press organs. The author of an article in *Inwalida* argued that the statutes of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans had been not approved for twenty months because Kamil Bogacki, the head of the Department of Assistance in the Ministry of Military Affairs, had denounced the Union as being controlled by Jews and communists. Bogacki had indeed written as much to the Minister of Internal Affairs, and the document was leaked to the press several months after Bogacki's dismissal. The author of the article admitted that every disabled soldier in Poland was accused of Bolshevism. Nonetheless, it was important for disabled activists to denounce left-wing ideology—and, by presumed extension, Jews—and the article clarified that neither Jews nor communists had in fact helped found the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans.¹⁵⁰

The attitude towards disabled soldiers in Polish society more generally was a perennial concern in magazines and newspapers by and for war invalids. These periodicals allowed veterans

¹⁴⁸ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 262 posiedzenie*, łam 70; Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Interpelacja nr 2758*.

¹⁴⁹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 262 posiedzenie*, łam 48; Similar opinion about the responsibility of the government was expressed also in the late 1920s. General Roja commented in his speech about the desperate situation of war invalids in the countryside that spread of communism was predictable in such circumstances but: "Even the best communist psychologist or agitator will not be able to prove anything without the cooperation of bureaucrats and administrative violations." (Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 48 posiedzenie*, łam 99).

¹⁵⁰ "Rzut oka w stecz," *Inwalida*, January 2, 1921, 1; "Tajemnica przewlwkania zatwierdzenia nashego statutu," *Inwalida*, February 13, 1921, 1-4. In order to prove that there were no Jews among the founders the author of the article published the list of the names of ninety-two participants of the first assembly in Warsaw.

to vent disappointment and frustration as they believed society was indifferent to their concerns.¹⁵¹

An anonymous disabled serviceman wrote to the editorial board of *Inwalida*:

Nobody remembers that we paid with our blood for the existence of the Polish state. It is a crime to forget about the best sons of the Fatherland. It seems that those who stayed at home and actually worked against the good of the state treat invalids with arrogance. Sad and lamentable is the fate of the Polish invalid.¹⁵²

This discourse changed little during the interwar years, and disabled veterans remained disappointed by society's indifference.¹⁵³ Antoni Snopczyński's speech in Parliament, delivered in February 1930, highlighted these concerns. He suggested that disabled veterans needed reserved seating on public transit, since other passengers often failed to offer their seats. He also admitted that employers did not adhere to the Act's requirement to hire one disabled serviceman for every fifty able bodied employees. In cases where employers were compelled to hire disabled veterans, often the invalids were assigned work that they were simply unable to perform.¹⁵⁴ Other deputies also complained about this during parliamentary debates and in editorials published in the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans' press organ.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ L. P., "List do redakcji," *Inwalida*, January 15, 1922, 1; Bialy, "Artykul 55 Ustawy Inwalidzkiej w teorji a praktyce," *Inwalida*, March 12, 1922, 1-2.

¹⁵² L. P., "List do Redakcji," *Inwalida*, January 15, 1922, 1; Disabled veterans openly cried for help from society: "People rescue those who are dying of poverty and there are those who have sacrificed their health for you. Reach out a hand to those invalids who want to work and give concessions or land to those who cannot work but have families that can help them. Then you will not call them communists and every invalid who can earn a living will refuse his allowance." Janusz Kornacki, "W Obronie Honoru Inwalidów," *Inwalida*, November 27, 1921, 2.

¹⁵³ Ente, "Zainteresujmy się tą sprawą," *Polska Zbrojna*, June 18, 1930, 8; Ente, "Inwalidzi a społeczeństwo," Ente, "Zainteresujmy się tą sprawą," *Polska Zbrojna*, February 27, 1930, 9.

¹⁵⁴ Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 72 posiedzenie*, łam 112-113; Jerzy Laskowski, "Społeczeństwo a inwalidzi," *Inwalida*, March 3, 1929, 15.

¹⁵⁵ Jerzy Laskowski, "Społeczeństwo a inwalidzi," *Inwalida*, March 3, 1929, 15.

The new Parliament elected in November 1922 was deeply cleaved ideologically. The endless bickering of various political groups profoundly shaped the Second Republic's political development, and the government continued to postpone the implementation of the Invalid Act. In June 1923, Karol Polakiewicz, a PSL "Piast" delegate, demanded regulations regarding concessions for disabled soldiers. He also stated that the government failed to implement agrarian reforms and that disabled veterans did not receive the land to which they were legally entitled.¹⁵⁶ From January to August 1923 the Polish government finally issued several ordinances implementing the Act.¹⁵⁷ In February 1927, Tadeusz Reger argued that Poles could be proud of the Polish Invalid Act. Yet, he blamed ordinances from 1923 that dramatically reduced veterans' benefits, which fed their dissatisfaction and anti-governmental moods.¹⁵⁸ The economic crisis had kept the government from fulfilling its duties to disabled servicemen; in June 1928, deputies underlined that the Polish state owed both a figurative and literal debt to disabled veterans.¹⁵⁹

The Polish Union of Disabled Veterans struggled to preserve benefits for disabled veterans and rejected any attempt to reduce allowances. But the severe economic crises of the early 1920s forced the government to defund social programs. In June 1924, the government decided to reduce the allowance paid to orphans, for example. Wacław Łypacewicz, a deputy from the left-wing Polish People's Party "Wyzwolenie," suggested cutting the allowance for disabled soldiers instead. The indignant leaders of the Union, however, persuaded him to reverse course. Nonetheless, they were disappointed that Łypacewicz parroted general "clichés" about assistance to demobilized veterans: "[...] invalids of the Polish army should have more privileges than the invalids of the

¹⁵⁶ Sejm II RP. 1 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 47 posiedzenie*, łam 33-34.

¹⁵⁷ "Rozporządzenie wykonawcze poz.132," *Dziennik Ustaw* 20, 1923, 221-236; "Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów poz. 206," *Dziennik Ustaw* 32, 1923; "Rozporządzenie Ministra pracy i opieki społecznej poz. 661," *Dziennik Ustaw* 84, 1923, 972-973; "Rozporządzenie Ministra pracy i opieki społecznej poz. 659," *Dziennik Ustaw* 84, 1923, 969-970.

¹⁵⁸ Sejm II RP. 1 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 323 posiedzenie*, łam 104-106.

¹⁵⁹ Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 17 posiedzenie*, łam 125-127.

partitioning armies, invalids with a low percentage of disability should be deprived of allowances and the status of the war invalid should be granted only to those who have proof of their disability [...].”¹⁶⁰

Even though he withdrew support for an across-the-board cut to the veterans’ allowance, Łypacewicz insisted on a division between disabled servicemen of the Polish and imperial armies. This hit a nerve, as the equality of these groups was one of the main principles of the disabled veteran movement.¹⁶¹ The government tried to change the legislation, divide the invalid movement, and increase the minimum percentage of disability required for an allowance. But, under pressure from the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, the deputies voted against such a decision.¹⁶² Before the May Coup, authorities again tried to reduce disabled veterans’ allowances; political events, however, preempted these efforts.¹⁶³

The Sanacja Government and the Definition of War Disability

Ideological fragmentation paralyzed Polish political life in the early 1920s. From 1919 to 1925, the Polish state endured 15 governments. Tensions between the National Democrats and other political parties reached a crescendo after the assassination of President Gabriel Narutowicz in December 1922 by an *endecja* (National Democrat) activist. Among the various political groups was the ideological unaligned *Pilsudczycy*; indeed, its members belonged to almost all of Poland’s political parties except the National Democrats. This group was united by its rejection of National Democratic ideology and its loyalty to Piłsudski, and many of its members had fought with Piłsudski against the Russians before the First World War or served in Polish Legions during the

¹⁶⁰ Kik, “Pan poseł Łypacewicz, a Sprawa Inwalidzka,” *Inwalida*, June 8, 1924, 1-3.

¹⁶¹ “Dwukrotne zwycięstwo,” *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 1-3.

¹⁶² Ebi, “Dalszy etap walki,” *Inwalida*, July 13, 1924, 1-4; “Dwukrotne zwycięstwo,” *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 1-3.

¹⁶³ Tarnawski, “Rozważcie skutki,” *Inwalida*, May 9, 1926, 1-2.

war. Although Piłsudski had officially retired in 1923, he continued to participate in political life from behind the scenes. The *Piłsudczycy* were bitterly disappointed by the endless political bickering and the parties' inability to place state interests above party interests. In May 1926, in order to prevent the creation of a National Democratic government, Piłsudski took active measures. On 12 May his followers marched to Warsaw and took power. The coup launched so-called sanacja period that marked a turning point in the history of the Second Republic. Technically, Poland remained a parliamentary democracy and elections took place in 1928, 1930, 1935 and 1938. But those elections were not democratic and sanacja authorities won the majority of seats because of manipulation.¹⁶⁴

This political turmoil represented an opportunity for disabled veterans: several prominent leaders of the disabled veterans' movement were elected to parliament during the 1930s. Among the deputies of the third parliamentary convocation (1930-1935) was Edwin Wagner, a blind major of the Polish army elected as a member of the pro-government BBWR (Nonpartisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government) from Lviv. He was one of the founders of the Małopolska Society of Blind Soldiers "Spójnia," the President of the Polish Society of Blind Soldiers, President of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans (1933-1939) and he became one of the main spokesmen for disabled veterans in the 1930s. In early February 1931, Wagner presented a budget report to Parliament covering state assistance for disabled soldiers. Jan Karkoszka, a colleague and fellow disabled serviceman who witnessed Wagner's report underlined the contrast between Wagner's physical disability and his ability to work harder than a healthy person:

¹⁶⁴ Brian Porter-Szűcs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 95-97; Piotr J. Wróbel, "The Rise and the Fall of Parliamentary Democracy in Interwar Poland," in *The Origins of Modern Polish Democracy*, ed by M. B. B. Biskupski, James S. Pula and Piotr J. Wróbel (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 142-143.

We witnessed a presentation by a blind major of the Polish army, the deputy Edwin Wagner. It seemed to me that everyone was delighted, because even those with vision could not have presented such a detailed report. Thus, I will represent the whole Parliament and sincerely thank our colleague Wagner.¹⁶⁵

During discussions in the late 1920s, Polish deputies usually emphasized that the March 1921 Invalid Act had never been implemented in its fullest form. In June 1928, General Bolesław Roja, a representative of the Peasant Party, argued that the government had paid only 76% of its legally obligated allowances. It also had yet to pay additional compensation for education and professional skills, establish Houses of Invalids, and revise its concession policy. The latter was one of the most important demands in the 1920s. Hersz Luzer Heller also admitted that it was not even clear how much the authorities had to pay to disabled veterans after the devaluation of the currency. Moreover, some members of Parliament who represented the pro-government BBWR suggested changing regulations and raising the minimum disability percentage required to be eligible for an allowance.¹⁶⁶ Another BBWR member stressed the need to pass a realistic budget that partly covered veterans' allowances: "Today, we can consider the requests from the left to pay a larger allowance to invalids, to implement fully the Invalid Act, as populist rhetoric, made only to create nice impressions, because our colleagues have not suggested sources for covering these expenses."¹⁶⁷ In other words, more than seven years after Parliament had passed the legislation, demanding its practical implementation was an act of political demagoguery. The state's failure to implement the Act had become "normalized." However, similar scenarios took place in other

¹⁶⁵ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 10 posiedzenie*, łam 73.

¹⁶⁶ Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 22 posiedzenie*, łam 94 -97, 105, Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 48 posiedzenie*, łam 90-91.

¹⁶⁷ Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 22 posiedzenie*, łam 53-54.

countries. For instance, by 1930 the Yugoslav government shut down the welfare system for disabled veterans, making relatives responsible for their wellbeing.¹⁶⁸

In Poland, state assistance to other categories of disabled citizens was also poorly organized. Even ten years after Poland had reemerged in Europe, the government had still not collected census data on other groups of disabled citizens, such as disabled children or those injured in the workplace.¹⁶⁹ The authorities would wait until 1930 before gathering such records.¹⁷⁰ In other words, the government had not been able to discern the actual number of disabled Polish citizens, let alone build an adequate welfare system. It was only in 1933 that the government was able to determine that there were roughly 307,000 disabled persons in Poland, more than half of whom were disabled veterans.¹⁷¹ In his report presented during the Fourth Convention of the Polish Orthopedic Association in November 1933 in Lviv, Dr. Witold Reklewski, a director at the Central Prosthesis Factory, argued that despite the enormous amount of money spent on assistance to various groups of disabled citizens, the system was ineffective.¹⁷²

The emergence of the left-wing opposition (Centrolew) by 1930 exacerbated political tensions in Warsaw. The Polish Socialist Party initially supported the May Coup and sanacja regime; it even organized a railway strike that prevented pro-government forces from reaching Warsaw to oppose Piłsudski and his supporters. However, leaders on the left soon grew disillusioned with the government's authoritarian tendencies and its inability to address social problems. As a result, in 1929, the left united. The right-wing National Democrats stood in

¹⁶⁸ John Paul Newman, *Yugoslavia in Shadow of War: Veterans and the Limits of State Building, 1903-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 57-58.

¹⁶⁹ Ireneusz Wierzejewski, *Organizacja opieki nad kalekami-ulomnymi* (Warszawa, 1929); Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej, 530.

¹⁷⁰ Jan Sobociński, "Inwalidzi wojenni i wojskowi w Polsce według pochodzenia oraz przyczyn inwalidstwa," *Praca i Opieka Społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, 1934, 316.

¹⁷¹ Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej, 530, 28.

¹⁷² Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej, 529; Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej, 530.

opposition to the government at the other end of the political spectrum, though their power was considerably reduced compared to the early 1920s.¹⁷³ As a result, assistance for disabled veterans became a political wedge issue. Deputies from all parties often hurled accusations and recriminations at each other, apportioning blame for an inadequate welfare system for disabled veterans.¹⁷⁴ Karkoszka, a BBWR deputy and the president of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, emphasized the pre- and post-May governments' differing attitudes towards disabled veterans. The new government sincerely cared about the fate of disabled veterans, worked to improve their material conditions, and, despite budget shortfalls, chose not to reduce social benefits for war invalids.¹⁷⁵

In spite of these claims about positive changes, popular discontent continued to grow during the late 1920s. In response to the June 1930 dissolution of parliament, thousands of people took to the streets in protests organized by Centrolew. The government also took drastic action against increasingly popular left-wing parties. Five thousand opposition leaders and rank-and-file members were imprisoned in Brest Fortress. This allowed the BBWR to win a majority in the election of November 1930.¹⁷⁶

Indeed, whatever optimism veterans may have felt about their prospects would soon be dashed. The Great Depression eviscerated the Polish economy, laying waste to government spending and employment. The government announced the first reduction of disabled veterans'

¹⁷³ Piotr J. Wróbel, "The Rise and the Fall of Parliamentary Democracy in Interwar Poland," in *The Origins of Modern Polish Democracy*, ed by M. B. B. Biskupski, James S. Pula and Piotr J. Wróbel (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 143, 147-148.

¹⁷⁴ Sprawozd. Stenogr. z 22 pos Sejmu II, łam 53-54, 94-107.

¹⁷⁵ Jan Karkoszka, "Opieka rządu nad inwalidami wojennymi (szkic porównawczy)," *Inwalida*, September 28, 1930, 2.

¹⁷⁶ Piotr J. Wróbel, "The Rise and the Fall of Parliamentary Democracy in Interwar Poland," in *The Origins of Modern Polish Democracy*, ed by M. B. B. Biskupski, James S. Pula and Piotr J. Wróbel (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 148-149.

allowances in August 1931. In response, the usually loyal *Inwalida* published a critical rebuke.¹⁷⁷ Major Wagner, in a report from early 1932, acknowledged the effects of possible budget cuts, but stressed that the most important issue facing war invalids was preparing for disabled life. In other words, the opportunity to receive a job or land could do more to address the needs of disabled soldiers than cash payments. Nonetheless, Wagner was aware that during the recession it would be even harder for disabled veterans to find work.¹⁷⁸

Poland endured political and economic tumult during its first ten years. The 1921 Invalid Act enumerated the size of allowances to be paid to disabled veterans in Polish marks. However, the złoty was introduced in 1924 after hyperinflation destroyed the value of the mark.¹⁷⁹ It took eight years to actually adjust the payments to the new currency. In March 1932, deputies discussed a draft of a new Invalid Act proposed by the government. Government representatives presented the new legislation as realistic, in contrast to the Invalid Act of 1921. In order to reduce budget spending by 20 million złoty the allowance for some categories of disabled veterans was decreased. Invalids' areas of residence were divided into three categories: a) all cities with a population greater than 10,000 and industrial regions where the cost of living was high, b) towns with a population of more than 3,000 where the allowance was reduced by 12%, c) everywhere else where the allowance was reduced by 32%. Veterans' allowances would be recalibrated depending on their places of residence. Moreover, disabled veterans who had more than 5 hectares of land lost the right to receive an allowance.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Antoni Pająk, "Konieczność Państwowa," *Inwalida*, August 16, 1931, 1-3.

¹⁷⁸ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 54 posiedzenie*, łam 27-28.

¹⁷⁹ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 10 posiedzenie*, łam 73; Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 54 posiedzenie*, łam 27; Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedzenie*, łam 7.

¹⁸⁰ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedzenie*, łam 7-9.

The new legislation was criticized by opposition parties because it reduced the benefits and rights of disabled veterans. The government even proposed that individual veterans' levels of disability could be reevaluated, with the goal of reducing the country's fiscal obligation; this will be further discussed in Chapter 2. Tomasz Arciszewski, a representative of the Socialist Party, argued that permission to review previous decisions of the medical commissions could result in a finding of a lower disability percentage and a reduced allowance. Moreover, he was afraid that this process would become politicized and only supporters of sanacja and Piłsudski would receive benefits.¹⁸¹

Despite the cuts, government supporters insisted that the revised Act would be beneficial to some categories of disabled veterans. According to the new law, those who were highly disabled received additional payments and free medical care without having to establish a connection between their disability and their military service. Additionally, some institutions, such as the House of Invalids in Lviv, saw their budgets increase. A government representative explained that only disabled soldiers who had more than 5 hectares of land and a disability percentage below 45% would be deprived of an allowance. This group of veterans constituted less than 3% of the total number of disabled servicemen in Poland.¹⁸² At the same time, a representative of the BBWR depicted the disabled servicemen as national heroes, and declared that the exceptional economic circumstances demanded further sacrifice from them.¹⁸³ As an example, a Treasury representative

¹⁸¹ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedzenie*, łam 14-15.

¹⁸² Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedzenie*, łam 36-40.

¹⁸³ Antoni Snopczyński told: "I would like to underline that the war invalids will make the sacrifice that the situation in the state demands. War invalids proved during the war that they were good sons of Poland, war invalids proved for eleven years that they understand the situation in the state because they calmly tolerated the violation of legislation by all previous Polish governments and parliaments. (Applause of the BBWR deputies)." (Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedzenie*, łam 23).

quoted a resolution of the Union of Organizations of Jewish Disabled Veterans, Widows, and Orphans that proclaimed that they were ready to sacrifice for the state.¹⁸⁴

One of the important consequences of the Invalid Act of 1932 was that it divided disabled veterans based upon whether they lived in urban or rural settings. The authorities believed that rural disabled veterans were not experiencing the economic crisis in the same way as their urban counterparts, since prices in the city were much higher than in the country. According to authorities, the division of residences into A, B, and C categories—with corresponding adjustments to veterans' payments—helped to level out this difference in living standards.¹⁸⁵ Nonetheless, differences in allowances created tensions between these newly formed groups of disabled soldiers.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, the allowance of disabled veterans who moved to villages was reduced immediately while, in contrast, war invalids who moved to cities had to wait three years for an increase. In March 1937, this was finally changed and the disabled veterans who moved to villages received their previous allowance for one more year.¹⁸⁷

The Union tried to oppose the new Invalid Act. This was the organization's last attempt to criticize the government in order to defend veterans' rights. Although the organization was able to block the specific clauses that would have deprived disabled veterans of their allowance if they were deemed to be less than 25% disabled, the new legislation still substantially reduced benefits. After the Act was passed, the leaders of the organization emphasized their displeasure with new legislation. However, they also believed that the authorities had no choice but to cut benefits because of the severe economic crisis; they declared that they would support the government

¹⁸⁴ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedzenie*, łam 42.

¹⁸⁵ Sobociński, "Zaopatrzenie pieniężne," 56.

¹⁸⁶ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 16.

¹⁸⁷ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 95.

nonetheless.¹⁸⁸ At the same time, some members of the organization, including its former president Kantor, argued that by siding with the government the organization had failed to protect disabled veterans. They tried to remove the pro-government executives from the Union's board of governors; their attempts failed, however, and the authorities maintained control over the organization.¹⁸⁹

While presenting the budget for disabled veterans' assistance in February 1933, Wagner spoke about the new Invalid Act as a rational way to solve the problems faced by disabled veterans and by the Polish state.¹⁹⁰ The following year, he was forced to deliver an even more frank speech, in which he acknowledged that the budget had been cut by 40% compared to 1931. At the same time, he underlined that the disabled veterans understood the rationale behind the cuts and were once again willing to sacrifice for the state.¹⁹¹ In February 1935, he repeated the same idea and argued that Polish war invalids, in contrast to disabled veterans in other countries, remained above the political fray:

There was, there is, and there will be a completely different situation in Poland. A soldier who participated in the struggle for independence mentioned that he had not fought for one social class but for an independent state, that a soldier who had struggled for a great idea could not exchange his honour for material benefits; he reduced his demands to a minimum and only in a form that would be feasible to the state.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ "W obronie zagrożonych praw inwalidów wdów i sierot wojennych," *Inwalida*, February 21, 1932, 1; "Przeciw probie, zamachu na prawa inwalidów wdów i sierot wojennych," *Inwalida*, February 28, 1932, 1; "Na froncie obrony praw inwalidzkich," *Inwalida*, October 23, 1932, 2; Ludwik Stachecki, "Żelazny front!" *Inwalida*, June 26, 1932, 9.

¹⁸⁹ "Związek Inwalidów i sanacja," *Dziennik Ludowy*, April 7, 1932, 2; "Inwalidzi uciekają od sanacji," *Dziennik Ludowy*, April 15, 1932, 3; "Do wszystkich członków Związku inwalidów wojennych R. P.," *Inwalida*, May 15, 1932, 1; "Na froncie obrony praw inwalidzkich," *Inwalida*, October 23, 1932, 2.

¹⁹⁰ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 81 posiedzenie*, łam 84.

¹⁹¹ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 112 posiedzenie*, łam 6-7.

¹⁹² Spr Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 130 posiedzenie*, łam 7.

Though Wagner, as president of the nation's largest veterans' group, represented veterans' interests, in reality, the government had acquired near complete control over the veterans' movement by the late 1920s; Wagner was little more than a government mouthpiece. In the 1930s, the newspaper *Inwalida* became a channel for state propaganda and most of the articles discussed government policy rather than issues connected to the veterans' movement. Wagner and other prominent members of the movement created a discourse in which the interests of disabled servicemen could not differ from state interests and, indeed, had merged completely. Moreover, those who had fought for Polish independence were homogenized into one monolithic group of heroes, stripped of ethnic or religious identifiers. These heroes could not demand anything from the state; they were capable only of sacrifice. The image of the "war invalid" as an absolutely loyal citizen was one of the most important features of the discourse created by disabled activists in the 1930s. The Polish Union of Disabled Veterans presented, and attempted to create, disabled veterans as loyal citizens.¹⁹³ The organization united disabled veterans of various ethnic backgrounds and political ideologies and turned them into people who worked for the good of the state.¹⁹⁴ Wagner and his supporters claimed that even a reduction to the disability allowance could not turn war invalids against the state.¹⁹⁵

In his parliamentary speeches from 1934 and 1935, however, Wagner omitted one extremely important fact. According to a presidential order of 28 October 1933, disabled veterans with less than 25% disability were deprived of allowances.¹⁹⁶ Discussion about benefit cuts for this group of veterans had begun in the 1920s. Despite their reduced ability to work, these disabled

¹⁹³ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 12.

¹⁹⁴ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 73 posiedzenie*, łam, 55.

¹⁹⁵ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 16-17.

¹⁹⁶ "Rozporządzenie Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej poz. 669," *Dziennik Ustaw* 86, 1933, 1696-1700.

servicemen were still able to perform paid work. As a government journal admitted, the Polish authorities based this decision on the German model, where veterans with less than 30% disability were deprived of an allowance. Moreover, the Polish government accepted lower requirements so that fewer disabled veterans would lose their allowance in times of economic crisis.¹⁹⁷ However, in mid-November 1934 another order divided veterans into two categories—soldiers of the Polish army and Polish troops (Piłsudski’s Legions) who had belonged to imperial armies with more than 15% disability regained the right to receive their allowance, whereas all other veterans with less than 25% did not.¹⁹⁸ The order issued in October 1933 also reduced allowances for eligible war invalids by 10%.¹⁹⁹ Disabled veterans’ organizations were frustrated by these decisions but publicly stated that they believed the government had good intentions.²⁰⁰ The presidential decree of October 1933 and the order of the government of November 1934, however, in addition to depriving 45,000 veterans (roughly 25%) of an allowance, also created more privileged groups of disabled servicemen.²⁰¹ For the first time since the existence of the Second Polish Republic, the state officially divided former soldiers by granting disabled veterans of the Polish army more benefits.

The new constitution, which reduced parliamentary power, was passed in April 1935. Some deputies even admitted that parliament had been stripped of any meaningful decision-making powers. For example, though the parliament debated the budget, it was always sent to the government without substantial changes.²⁰² After Piłsudski’s death, his political heirs became even more authoritarian, treating minorities as second-class citizens and shrinking the public sphere.

¹⁹⁷Jan Sobociński, “Zaopatrzenie pieniężne inwalidów w świetle obowiązujących przepisów o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim,” *Praca i Opieka Społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 1 (1934): 57.

¹⁹⁸“Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów poz. 943,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 106, 1934, 2193-2194.

¹⁹⁹ S Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 125.

²⁰⁰ J. B., “Losy Ofiar Wojennych Zależne Obecnie od Rządu,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, March, 1934, 1-3.

²⁰¹ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 125.

²⁰² Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 15.

In 1936, the budget for disabled veterans' benefits was reduced yet again. Although Wagner did not protest, he emphasized that assistance to disabled veterans was not just a national duty to the past, but also a project building the future of Poland. In addition to Wagner, three more war invalids who belonged to the OZN (Camp of National Unity, which replaced the BBWR after Piłsudski's death) from Malopolska delivered speeches in which they discussed the relationship between disabled veterans and the state.²⁰³ Jan Dostych admitted that disabled veterans needed society's love even more than material comfort.²⁰⁴ His colleague Jan Łobodziński added: "The further we are away from that minute (1918), the more society forgets whom it should thank for its independence and even more it forgets about who created its independence".²⁰⁵ At the same time, he emphasized that disabled veterans were ready to sacrifice for the good of the state.²⁰⁶ One of the paradoxes of Polish parliamentary discourse in the 1930s was that deputies who were themselves disabled veterans accused society of indifference, but they did not extend such accusations against the state, which had dramatically reduced funding. As members of the OZN, these deputies supported the government and underlined that material conditions were not as important as society's concern for veterans.

Another discourse developed simultaneously, one that demanded more than recognition for disabled soldiers: ideally, welfare programs would provide both jobs and capital for business development. Representatives of disabled veterans stressed that they wanted neither charity nor pity. Rather, they simply wanted the opportunity to earn a living. This request, however, proved

²⁰³ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 121-122.

²⁰⁴ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 124.

²⁰⁵ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 124. Such statements were often made by veterans of other countries. For example, Austrian veterans also claimed that their sacrifice was forgotten by society. (Catherine Edgecombe and Maureen Healy, "Competing Interpretations of Sacrifice in the Postwar Austrian Republic," in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 25).

²⁰⁶ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 126.

more illusory. In February 1937, even Wagner complained that government and businesses were violating relevant acts and orders by not meeting the disabled veteran hiring quota.²⁰⁷ Numerous articles and speeches revealed that employers had undermined those norms throughout the interwar period.²⁰⁸

The severe economic crisis of the early 1930s led to differentiation between disabled veterans of the imperial and Polish armies. Although economics, not ideology, underpinned this decision, the Polish national discourse inscribed the special place of disabled veterans of the Polish army and it forced the government not to reduce their benefits. In 1937, in parliament, Wagner mentioned the problem of dividing disabled soldiers, which arose after the order of November 1934. The leader of the war invalids' organization considered this division of veterans immoral and argued that peasants who had died in different places and for different armies were all Polish veterans. Moreover, the former soldiers of Piłsudski's legions stated that they did not want special rights because every soldier had struggled for Poland.²⁰⁹ The official discourse represented disabled veterans of the imperial armies not as victims who had suffered for an "alien" cause but as heroes who had struggled for Polish independence. In March 1937, thanks to an economic upswing, amendments that would make the Invalid Act more compassionate were suggested. First, veterans of imperial armies with between 15 to 25% disability and who were older than 55 could regain their allowance. Second, the rules governing how disabled veterans accessed capital were changed. Disabled veterans were permitted to capitalize only half of their allowance, which ensured that they would still have a source of income even if their business became insolvent.²¹⁰ A year later, the age limit at which disabled veterans of the imperial armies could collect an

²⁰⁷ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 10.

²⁰⁸ Spraw Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, 15.

²⁰⁹ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 11.

²¹⁰ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 94, 96-97.

allowance was reduced to 50.²¹¹ Despite such incremental increases, disabled veterans of the imperial armies were not granted rights equal to invalids of the Polish army before the Second World War.

Disabled Veterans and the National Minorities Issue

For Poland, conflict did not end in November 1918. At first Ukrainians seized power in Galicia and then the Polish-Soviet war started. As a result, disabled veterans of the imperial, Polish, Ukrainian Galician and Ukrainian People's Republic (*petliurivtsi*) armies eventually lived in one state. Veterans of both the Galician and Ukrainian People's Republic armies belonged to the Ukrainian minority, but soldiers of the former had fought against the Polish state and the latter become allies with the Polish army during the Polish-Soviet War. The issue of national minorities was thus one of the most important challenges for the authorities of the Second Polish Republic. The existence of large minority groups and the gradual radicalization of some of them (for instance, the growing popularity of groups such as the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) greatly influenced interwar Poland's political life. Political discourse about the welfare system for disabled soldiers highlights the complexity of ethnic relations in the new Polish state, as disability took on an important role as a site of national self-definition, and a bargaining chip in these conflicts. Ethnic concerns were at the heart of the dispute over who was considered deserving of state benefits, and disability was a political and very human concern in the assertion of ethnic and Polish national identity.

Discussion about the inclusion or exclusion of invalids of the multiethnic imperial armies from the system of state assistance was part of a larger—and politically charged—discussion about

²¹¹ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 73 posiedzenie*, łam, 56.

the rights of national minorities. The majority of soldiers of the Polish army were ethnic Poles; however, many ex-soldiers of the imperial armies belonged to minorities. Demobilized soldiers of the imperial armies faced discrimination either because of their previous army affiliation or because they were minorities. The mainstream national narrative depicted soldiers of the Polish army as heroes who bravely struggled for Polish independence. They were examples of sacrifice, invested with symbolic power for a national resurrection. Granting the same status to disabled veterans of the imperial and Polish armies meant not only symbolic recognition of their respective service, but also equalized ethnic Poles and non-Polish soldiers. The first provisional regulation issued by the Ministry of Military Affairs in February 1919 granted rights to all disabled servicemen who had served after 28 July 1914.²¹² This law showed the willingness of the government to use broad criteria in defining the “Polish war invalid.” The very chaos and struggle of the political and economic situation of the early 1920s also helped ensure the victory of inclusive discourses and the establishment of a legislative system that granted equal rights for demobilized invalids of the imperial armies. Politicians understood the importance of preventing social unrest and winning popular support in the Polish borderlands.²¹³

Even though disabled veterans of various armies and ethnic origins were de-facto equal, soldiers who belonged to minorities were easily “othered” in both government and Parliamentary discourse, and in the larger society. In June 1923 Jewish deputy Elias Kirszbraun felt the need to remind his fellow parliamentarians of the Jewish contribution to the defense of the Polish state:

²¹² *Zarys działalności ministerstwa spraw wojsk. w przedmiocie opieki nad inwalidami wojskowymi przez sekcję opieki od początku jej istnienia aż po Dzień 31 Grudnia 1919 R.* (Nakładem sekcji opieki Minist. Spraw Wojsk. w Warszawie), 4.

²¹³ Sejm II RP. 1 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 47 posiedzenie*, łam 43.

I think that despite different political views, regardless of what benches we are sitting on, no deputy here will say to the soldiers who have confirmed their citizenship by blood, who have defended the borders of Poland, that those concessions did not belong to them because they are members of an ethnic group other than Polish.²¹⁴

Soldiers of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic (*petliurivtsi*), for example, were one of the distinctive groups of Ukrainian veterans living in Poland and were an exception to the government's initially broad criteria for "war invalid" status. According to the first Invalid Act, they received neither official war invalid status nor state benefits. However, the *petliurivtsi* were discussed during the meeting on 4 August 1922. Tadeusz Reger, a representative of the Socialist Party, argued that they were entitled to the same status as other Polish disabled veterans. This remark was met with protest from the representatives of the right-wing parties.²¹⁵ Other members of parliament suggested making a declaration to the government that demanded state assistance to disabled soldiers who were not citizens of Poland but had served in the Polish army and lived in Poland. This resolution was passed by the majority of deputies.²¹⁶ Disabled soldiers (Polish citizens) of the Ukrainian People's Republic were recognized as "war invalids" only in June 1927 after the sanacja government came to power. Ignaci Mościcki issued an order stating that soldiers who had served in allied armies that struggled for Polish independence and who were citizens or permanent residents should receive the same assistance as other categories of war invalids.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ Sejm II RP. 1 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 47 posiedzenie*, łam 52.

²¹⁵ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 12.

²¹⁶ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 29, 334.

²¹⁷ "Rozporządzenie Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej poz. 475," *Dziennik Ustaw* 54, 1927, 745-746; "Rozporządzenie Ministrów poz. 898," *Dziennik Ustaw* 103, 1413-1414.

The equality of all disabled veterans regardless of their ethnic background or army affiliation was one of the main principles of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. The members of the organization opposed any act that would privilege disabled veterans of the Polish army.²¹⁸ At the same time, the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans considered itself the “defender” of Polish identity and the state in the eastern borderlands. Despite the radicalization of some groups of Ukrainian society in Małopolska in the late 1920s and 1930s, representatives of the Union emphasized the importance of working with loyal citizens.²¹⁹ Although in the late 1930s members of the other veterans’ organizations accused the Union of harbouring disabled minority soldiers (especially “*Rusyny*”), disabled activists proclaimed that they were proud to mould and unite loyal citizens of various ethnic origins. Again, they emphasized the equality of all members regardless of their ethnic background.²²⁰ *Inwalida* wrote that the “radical and chauvinistic nationalism that threatens the wellbeing and safety of the State will not stop the implementation of our main principles and we will overcome all difficulties!”²²¹ As an example, it cited a pledge of loyalty from the disabled *Rusyny* in Stanisławów.²²² Activists of the Union even tried to emphasize the loyalty of its members by using the official term Ruthenians (*Rusyny*) instead of Ukrainians.²²³

Disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army were perceived as disloyal citizens of the Polish state and were initially excluded from the welfare system. However, this perception changed during the 1920s. In 1927, Bolesław Kikiewicz, a leader of the disabled veteran

²¹⁸ L. Stachewski, “Inwalidzi polscy a inwalidzi “polacy”!” *Inwalida*, April 1, 1923, 22-23.

²¹⁹ Sanus, “Łajdackie metody,” *Nasza Sprawa*, January 15, 1929, 1.

²²⁰ “Inwalidzi – Rusini deklaruja Rzplitej Polskiej pełną lojalność.” *Inwalida*, September 1, 1938, 3-4; E. W.

“Narodowość lub wyzwanie nie zmieniają stosunku obywatela do Państwa,” *Inwalida*, September 1, 1938, 1-2.

²²¹ E. W. “Narodowość lub wyzwanie nie zmieniają stosunku obywatela do Państwa,” *Inwalida*, September 1, 1938, 1-2.

²²² It was forbidden to use “Ukrainians” in official document. “Inwalidzi – Rusini deklaruja Rzplitej Polskiej pełną lojalność.” *Inwalida*, September 1, 1938, 3-4.

²²³ Myroslav Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology and Literature, 1929-1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 18.

movement, wrote that it was necessary to grant war invalid status to soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician Army. He believed that most of them were victims of circumstance, forcefully conscripted to fight against the Polish forces. Loyal citizens of the Second Republic deserved state assistance.²²⁴ The new political climate of the early 1930s altered this social contract. After state violence against Ukrainians in Małopolska in 1930, Polish authorities tried to find a compromise with the moderate circles of Ukrainian society.²²⁵ As a result, in spite of a reduced allowance for some categories of disabled veterans, the new Invalid Act of 1932 granted war invalid status to Galician army veterans who had more than 45% disability and were loyal Polish citizens.²²⁶ The government presented this decision as “[...] an act of goodwill, an act consistent with the tradition and history of the Polish nation that forgets some scars [...]”²²⁷ On the one hand, this law was a step forward compared to previous legislation; on the other hand, it allowed Polish authorities to deny invalid status to the majority of soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army.

The inclusion of veterans of the Galician army, who had actually fought against Poland in the Ukrainian-Polish War, into the category of “Polish war invalids” incensed right-wing deputies. Zygmund Cadini, a representative of the Christian Democrats, articulated the traditional nationalist discourse. He argued that the government was trying to reduce spending on “Polish invalids” while simultaneously increasing outlays for those who fought against the country. Moreover, he underlined that there was no such thing as a Galician Army, but rather gangs of criminals who had committed terrible atrocities against civilians.²²⁸ Dmytro Welykanowycz, a member of the

²²⁴ Bolesław Kikiewicz, “W Imię Ludskości,” *Inwalida*, June 5, 1927, 2.

²²⁵ In 1930 OUN organized the numerous sabotages against Polish settlers, land owners and bureaucrats. The government answered by a “pacification,” the severe repressions against Ukrainian population. (Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 217).

²²⁶ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 41.

²²⁷ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 41.

²²⁸ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 12.

Ukrainian Club, countered Cadini, claiming that Ukrainian soldiers were simply struggling for their Wilsonian rights of self-determination.²²⁹ Another Ukrainian deputy, Wolodymyr Zahajkewycz, added:

We can consider someone an opponent, a political enemy; we can understand that our roads cross and we can struggle against each other. It is an axiom of our world; that is life. But nobody who has ideals for his own life, his own national idea, his own national liberation, and independence in his heart, who is human, can ridicule such ideals in others. [You] not only ridicule but also underestimate and disregard them. [...] The Ukrainian army was, is, and would be sacred for us, and all Ukrainian people humbly bow every time and in every place before it and its memory.²³⁰

In other words, the Ukrainian deputies argued that both Poles and Ukrainians had a shared spirit, and the same right to establish and fight for a state. Even if unsuccessful, as in the Ukrainian case, the act of fighting had to be respected. Although members of the Ukrainian Club openly defended the right of veterans of the Galician army to state assistance, there was no single “Ukrainian” discourse in Parliament. Some Ukrainian deputies belonged to the BBWR and during discussions they advanced an optimistic vision of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation while openly flattering the government.²³¹

²²⁹ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 24.

²³⁰ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 33-35.

²³¹ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 33. The former officer of Petliura’s army (and future Patriarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate) Stepan Skrypnyk said: “A great number of war invalids of the former Ukrainian People’s Republic army received the assistance of the Polish state and this Act guaranteed them an allowance. This fact is very important for us because it proves the importance of the events of 1920, and the idea of the historical mission of the Ukrainian and Polish nations is the idea of the majority of Polish society led by the great state leader Józef Piłsudski. This fact increases our faith in the Polish people; this fact makes us trust in every governmental project that represents the majority of the society. Thus, this belief caused the

The new Invalid Act symbolized cooperation between the government and a large minority group. Yet, at the same time, it was clear that this Act was more of a declaration, a pronouncement of values, than an enforceable law. Dmytro Welykanowycz admitted that the requirements that allowed the Ukrainian disabled veterans to receive benefits were unjust. He suggested reducing the percentage of disability and removing the condition of “loyalty” to the state because this notion had a very broad meaning. He was concerned that local bureaucrats would interpret it according to their own biases and the fact that a person had served in the Galician army would determine their decision.²³² In spite of some right-wing protest and demands of the Ukrainian Club for amendments, the Parliament passed the Invalid Act suggested by the government.²³³

Nonetheless, this law changed very little for disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army. In January 1933, Ukrainian deputies petitioned the government for the implementation of a new Invalid Act and that had granted the invalid status to disabled veterans of the Galician army.²³⁴ It took another year for the government to issue the order that made the practical implementation of this law possible.²³⁵ In 1937, only 35 disabled veterans were granted war invalid status. In March 1939, that number increased to 70. The granting of invalid status often depending on the nebulous issue of loyalty, and for instance, there were cases when persons with serious mental disorders were declared disloyal.²³⁶ Stepan Nawroćkyj, a Ukrainian deputy, outlined the law’s shortcomings and admitted that some Poles demanded a loyalty litmus test for Ukrainians. He insisted that

suggestion of cooperation with this government with the goal of creating a create great and strong Poland, because only such a Poland can help the Ukrainian nation to fulfill its ideals. (Loud applause of BBWR representatives).”

²³² Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 24-26.

²³³ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 67 posiedze*, łam 46-49.

²³⁴ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Interpelacja* nr 141.

²³⁵ “Rozporządzenie Ministra Opieki Społecznej poz. 141,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 18, 1934.

²³⁶ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedze*, łam 19; Sejm II RP. 5 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 12 posiedze*, łam 146.

granting of the “war invalid” status to soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army was a natural solution to the problem of a multi-ethnic state.²³⁷

The Jewish question was one of the central issues of political discourse in interwar Poland; the official attitude toward Jews changed in this period. Although most political parties rejected anti-Semitism in the early 1920s, they rarely addressed Jewish issues publicly. As the Second Republic transitioned to authoritarianism, however, political anti-Semitism became more common. Sanacja authorities practiced a kind of doublespeak on the Jewish question: they tolerated expressions of cultural difference, while encouraging Jews to assimilate. A gradual shift started in the early 1930s when some right-wing political forces joined sanacja and a final turn to the right took place after Piłsudski’s death. The political situation in Germany also greatly influenced Polish developments. Anti-Semitism became one of the main features of the official political discourse in the Second Polish Republic before the war²³⁸ and it became visible in the political discourse about war disability.

Unlike Ukrainians, Jews had only served in imperial armies (there were a few soldiers of Jewish origin in the Polish army but it was rare) and did not constitute separate national military units during the First World War (Poles created the Polish Legions and Ukrainians established the

²³⁷ Sejm II RP. 5 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 12 posiedze*, 146-147.

²³⁸ Jerzy Holzer, “Polish Political Parties and Antisemitism,” in *Jews in Independent Poland 1918-1939* (*Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry*, Vol. 8), ed. by Antony Polonsky, Ezra Mendelsohn and Jerzy Tomaszewski (London. Washington: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1994), 194-205; Yisrael Gutman, “Polish Antisemitism Between the Wars: An Overview,” in *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars*, ed. by Yisrael Gutman, Erza Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk (Hanover. London: Brandeis University Press, 1989), 97-108; Emanuel Melzer, “Antisemitism in the Last Years of the Second Polish Republic,” in *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars*, ed. by Yisrael Gutman, Erza Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk (Hanover. London: Brandeis University Press, 1989), 126-137. In his recent work Paul Brykczynski challenged the conventional depiction of the Jewish question in interwar Poland. He argued that a glance behind an official party program showed that anti-Semitism was an integral part of the national-democratic a political doctrine at the beginning of 1920s. Moreover, Brykczynski claimed that the slow drift of the Piłsudski camp to anti-Jewish policy had started after the assassination of President Gabriel Narutowicz in December 1922 (Paul Brykczynski, *Primed for Violence: Murder, Antisemitism, and Democratic Politics in Interwar Poland* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2016)).

Sich Riflemen). Formally, Jewish disabled servicemen had the same rights as ethnic Poles who had served in imperial armies. However, there was a gap between the law and its implementation. Jewish disabled veterans sometimes received fewer benefits than Polish soldiers, and representatives of the Jewish veterans' organization accused Polish authorities of anti-Semitism and demanded justice.²³⁹ For instance, Hersz Luzer Heller, a representative of the Jewish community, demanded the equal distribution of concessions between Polish and Jewish organizations of disabled veterans. In another speech Heller emphasized that Jewish war invalids did not want an allowance so much as the opportunity to work. They sought concessions for monopoly goods, the right to establish kiosks and railway station food outlets, and the opportunity to be hired by state, local and municipal governments, as well as private enterprises.²⁴⁰

The Polish Union of Disabled Veterans declared the equality of all disabled veterans, but anti-Jewish attitudes were still evident among its members. In the early 1920s, numerous anti-Jewish articles were published in *Inwalida*. Most of them mentioned the economic competition between disabled veterans and Jews for the right to sell monopoly goods, for example; economic and regulatory factors evidently shaped anti-Semitism in interwar Poland.²⁴¹ The leaders of the disabled veteran movement often applied double standards. Commentators published anti-Jewish articles while simultaneously accusing Jews of factionalism in their creation of a separate organization. After the sanacja government came to power, the focus of the articles shifted from economic to political anti-Semitism. The leaders of the movement accused the Jewish lobby of being behind a governmental attack on the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans at the beginning of

²³⁹ J. B., "Sprawedliwości," *Inwalida Żydowski*, February 1, 1927, 1-4.

²⁴⁰ Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 22 posiedze*, łam 107-108, Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 48 posiedze*, łam 93 -95.

²⁴¹ Yisrael Gutman, "Polish Antisemitism Between the Wars: An Overview," in *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars*, ed. by Yisrael Gutman, Erza Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk (Hanover. London: Brandeis University Press, 1989), 102.

1927. “The anonymous “Elders of Zion,” the rich Rothschild family, and other Jewish magnates had supposedly united with the Jewish canaille (*chataciarzami Żydowskimi*). Their main slogan was “Destruction of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans.”²⁴² Explicitly anti-Semitic articles disappeared from *Inwalida* after the government took control of the organization.

In the 1930s, the Union of Organizations of Jewish Disabled Veterans publicly emphasized its loyalty to the Polish state. In an article that discussed the new constitution passed in 1935, a member of the Jewish organization argued that despite the racial hatred of fellow-citizens, Jews had to work for the good of the state.²⁴³ However, after Piłsudski’s death, the regime drifted to the right and anti-Semitism became state policy. The Polish Union of Disabled Veterans had little choice but to support this official ideology, and Wagner frequently reinforced the image of communist Jews. *Inwalida* commented on Wagner’s June 1936 speech and underlined that the Jewish population had to reject its anti-state policy in order to become truly Polish.²⁴⁴ In September 1938, Wagner proclaimed again that all members of the Union (including Jews) were equal.²⁴⁵ However, at the beginning of 1939 an article in *Inwalida* stated that the only solution to the Jewish question in Poland was to reduce the Jewish population, in other words, mass emigration.²⁴⁶ Thus, the organization which was created to unite disabled veterans regardless of their ethnic and religious background completely departed from its principles and did not recognize a large minority group’s right to live in Poland.

Conclusion

²⁴² Ludwik Stachecki, “Choć burza huczy wkolo nas, do górzy wzniesmy skroń,” *Inwalida*, February 7, 1927, 1-2

²⁴³ Karol Peczenik, “Nowa konstytucja na tle współczesnych przemian polityczno-społecznych,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, March, 1934, 3-4.

²⁴⁴ Edwin Wagner, “Społeczeństwu Żydowskiemu pod rozwagę,” *Inwalida*, June 15, 1936, 13.

²⁴⁵ E. W. “Narodowość lub wyzwanie nie zmieniają stosunku obywatela do Państwa,” *Inwalida*, September 1, 1938, 1-2.

²⁴⁶ “Sprawa żydowska na realnych torach,” *Inwalida*, January, 1939, 8.

After the First World War, many Western European and North American countries established welfare systems to assist disabled demobilized soldiers. The Polish government was no exception: it planned to establish a multi-pronged system of payments, education, reemployment, and social inclusion to repay disabled veterans who had fought for Polish independence. But this ideal soon met the strictures of reality: inspired by German efforts Polish programs had to be scaled back due to recurring economic crises. Despite ideological fragmentation in parliament in the early 1920s, most political forces agreed that establishing assistance for disabled veterans was important and worked to pass laws to this end. But the government consistently failed to fund these promised programs, and they often blamed local authorities for shortcomings in service provision. Later, sanacja governments also accused previous governments and their political opponents of failing to establish a welfare system. The Great Depression demanded financial belt tightening; veterans' allowances and related services were cut accordingly. The government and its supporters (often leaders of disabled veterans' organizations) presented those reductions as unavoidable and demanded new sacrifices from heroic disabled soldiers who had already fulfilled a noble duty.

The self-organized disabled veterans' movement was one of the most important forces negotiating for state assistance for war invalids. In the early 1920s, the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans declared its political neutrality and was known for its harsh criticism of government failures. It initially met with some successes, as a democratic civil society was able to effectively pressure the government. The relation between state and society, however, changed after May 1926. The sanacja regime did not allow dissent and took control over the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. This was a turning point after which the movement became little more than a government mouthpiece.

The heterogeneity of disabled veterans resulted in the negotiated concept of “Polish war invalid.” There were both inclusive and exclusive discourses, and in many cases previous army affiliation trumped ethnic or religious criteria. In other words, Poles who had served in imperial armies could be excluded from the category of “Polish war invalid.” At the same time, both Petlura’s soldiers and Ukrainian Galician veterans were included by sanacja authorities in this category regardless of their ethnic background. When authorities differentiated disabled soldiers in 1934 they did so for economic not political reasons. But ideology still mattered. Although the government cut benefits because of economic reasons, its decision not to deprive veterans of the Polish army of their allowance was ideological. Wagner, the President of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, who always voiced the government position, felt uncomfortable with this division. At the same time, disabled veterans were depicted monolithically in the discourse created by the organization during the Great Depression. This discourse stated that all veterans were ready to sacrifice for the good of the Polish state. In the late 1930s, the government reissued allowances for some categories of imperial soldiers who were previously deprived of support. The largest organization of disabled veterans proclaimed the equality of all disabled veterans after the war. The only exception were Jews, who felt compelled to create their own organization. Such a split was seen as a betrayal of the principle of unity in the mid 1920s. Despite outreach from Jewish activists in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Polish and Jewish organizations were unable to reunite. During the second half of the 1930s, the sanacja government turned to the right. The Polish Union of Disabled Veterans supported the state’s anti-Semitism and advocated wholesale Jewish expulsion from Poland. By accepting position of the government on the Jewish question, the Union came closer to the ethnic vision of the notion “Polish war invalid.” The negotiation of this term throughout the interwar period not only illuminated the tension between different concepts of the

Polish nation that guided the political life in the Second Republic but also showed the gradual defeat of the political perception of the nation.

CHAPTER TWO

PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE ABOUT DISABLED VETERANS IN INTERWAR POLAND

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the influence of experts increased as scientific progress and knowledge became foundational to modern society and the modern state. Scientific and, in particular, medical discourses constructed by experts had an especially great influence in interwar Central Europe.²⁴⁷ The socialists who constituted the core of the first Polish government promised broad social reforms, and the participation of professionals from various fields was necessary for their implementation. Though the knowledge they made and used purported to be universal, experts and their activities were intimately connected to the work of the nation-state. Indeed, when the sanacja government came to power in 1926, it launched a policy of “national healing and cleansing,” which meant the adaptation of technocratic ideas and the professionalization of the bureaucratic machine. Among the most significant manifestations of these ideas was the election in 1926 of the chemist Ignacy Mościcki as president of the country.²⁴⁸

For governments across Europe, the United States, and even parts of Asia and Africa, the establishment of public health systems was a central initiative in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an indicator of their supposed progress and modernity. As a result, medical professionals played enormous roles in shaping the policies of the welfare state. With regard to war disability in particular, these experts also had the power both to entitle and discriminate against those who did

²⁴⁷ Martin Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen and Stefan Wiederkehr, “Introduction,” in *Expert Cultures in Central Eastern Europe. The Internationalization of Knowledge and the Transformation of National States since World War I*, eds. Martin Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen and Stefan Wiederkehr (Fibre: Osnabrück, 2010), 9-17; Maria Bucur, *Eugenics and Modernization in interwar Romania* (University Pittsburgh Press, 2002).

²⁴⁸ Katrin Steffen, “Experts and the Modernization of the Nation: the Area of Public Health in Poland in the First Half of the Twentieth Century,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 61, no. 4 (2013), 574-579; Brian Porter-Szűcs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 75-88; Magdalena Gawin, “Progressivism and Eugenic Thinking in Poland, 1905-1939,” in *“Blood and Homeland”: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900-1940*, eds. Marius Turda and Paul Weindling (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007), 167-183.

not fit the definition of “normality.” The new country of Poland was no exception, and medical experts participated in the creation and organization of the public health system. Though this situation provided opportunities for health professionals to expand the scope of public health initiatives, a near permanent economic crisis, political instability, and the legacy of three legal systems (German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian) made the task extremely challenging.²⁴⁹ The authorities often made important decisions that contradicted expert advice. For instance, in 1923 Parliament passed a law that liquidated the Ministry of Public Health without consulting either medical experts or the public. This separate ministry was a heavy burden on state finances, and despite the protests of medical professionals, who emphasized the necessity of a central bureaucracy that could organize and supervise public health policy, the ministry was disbanded.²⁵⁰ Some medical professionals lamented in February 1924 that this decision had set back the Polish public medical system by decades.²⁵¹

Medicine’s most important task was to construct a healthy national body. Situated between an often irredentist and aggressive Soviet Union and Germany, a fixation on strength and safety characterised the political discourse of the Second Polish Republic. To ensure national security, Warsaw needed both healthy soldiers and a healthy society; the construction of a modern medical

²⁴⁹ Martin Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen and Stefan Wiederkehr, “Expert Cultures in Central Eastern Europe : the Internationalization of Knowledge and the Transformation of the Nation States since World War I : Introduction” in *Expert Cultures in Central Eastern Europe: the Internationalization of Knowledge and the Transformation of the Nation States since World War I*, ed. by Martin Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen and Stefan Wiederkehr (Fibre: Osnabrück, 2010), 9-17; Katrin Steffen, “Experts and the Modernization of the Nation: the Area of Public Health in Poland in the First Half of the Twentieth Century,” *Jahrbücherfür Geschichte Osteuropas* 61, no. 4 (2013), 574-587; Maria Cristina Galmarini-Kabala, *The Right to Be Helped: Deviance, Entitlement, and the Soviet Moral Order* (DeKalb: NIU Press, 2016), 8.

²⁵⁰ S. M., “Zniesienie Ministerstwa Zdrowia Publicznego,” *Polska gazeta lekarska*, Lutego 11, 1923, 106; “W sprawie zniesienia Ministerstwa Zdrowia Publicznego,” *Polska gazeta lekarska*, Marca 4, 1923, 162.

²⁵¹ Jerzy Bujalski, “Po zniesieniu Ministerstwa Zdrowia Publicznego,” *Warszawskie czasopismo lekarskie*, Lutego 29, 1924, 77-78.

service was an important step in fulfilling this task.²⁵² This chapter will focus on attempts to return broken bodies to an ideal “productive existence” in the interwar period, and examine the Polish public discourse about men disabled in war. This discourse was a result of the interplay between professional knowledge, political strategy, and the narratives produced by disabled activists. I will explore how medical experts defined disability and the principles that became the foundation for medical services, along with the counter-discourse created by disabled veterans.

Military doctors did not strive for scientific discoveries per se; rather, they tried to develop specialized, practical knowledge that would help solve the specific problems of military medicine. Among the most important challenges was to prepare and organize the military medical service for an eventual future war. In peacetime, then, military doctors’ primary focus was not generally treating sick patients, but rather working with healthy young people to maintain this health and military readiness. Disease prevention and hygiene were key areas of intervention. The military doctor Brunon Nowakowski also stated that military service was a turning point for every young man, when he left his usual lifestyle and found himself in a completely different situation. Every person experienced this dramatic upheaval in a different way, and military medical experts had to work with soldiers to soften the transition and to prevent possible psychological breakdown. At the same time, they were responsible for maintaining a “military spirit” among sick soldiers in military hospitals. Concerned with both the military and industrial health of the nation, the doctors also developed special processes to translate medical diagnoses into the languages of military readiness and industrial productivity. A calculus of fitness and efficiency allowed them to evaluate and categorize the ability of a person to serve in the army, for example, or the ability of disabled

²⁵²Martin Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen and Stefan Wiederkehr, “Expert Cultures in Central Eastern, 9-17; Katrin Steffen, “Experts and the Modernization of the Nation: The Area of Public Health in Poland in the First Half of the Twentieth Century,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 61, no. 4 (2013), 584.

veterans to work.²⁵³ In this chapter, I will examine these processes, calculations, and categories, and focus in particular on the criteria that military medical experts used in defining the category of “war invalid”.

Experts also constructed a specific built environment in order to meet the challenges of postwar society and provide assistance for disabled servicemen. John M. Kinder defines such space created to solve the problem of disabled veterans in the USA between the Civil War and the Second World War as the “architecture of injury”. As many scholars have noted, the organization of space influences the complex social relations and the formation of collective and individual identities. The notion of “disability” is the result of the interplay between people with various impairments and the sociocultural environment, and arrangements that often separate disabled persons from the rest of society are crucial in the construction of “disability” as a community bound together by discrimination and exclusion.²⁵⁴ The architecture of injury and the way it shaped the identity of Polish disabled veterans is one of the important themes of this research. Though medical discourse had significant influence on the construction of this architecture, other experts also participated in shaping the environment in ways that could determine the experience and fate of disabled veterans. The second part of the chapter examines the project of urban and agricultural settlements for disabled veterans proposed by the Lviv architect Roman Feliński. It studies how through spatial changes some experts planned to transform the experience of disability in interwar Poland.

²⁵³Brunon Nowakowski, “Lekarz w wojsku lekarz wojskowy,” *Lekarz wojskowy*, no 11 (November 1922): 908-915.

²⁵⁴John M. Kinder, “Architecture of Injury: Disabled Veterans, Federal Policy and the Built Environment in the Early Twentieth Century,” in *Veterans’ Policies, Veteran Politics: New Perspective on Veterans in the Modern United States*, ed. by Ortiz Stephen R. (University Press of Florida, 2012), 65-67.

Defining Disability: Medical “Productivity” Narrative and Disabled Soldiers in Interwar Poland

Defining the “War Invalid”

War disability was an important category for soldiers injured in war; the way in which it was defined would determine which veterans were entitled to receive state assistance. “The war invalid status” indicated not only physical or mental impairment but rather some legal position. In his article about the politics of compensation in the USA after the First World War, K. Walter Hickel writes about physicians as “gatekeepers to benefits.”²⁵⁵ Disabled soldiers’ benefits depended on the extent to which their capacity to perform paid work was reduced, and only doctors were trusted to have the specialized knowledge to make such decisions. Thus, medical experts, who had power over the fate of demobilized soldiers, made their decisions not only as professionals, but also as agents of the state. At the same time, the language of the welfare system was not medical, and experts had to translate the results of their examinations into a disability rating system rooted in ideas of industrial capitalism and defined by United States law.²⁵⁶

The situation in Poland was similar. Medical professionals, who were mostly in the military, were some of the main contributors to the definition of disability and the public policy conversations surrounding it. Yet, in a 1922 article in *Lekarz Wojskowy*, Nowakowski underlined that military doctors were not a homogeneous group. Often they had vastly different wartime experiences, belonging to different armies and age groups. In the post-war era young Polish doctors with little experience worked alongside professionals who had served in the former

²⁵⁵Walter Hickel, “Medicine, Bureaucracy, and Social Welfare. The Politics of Disability Compensation for American Veterans of World War I,” in *The New Disability History. American Perspective*, ed. by Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001), 237.

²⁵⁶ Walter Hickel, “Medicine, Bureaucracy, and Social Welfare. The Politics of Disability Compensation for American Veterans of World War I,” in *The New Disability History. American Perspective*, ed. by Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001), 237-241.

imperial armies. Moreover, after the end of the First World War and the Polish-Soviet War, the majority of doctors chose to leave military service and work as civilians. Nowakowski argued that many felt antipathy toward the army and military doctors, which caused a rift between military and civilian medical professionals. The tension was further exacerbated by a lack of understanding of the special tasks of military doctors, as well as the special position of these professionals within the military itself. Those who thought that military medical service was similar to the work of the civilian doctor found themselves disappointed with or resentful of doctors' power and responsibility. Polish military doctors, Nowakowski stressed, had to create a clearly separate identity and popularize the image of the military medical professional among both civilian doctors and other military officers.²⁵⁷

Working under direct orders and guidelines from the state, special medical military commissions were responsible for determining the relationship between veterans' current health and their military service. In other words, these commissions were tasked with deciding if veterans' disabilities were actually a result of their time in the military. Commissions also calculated the percentage of the reduction of a veteran's ability to work, and the degree to which they would need ongoing care. Disabled veterans could be re-examined if their percentage reduction was defined as temporary, or if their condition changed after hospital treatment. The medical military commissions conducted such examinations, and in cases when they were not able to make a decision, further examination took place in military hospitals and became the basis for the decisions of medical commissions. In addition to making a diagnosis, doctors also noted the circumstances that had led to the veteran's current medical condition and tried to piece together its connection to military service. Often former soldiers' health conditions were only attributed in part

²⁵⁷Brunon Nowakowski, "Lekarz w wojskuczy lekarz wojskowy", *Lekarz wojskowy*, no 11 (November 1922): 908-915.

to their military service; the medical commission also had to determine this percentage. These decisions were accepted by the majority of commissions; however, when commissioners did not agree with the decision of military doctors, their opinion was often noted in the documents. Witnesses, outside doctors, and medical specialists were also sometimes brought in to assist in this work. As a response to demands of veterans' organization, in February 1930, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare issued an order that declared that representatives of the disabled veterans would also be added to the medical military commissions.²⁵⁸

The decisions of medical experts were based on strict guidelines developed by the government. In 1920 the Ministry of the Economy and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare issued detailed instructions for the medical commissions. It explained the algorithm by which the percentage of disability was calculated and it described the physical and mental conditions which justified "war invalid" status. Among the diagnoses that resulted in 100% disability were blindness, deaf-muteness, severe tuberculosis, and extreme trauma to the chest and stomach. Though the main criteria in defining the percentage of disability was the capacity to perform paid labour, the medical commission sometimes granted status to those whose ability to labour was not affected. For instance, a former soldier who suffered from impotence due to battlefield trauma obtained the status of being one-third disabled, as he could not have a family and was considered "maladapted" to society.²⁵⁹ Thus, in this instance, the algorithm was based on social, not economic principles. However, the authorities warned doctors against using their own judgment in

²⁵⁸ "Zarządzenie Ministra Spraw Wojskowych z dnia 25 lipca 1929," in *Ustawa inwalidzka wraz z odnoszącymi się do niej rozporządzeniami, instrukcjami I T. P. z uwzględnieniem orzecznictwa Najwyższego Trybunału Administracyjnego*, ed. by Marjan Buszyński and Bolesław Matzner (Warszawa, 1931), 122-128; "Instrukcja ministra Spraw Wojskowych Wydana w porozumieniu z ministrem Skarbu oraz ministrom Pracy i Opieki Społecznej z dnia 15 maja 1923," in *Ustawa inwalidzka*, 152-160; "Rozporządzenie ministra Pracy i Opieki Społecznej w porozumieniu z ministrem Spraw Wewnętrznych z dnia 20 lutego 1930," in *Ustawa inwalidzka*, 175-176.

²⁵⁹ "Instrukcja ministra Spraw Wojskowych, ministra Skarbu, Ministra Pracy i Opieki Społecznej," in *Ustawa inwalidzka*, 137-152.

determining disability, since “humanitarian and social” criteria were already supposedly included in the guidelines.²⁶⁰

In fact, the application of non-medical criteria by experts would become one of the most important issues in interwar medical practices. The instructions issued after the acceptance of the new Invalid Act of 1932, for instance, imposed stricter guidelines on doctors, but also allowed for the broader use of non-medical criteria. Among their many stipulations, the guidelines recommended that doctors not recognize the connection between military service and tuberculosis in cases where demobilized soldiers were predisposed to the disease, their conditions of service were not difficult, or their length of service supposedly was not long enough to result in tuberculosis.²⁶¹ Later instructions recommended not granting a permanent percentage of disability to limbless veterans. It was suggested that their ability to work would increase as they became more comfortable with their prostheses.²⁶²

The Great Depression also influenced the work of the medical military commissions. With the government facing dire fiscal pressure, doctors were instructed to prioritize economic rather than medical considerations in their work with disabled soldiers. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare ordered the local authorities in Przemsł, Rzeszów, and Lviv simply to reduce the number of disabled veterans; in August 1931, only one quarter as many soldiers as in the previous years were sent to hospitals for special examination. The government simply did not have enough money to cover the costs associated with special examinations, including travel, and the Ministry sent recommendations to the commissions’ doctors specifying which cases it felt warranted the

²⁶⁰CAW, I 300.62.16.

²⁶¹ “Przepisy lekarskie do określania utraty zdolności zarobkowej inwalidów wojennych i wojskowych” in Jan Sobociński and Edward Bednarowicz, *Ustawa o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim z dnia 17 marca 1932 roku* (Warszawa: Nakładem Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej, 1935), 125.

²⁶² “Przepisy lekarskie do określania utraty zdolności zarobkowe inwalidów wojennych i wojskowych” in Jan Sobociński and Edward Bednarowicz, *Ustawa o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim z dnia 17 marca 1932 roku* (Warszawa: Nakładem Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej, 1935), 111.

expense. This increased the power but also the responsibility of the members of the medical military commissions, who now had to make decisions without proper examinations and expert opinions.²⁶³

At the beginning of the 1920s, the work of medical military commissions was often viewed negatively by disabled veterans. Newspapers and magazines from disabled soldiers' organizations published numerous accounts of veterans' rights being violated. They argued that doctors often declared demobilized soldiers with severe conditions to be healthy and able to perform paid labour.²⁶⁴ One disabled soldier wrote that the reason for such decisions was the doctors' desire to please their superiors and make careers for themselves in the army. The same man also demanded changes to how disabled veterans were examined; he even threatened doctors with physical violence if they did not decide cases according to their conscience.²⁶⁵ Disabled activists produced a discourse of disbelief in which they contended that medical experts did not use medical criteria to define disability, and the economic crises of the 1930s and the resulting reduction of benefits continued to feed the suspicion that military doctors worked as agents of the state and deliberately reduced disability percentages in order to limit the state's financial obligation.²⁶⁶ This charge was reinforced by some medical experts who openly spoke out against the unjust decisions of the medical military commissions.²⁶⁷

The transparency of the medical military commissions' decision-making process was a central issue of concern for veterans. Doctors had exclusive professional knowledge, but

²⁶³DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 12, ark.1-16.

²⁶⁴K. D., "Dola inwalidy," *Inwalida*, May 22, 1921, 3-4; St. Obrzydowsky, "Djabelski taniec," *Inwalida*, February 19, 1922, 5-6.

²⁶⁵Filipowicz, "Badania lekarski w ekspozyturze w Krakowie," *Inwalida*, July 10, 1921, 2-3

²⁶⁶"Komisje lekarskie bezpodstawnie podtinają byt inwalidów wojennych," *Inwalida*, October 21, 1934, 2; Fr. Bratek-Kozłowski, "Głos wybitnego chirurga w sprawie Orzeczeń Komisj Lekarskich," *Inwalida*, November 18, 1934, 2-3.

²⁶⁷Bratek-Kozłowski, "Głos Wybitnego Chirurga w Sprawie Orzeczeń Komisj Lekarskich," *Inwalida*, November 18, 1934, 2-3.

sometimes state authorities also issued internal orders or instructions for them to follow. In early 1930, disabled veterans protested against secret instructions to the military medical commissions, underlining that such interference in due process was a violation of their “constitutional rights.”²⁶⁸ The situation caused considerable anger among disabled ex-servicemen, and they demanded publication of the official guidelines used by medical professionals in determining the percentage of disability. Although the previous instructions were available to the public, the government decided to restrict access to information. Knowledge of the criteria would have allowed disabled veterans to critique the commissions’ decisions and to appeal to the courts.²⁶⁹

Despite these complaints, the Polish authorities took a rather liberal approach, and the work of military medical commissions was relatively transparent compared to practices in other countries. For instance, in the United States only doctors who worked in medical commissions enjoyed access to the instructions for medical experts. In this case, it was not only the disabled veterans who were denied information about the criteria of evaluation, but the bureaucrats, too.²⁷⁰ Yet Poland’s slightly more liberal approach did not necessarily benefit veterans. The medical military commissions had great power, and bureaucrats, moreover, could make decisions that were not based on the opinion of medical professionals. After the first examination of Bolesław Kikiewicz, one of the most active participants of the disabled veteran movement, the medical commission in Cracow declared him 60% disabled. His health condition soon worsened and two commissions in Warsaw recognized him as a 100% disabled veteran. However, he only received an allowance based on the 60% decision. The editorial board of the newspaper *Inwalida* suspected

²⁶⁸ Stanisław Szulczyński, “Badania inwalidów przez komisje wojskowo-lekarskie,” *Inwalida*, Styczeń 19, 1930, 3.

²⁶⁹ Stanisław Szulczyński, “Badania inwalidów przez komisje wojskowo-lekarskie,” *Inwalida*, Styczeń 19, 1930, 3.

²⁷⁰ Walter Hickel, “Medicine, Bureaucracy, and Social Welfare. The Politics of Disability Compensation for American Veterans of World War I,” in *The New Disability History. American Perspective*, ed. by Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001), 245-246.

that Kikiewicz's active role in fighting for the rights of disabled soldiers was the reason for the unfavourable decision.²⁷¹

It is important to note that the examination process was different for soldiers with mental disabilities. Veterans with mental conditions were not physically examined; rather, the decisions of the medical commissions were based on a psychiatrist's report and a special report written by local authorities. The special report commented on a patient's mental health prior to military service and included numerous non-medical and moral criteria. Relatives, acquaintances and neighbours indicated if the person had shown any signs of mental disease, had experienced head trauma, had venereal diseases, or was an alcoholic, and how he behaved in a state of intoxication. The report also included information about the mental and physical development of the demobilized soldier, such as when he learned to walk and talk, whether he had attended school, and if he was literate. Criminal records, marital status, professional qualities, and the veteran's relationships with other people and authorities were also taken into consideration. Moreover, the medical commission not only considered information about the patient, but also evaluated his family history. It was interested in patterns of mental disorders, alcoholism, suicides, and prostitution, as well as the cause of death of the veteran's closest relatives.²⁷² A similar application of both medical and non-medical criteria in determining whether mental disorders were caused by war was the typical practice in other European countries, too.²⁷³

According to instructions issued in 1920, only disabled veterans with mental disorders who needed either treatment in mental hospitals or permanent assistance could be recognized as

²⁷¹ "Prowokacyjna zemstwa," *Inwalida*, January 2, 1921, 1-2.

²⁷² "Zarządzenie ministra Spraw Wojskowych z dnia 25 lipca 1929," in *Ustawa inwalidska*, 131, 136-137.

²⁷³ Marc Roudebush, "A Battle of Nerves: Hysteria and its Treatments in France during First World War." In *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870-1930*, ed. by Mark S. Micale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 253-280; Bruna Bianchi, "Psychiatrics, Soldiers, and Officers in Italy During the Great War," In *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870-1930*, ed. by Mark S. Micale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 22-253.

completely unable to work. Men who posed no danger to society and who could adapt to public life could obtain no more than 50% of the maximum disability benefit, while a high percentage of disability was assessed among veterans who had multiple epileptic seizures weekly and a severe decrease in intellectual abilities. The instructions recommended against allowing such disabled soldiers to perform any job which involved work with machines and suggested that they might find jobs in agriculture and forestry instead. Other mental disorders, such as neurasthenia, the weakening of nerves, and hysteria, could result in anywhere from 10 to 100% disability depending on the severity of the patient's condition. The authors of the instruction emphasized that in such cases, the criteria used by the German army were an important model to follow.²⁷⁴

The guidelines published in the early 1930s provided a more detailed description of the possible medical disorders connected to military service and their potential causes. At the same time, all mental conditions were divided into three categories: disorders which were connected with military service but did not worsen because of it, disorders which worsened because of military service, and disorders which were caused solely by military service. The guidelines determined that mental conditions such as epilepsy and neurosis always belonged to the second category; in other words, military service did not cause, but only worsened them. The instructions also stressed that alcoholism, drug addiction, and syphilis could lead to worsening mental conditions, but they were not related to the military service.²⁷⁵ The instructions published in 1932

²⁷⁴“Instrukcja ministra Spraw Wojskowych, ministra Skarbu, ministra Pracy Opieki Społecznej,” in *Ustawa inwalidska*, 139-140.

²⁷⁵ “Przepisy lekarskie do określania utraty zdolności zarobkowej inwalidów wojennych i wojskowych” in Jan Sobociński and Edward Bednarowicz, *Ustawa o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim z dnia 17 marca 1932 roku* (Warszawa: Nakładem Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej, 1935), 113-117.

allowed recognizing the connection between drug addiction and military service in only rare cases, when the addiction was the result of medical treatment after severe injuries.²⁷⁶

The nature of mental conditions and the application of non-medical criteria in their diagnoses gave doctors significant latitude in defining the origins of these conditions and their relationship to military service. But since doctors' decisions were not always in favour of disabled veterans, this flexibility also opened them up to accusations of unprofessionalism or of attempting to reduce the number of beneficiaries. Witness testimony indicating the positive mental health of a soldier before the war was often the most important evidence linking military service to the subsequent mental illness.²⁷⁷ Józef Nowak argued that medical commissions generally granted a low percentage of disability to mentally ill veterans. He described a case in which the medical commission recognized 20% disability and after re-examination changed its decision to 50%. However, doctors at the mental hospital had assessed the patient's disability at 100%. Nowak demanded a change to such unjust practices and the provision of adequate assistance for ex-servicemen with mental disorders.²⁷⁸

The great number of soldiers who suffered various mental disorders during and after the war accelerated changes and created new challenges for experts in psychiatry, and medical experts launched new discussions of the relationship between war and mental disorders.²⁷⁹ Eugeniusz Artwiński, who worked as a doctor in the hospital for mental and nervous diseases in Cracow, examined the role of war in cases of hysteria. He pointed out that there was no single definition of

²⁷⁶ "Tezy lekarskie," *Inwalida*, August 20, 1933, 4. Ana Garden-Coyne mentioned that addiction to the painkillers was the common problem in British military hospitals (Ana Garden-Coyne, *The Politics of Wounds. Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 169).

²⁷⁷ Ludwik Wątroba, "Sprawedliwość nastąpić musi," *Inwalida*, January 2, 1921, 4-5.

²⁷⁸ Józef Nowak, "O poprawie bytu inwalidów umysłowo chorych," *Inwalida*, June 22, 1930, 11

²⁷⁹ CAW, I 300.62.16; Eugeniusz Artwiński, "Histeria w świetle wojny," *Polska gazeta lekarska*, March 26, 1922, 235-239; Bronisław Karbowski, "O dominujących poglądach na sprawę tak zwanej nerwicy kontuzyjnej," *Lekarz wojskowy* no 14 (1920): 5-20, no 15 (1920): 11-25; Jan Nelken, "'Psychozy reaktywne na wojnie,'" *Lekarz wojskowy* no 30 (1921): 941-950.

hysteria; rather, many experts created a catch-all diagnosis that elided various mental disorders. He contended that war in fact caused many instances of trauma and shell-shocked hysteria, and soldiers of different armies and countries all suffered from the mental consequences of battle. But Artwiński also argued that the war had changed understandings of hysteria, even among professionals, who now started to simplify the issue. Patients with symptoms of hysteria were often cast as “malingerers”—those who feigned illness to try to avoid military service. In contrast, Artwiński believed that hysteria could not be faked; one’s conscious or unconscious desire was irrelevant.²⁸⁰ Szczęsny Bronowski similarly cautioned military doctors who frequently accused soldiers of malingering and confused mental disorders with malingering. He suggested that they study such issues in more depth.²⁸¹

Malingering was one of the most important issues faced by military doctors, since malingerers could not only avoid military service but also apply for benefits. Soldiers accused of malingering could claim a great variety of symptoms, but most often they simulated heart conditions. Bronowski wrote about such soldiers, describing them as people of a “lower kind” intellectually undeveloped, immoral, and often showing clear features of physical degeneracy. He claimed that malingering had a geographical dimension, with a disproportionate number coming from Łomża Land and large cities, such as Warsaw and Łódź. Playing into established prejudices, experts believed that malingers could have an ethno-religious or racial profile. According to Bronowski, the number of malingerers among Christian soldiers in the Polish army was no higher than five percent whereas Protestant Germans were more prone to malingering. Jews, by contrast,

²⁸⁰ Eugeniusz Artwiński, “Histeria w świetle wojny,” *Polska gazeta lekarska*, March 26, 1922, 235-239.

²⁸¹ Szczęsny Bronowski, “Kilka uwag o udawaniu i o sztucznym wywoływaniu objawów chorobowych w praktyce wojskowo-lek.,” *Polska gazeta lekarska*, May 7, 1922, 373; On shell-shock and malingering in Great Britain see Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male. Men’s Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (Chicago: The University Chicago Press, 1996), 76-123.

were malingerers by nature. In his view, all Jews who did not have obvious health issues tried to malingering in order to avoid military service.²⁸² Such views were shared by some Polish experts; for instance, the anthropologist Jan Czekanowski argued that Jews were physically inferior and, as a result, made the worst soldiers.²⁸³

The main criteria for determining “invalid status” was one’s “ability to work,” and professionals defined this in terms of the Invalid Act of 1921 and other guidelines. In contrast to Germany, where more nuanced economic criteria were important factors in determining the percentage of disability, Polish experts based their decisions only on the physiological aspects of disability. The medical commission did not take into consideration the veteran’s previous occupation or the potential for re-education and employment, but only the physiological consequences of disability. In other words, a peasant and an office worker who lost legs would each be assessed the same percentage of disability.²⁸⁴ Some experts argued that one’s “capacity to work” should be understood as more than an anatomical-pathological problem. Yet, the disability schedule was strict—doctors had to follow it exactly. Other important criteria such as the veteran’s age, his/her education, and his/her previous professional skills were disregarded. The jurist Teodor Molkner argued that although they may have experienced the same changes to their bodies, two different people with different professions would in fact experience different changes in their ability to work—and thus, different levels of disability, which should be compensated differently by the state. The editorial board of the *Polska Gazeta Lekarska* agreed with Molkner’s arguments but added that the government’s instructions to doctors were not strict, but instead created only a

²⁸² Szczęsny Bronowski, “Kilka uwag o udawaniu i o sztucznym wywoływaniu objawów chorobowych w praktyce wojskowo-lek.,” *Polska gazeta lekarska*, May 7, 1922, 373-376.

²⁸³ Katrin Steffen, “Experts and the Modernization of the Nation: The Area of Public Health in Poland in the First Half of the Twentieth Century,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 61, no. 4 (2013), 583.

²⁸⁴ Helena Lipnowska, “Metody oceny uszkodzenia inwalidów wojennych,” *Jednodniówka* 1919-1934, 1934, 16-19; Fr. Zawaryński, “Na marginesie Instrukcji dla komisyjrew-lekarskiej,” *Inwalida*, March 26, 1933, 3.

general framework for the evaluation of disability, while allowing a substantial amount of deviation. It maintained that members of medical commissions considered various factors in every individual case. In other words, according to the *Gazeta Lekarska*, doctors actually had enormous power over the fate of each disabled veteran. Medical professionals could consider both medical and nonmedical criteria and be guided solely by their informed personal judgements.²⁸⁵ However, this conclusion of the editorial board was rather unfounded, as the documents suggested that the instructions to the military commissions were strict and did not leave much room for interpretation.

In order to receive the status of war invalid, one's disability had to be clearly linked to military service. For most injuries, it was relatively easy to determine cause and effect. However, when a disease was the reason for a disability, the connection to military service was not always clear. It was frequently difficult to determine when and how a veteran became infected or the circumstances that gave rise to a condition, and it was even more difficult to determine how military service may have exacerbated the illness. A veteran with tuberculosis could be asymptomatic; doctors believed that the emergence or worsening of symptoms could not necessarily be linked to military service. Moreover, many diseases, doctors argued, had more to do with the individual's predisposition than with external factors; they reasoned that it would only have been a matter of time before a person developed tuberculosis anyway and military service was ultimately irrelevant. Cases in which demobilized soldier was affected by the same disease after military service as before also did not prove a connection and could not be implicitly considered as the continuation of previous disease. Sometimes soldiers were completely cured during military service; illness, therefore, could no longer be said to influence their physical performance and ability to work. As a result, the re-emergence of a disease after the war could not

²⁸⁵ Teodor Molkner, "Pojęcie zdolności zarobkowej w duchu ustawy inwalidskiej," *Polska gazeta lekarska*, May 18, 1926, 391-392.

realistically be connected with military service.²⁸⁶ Understandings of the relationship between military service and soldiers' complex health conditions were medically mediated, and only doctors were vested with the authority to categorize the origins of illness.

Representatives of disabled veterans criticized this approach to defining the connection between health and military service. In most cases, commissions recognized that person's disability was only partially caused by military service. Critics argued that such practices were unjust because it was not always possible to determine a condition's origins, especially in cases when men contracted several infectious diseases (including venereal diseases). Different answers to this question meant completely different levels of social assistance for the demobilized soldier. Venereal diseases in particular often allowed the medical commission to declare a lack of connection between military service and a health condition. Disabled veterans emphasized that medical commissions made decisions beneficial to the state budget, not to soldiers.²⁸⁷ Moreover, the military medical commission could change the decision of a previous commission after re-examination, depriving disabled soldiers of their allowances.²⁸⁸ Veterans also demanded compensation for injuries, such as accidents, which they suffered while in uniform but that were not directly caused by combat.²⁸⁹ Representatives of ex-servicemen also demanded changes to other criteria that determined military-related injuries. For instance, if a limbless veteran with a prosthesis fell down and broke his hand, he had no right to free medical assistance. His new injury was one step removed from the disability he had acquired during military service.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶Jan Sobociński, "Inwalidzi wojenni i wojskowi w Polsce według pochodzenia oraz przyczyn inwalidstwa," *Praca i opieka społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 3 (1934): 316-318.

²⁸⁷Chrzanowski, "Bołączki," *Inwalida*, October 10, 1926, 1-2; K., "Zaspór lekarski... Płaci inwalida," *Inwalida*, October 17, 1926, 2; "Komisje lekarskie bezpodstawnie podcinają byt inwalidów wojennych," *Inwalida*, October 21, 1934, 2.

²⁸⁸K., "Zaspór lekarski... Płac i inwalida," *Inwalida*, October 17, 1926, 2.

²⁸⁹Chrzanowski, "Bołączki," *Inwalida*, October 24, 1926, 1.

²⁹⁰Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 10 posiedzenia*, łam 76.

Bureaucrats sometimes accused demobilized soldiers of misunderstanding the legal principles that guaranteed assistance to disabled veterans. In his article “The Category of War Invalids According to Origin of Their Disability,” Jan Sobociński complained that 75,000 veterans had applied for the status of war invalid after the additional registrations in 1929, and that the majority of these cases were in fact unfounded. He contended that former soldiers were reluctant to admit that deterioration in their health might simply be a matter of aging. Not all aches and pains came from the military battlefield.²⁹¹

By the early 1930s, Polish authorities determined that the medical commissions had been too liberal in linking current disability to military service, especially during the first years after the war, and they claimed that many individuals had wrongly received “war invalid” status and benefits. In order to eliminate this alleged fraud, the government announced that it would review all previous decisions under the terms of the new 1932 Invalid Act. The review process was divided into two stages. First, special commissions re-examined the documents of every disabled veteran in order to identify cases in which connection between the disability and military service was not sufficiently proven. The relevant documents were then sent to other commissions, which would make the final decision. These second commissions investigated the documents scrupulously, and veterans had two months to gather and send in evidence to support a connection between their military service and disability. After those two months had elapsed, the veterans were invited to an official hearing at which the commission would announce its revised decision.²⁹² Through this process of documentation and decision-making, the bodies of men were “bureaucratized,” and the

²⁹¹Jan Sobociński, “Inwalidzi wojenni i wojskowi w Polsce według pochodzenia oraz przyczyn inwalidstwa,” *Praca i opieka społeczna. Kwartalnik organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 3 (1934): 314-315.

²⁹²Jan Sobociński, “Rewizja orzeczeń lekarskich inwalidzkich komisji rewyzyjno-lekarskich i inwalidzkich komisji odwoławczych na zasadzie art. 7 ustawy z dnia 13 marca 1932 r. o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim,” *Praca i opieka Społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 2 (1934): 148-155.

experience of disabled soldiers was narrowed into the confines of a short note on a form.²⁹³ About 22% (1320) of disabled veterans in the Lviv Voivodeship were determined to have a questionable status during the initial stage of the review. The percentage of doubtful cases was higher only in Stanislaviv Voivodeship (22.9%). Between June 1932 and June 1934, however, the commissions issued final decisions in only 286 of the 1320 Lviv cases. Of those cases that actually went through this second stage of the review, 70 were immediately dismissed, 112 resulted in decisions against disabled soldiers, and the remaining 104 cases were found in favour of the veteran. In other words, the government denied assistance to more than half of the disabled soldiers whose documents were re-examined. Moreover, the procedure was slow and the review process lasted years, during which many disabled servicemen did not receive state assistance.²⁹⁴

In the new system of evaluation, hospital records were considered the most reliable evidence linking military service to disability. When such documents were not available (and Sobociński believed that they would be found if soldiers had actual health problems) the testimony of witnesses could be taken into consideration. But government authorities were sceptical, believing that medical commissions placed too much value on witness testimony in making their decisions. Often witnesses reported only that soldiers left home happy and healthy, and returned damaged or diseased. Fellow servicemen usually testified that their brothers-in-arms had some health condition. Yet this testimony was not medical, but personal and anecdotal. In general, soldiers were inclined to blame their misfortune on their military service—either for legitimate reasons, or because they hoped they might get financial benefits—so the authorities were dubious

²⁹³ On “bureaucratization of soldier’s body” see Ana Garden-Coyne, *The Politics of Wounds. Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 73-74.

²⁹⁴ Jan Sobociński, “Rewizja orzeczeń lekarskich inwalidzkich komisij rewyzijno-lekarskich i inwalidzkich komisij odwoławczych na zasadzie art. 7 ustawy z dnia 13 marca 1932 r. o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim,” *Praca i opieka społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 2 (1934): 148-155.

of much of their testimony to the medical commissions. Moreover, at the beginning of 1920s veterans had occasionally received “war invalid” status despite the fact that their health had worsened due to their own behaviour, by developing alcoholism, for example, or contracting a venereal disease.²⁹⁵ New rules and approaches to the evaluation of evidence concerning health and military service sought to undo such decisions and reduce the number of disabled soldiers. The re-examination of disabled veterans’ documents took place simultaneously with other initiatives designed to reduce expenditures during times of financial strain.

The medical commission determined not only one’s “ability to work,” but also defined whether the disability was of a temporary or permanent nature. Servicemen whose percentage of disability was defined as “transient temporal” had to be re-examined at some later date. By the end of 1922, however, the government issued an order to reduce the number of soldiers classified as temporarily disabled and instead simply classified them as “permanently disabled” in order to save the money associated with re-examination.²⁹⁶ This was a boon not only for the authorities, but for many veterans too: those whose disabilities were deemed to be impermanent often faced inconveniences. They had to arrange to attend re-examinations, for example, and they did not have the same rights as ex-servicemen with a permanent disability; for instance, they could not claim a one-time lump sum payment of their allowance. One of the most famous activists of the disabled veterans’ movement, Kikiewicz, argued that this system had to change. He suggested a more nuanced way of documenting the permanence of disability and describing the future changes to one’s health that might be expected. For example, veterans with tuberculosis could have an unchanging, permanent component of disability on their record, as well as a comment that their

²⁹⁵ Jan Sobociński, “Rewizja orzeczeń lekarskich inwalidzkich komisji rewizyjno-lekarskich i inwalidzkich komisji odwoławczych na zasadzie art. 7 ustawy z dnia 13 marca 1932 r. o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim,” *Pracai opieka społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 2 (1934): 153-157.

²⁹⁶ CAW, I 300.62.16.

condition was expected to deteriorate in the future. Such an approach would allow disabled veterans to receive an allowance subsidy and not lose their benefits if they were unable to attend a re-examination.²⁹⁷

The Polish government tried to find various ways to reduce spending, and a presidential order issued in November 1935 forbade commissions from changing the percentage of disability for soldiers whose disabilities had been categorized as permanent. Veterans and medical professionals alike perceived the order as unjust; they recognized that the health conditions of disabled veterans with a permanent percentage of disability in fact often worsened over time. Someone with 20 or 30% disability, for example, could realistically deteriorate to 100% disability status in a relatively short time. This presidential order was soon rescinded and veterans with permanent disabilities could apply for a re-examination of their case.²⁹⁸

The act of quantifying disability was not the only problem faced by medical commissions; often doctors' medical qualifications were suspect. Veterans sometimes claimed, for example, that their physical examinations did not meet professional standards. In November 1921, Deputy Wincenty Szymczak mentioned cases in which unqualified experts, such as dentists, were responsible for decisions about the disability of demobilized soldiers.²⁹⁹ Complaints about the work of the medical commissions were voiced in parliament throughout the interwar period. In February 1929, a deputy of the BBWR Jan Karkoszka had to emphasize that the Cracow commission's decisions on the relationship between military service and disability were based only on documents and not on physical examinations.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁷ Bolesław Kikiewicz, "Czasowe inwalidstwo," *Inwalida*, September 7, 1924, 8-9.

²⁹⁸ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 126-127; Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 5 posiedzenie*, łam 94-95.

²⁹⁹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 262 posiedzenie*, łam 69.

³⁰⁰ Sejm II RP. 3 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 48 posiedzenie*, łam 101.

Medical military authorities similarly recognized the incompetence or irresponsibility of some medical experts. Sometimes the doctors' statements made no sense or were illogical. Disabled veterans quoted them during meetings and newspapers published them as jokes. In February 1924 the military authorities reminded medical experts that they were responsible for every statement and that their mistakes exacerbated disabled veterans' dissatisfaction with the government.³⁰¹ However, at the beginning of the 1930s the newspaper *Inwalida* continued to publish humorous statements from the military medical commissions as examples of their incompetence.³⁰²

Veterans' groups often voiced accusations against medical experts who used non-medical criteria in determining disability. The medical discourse on Jewish soldiers, for example, was frequently tinged with anti-Semitism. Representatives of the disabled Jewish veterans' movement accused medical commissions of blatant racism as they would often arbitrarily lower a Jewish veteran's disability percentage or would refuse to recognize a clear link between military service and disability.³⁰³ At the same time, according to a 1930 article in the newspaper *Inwalida Żydowski*, disabled Jewish servicemen were treated as equals in most medical institutions. The only exception was sanatoriums in Upper Silesia, where many Jewish veterans had unpleasant experiences. However, the men did not complain about the quality of medical treatment or the behaviour of medical personnel. Rather, it was the anti-Semitism of Christian ex-soldiers (presumably of German origin) that made their stays in those sanatoriums unbearable. Rather than addressing anti-Semitism head-on, the author of the article suggested moving Jewish disabled

³⁰¹ CAW, I 300.62.16.

³⁰² "Z Księgi orzeczeń komisji lekarskich," *Inwalida*, September 6, 1931, 1.

³⁰³ "Męczarnie żydowskich inwalidów," *Inwalida żydowski*, March, 1927, 6.

veterans to sanatoriums in other regions of Poland in order to provide better conditions and meet their religious needs.³⁰⁴

The concept of “war invalid” was fluid and constantly changing during the interwar period. Injured bodies of disabled veterans turned into “bureaucratized” bodies and physical or mental trauma was translated mainly into the language of productivity by medical experts. At the same time, the process of “translation” was shaped not only by medical criteria but also the economic interests of the state, as well as some ideological aspects (for instance, anti-Semitism), and was widely criticized by disabled activists.

Medical Services for Disabled Veterans

Military medical experts, much like politicians, also participated in the national conversation around the inclusiveness of the welfare system for disabled veterans. They believed that the new Polish state had to provide assistance to disabled veterans of the imperial armies alongside soldiers of the Polish army. Jan Kołłątaj-Strzednicki, the chief of the Department of Assistance of the Ministry of Military Affairs, emphasized the security implications of the issue. Desperate and disaffected victims of the Great War were vulnerable to the influence of hostile agitation against the Polish state and army.³⁰⁵ The main aim of the welfare system, then, was not only to provide compensation and medical assistance to demobilized disabled soldiers, but also to turn them into productive and engaged citizens through the program of rehabilitation.³⁰⁶ Mainstream discourse stressed that proper medical assistance would be beneficial for both the state

³⁰⁴ J. Bachner, “Leczenie żydowskich inwaliów wojennych,” *Inwalida żydowski*, September, 1930, 4-5.

³⁰⁵ Jan Kołłątaj-Strzednicki, “Krótki zarys M. S. Wojsk. W sprawie opieki nad inwalidami wojennymi,” *Lekarz wojskowy*, no 4 (April 1923):301; Mieczysław Bielski, *General brygady Dr. Jan Kołłątaj-Strzednicki (1883-1933). Żołnierz, Lekarz, Komendant Centrum Wyszkozenia Sanitarnego* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2012), 216-219.

³⁰⁶ Marcjan Zienkiewicz, “Stan obecny opieki nad inwalidami wojennymi w M. S. Wojsk.,” *Lekarz wojskowy*, no 52 (December 1921): 1646, 1650.

and disabled soldiers. Disabled veterans whose medical conditions improved would be able to earn money by themselves and would not be a burden to the Polish state.³⁰⁷

Medical professionals exercised power over disabled veterans in two ways: one was through the evaluation of disability, and the other was through the provision of treatment and rehabilitation. Disabled veterans chose neither their doctor nor their hospital. They had to follow the medical institutions' rules, and they could be forced to leave if they broke them. Ex-servicemen who failed to follow a prescribed treatment regimen, and whose health condition worsened as a result, were also forbidden any increase in their compensation.³⁰⁸ Similar to other postwar European and North American countries, the medical practices in Poland offered little room for personal choice.³⁰⁹ Disabled soldiers became part of a welfare system with a singular vision of rehabilitation, which controlled and punished recalcitrant veterans.

Organizing medical assistance for disabled veterans was a challenging project, especially since the Polish government did not have enough financial resources to create facilities for such a large number of disabled soldiers. The treatment of veterans in hospitals for civilians was too expensive and the Ministry of Military Affairs could not have full control over it. As a result, the government planned to create a network of military hospitals in order to facilitate and supervise medical assistance to disabled soldiers. After the war, the only military hospital for disabled veterans was in Cracow; a second hospital for 250 soldiers was created on the grounds of the old

³⁰⁷Sprawozd.Stenogr. z 73posSejmu IV, łam 53.

³⁰⁸“Rozporządzenie wykonawcze poz.132,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 20, 1923, 226.

³⁰⁹Ana Carden-Coyne, “Ungrateful Bodies, Rehabilitation, Resistance and Disabled American Veterans of the First World War,” *European Review of History – Revue européenne d’Histoire* 14, no. 4 (December 2007): 543-565; Roxanne Panchasi, “Reconstructions: Prosthetics and the Rehabilitation of the Male Body in World War I France,” *The Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 7 (1995): 110-136.

Lviv House of Invalids. The military authorities also planned to open smaller hospitals in Warsaw and Przemyśl.³¹⁰

In the early 1920s, these military hospitals also acquired an additional function: acting as temporary housing for disabled soldiers. After completing their treatment in medical institutions, many veterans were unemployed and without any place to live, so military hospitals had to fill the gap. In September 1923, however, the military authorities banned this practice and suggested that disabled soldiers should be accommodated in special temporary hostels instead. By the beginning of 1924, disabled veterans were allowed to stay in hospitals after their treatment only in exceptional cases, and they could not remain longer than two weeks. To help them reintegrate into civilian life, the hospitals had to inform the local authorities about the disabled veterans in need, for example, and the local departments of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare were responsible for transferring servicemen into houses of invalids, educational institutions, or temporary hostels, as well as organizing other necessary assistance for veterans.³¹¹

The Second Polish Republic suffered from both a lack of financial resources and a lack of military medical professionals. Military doctors had a broad range of responsibilities and often could not cope with the volume of work. As a result, disabled veterans were not always able to find a military doctor who could link the military service and the veteran's condition. However, admission to a military hospital was impossible without a supporting statement from a military medical professional. This system of admission to the hospitals, combined with the lack of human resources, made the medical service even less accessible for disabled soldiers.³¹²

³¹⁰Zarys działalności Ministerstwa Spraw Wojsk. w przedmiocie opieki nad inwalidami wojskowymi przez sekcję opieki od początku jej istnienia aż po dzień 31 grudnia 1919 R. (Nakładem sekcji opieki Minist. Spraw Wojsk. w Warszawie), 10.

³¹¹CAW, I.300.62.16.

³¹²Łukasiński, "Opieka lekarska," *Inwalida*, May, 1928, 1-2.

Even those who did gain admission to military hospitals seldom got the care they needed. Frustrated by their situation, many wrote articles recounting their experiences, which differed dramatically from the generally positive depictions of the medical service in government reports. In the early 1920s, demobilized soldiers complained that the conditions were unbearable in some military hospitals, and that they caused the further deterioration of their health conditions. For instance, there was not enough food in Zakopane Sanatorium for disabled veterans suffering from tuberculosis, and the institution did not provide sufficient or relevant treatment for its patients.³¹³ Similar complains about intolerable hygienic conditions in some military hospitals were still appearing in the press in the early 1930s.³¹⁴

Responsibility for providing medical care to disabled veterans was constantly divided and re-divided between the military and civilian authorities throughout the interwar period. According to the Invalid Act of 1921, disabled soldiers were members of Health Insurance Funds (*Kasy Chorych*) that were responsible for providing medical assistance to employed citizens of Poland. The state paid three-fifths of the contributions to these funds for disabled veterans who were categorized as 100% disabled.³¹⁵ However, the regulations changed in August 1922. Employed veterans with less severe conditions continued to receive assistance from Health-Insurance Funds. At the same time, jobless men with severe impairment were deprived of insurance. Some disabled servicemen believed that abolishment of the insurance system was the worst injustice done by the state thus far. They were entitled to free medical assistance only for conditions directly connected to their military service. Disabled veteran Antoni Chomicki emphasized that because of their disabilities, many of these soldiers had fragile health and were predisposed to some diseases. He

³¹³Chory inwalida, "Jak leczą w Zakopanem," *Inwalida*, March 26, 1922, 3-4; "Szpitalczy baraki w Choczni," *Inwalida*, February 26, 1922, 2.

³¹⁴Wśród brudów i robactwa leczą inwalidów w Ciechocinku," *Inwalida*, September 14, 1930, 3.

³¹⁵"Ustawa z dnia 18 marca 1921 o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim poz. 195," *Dziennik Ustaw* 32, 1921, 419.

urged representatives of disabled soldiers to lobby for the restoration of the previous regulations that had guaranteed medical assistance through the Health Insurance Funds.³¹⁶

Since military institutions and infrastructure were not able to provide sufficient medical services for disabled servicemen in the 1920s, disabled activists demanded reforms. Under pressure from organizations of disabled veterans, the government transferred responsibility for the system of assistance to disabled veterans from the Ministry of Military Affairs to the Ministry of Labour and Welfare. At the end of 1929, the Health Insurance Funds became responsible for providing medical care to disabled veterans. They also took over the facilities in Warsaw, Poznań, Cracow, and Lviv that made and repaired prostheses. However, disabled veterans did not receive full coverage, because Health Insurance Funds still provided medical treatment only for conditions linked to military service. Moreover, doctors and special commissions of Health Insurance Funds could declare that a particular condition was not connected to military service despite a previous decision from the medical commission. The Health Insurance Funds would send a report to the local Department for Disabled Veterans, which would then make the final decision about whether a diagnosis could be attributed to military service.

One of the reasons for dissatisfaction with the services provided by Health Insurance Funds was the fact that the quality of medical assistance did not substantially improve. Those institutions usually sent disabled veterans not to the local, but to the military hospitals. There were only ten military hospitals in Poland in 1929, and they were not able to provide appropriate service to all

³¹⁶CAW, I 300. 62.16; Antoni Chomicki, "Inwalidzi, a Kasa Chorych," *Nasza sprawa*, February 1, 1929, 4. At the same time, the Health Insurance Funds were broadly criticized as a system that did not provide adequate medical assistance to its members. Patients argued that the medical service provided by Health Insurance Funds was much worse than that provided by private doctors or institutions. Doctors who worked for the Funds were paid less for each patient and provided a lower quality of treatment. The critics suggested abolishing all special institutions attached to the Health Insurance Funds and allowing patients to choose their own doctors, who would be paid from the Funds. ("Kasa Chorych a inwalidzi," *Inwalida*, June 9, 1929, 2-3).

disabled soldiers.³¹⁷ In 1931, the authorities changed the regulations yet again, and the Health Insurance Funds began to provide medical service to all disabled soldiers even in cases that were unconnected to military service. Another change, this time in the form of the new Invalid Act, granted such rights only to soldiers with more than 84% of disability.³¹⁸ Activists from the veterans' movement continued to criticize the Health Insurance Funds and published numerous articles about their negligence.³¹⁹ After a reform in March 1933, the Social Insurance Institution [*Zakład Ubezpieczeń Społecznych*] took over Health Insurance Funds,³²⁰ but the quality of service stayed more or less the same. In 1938, *Front Inwalidzki* complained about bureaucratic indifference towards the suffering of disabled veterans. Although in the 1920s activists had lobbied for civilian medical service for disabled servicemen, in the late 1930s representatives of the Invalid Legion changed their minds. Discouraged by consistently poor treatment from civilian institutions, they argued that military medical institutions would provide better service for veterans. Legion activists underlined that disabled veterans of the Polish army still felt that they were part of the military force and that military doctors would better understand their needs.³²¹

The organization of an effective system of assistance for disabled veterans relied on the cooperation of bureaucrats and experts in various fields. However, the lack of material and human resources, as well as inadequate management of the welfare system for disabled soldiers in general,

³¹⁷“Pismo okólne Nr 19/O.V/0 Ministrstwa Pracy i Opieky Społecznej z dnia 2 stycznia 1930 r.” in *Ustawa inwalidska*, 163-167; “Okólnik Nr5216/29,” in *Ustawa inwalidska*, 167-171; “Instrukcja Ministra Pracy i Opieky Społecznej,” in *Ustawa inwalidska*, 172-175; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 826, ark. 147-150.

³¹⁸ “Zmiany w sprawie leczenia,” *Inwalida żydowski*, August, 1931, 10-12; “Leczenie inwalidów woj.,” *Inwalida żydowski*, January-February, 1934, 6-7; “Ustawa z dnia 17 marca 1932 o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkiem poz. 238,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 26, 1932, 431.

³¹⁹ “Przekleństwo Kas Chorych,” *Inwalida*, April 10, 1932, 7-8; “Jak leczą inwalidów Kasy Chorych,” *Inwalida*, March 27, 1932, 7; “O leczeniu inwalidów wojennych winne decydować nadal referaty inwalidzkie,” *Inwalida*, April 2, 1933, 1-2.

³²⁰ “Ustawa z dnia 28 marca 1933 o ubezpieczeniu społecznym poz. 396,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 51, 1933, 903-954

³²¹ “Lecznictwo jest albowąką z naturą, albowapółdziałaniem z nią,” *Front Inwalidzki* 10-11 (October-November 1938): 20-23.

became major points of public contention in interwar Poland. Some experts openly acknowledged that welfare assistance for various groups of disabled citizens (not only disabled veterans) was ineffective despite enormous spending.³²² Frequent administrative changes and the re-division of responsibilities between different ministries and departments, as well as between the military and civilian authorities, made the system unwieldy and ineffective. The fact that the Polish government had not gathered precise statistical data about disabled veterans by the early 1930s, but instead worked only from an estimate of their total number, represented a managerial failure of the state bureaucracy. The Great Depression necessitated even more reductions in spending and further changes to the management of assistance for disabled veterans. In 1933, the authorities conducted their first evaluation of the situation, and according to an article in *Praca i Opieka Społeczna*, they determined that exactly 171,878 disabled ex-servicemen lived in Poland. The author of the article who worked as a government researcher, divided the disabled veterans into two groups according to the causes of their disabilities. The first group consisted of veterans who had suffered mechanical, chemical, or thermal traumas; most disabled soldiers belonged to this group, while veterans who were disabled by disease belonged to the second group. For the first group, the most common injuries were mechanical traumas to the upper and lower limbs, head, or torso. They were the cause of disability in 124,372 former soldiers.³²³ In other words, for the first fifteen years after the First World War, the Polish government had not been aware of the precise number—or the general nature of their injuries—of the disabled veterans for whom it had tried to organize a system of assistance. Even when the state did embark on research to determine these numbers, its motivation was not the improvement of the welfare system for disabled veterans, but rather a

³²² Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej, 529; Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej, 530.

³²³ Jan Sobociński, “Inwalidzi wojenni i wojskowi w polsce według pochodzenia oraz przyczyn inwalidstwa,” *Praca i opieka społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 2 (1934): 315-316.

reduction in spending for a government whose finances had been devastated by the world economic crisis.

The rehabilitation system included not only medical treatment but also the re-education of disabled soldiers, who had to be turned into productive citizens. Special medical-educational institutions were created in order to encourage the rehabilitation of the demobilized soldiers. The design of such institutions was shaped by numerous professionals, and the facilities were a kind of combination of hospital, school, hostel, and prosthesis factory. Disabled soldiers would theoretically be able to access necessary medical treatment, theoretical and practical training, and orthopedic and prosthetic devices—all of which would allow them to perform productive labour.³²⁴ The approach to rehabilitation, however, changed throughout the interwar period, and by 1932 there were only three remaining schools for the (re)education of disabled veterans in Poland (in Cracow, in Niepołomnicach near Cracow, and in Poznań). These institutions could accept only about 300 students each year, and they were no longer connected to hospitals or prosthesis factories.³²⁵

The Ministry of Military Affairs also established special institutions known as Houses of Invalids, which served disabled veterans who had lost the ability to perform paid labour and could not receive adequate care at home. The Lviv House of Invalids, which had been built by the Austrian authorities in the 1860s, could accept 500 war veterans. But the Ministry of Military Affairs determined that there was no need for such a large House of Invalids, and decided instead to open an orthopaedic surgical military hospital, a prosthesis factory, and a school for the re-education of disabled veterans in its building. Ex-soldiers from the former Russian part of Poland,

³²⁴Marcjan Zienkiewicz, "Stan obecny opieki nad inwalidami wojennymi w M. S. Wojsk.," *Lekarz wojskowy*, no 52 (December 1921): 1651.

³²⁵L. A., "Szkolnictwo zawodowe inwalidów woj.," *Inwalida*, April 10, 1932, 5-7.

though, did not want to live so far from their homes and families, and a second House of Invalids was established in Płock. This House was closed in 1929 and its residents were transferred to Lviv.³²⁶

Only some disabled veterans enjoyed the right to reside in the House of Invalids: demobilized soldiers with 75-100% disability, or those with 47-75% of disability but who could not perform paid labour because of mental disorders and could not be cared for at home. Even in cases in which they did not need special medical treatment and were not dangerous to their environment, disabled veterans with mental conditions could be sent to houses of invalids against their will. Residents of these institutions had to follow strict regulations and could leave only with the permission of local authorities. Unauthorized departure could lead to the loss of the right to reside in such institutions in the future.³²⁷

War Disability and Artificial Limbs

Artificial limbs became key symbols of postwar “normalization” and reintegration. They were presented in the rehabilitation discourse as an ideal way to help severely injured soldiers return to normal and productive life. Once again, the human body was defined in terms of industrial productivity and functionality, and notions of self-discipline and overcoming were central for rehabilitation. The technical achievements of modern orthopedics, combined with the right attitude, were seen as a path to reintegration into society.³²⁸ At the same time, however, prostheses

³²⁶*Zarys działalności Ministerstwa Spraw Wojsk. w przedmiocie opieki nad inwalidami wojskowymi przez sekcję opieki od początku jej istnienia aż po dzień 31 grudnia 1919 R.* (Nakładem sekcji opieki Minist. Spraw Wojsk. w Warszawie), 12.

³²⁷ “Rozporządzenie ministra Pracy i Opieki Społecznej, Ministra Spraw Wojskowych i Ministra Skarbu z dnia 11 sierpnia 1923 r.,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 34, 1923, 969-970.

³²⁸ Carol Poore, *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 10-12; Roxanne Panchasi, “Reconstructions: Prosthetics and the Rehabilitation of the Male Body in World War I France,” *The Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 7 (1995): 110-136; Julie Anderson and Heather R. Perry, “Rehabilitation and Reconstruction: Orthopaedics and Disabled Soldiers in Germany and Britain

could trigger ambiguous feelings about the influence of technological progress on the human body.³²⁹

Orthopaedic devices, prostheses, and wheelchairs were some of the principal benefits provided to disabled veterans by state. The special commission determined the eligibility of the demobilized soldiers who applied, and they decided which prostheses might increase physical abilities, decrease pain, prevent worsening of health conditions, and hide disability. Disabled veterans received both functional and cosmetic prostheses for upper and lower limbs. They could change the functional prostheses every three years and the cosmetic prostheses every five or six years.³³⁰ Although disabled servicemen enjoyed a legal guarantee to prostheses, the general quality of the service and the prostheses was often unsatisfactory. They could wait several years for their prostheses and sometimes they could not wear them because of poor fit. Moreover, shoddy prostheses could exacerbate the health conditions of disabled soldiers, who accused the government and local authorities of negligence.³³¹ These accusations were not baseless; for instance, in the spring of 1924 the authorities conducted an investigation into the work of the director of a Warsaw prosthesis factory and laid several criminal charges.³³² In January 1925, the newspaper *Inwalida* published an article that criticized the repair of prostheses and the unnecessary

in the First World War,” *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 30, no. 4 (2014): 227-250; Ana Carden-Coyne, *The Politics of Wounds: Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2014), 113, 349-353; Mia Fineman, “Ecce Homo Prostheticus,” *New German Critique* 76, no.1 (1999): 85-114. This concept of disability is different from the contemporary approach in which “disability is neither ‘a state of mind’ to be overcome through heroic struggle or cultural change, and nor is it biologically determined. Instead, a historical-geographical perspective casts disability as a socio-spatial construction of the impaired body that can vary over space and time.” (Brendan Gleeson, “Can Technology Overcome the Disabling City” in *Mind and Body Spaces: Geographies of Illness, Impairment and Disability* ed. by Ruth Butler and Hester Parr (Routledge: London and New York, 1999), 99).

³²⁹ Roxanne Panchasi, “Reconstructions: Prosthetics and the Rehabilitation of the Male Body in World War I France,” *The Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 7 (1995): 109-140.

³³⁰“Rozporządzenie wykonawcze poz.132,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 20, 1923, 226-228.

³³¹Bronisław Rombek, “Jak pracuje krakowska fabryka protez,” *Inwalida*, June 31, 1921, 3-4; Bronisław Rombek, “Jak pracuje krakowska fabryka protez,” *Inwalida*, August 7, 1921, 3-4; Jan Dostych, “Protezy inwalidzkie,” *Inwalida*, August 7, 1921, 5; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2065, ark. 61-72.

³³²“Sprawa nadużyć w fabryce protez,” *Inwalida*, June 1, 1924, 5.

bureaucratization of the process. Disabled veterans had to wait months in order to have their prostheses repaired and were not able to work in the meantime. The Ministry of Military Affairs started an investigation and demanded reports from local authorities about the veracity of these accusations. In fact, some local officials in the Lviv Voivodeship recognized the inefficient organization of this service.³³³ Investigations conducted by authorities acknowledged both the ability of veterans' organizations to put pressure on government, and the interest of some bureaucrats in improving the quality of services to disabled soldiers.

Prostheses became essential devices in many veterans' everyday lives. Disabled servicemen and prosthesis experts followed news about the orthopaedic inventions abroad and publicly discussed them. The newspaper *Inwalida*, for example, published a brief article about new kind of artificial arm invented in France that could function almost like a natural hand and could become "real blessing for invalids." Armless veterans would be able move fingers and hold things in their hands.³³⁴ However, Florjan Koralewski, an expert in orthopaedic mechanics, did not share the enthusiasm and wrote a critical response with more realistic suggestions. He argued that the physical and mental state of every disabled person had to be taken into consideration before the right prosthesis could be applied. Moreover, the complicated mechanism of the palm might not be suitable in every profession. He recommended using prostheses along the model introduced by German surgeons Hermann Sauerbruch and Friedrich Krukenberg, which could be produced in Poland. The only obstacle was the long and complicated process of fitting these types of prostheses. Soldiers had to spend up to three weeks in hospital, which was not feasible for those with jobs, and their allowance was suspended for the period of hospitalization, which might make

³³³Ludwik Stachecki, "Mniej biurokracyzmu," *Inwalida*, January 11, 1921, 3-4; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2065, ark. 61-72.

³³⁴"Ruchome protezy dla inwalidów," *Inwalida*, February 8, 1925, 15.

it difficult for them to pay their rent and support their families. Koralewski argued that paying an allowance during the hospitalization period was crucial to ensuring access to such prostheses for as many veterans as possible. He ended his article with a dry remark that Sauerbruch and Krukenberg's prostheses would not be a "blessing for invalids" (compared to the more modern French prosthesis), but "would give them some satisfaction and prolong their lives."³³⁵

Though some experts recommended them, the prostheses produced by Polish factories under the supervision of the state met with many complaints from ex-servicemen. Disabled activists emphasized that the main feature of Polish prostheses was their low price. The authorities were not interested in the introduction of new technical developments that could improve quality of life, but rather focused only on cheap mass production. The newspaper *Inwalida* described the Sanitary Hygienic Exhibition in 1927 and argued that the display of orthopaedic equipment was insufficient and did not feature the kinds of high quality prostheses that were necessary for limbless veterans. He demanded the organization of a separate Exhibition of Prostheses and Orthopaedic Devices that would expose veterans to more modern devices and innovations.³³⁶ Similarly, activist Ludwik Stachecki expressed his disappointment about the exhibition in Poznań in 1933. However, he emphasized that the director of the Poznań prosthesis factory seemed to be interested in production of higher quality prostheses.³³⁷

The situation changed little throughout the interwar years, though experts and disabled soldiers suggested various solutions. Limbless veterans complained about inconvenient painful prostheses that were impossible to wear in the cold winters and hot summers. They continued to

³³⁵ Florjan Koralewski, "Ruchome protezy dla inwalidów," *Inwalida*, April 12, 1925, 11-12.

³³⁶ Obserwator, "Międzynarodowa wystawa sanitarno-higieniczna," *Inwalida*, June 26, 1927, 4-5; Obserwator, "Międzynarodowa wystawa sanitarno-higieniczna," *Inwalida*, July 3, 1927, 3-4.

³³⁷ "Protezy na wystawie poznańskiej," *Inwalida*, October 5, 1933, 3-4.

demand more technically advanced orthopaedic devices.³³⁸ Despite numerous complaints about the quality of prostheses and the organization of orthopaedic services, there were reports of some improvement. Koralewski documented positive experiences and even some innovations in manufacturing prostheses for disabled veterans in Poznań.³³⁹ Other ex-soldiers contended that the bureaucratized system of prosthesis production was the source of the problem. The bureaucrats who ran the state factories that produced the cheapest and most inconvenient prostheses received salaries from the government and had no incentive to take their work responsibilities very seriously. The author of an article in the newspaper *Polska Zbrojna* suggested following the French model, in which private orthopaedic factories produced prostheses for disabled veterans. Competition between private producers, he argued, would result in much better products and services.³⁴⁰ However, some medical experts responsible for the quality of prostheses shifted the responsibility to the patients and contended that positive results also often depended on the ability of disabled veterans to communicate their needs and desires to doctors.³⁴¹ While disabled veterans, government and experts accused one another of failure, ideal prostheses that could substitute limbs remained fantasy.

Prostheses and artificial limbs were usually described in rehabilitation discourse as necessary and useful devices that helped veterans to resume “normal” productive lives, as manifested by their labour, their appearances, and their personal relationships. At the same time, journals and papers produced by disabled activists testify to a more ambiguous attitude towards

³³⁸Oleszek, “Niec o sztucznych kończynach górnych,” *Inwalida*, 1931, 2-3; Chomiccki A., “Głos w sprawie ulepszenia protezowania,” *Inwalida*, March 8, 1931, 5; St. Sz., “Protezy inwalidów wojennych należy ulepszyć,” *Inwalida*, June 7, 1931, 1-2.

³³⁹Florjan Koralewski, “Ortopedja i Protezy,” in *Książka jubileuszowa wielkopolskiego zarządu wojewódzkiego Związku Inwalidów Wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Poznań: Druk. D. O. K. VII w Poznaniu, 1925), 80-83

³⁴⁰Nit., “Protezowanie inwalidów we Francji u nas,” *Polska zbrojna*, May 9, 1929, 6; Nit., “Protezowanie inwalidów we Francji u nas,” *Polska zbrojna*, May 16, 1929, 8.

³⁴¹Florjan Koralewski, “Ortopedja i Protezy,” in *Książka jubileuszowa wielkopolskiego zarządu wojewódzkiego Związku Inwalidów Wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Poznań: Druk. D. O. K. VII w Poznaniu, 1925), 83.

artificial limbs. Dr. Adolf Klęsk reported that many armless disabled veterans preferred not to wear a prosthesis but adapted to life with one arm. Moreover, he argued that the productivity of these veterans depended only on their will-power, not their appliances.³⁴² Historian Roxanne Panchasi uses Freud's concept of the "uncanny" to explain the tension between rehabilitation discourse and individual experience of disability. "Uncanny" feelings appear because of uncertainty about certain things or events—when the line between the real and the imagined is blurred. Professional discourse tried to eliminate the uncanny aspects of war and disability with seemingly practical solutions that obscured the trauma of war and its radical changes to the body and the self. However, individuals' perceptions of their damaged bodies and prostheses could be very different from the stereotyped narratives created by experts. Panchasi emphasizes that prostheses resulted in a deeply uncanny "hybrid" being,³⁴³ and Polish disabled veterans noted similar "uncanny" experiences. In a short "notebook" extract from a disabled man published in 1925, the author described his deep hatred of artificial limbs. There was a substantial gap between the discourse created by experts and activists, and the personal experiences of some disabled veterans. In this case prostheses were only phantoms and lies that could not change his perception of the disabled body. Gradually the author of this "notebook" understood that he would rather prefer not to move than to move like a mannequin, and he destroyed his prosthesis.³⁴⁴

³⁴² Adolf Klęsk, "Człowiek o jednej ręce," *Inwalida*, January 31, 1931, 4.

³⁴³ Roxanne Panchasi, "Reconstructions: Prosthetics and the Rehabilitation of the Male Body in World War I France," *The Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 7 (1995): 111-112.

³⁴⁴ Inwalida Spółdzielca, "Protezy. Urywki z zotatnika inwalidy," in *Książka jubileuszowa wielkopolskiego zarządu wojewódzkiego Związku Inwalidów Wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Poznań: Druk. D. O. K. VII w Poznaniu, 1925), 91-93.

Architectural Discourse and Disabled Veterans: Roman Feliński's Settlement Project

Medical experts were not the only group of professionals that focused on the restoration and reintegration of injured man and this subchapter continues to study the professional discourses on war disability. It studies the “architecture of injury,” or rather the attempt to create an environment that could provide not only material well-being but also shape the collective identity of disabled veterans. The study examines how, through the transformation of social space, experts tried to redefine the notion of “disability” and link it with the national narrative. I will focus on the case study of the project proposed by Lviv architect Roman Feliński. He moved to Warsaw in 1919 and worked as a high-ranking official in the Ministry for Public Works until 1926. But before moving to Warsaw, Feliński worked in the Provincial Department for the Economic Reconstruction of Galicia during the Great War, and he prepared a project aimed at solving the housing problem for disabled soldiers.³⁴⁵ The proposal appeared as a separate book in 1919 and as a series of articles in the newspaper *Inwalida Polski*.³⁴⁶ His project dealt not only with disabled veterans but also with the city fabric as it was being transformed by both social and architectural change. Feliński's discussion of urban trends and “the city” was based on Lviv and its development in particular, as he imagined new civic design and a large-scale transformation of the built environment as a solution to all social ills. In his vision, disabled Polish soldiers—as those who had suffered most—would be the first to experience the benefits of urban transformation. But Feliński was not only interested in veterans' urban mobility; he advocated the colonization of the “Eastern borderlands” by disabled Polish veterans, which would strengthen the Polish character of

³⁴⁵Stanisław Łoza, *Architekci i budowniczowie w Polsce* (Warsaw: Budownictwo i architektura, 1954), 74.

³⁴⁶ Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919); Roman Feliński, “W Sprawie mieszkań dla inwalidów,” *Inwalida Polski. Organ opieki MSW* 1 (1919): 15-17; Roman Feliński, “Siedziby jako podstawa zaopatrzenia inwalidów,” *Inwalida Polski. Organ Opieki MSW* 2 (1919): 2-4.

those lands. Military colonization [*osadnictwo*], which started at the beginning of 1921, became one of the most controversial projects of the Polish interwar government and caused an increase in tension between Poles and the local Ukrainian population in the Eastern borderlands.³⁴⁷

The Garden City Movement

The concept of the garden city was suggested by Ebenezer Howard as an attempt to transform the modern industrial cities of nineteenth-century England. In his book *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, published in 1898, Howard developed the idea of the “decentralized city,” which would combine urban and rural elements. Among its main principles were municipal ownership of the land and civic self-governance. The new concept of urban planning was envisioned as the foundation of broad-scale social reform. In order to promote Howard’s ideas, the Garden City Association was established in 1899, and the practical implementation of the first project started at Letchworth four years later. Ideas about the transformation of the industrial city into the garden city soon spread across Europe and activists in various countries applied them and developed projects for new garden cities.³⁴⁸

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the concept of the garden city became popular among Polish architects, too. The living conditions in the large cities of the region were similar to those in modern Western European cities, and Warsaw and Cracow hosted two major circles of architects that promoted the establishment of garden cities. Among their projects were plans for construction of garden settlements near Warsaw, though they were never implemented because of

³⁴⁷ Janina Stobniak-Smogorzewska, *Kresowe osadnictwo wojskowe 1920-1945*, (Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, 2003).

³⁴⁸ Mervyn Miller, *English Garden Cities. Introduction* (English Heritage, 2010), 1-22; Stephen V. Ward, “The Garden City Introduced,” in *The Garden City. Past, Present and Future* ed. by Ward Stephen R. (London: E & FN Spon, 1992), 1-27; Frederick H. A. Aalen “English Origins,” *The Garden City. Past, Present and Future* ed. by Ward Stephen R. (London: E & FN Spon, 1992), 28-51.

the beginning of the First World War.³⁴⁹ Experts in Lviv also participated in this movement, including architect Ignacy Drexler, whose 1912 book *Miasta Ogrodowe (Garden City)* promoted the establishment of garden cities.³⁵⁰

World War I interrupted the practical implementation of plans to establish garden settlements, but architects continued to work on their projects. Some of them aimed to help war victims. One charitable organization in Warsaw suggested establishing a garden settlement for five hundred widows and their children. The Warsaw Organization of Architects worked on this project and published it in *Przegląd Techniczny* in 1915.³⁵¹ Architects assumed that the majority of the future inhabitants would belong to the working class, so it was essential to locate the settlement near transportation hubs that would allow an easy commute to the factories. At the same time, the housing project had to be cheap and provide good hygienic conditions and plenty of green areas. Besides family houses, the WOA planned to construct schools and daycares for children, a public bath, shops and an administrative building.³⁵²

The necessity of providing assistance to disabled veterans and other victims of the war resulted in the development of various projects, and Feliński led the way with his plan to establishing both special urban and rural settlements for Polish disabled veterans. Feliński was a successful and well-known Lviv architect whose works, for instance, included the design of the

³⁴⁹ Edyta Barucka, *W szkatulach zieleni. europejski ruch miast ogrodów 1903-1930* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2014), 92-101.

³⁵⁰ Ignacy Drexler, *Miasta ogrodowe* (Lwów: H. Altenberg, 1912). One of the first articles in Polish about the concept of garden cities (the English town of Port Sunlight was shown as an example) was published in the Lviv press in 1905. (Jakub Lewicki, *Między tradycją nowoczesnością: Architektura Lwowa lat 1893-1918* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2005), 393).

³⁵¹ "Projekt koloniina 500 mieszkań dla wdów i sierot po poległych żołnierzach," *Przegląd techniczny* no. 27-28 (1915): 291-294.

³⁵² "Projekt koloniina 500 mieszkań dla wdów i sierot po poległych żołnierzach," *Przegląd techniczny* no. 27-28 (1915): 291-294.

city's famous Magnus Department Store.³⁵³ In addition to work on various architectural projects, Feliński was interested in theoretical issues, and in 1916 he published the first Polish urban theory textbook.³⁵⁴ Many of its ideas about the modern city and its future development were repeated in Feliński's postwar project, which aimed to solve the issue of reintegrating disabled veterans in Poland. He emphasized that the majority of city-dwellers lived in extremely unhealthy conditions in crowded rental apartments, and he believed that changes in the principles of urban planning and construction could create more appropriate and healthful accommodation for these people. The garden cities—which theoretically consisted of small houses surrounded by gardens—could be an alternative to crowded rental apartments in tower buildings.³⁵⁵

Feliński's project was not unique, and similar ideas could be found in the works of professionals from other countries.³⁵⁶ For example, German architects envisioned a similar "City of Peace" project, and their works were a source of inspiration for the Lviv architect.³⁵⁷ Moreover, in Germany one of the projects involved using German disabled veterans to colonize the ethnically Polish borderlands. A similar idea of military colonization of the eastern borderland populated by Ukrainians became an important part of political discourse in interwar Poland, and Feliński was one of its advocates.³⁵⁸ The English physician Fortescue Fox similarly established a special

³⁵³ Jakub Lewicki, *Roman Feliński — architekt iur banista, pionier nowoczesnej architektury*, (Warszawa: Neriton, 2007), 62-66.

³⁵⁴ Feliński Roman, *Budowa miast* (Lwów: Nakł. Gubrynowicza i Syna, 1916.).

³⁵⁵ Feliński Roman, *Budowa miast* (Lwów: Nakł. Gubrynowicza i Syna, 1916), 32-48, 54-65.

³⁵⁶ Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001), 123-124; John M. Kinder, "Architecture of Injury. Disabled Veterans, Federal Policy and the Built Environment in Early Twentieth Century," in *Veterans' Policies, Veteran Politics: New Perspective on Veterans in the Modern United States*, ed. by Ortiz Stephen R. (University Press of Florida, 2012), 83-87.

³⁵⁷ Edyta Barucka, *W szkatułach zieleni. Europejski ruch miast ogrodów 1903-1930* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2014), 154, Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 76.

³⁵⁸ Teresa Harris, "The German Garden City Movement: Architecture, Politics and Urban Transformation, 1902-1931" (PhD Diss., Columbia University, 2012), 302; Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 109.

rehabilitation settlement in Hampshire, which was part of his broader vision of rural colonization, the foundation of permanent settlements, and returning the next generation to the healthier village lifestyle. Demobilized disabled soldiers could become model settlers, who would own small farms but live communally.³⁵⁹ Such ideas were not limited to Europe. In 1918, the US Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane suggested resettling demobilized disabled soldiers in small cooperative agricultural colonies. The Military Department distributed more than one million copies of a brochure that described this project, but it was criticized as “socialist” idea and because of a lack of political support the plan was not implemented. Although one experimental farm was established in rural Minnesota, it proved to be a failure. The poor quality of the land, the necessity of hard physical work, and inadequate material support made the task of farming almost impossible for disabled veterans. Moreover, in contrast to expectations, disabled veterans were not reintegrated, but isolated in remote areas far from the rest of society.³⁶⁰ Transforming modern cities into garden cities or establishing separate agricultural colonies that would improve quality of life was a popular idea in the interwar period, and while all of these projects aimed to create better conditions for disabled veterans than they had experienced in overcrowded cities and traditional institutions, implementing them successfully often proved to be the greatest challenge.

Feliński’s *Future Housing and Settlement Questions and the Daily Life of Disabled Veterans*

Much like Fox’s Hampshire project, Feliński’s proposal envisioned not only a rehabilitation program, but the wholesale transformation of society. The establishment of colonies

³⁵⁹ Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001), 123-124).

³⁶⁰ John M. Kinder, “Architecture of Injury. Disabled Veterans, Federal Policy and the Built Environment in the early Twentieth Century,” in *Veterans’ Policies, Veteran Politics: New Perspective on Veterans in the Modern United States*, ed. by Ortiz Stephen R. (University Press of Florida, 2012), 83-87.

for disabled soldiers was supposed to be the first step in this transformation.³⁶¹ However, Feliński was not only concerned with finding solutions to social problems; he was also deeply invested in broader political questions. He was careful to take into account the fact that almost one third of the Polish population belonged to national minorities. Indeed, the issue of national minorities was one of the most important challenges for interwar Polish governments and different political groups and experts suggested different solutions. Feliński advocated using disabled veterans to colonize the Eastern borderlands, where the Polish population was in the minority (especially in rural areas); as others also indicated, this would be a way to strengthen the influence of the Polish state in a highly contested region. Loyal Polish settlers—with a large percentage of members from the Polish legions—would become the “defenders” of the Eastern borderlands.³⁶² At the same time, the authorities would acknowledge the sacrifices of these national heroes by granting them land. Feliński also suggested establishing suburban colonies of disabled soldiers near large cities; Lviv, for instance, would be one of them. The Ukrainian-Polish War of 1918-1919 led to the mythologization of Lviv’s heroic defenders and emergence of a group of privileged disabled veterans. In Feliński’s vision, local authorities needed to reward these heroes with resettlement in suburban colonies as soon as possible.³⁶³

Feliński’s project was closely related to agrarian reform, one of the important political issues in the Second Polish Republic.³⁶⁴ Agrarian reform as a means to solve the problem of

³⁶¹Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 25, 65-66.

³⁶²Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 109.

³⁶³Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 114.

³⁶⁴ On historiography examining the agrarian question and military colonization in interwar Poland see Bronisław Gralak, *Osadnictwo wojskowe marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego na ziemiach wschodnich drugiej Rzeczypospolitej* (Zgierz, 2006); Janina Stobniak-Smagorzewska, *Kresowe osadnictwo wojskowe 1920-1945* (Warszawa: Rytm, 2003); Christhardt Henschel, “Front-Line Soldiers into Farmers. Military Colonization in Poland after the First and Second World Wars,” in *Property in East Central Europe. Notion, Institutions and Practices of Landownership in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Hannes Siegrist and Dietmar Müller (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014); Głowacka

assistance to disabled soldiers was suggested during the first discussion in the Constitutional Assembly of the future welfare system for disabled soldiers. Józef Putek, a representative of PSL-left, underlined that a delay in agrarian reform would have negative implications for the material well-being of demobilized disabled soldiers.³⁶⁵ The Agrarian Reform Act was passed on 15 July 1920 without discussion in the Constitutional Assembly. It stated that disabled soldiers of the Polish army and other disabled servicemen would have priority in receiving land, and Polish disabled veterans could also receive special credits that would help them to start farming.³⁶⁶

The issue of granting land to disabled veterans was part of the broader question of so-called military colonisation of the Eastern borderlands. In other words, some fragments of Feliński's project corresponded to the mainstream political discourse. Separate legislation about granting of land to soldiers of the Polish army was passed by Constitutional Assembly on 17 December 1920. Much like the July legislation, it mandated that priority would be given to disabled veterans and soldiers of the Polish army who had gained special merits, but in this case disabled servicemen of the imperial armies, along with other soldiers, were granted the right to buy available land.³⁶⁷ This legislation not only aimed to solve the social problem of disabled veterans, but also had an important political dimension. Soldiers of the Polish army were to become strongholds of the state in the ethnically mixed borderlands. However, during the discussion in the Constitutional Assembly, representatives of the *Kresy Wschodnie* (Eastern Borderlands) warned about possible negative consequences. Adolf Świda, a representative of the centrist political group the Union of

Lidia and Andrzej Czesław Zak, "Osadnictwo wojskowe na Wołyniu w latach 1921-1939 w świetle dokumentów Centralnego Archiwum Wojskowego," *Builetyn wojskowej służby archiwalnej* no 28 (2006): 140-164.

³⁶⁵ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 820.

³⁶⁶ "Ustawa z dnia 15 lipca 1920 Roku o wykonaniu reform rolney poz. 462," *Dziennik Ustaw* 70, 1235-1236

³⁶⁷ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Druk* 2220, 4.

City Dwellers (*Zjednoczenie Mieszczańskie*]), emphasized that the distribution of land to Polish soldiers would likely cause tensions between them and the local population.³⁶⁸

In the end, political pressures accelerated the decision to launch the military colonization project. The Polish government desperately needed volunteers during the Polish-Soviet War and tried to entice them with the promise of land. However, the implementation of the new law after the war proved to be problematic. Predictably, Polish landowners whose lands had to be sold to the state and re-apportioned to soldiers fiercely resisted the project. The newspaper *Inwalida* stressed that this resistance significantly stalled colonization efforts.³⁶⁹ The situation did not improve after the May 1926 coup. Despite the fact that Piłsudski had initiated the military colonization project in the early 1920s, he did not actively support it after 1926. Landowners from the Eastern borderlands became his allies against the right and left-wing opposition, and his political interests guided his position against military colonization.³⁷⁰

While the agrarian reform was discussed in the Constitutional Assembly, Feliński presented his own vision of spatial change that would shape the different experience of disability. In the introduction to his book, Feliński wrote that he had finished writing the work at the beginning of 1918 in Lviv, but because of his heavy workload, he was unable to prepare it immediately for publication. The Ukrainian-Polish War further postponed its publication, though he discussed the same issues in several of his articles, which appeared in newspapers and magazines.³⁷¹ In fact, Feliński could not have finished this book in the first months of 1918 because the Polish lands were still partitioned, and the possibility of an independent Poland was still

³⁶⁸Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam, 13-19.

³⁶⁹“Czy żołnierzowie dadzą ziemię,” *Inwalida*, April 10, 1921, 4; “Ustawa z dnia 15 lipca 1920 Roku o wykonaniu reform rolnej poz. 462,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 70, 1235-1236.

³⁷⁰Bronisław Gralak, *Osadnictwo wojskowe marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego na ziemiach wschodnich Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej* (Zgierz, 2006), 287-297.

³⁷¹Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), xi.

illusory. In August 1918, Feliński published an article in *Kurjer Lwowski* that spoke about the general issue of housing shortages in Galician, Austrian and German cities during and after the war.³⁷² In February 1919, he also published his first article about the necessity of providing assistance to disabled soldiers in the Lviv newspaper *Słowo Polskie*.³⁷³ Feliński repeated the widespread but erroneous belief that half of the wounded and killed soldiers of the Austrian army were from Galicia, and stressed the need to honour them.³⁷⁴ He did not suggest any particular solution to the problem in this article, but only emphasized that establishing a special system of assistance to Polish disabled servicemen was the duty of the government and society; the fledgling Polish state had a responsibility to take care of all disabled soldiers within its borders. Feliński also argued that both the authorities and society more generally had to abandon all “traditional” forms of assistance and instead create a “progressive” system, but he did not provide any specifics about this innovation.³⁷⁵

In July 1919, the Ministry of Military Affairs launched the publication of *Inwalida Polski*, and Feliński contributed a series of articles in which he laid out his vision for a solution to the housing issue for Polish disabled veterans.³⁷⁶ He noted that the great shortage of accommodation was caused by a slowing of construction during the First World War, combined with widespread destruction. Such circumstances inflated the price of rental apartments and, as a result, the poorest groups of urban Polish society suffered the most. Orphans and disabled veterans who had partially lost the ability to work were among the poorest groups of city dwellers. Feliński stressed that

³⁷²Roman Feliński, “Wojna a stosunki mieszkaniowe,” *Kurjer Lwowski*, August 19, 1918, 2-3.

³⁷³Roman Feliński, “Przyszłość Inwalidów,” *Słowo Polskie*, January 24, 1919, 3.

³⁷⁴ See also speech delivered by Deputy Kazimierz Kotula in Constitutional Assembly (Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łam 826) and report of the Ukrainian Citizens’ Committee (TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180, ark. 16).

³⁷⁵ Roman Feliński, “Przyszłość Inwalidów,” *Słowo Polskie*, January 24, 1919, 3.

³⁷⁶Roman Feliński, “W sprawie mieszkań dla inwalidów,” *Inwalida Polski* no. 1 (1919): 15-17; Roman Feliński, “Siedziby jako podstawa zaopatrzenia inwalidów,” *Inwalida Polski* no. 2 (1919): 2-4.

housing reform was necessary for the whole society but recognized that it was difficult to implement such a broad transformation. However, starting with disabled veterans could lay the foundation for future reforms.³⁷⁷ Feliński identified various categories of veterans who needed different forms of assistance. For instance, disabled soldiers who had lost the ability to work would live permanently in special institutions. Feliński advised moving from the barrack-type Houses of Invalids to colonies of disabled veterans, which would consist of small houses surrounded by gardens. The colonies, linked to workshops, could become partly self-sustaining. Moreover, he contended that such small, individual houses were best suited to ensuring that disabled soldiers rested, in contrast to the terrible conditions of crowded rental apartments, which could cause further deterioration of ex-servicemen health. Such colonies would be located in urban or agricultural settlements; the latter also served Feliński's interest in colonization within Poland and the agricultural reform that would help to implement it. In addition, disabled urban dwellers would evolve from being society's outcasts to true citizens connected to their land.³⁷⁸ Indeed, the architect had a somewhat ambiguous attitude towards disabled soldiers, whom he saw as national heroes, but whom he also felt needed to be turned into better citizens. Feliński's work went well beyond sketching out the general principles for the colonies' organization; he also proposed specific projects. For example, he published his plan for the colony on Stanisław Badeni's land in Radzechów commune in Galicia, which was actually established later.³⁷⁹

Further Feliński developed and broadened his ideas about settlements for disabled veterans in a book that he submitted to the Department of Assistance of the Ministry of Military Affairs in March 1919. The Department considered this project to be feasible and published the book *Future*

³⁷⁷ Roman Feliński, "W sprawie mieszkań dla inwalidów," *Inwalida Polski* no. 1 (1919): 15-17.

³⁷⁸ Roman Feliński, "Siedziby jako Podstawa zaopatrzenia inwalidów," *Inwalida Polski* no. 2 (1919): 2-4.

³⁷⁹ Roman Feliński, "Project założenia kolonji inwalidów na obszarze 200 morgowym Fundacji St. Badeniego w Gminie Radziechów, w Galicji," *Inwalida Polski* no. 3 (1919): 1-4.

Housing and Settlement Questions and the Daily Life of Disabled Veterans later the same year.³⁸⁰

As in his previous articles, Feliński emphasized that the Polish state had to provide assistance for all disabled soldiers who had fought during World War I, regardless of their affiliation with the imperial armies. He also argued that the widespread image of disabled soldiers as “crippled” persons with visible injuries was wrong. The majority of disabled veterans in fact had invisible physical or mental diseases and as a result, often society did not realize the enormous scope of the problem. There were no official statistics on disabled veterans, but Feliński argued that a huge number of demobilized soldiers, along with their families, war widows, and orphans, would need state assistance. Feliński did not use army affiliation as a criterion of exclusion from the settlement project—and the nation more broadly; he ultimately had a broader goal of making these men and their families better Polish citizens through providing access to “Polish land.”³⁸¹

Following a model similar to the medical one, Feliński also used productivity as his criteria for dividing veterans into different groups. The first group was made up of disabled soldiers who had completely lost the ability to work and had to live in special institutions. He admitted that the shortage of various medical institutions, hospitals, and sanatoria in Galicia was significant even before the war. There was only one House of Invalids in Lviv and he believed that the authorities had to establish more such institutions in order to provide assistance to all disabled veterans.³⁸² Much like in his article in *Inwalida Polski*, Feliński emphasized that barrack-type houses of invalids had to be dissolved and colonies of disabled veterans organized instead of them. At the same time, he believed that isolating disabled veterans from the rest of society was the wrong approach, and he argued that only ex-soldiers who could not live with their families should be institutionalized.

³⁸⁰Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), xi.

³⁸¹Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 4-8.

³⁸²Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 7-9.

The second group of disabled veterans consisted of those who had partially lost their ability to work; the organization of the system of the assistance to this group was the main focus of Feliński's book.³⁸³

Again, Feliński explained that the social conditions of modern cities had numerous negative implications for both individuals and nations.³⁸⁴ However, the unacceptable conditions of crowded urban apartments affected not only the physical health of the city dwellers, but also the "national" health. Unbearable conditions of everyday life caused the decline of Polish culture and were dangerous for the nation. The only solution of this problem could be the establishment the connection between the houses and land which would turn homeless disabled veterans into citizens connected with the motherland.³⁸⁵ Through spatial change Feliński aimed not only to influence the daily experience of war disability and reintegrate disabled veterans into society, but also to "heal" the Polish nation. In other words, disabled bodies were put in the centre of social and political transformation.

Feliński criticized the prewar system of providing allowances for disabled civilians and veterans, believing that it only further marginalized them. The benefits were too low and could not provide a decent lifestyle. Moreover, if a disabled person found a job, his or her benefits were further reduced, dissuading many from working in the first place. People with disabilities had become outcasts excluded from productive society, and many suffered from alcoholism and other addictions. To be sure, Feliński's work belonged to the same rehabilitation discourse that placed

³⁸³Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 10.

³⁸⁴ Feliński never referred directly to Lviv in the description of the modern city in his book *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (*Future Housing and Settlement Questions and the Daily Life of Disabled Veterans*). However, in an article in *Kurjer Lwowski* in 1918, Feliński described Lviv as a place where the rent was higher than in some large European urban centers. As a result, Lviv's inhabitants lived in tiny apartments that caused serious health problems, epidemics, and moral decline. (Roman Feliński, "Wojna a stosunki mieszkaniowe," *Kurjer Lwowski*, August 19, 1918, 2) For the architect, who lived and worked in the city until 1919, Lviv embodied modern urban blight with its social evils.

³⁸⁵Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 28, 88.

the “productivity” of the individual at the centre. He argued that the system of assistance had to be made more work-oriented. The old allowance model turned disabled people into a burden for society; in contrast, the new one would return them to productive life. Though the state had to continue to pay allowances to disabled soldiers, they would ideally serve only as additional, stabilizing income.³⁸⁶

Feliński was also interested in various other approaches to social assistance for disabled veterans. He stressed that charitable organizations were not up to the task of establishing colonies, which were meant to turn soldiers back into people who needed mercy and compassion. Disabled veterans had the right to return to their lives and work as full members of society. The charitable organizations, by contrast, simply reduced disabled veterans to objects of charity. Moreover, such organizations and individuals did not have enough resources to pursue the kinds of large-scale projects that Feliński envisioned, and their activity would necessarily be limited to just a few showcases. Feliński argued that only the state could undertake such ambitious projects, and their implementation would be possible only with the efforts of numerous professionals, the government, and the whole of Polish society.³⁸⁷

The main aim of Feliński’s project was to provide disabled veterans with appropriate accommodation. But, at the same time, he considered the segregation of disabled servicemen into separate spaces to be negative practice. Disabled veterans had to live together with healthy neighbours, since he believed that the cohabitation of many people with physical and mental disorders would cause tension and an unhealthy psychological climate in the colonies. In contrast, healthy members of the settlements would serve as good examples, and could inspire disabled

³⁸⁶Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 142-143.

³⁸⁷Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 94-95, 165.

veterans to live “productive” lives.³⁸⁸ Although Feliński spoke against the segregation, his views were determined by a negative perception of war disability and the necessity to overcome its negative effects on ex-servicemen. The reintegration into society was possible only under the “healing” influence of the able-bodied citizens.

The task of rehabilitating disabled soldiers was challenging and demanded extraordinary resources, and Feliński’s plans went beyond settlements. First, he believed that the government had to create orthopaedic factories that would provide disabled veterans with prostheses and orthopaedic devices. It also had to establish special schools, where ex-servicemen could train or retrain to work in post-combat professions. At the same time, Feliński stressed that disabled veterans would not be able to work as the same way as their healthy colleagues because of their impairments. Further industrialization would require physically and mentally healthy workers, and disabled veterans simply could not compete; disability would only further limit the productivity of individual as technology and industry evolved. In order to provide disabled veterans with jobs, it would be necessary to change the organization of labour to a form more suitable for them, and he imagined that a significant number of disabled veterans would have to work at home, despite the negative and even regressive economic implications of using domestic methods of production in modern society. But Feliński believed that, given rational organization, small-scale domestic production could compete with industrial production. Small rental apartments were even more unsuited for domestic production, further justifying the need for the kinds of accommodations that Feliński designed.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 90.

³⁸⁹Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 144-166.

Individual veterans' particular inclinations and productivity would also dictate the most suitable type of settlement for them. Those who wished to reside in agricultural colonies would ideally study in special agricultural schools in order to gain the right practical knowledge. However, the veteran's family also had to be taken into consideration, as it was not possible to run a farm without the participation of other family members.³⁹⁰ In other words, bureaucrats were supposed to evaluate not only the productivity of each individual disabled veteran, but also his entire family.

Feliński's project was never implemented because of the lack of financial resources and political will. The wide-scale military colonization that he envisioned in the early 1920s was never put into practice. Though some demobilized soldiers and disabled veterans received land in the Eastern borderlands, their number was far below what was proposed in the early colonization plans. However, even into the mid-1930s Feliński continued to advocate the colonization of the Eastern borderlands as the way to Polonize the region.³⁹¹ Though resistance from landowners was the main reason for the failure of colonization in general, some did participate in charitable projects and even donated their land to create colonies for disabled veterans. A special organization that managed this land and established settlements for disabled veterans was created in 1920.³⁹² In an article in *Inwalida Polski*, Feliński published the plans for a settlement established on Stanisław Badeni's land in Radziechów (near Lviv).³⁹³ He suggested three models to divide the land among the settlers. In the first, land was to be given only to 64 families and disabled veterans received

³⁹⁰Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszości a siedziby i byt inwalidów wojennych* (Warsaw, 1919), 124-125.

³⁹¹Roman Feliński, *Miasta, wsie, uzdrowiska w osiedleńczej organizacji kraju* (Warszawa: NaszaKsięgarnia, 1935), 203-204.

³⁹²“Sprawa inwalidów wojennych,” *Słowo Polskie*, November 14, 1919, 2; “Pamiętajmy o inwalidzie polskim,” *Słowo Polskie*, February 27, 1920, 5; “Zabezpieczenie bytu inwalidom,” *Słowo Polskie*, Marca 9, 1920, 3; “Zagrody dla inwalidów polskich,” *Słowo Polskie*, Marca 21, 1920, 3.

³⁹³Roman Feliński, “Project założenia kolonji inwalidów na obszarze 200 morgowym Fundacji St. Badeniego w Gminie Radziechów, w Galicji,” *Inwalida Polski* no. 3 (1919): 1-4.

enough land to provide a living. However, due to large number of disabled veterans, this plan was not feasible. The second idea would provide space for 187 people; 117 of these people were veterans with their families, along with 30 widowers and 40 single veterans. The third option was the establishment of an industrial-agricultural colony. Feliński believed that this type of settlement could host the largest numbers of disabled veterans (645 men with families, 30 widowers, and 40 single disabled veterans). In the second and third schemes, veterans would receive small allotments but these would not be the main source of income. The last two models also included a “House of the Organization” that would be the centre of the cultural life of the colony. It would not only provide space for lectures, meetings, a library, and a canteen, but apartments for widowed and single disabled soldiers, too. It had to be located close to the workshops to allow disabled veterans with high disability percentages to get to work.³⁹⁴ The colony for disabled Polish veterans in Radziechów was in fact established, but I have not yet found any materials that would allow a comparison of Feliński’s plans with the project that was actually implemented. In general, the charitable organization that helped to establish colonies for disabled servicemen achieved only modest results. By 1938, it had established only 15 settlements inhabited by 106 disabled veterans of the Polish army with their families.³⁹⁵

Conclusion

³⁹⁴ Roman Feliński, “Project założenia kolonji inwalidów na obszarze 200 morgowym Fundacji St. Badeniego w Gminie Radziechów, w Galicji,” *Inwalida Polski* no. 3 (1919): 1-4. Martin Kohlrausch argues that architects in interwar Poland paid a lot of attention to development of communal facilities. This common space provided a social environment that was supposed to create a sense of community. Martin Kohlrausch, “‘Houses of Glass’ Modern Architecture and the Idea of Community in Poland, 1925-1944” In *Making a New Word: Architecture and Communities in Interwar Europe*, ed. by Rajesh Heynickx and Tom Avermaete (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012), 93-103.

³⁹⁵ Jan Silhan, “Osadnictwo inwalidzkie,” *Inwalida*, September 1, 1938, 11.

After World War I, disability was an important topic among professionals ranging from physicians to architects. Moreover, neither medical nor architectural discourses in Poland were isolated from conversations abroad; rather, they frequently borrowed from foreign models. The definition of “war invalid” constructed by experts and bureaucrats was crucial for access to the welfare system. Medical and non-medical criteria were intertwined and it was difficult to unravel the knot. Experts served as mediators between the state and disabled veterans, with the power to decide who would be the beneficiaries. In addition to diagnosing and determining connections between health and military service, doctors translated those diagnoses into a percentage of disability. Even though the ability to labour was the main factor that the modern welfare system used to determine disability, social standards of ability, such as one’s capacity to procreate, were also used. Disabled veterans always suspected that military doctors were biased and worked for the interests of the state. Indeed, experts often used a broad range of non-medical criteria in their examinations. In the face of the Great Depression, doctors became the instrument through which the state practiced austerity, and orders from the state forced doctors to use not medical but economic considerations in determining the fate of veterans. At the same time, instructions for medical commissions were made public, which allowed veterans to appeal, and attempts to issue secret instructions to commissions led to protest among disabled soldiers who tried to influence the system. However, these activists had little control over the broader medical practices, which relied heavily on non-medical criteria (including economic, racial, and moral considerations) and imposed a state-led vision of rehabilitation.

Medical discourse about war disability in interwar Poland was shaped not only by medical criteria, but also political, economic, and social factors; these could not be isolated from one another. Bureaucrats and experts tried to establish a medical system that could provide assistance

to all disabled Polish veterans. The government founded Houses of Invalids and special educational institutions, and it supplied orthopaedic devices for disabled veterans. In other words, it constructed an environment that defined the experience of “disability.” The rehabilitation system sought to re-establish disabled ex-servicemen as productive forces useful to the state, and those who could not return to productive life and needed special care had to be institutionalized in dedicated facilities. However, the lack of material and human resources, as well as inefficient managerial strategies, plagued the system, and as the Depression worsened the government’s primary goals became reducing services and excluding potential beneficiaries. Medical professionals and bureaucrats were trapped between the idea that the state had to provide assistance to all groups of disabled veterans and the government’s limited financial resources.

Architects, among other Polish experts, discussed the restoration of damaged bodies. Feliński’s project brought together the greater question of re-thinking the modern city, his vision for social change, and his ideas for constructing a new national identity. The Lviv architect underlined the role of the state as the main force behind these transformations. Unbearable social conditions in modern cities such as Lviv caused physical and cultural degeneration, and the transformation of urban space into a healthier environment was vital. The emergence of a large group of war victims and heroes who needed special assistance reinforced the need to re-plan the modern city.

Feliński understood the problem of disability in spatial terms and tried to find a solution in the reorganization of the built landscape, which determined both the definition and the experience of disability. Feliński considered disabled veterans to be citizens who had to return to “productive” life, and the specially built environment provided the opportunity to renew such productivity. However, residence in the special settlements would not mean segregation in his vision; in the

contrary, disabled veterans needed to live close to healthy neighbours and be integral parts of society. In his model, Polish disabled soldiers had to become useful, loyal citizens who would live full lives; moreover, this new “architecture of injury” would become the first step in a full-scale transformation of society. As heroes who had sacrificed themselves for the independence of their country, disabled veterans were entitled to live in newly established garden urban settlements or agricultural colonies. Veterans were assigned a special mission to Polonize the eastern borderlands and, at the same time, a reward in the form of land and home ownership that would strengthen their national identity. They were both the instruments and the objects of a nationalizing process. Feliński’s project was never implemented because of a lack of state support. Private charitable organizations and donors were left to establish colonies for disabled veterans, but their activities were limited to a few showcases.

War disability was defined as a complex political, social, and spatial concept and the professional discourses included a variety of expert and non-professional factors. The main aim of experts was to restore impaired soldiers and turn them into productive Polish citizens. Doctors became agents of the state and defined, classified, and tried to manage the injured bodies of disabled veterans. Architects understood war disability as a spatial problem and planned to change the experience of disability through changing spatial arrangements. All of these processes were interconnected and disabled veterans were supposed to become good Polish citizens and, at the same time, Polonize space inhabited by national minorities. Polish professionals envisioned the transformation of disabled bodies and society but they were stuck in the economic and political reality of interwar Poland.

CHAPTER THREE

MANAGING DISABILITY: STATE BENEFITS AND DISABLED VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS IN INTERWAR LVIV

Lviv holds a special position in the state. It is the only city with three archbishops and it has four higher education institutions that publish hundreds of scholarly works and that employ world-famous academics who make the most accurate maps for various offices and institutions throughout Poland. Lviv is also the headquarters of several all-Polish academic societies and is the home of the Raławice panorama, a unique masterpiece [...].

Jan Gierynski, *Lwów nie Znany* (Lwów: Nakładem księgarni A. Krawczynskiego, 1938), 108

Adoration of the city by its inhabitants is one of the most important features of Lviv. Jews, Scots, Greeks, Armenians, Germans were among the citizens whose names were written in gold in Lviv's history
Biały Orzeł, September 1, 1929

Throughout the centuries, our city belonged to Poland and was famous because of its unprecedented patriotism, bravery, and attachment to the Motherland.
Front Inwalidzki, March-April, 1939³⁹⁶

After the Second World War, the former residents of Lviv created a nostalgic myth about the city. Numerous narratives glorified a “lost paradise” and mourned the loss of a very diverse urban culture.³⁹⁷ However, the construction of the Lviv myth started much earlier. Despite its peripheralization during the interwar era, the city occupied a central position in its citizens' imagination—an imagination that created both inclusive and exclusive ethnic, religious, social, and urban discourses centered on Lviv. Although interwar Lviv is usually described as an

³⁹⁶ *Biały Orzeł* was an independent invalid newspaper published in Lviv in 1929-1930. Its editor Bolesław Kikiewicz belonged to the group of the most active members of the Polish Association of War Invalids. The Journal *Front Inwalidzki* was published in Warsaw from 1936-1939 by the right-wing Legion of Invalids.

³⁹⁷ Jerzy Michotek, *Tylko we Lwowie* (Warszawa: Omnipress, 1990); Katarzyna Kotyńska, *Eseiści o Lwowie. Pamięć, sąsiedztwo, mity* (Warszawa: Sławistyczny ośrodek wydawniczy, 2006); George G. Grabowicz, “Mythologizing Lviv/Lwów: Echoes of Presence and Absence,” In *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 320-331.

ethnically and socially diverse city,³⁹⁸ that diversity was not limited to national or social categories and includes other forms of identity. In the 1920s and 1930s, disabled veterans became a visible part of this urban diversity. The factors that determined a collective post-war experience of disability were veterans' military experiences, including political and cultural components, relations with the state, and attempts to reintegrate into post-war society.³⁹⁹

In the popular consciousness of interwar Lviv, disabled veterans were typically thought of as indigent beggars represented by special institutions and lobby groups. Yet, this perception was far from reality. Disabled veterans established organizations, published newspapers, participated in political life and were co-authors of the Lviv myth.⁴⁰⁰ Disabled soldiers struggled for the right to live in the city and to be part of the urban community; for example, they protested the proposed transfer of the Lviv House of Invalids to the countryside.⁴⁰¹ At the same time, disabled soldiers were visible in urban spaces because of their kiosks and other enterprises.⁴⁰² For instance, the local administration allowed the Association of Blind Soldiers in Małopolska to rent out chairs in city parks and the Union of Disabled Veterans in Lviv was allowed to establish a cinema.⁴⁰³ Its founders hoped that the disposable income and increased leisure time of the middle class would financially benefit disabled veterans. As there were several dozen cinemas operating in Lviv,⁴⁰⁴ activists developed a strategy that was designed to compete in a crowded marketplace. They

³⁹⁸ The most common example of social diversity involves the romanticisation of urban proletarian culture (so-called *batiar* culture). See Urszula Jakubowska, *Mit Lwowskiego Batiara* (Warszawa: Instytut Badań Literackich, 1998).

³⁹⁹ David A. Gerber, "Introduction: Finding Disabled Veterans in History," in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 25.

⁴⁰⁰ Cel. Srożyński, "Targi Lwowskie – Targi Wschodnie," *Biały Orzeł*, September 1, 1929, 1-2; "Na Ratusz Lwowskim Winna Czuwać Straż," *Front Inwalidzki*, March-April, 1939, 14.

⁴⁰¹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 134-135 zv., 159.

⁴⁰² DALO, f.7, op. 1, spr. 583.

⁴⁰³ DALO, f. 1, op. 54, spr. 1585, ark. 4-4 zv.; S., "Nowa własna placówka we Lwowie," *Biały Orzeł*, September 15, 1929, 3-4. *Kino Stylowe* opened its doors in mid-September 1929.

⁴⁰⁴ Barbara Gierszewska, *Kino i film we Lwowie do 1939 roku* (Kielce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej, 2006), 362-374.

advertised their films' high artistic quality, which filled a void in Lviv's entertainment landscape. Moreover, even the title of the new establishment "Stylish Cinema" ("*Kino Stylowe*") implied its fashionable interior. Moviegoers not only supported a righteous patriotic cause, they watched high quality cinema in an "aesthetically" pleasing setting.⁴⁰⁵ As Lviv was a large urban centre, this both enabled diverse representations of disability and offered many opportunities for the expression of diverse disabled identities.

At the same time, the modern city could also be dangerous for disabled veterans. Teodor Kubejko, a disabled resident of the Lviv State House of Invalids in the early 1920s, was hired as the caretaker of Kościuszko Park (now Ivan Franko Park). He quickly fell under the influence of the criminal underclass. Kubejko pursued an "immoral lifestyle" and was heavily indebted to a criminal syndicate. As he was unable to repay his debts, he fled the city and spent several months with his sister in the countryside. After Kubejko returned to Lviv, he again wanted to reside in the House—though he proved unable to break with old habits and old people. Moreover, he was hospitalized with knife wounds after fighting with another man over a women's affections. Jan Silhan, the director of the House, insisted on Kubejko's transfer to either a vocational school in Piotrków, roughly 400km away, or his return to his family, as he was unable to change his behaviour. As a result, the veteran left the city and returned to his sister in the country as his application in Lviv was rejected.⁴⁰⁶ This is but one of many urban stories about servicemen who were lost in the Lviv underworld.

⁴⁰⁵ S., "Nowa własna placówka we Lwowie," *Biały Orzeł*, September 15, 1929, 3-4.

⁴⁰⁶ DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 495, ark. 122-125 zv.

The “flaky pastry” space of the modern city shapes diverse urban experience and practices.⁴⁰⁷ This chapter will explore several aspects that shaped the experience of disability in interwar Lviv. I intend to examine the relationship between disabled veterans and the state, focusing particularly on the First World War imperial legacies of disabled veterans, and the ways in which their ethnicity influenced their post-war political and social lives. The interplay between various levels of government and various veterans’ organizations will highlight the complex relationship between bureaucracy and the public sphere in interwar Poland.

Organization of Assistance for Disabled Veterans

In March 1922, the Lviv voivode stressed the importance of proper assistance to soldiers who had lost their health in the struggle for the Polish state, although it took several years to establish the main principles of the welfare system for disabled servicemen.⁴⁰⁸ The Ministry of Military Affairs was responsible for providing assistance to disabled veterans until 1922. Later, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare assumed responsibility for their care and continued to develop the state welfare system.⁴⁰⁹ As a large regional metropolis, Lviv was an important administrative centre. Similar to the other regions of Poland, in Lviv, local military authorities supervised the registration process, established special institutions, and provided medical assistance to veterans. Though the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare administered the system of state benefits for disabled soldiers after 1922, the military authorities still provided medical assistance and had control over

⁴⁰⁷ I use the Gyan Prakash’s term that defines space as “layered and heterogeneous” (Gyan Prakash, “Introduction” in *The Space of Modern City: Imaginaries, Politics and Everyday Life* ed. by Gyan Prakash and Kevin M. Kruse (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 7).

⁴⁰⁸DALO, f. 1, op. 33, spr. 815, 13 zv.

⁴⁰⁹DALO, f. 1, op. 33, spr. 815, 12.

institutions such as the state House of Invalids until 1929.⁴¹⁰ Such “dual power” was a source of conflicts between military and civilian bureaucrats.⁴¹¹

According to articles in *Inwalida*, the living conditions of disabled veterans in Eastern Malopolska were unbearable in summer 1919. Lviv officials did not pay much attention to disabled soldiers. As medical documents establishing one’s disability were often located in the hospitals of other countries, it was difficult for disabled veterans to apply for Polish state benefits and to prove a connection between military service and disability. Those who applied for benefits could wait for years to receive them. Often, the government did not pay a disability allowance and the survival of many disabled veterans depended on charity. Moreover, disabled persons who were not enlisted men during the Ukrainian-Polish War, but who had fought during the conflict or served as auxiliary workers, were excluded from the welfare system for disabled veterans.⁴¹²

The state’s lack of financial resources was a key reason for its poorly organized system of assistance to disabled veterans. In fall 1919, local military authorities started fundraising by printing and distributing special coupons to the owners of restaurants, pubs, and shops. Local businessmen were to sell these coupons to their customers and return the proceeds to the local administration. Officials planned to allocate these funds to programs for disabled soldiers. Despite much effort and pressure from the local administration, this project was unsuccessful, as only 5,000 coupons out of 7,800 were sold in Lviv between December 1919 and the end of November 1920.⁴¹³

As the Polish-Soviet war deepened the economic crisis and the Constitutional Assembly did not pass the legislation that regulated the status of disabled soldiers, who turned to more radical

⁴¹⁰ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1569, ark. 16, 18-19 zv.

⁴¹¹ For instance, the civilian authorities opposed against the project to transfer disabled veterans from the House of Invalids in 1924 (See Chapter 4).

⁴¹² “Wieści z Czerwonej Rusi,” *Inwalida*, August 3, 1919, 3; *Inwalida W.*, “Jak wypłaca się rentę inwalidom,” *Sprawiedliwość*, July 2, 1922, 11-12.

⁴¹³ DALO, f. 1, op. 33, spr. 448.

actions. The first demonstration of disabled veterans took place in Lviv on 14 June 1920. They came together on Gosiewskiego Square, which was located slightly outside of the city centre, and demanded the establishment of an adequate system of care for disabled veterans. They also protested against the ignorance of the central and local authorities (especially Lviv municipal administration that did not even provide them free tram passes) and any difference in the treatment of disabled soldiers of the Polish and imperial armies. Later the participants of the demonstration marched to the monument to the Polish national poet, Adam Mickiewicz and the City Hall.⁴¹⁴

Though the Invalid Act was passed finally in March 1921, the government failed to implement it immediately because of the poor economic conditions of the early 1920s. Desperate disabled soldiers took to the streets of Warsaw and Poznań in August 1921.⁴¹⁵ At the beginning of November, a demonstration of Warsaw's disabled veterans ended in a bloody clash with police.⁴¹⁶ Similar to fellow veterans in other Polish cities, Lviv's disabled veterans took to the streets to struggle for their rights again. On October 24, the Lviv branch of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans organized a demonstration on Gosiewskiego Square to demand the implementation of the Invalid Act and the granting of various benefits.⁴¹⁷ *Gazeta Wieczorna* wrote that disabled veterans had changed tactics. In the past, they had blamed an indifferent society for their misery, which widened the figurative and literal socio-economic gap between city dwellers and disabled servicemen. However, now demobilized soldiers asked for the political support of Lviv's inhabitants.⁴¹⁸ Though their demands were economic, they performed political rituals that

⁴¹⁴ "Ciężkie położenie inwalidów wojennych," *Dziennik Ludowy*, June 14, 1920, 4; "Wiec inwalidów we Lwowie," *Dziennik Ludowy*, June 16, 1920, 7; "Wiec inwalidów wojskowych," *Słowo Polskie*, June 15, 1920, 3.

⁴¹⁵ "Demonstracja inwalidska w Warszawie," *Inwalida*, August 21, 1921, 1-3; "Wielkopolski zjazd inwalidów i demonstracja w Poznaniu," *Inwalida*, August 28, 1921, 1-3.

⁴¹⁶ "Krwawa środa," *Inwalida*, November 13, 1921, 3-5; "Walka o wykonanie ustawy," *Inwalida*, November 27, 1921, 1-2.

⁴¹⁷ "Wiec inwalidów wojskowych," *Wiek Nowy*, October 26, 1921, 5; "Zmiana frontu. Sprawozdanie z wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Wieczorna*, October 25, 1921, 4.

⁴¹⁸ "Zmiana frontu. Sprawozdanie z wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Wieczorna*, October 25, 1921, 4.

underlined the demonstration's Polish national character. The disabled veterans marched from Gosiewskiego Square to the monument of Adam Mickiewicz where a representative from Warsaw, Bolesław Kikiewicz, delivered a speech, after which the participants sang Maria Konopnica's patriotic poem "Rota."⁴¹⁹

The Mickiewicz monument was the main symbolic site for the Polish community in Lviv and customarily, every national demonstration had to take place near it. The inclusion of the Mickiewicz monument and Konopnica's anthem into veterans' protests reflects the disabled servicemen's dissatisfaction with the government and their willingness to seek redress by employing canonical aspects of the Polish national discourse. Although the participants did not divide veterans into ethnic or religious categories, they all performed political rituals that highlighted and accentuated such division.

There was only one more instance when disabled soldiers staged a mass protest in urban public space. At the end of April 1923, a meeting of disabled veterans took place near city hall. The protestors appealed to the government for appropriate care and assistance. After the speeches, they marched to the Mickiewicz monument.⁴²⁰ *Wiek Nowy* emphasized that only a small number of disabled veterans gathered that late April and it encouraged veterans to actively demand their rights.⁴²¹ Besides these few cases in the early 1920s, disabled servicemen in Lviv did not take to the streets; rather, they focused on building veterans' organizations that served as intermediaries between them and the state.

A variety of public initiatives developed in tandem, though independently from, state programs. At the end of August 1919, Lviv activists created the Association for Aid to Disabled

⁴¹⁹ "Wiec Inwalidów Wojskowych," *Wiek Nowy*, October 26, 1921, 5; "Zmiana frontu. Sprawozdanie z wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Wieczorna*, October 25, 1921, 4.

⁴²⁰ "Wiec inwalidów," *Kurjer Lwowski*, May 2, 1923, 3; "Wiec inwalidow we Lwowie," *Wiek Nowy*, May1, 1923, 4

⁴²¹ "Wiec inwalidow we Lwowie," *Wiek Nowy*, May1, 1923, 4.

Veterans, which was supposed to assist various veterans' groups. However, some local activists refused to participate as they wanted to support Polish disabled veterans to the exclusion of ethnic minorities.⁴²² The aim of the other charity organization, the Association of Agricultural Settlements for Disabled Veterans, founded in 1920, was to establish agricultural settlements for disabled veterans of the Polish army. Among landowners who granted tracts to servicemen of the Polish army were Stanisław Badeni and Filicja Skarbek.⁴²³ Though it was a private initiative, it was the military authorities who made the final decision about the land grants to disabled soldiers.⁴²⁴ This case showed how in the first years after independence, local activists worked together with state institutions to provide support for some veterans' advocacy groups.

These organizations also engaged in lobbying and advocacy work for disabled soldiers. One of the main goals of the government and activists was to provide meaningful and suitable employment for disabled veterans. For instance, in summer 1919, Lviv activists suggested that Polish veterans should receive fruit kiosks. However, some local officials did not support this idea. Wojciech Nowak, the head of the Agrarian School, refused to provide cheap fruit. Obviously, such an "unpatriotic" stance caused indignation among activists.⁴²⁵ This example showed that some local notables did not support activists' projects and were more interested in profitability than patriotism. Similar to Poles, Ukrainian and Jewish activists also created committees and

⁴²² Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolinskich, 13498/II, 194.

⁴²³ "Sprawa inwalidów wojennych," *Słowo Polskie*, November 14, 1919, 2; "Pamiętajmy o inwalidzie Polskim," *Słowo Polskie*, February 27, 1920, 5; "Zabezpieczenie bytu inwalidom," *Słowo Polskie*, March 9, 1920, 3; "Zagrody dla inwalidów Polskich," *Słowo Polskie*, March 21, 1920, 3; Roman Feliński, "Project założenia kolonji inwalidów na obszarze 200 morgowym Fundacji St. Badeniego w gminie Radziechów, w Galicji," *Inwalida Polski* no. 3 (1919): 1-4; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 495, ark. 1-6, 130-132 zv.

⁴²⁴ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 495, ark. 1-6, 130-132 zv.

⁴²⁵ Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolinskich, 13500/III, 361-362.

organizations specifically to aid “their” disabled veterans. These initiatives, however, were not supported by the authorities.⁴²⁶

The public discussion about disabled veterans’ tobacco kiosks and wholesale stores started in summer 1919. According to Lviv activists, Jews, Germans and wealthy privileged citizens were usually owners of these enterprises. Instead, they suggested granting Polish disabled soldiers permits to establish these kiosks.⁴²⁷ However, it took several years to implement this project and only in February 1921 did disabled veterans receive permission to establish the first of eleven kiosks on Lviv streets.⁴²⁸ According to official figures from the end of 1924, 108 disabled veterans owned such kiosks in different areas of the city.⁴²⁹ In January 1939, just over two percent of the members of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans in Lviv County owned kiosks.⁴³⁰ The kiosks were granted to disabled veterans of the imperial and the Polish armies, and also to widows of soldiers regardless of their ethnic origin. The newspaper *Inwalida* discussed the employment prospects of disabled veterans at the end of 1921. An article focused on Lviv disabled soldiers who worked in the kiosks. The author stated that the kiosks proved that veterans could work despite physical or mental disabilities. The article also claimed that labour had a positive influence on the servicemen’s emotional health, thus rendering them more productive. At the same time, their success could not be possible without the support of citizens who consciously frequented disabled veterans’ kiosks. However, local authorities were often depicted in a negative way. They were either accused of ignorance on veterans’ issues or of supporting Jewish kiosk owners at the

⁴²⁶“O Pomoc dla invalidów,” *Chwila*, December 1, 1921, 4; “O Pomoc dla invalidów,” *Chwila*, February 15, 1922, 5. See Chapter 5 about Ukrainian activism.

⁴²⁷ Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 13500/III, 371, 375. In August 1922 the Lviv newspaper *Sprawiedliwość* published a cartoon that depicted Jews and well-dressed women and men that owned the numerous boxes of tobacco. In the other corner the readers could see a disabled veteran in his kiosk and a sign “no tobacco.” (“Jak katolickie hrabiny i żydowscy spekulanci żyją kosztem polskich inwalidów,” *Sprawiedliwość*, August 27, 1922, 5).

⁴²⁸ “Z Działalności Koła Lwów,” *Inwalida*, February 27, 1921, 5-6.

⁴²⁹ DALO, f.7, op. 1, spr. 583.

⁴³⁰ DALO, f. 1, op. 54, spr. 1585, ark. 4. 45 out of 2008 veterans were kiosk owners in 1939.

expense of Polish disabled servicemen.⁴³¹ Complaints about unjust treatment by the local administration were also mentioned during the meeting of the Union of Disabled Veterans in March and June 1924.⁴³² For instance, members spoke openly about the brutality they endured at the hands of the Lviv police.⁴³³ Kiosk owner Jan Kos, a disabled soldier, committed suicide publically on 6 July 1924 and Lviv newspapers emphasized that the local authorities were responsible for this tragedy. Bureaucrats created various obstacles for disabled kiosk owners and Kos' suicide was a public protest against such poor treatment.⁴³⁴

The kiosks created spaces of communication between disabled servicemen and other city dwellers and thus became a part of Lviv's urban landscape. They were established on city streets and at markets. The Invalid Legion and the Association of Blind Soldiers in Małopolska, for example, had kiosks in the main hall of Lviv's railway station.⁴³⁵ Sometimes, Lviv officials refused applications to establish kiosks at specific locations, as similar enterprises were already located there.⁴³⁶ Kiosks were often called "altars" or "living monuments" that reminded Lviv society about the horrors of war.⁴³⁷ These small enterprises helped disabled veterans integrate into society. Yet, they also served as visible reminders about wartime trauma and sacrifice. In 1922 the Association of Agricultural Settlements for Disabled Veterans published postcards that depicted the disabled veteran's kiosk on the main city square, Marker square. A disabled owner who had prostheses and crutches instead of his leg was selling the local newspapers to the urban dwellers.

⁴³¹ "Co pisze prasa lwowska o inwalidach? inwalidzi a praca," *Inwalida*, December 18, 1921, 5.

⁴³² "Doroczne walne zebranie związku inwalidów wojennych koło Lwów," *Wiek Nowy*, March 6, 1924, 7.

⁴³³ "Doroczne walne zebranie związku inwalidów wojennych koło Lwów," *Wiek Nowy*, March 6, 1924, 7.

⁴³⁴ "Tragiczny przebieg wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Lwowska*, 8 July, 1924, 5; "Demonstracyjne samobójstwo inwalidyna wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 9 July 1924, 3; "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sali Sokoła Macierzy," *Wiek Nowy*, 8 July, 1924, 5; "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sokole," *Gazeta Poranna*, 8 July 1924, 3.

⁴³⁵ DALO, f. 1, op. 54, spr. 1585, ark. 4-4 zv.

⁴³⁶ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 817, ark. 43-44 zv.

⁴³⁷ *Jednodniowka inwalidy Lwowskiego. Wydana na uroczystosc swiecen sztanaru powiatowego kola Związku inwalidów wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej we Lwowie*, September 6, 1925.

On the other side of the postcard was written “Remember the defenders.” Kiosks, as noted earlier, were not only “sites of memory,” but also signs of civilization in suburban Lviv. Thus, writer Lew Kaltenbergh perceived these kiosks as a modern urban phenomenon that, though established by authorities, represented servicemen.⁴³⁸ Small veterans’ enterprises illustrated the cooperation between activists and local authorities and became part of city infrastructure.

⁴³⁸ Lew Kaltenbergh, *Ułamki stłuczonego lustra. Dzieciństwo na kresach. Tamten Lwów*. (Warsaw, 1991), 42.



Figure 1. Postcard published by the Association of Agricultural Settlements for Disabled Veterans, 1922 (The National Library of Poland)
Evaluating Disability: Medical Commissions and Disabled Veterans

The military medical commissions were a core component of the system that granted disabled veteran status. Demobilized soldiers had to provide appropriate documents to the commissions and undergo a medical examination. As bureaucrats, experts and medical facilities were centralized in the large urban areas, those who lived outside Lviv had to travel to the city. The commissions' work was often controversial and many veterans felt as if their needs were not taken seriously. Doctors were seen as putting the financial interests of the state ahead of the material interests of the veteran. In the early 1920s, Lviv disabled soldiers mentioned that doctors at the local hospital frequently ignored medical documents pertaining to their disability if they were acquired under the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. According to a 1920 article in *Inwalida*, Lviv medical experts often claimed no causal link existed between a soldier's disability and his military service despite presented facts.⁴³⁹ Almost ten years later, the Lviv newspaper *Biały Orzeł* complained that medical decisions regarding disability were often based upon the opinion of a single physician and not upon clinically objective factors. Different doctors could come to wildly different conclusions after examining the same patient. The article in *Biały Orzeł* simply demanded consistency in how doctors evaluated patients.⁴⁴⁰ Disabled veterans, for example, emphasized that from their perspective medical decisions seemed based on subjective factors, which undermined doctor-patient trust. At the same time, medical experts recognized that in cases of some mental disorders, such as schizophrenia, it was very difficult to determine cause and effect between ailment and military service.⁴⁴¹ In the early 1930s the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare ordered a reduction in the number of disabled soldiers who were sent for special examination to hospitals and doctors often had to make decisions without the proper examination.⁴⁴² Economic

⁴³⁹ "Krywdzenie inwalidów wojennych," *Inwalida*, July 18, 1920, 8.

⁴⁴⁰ "Jeden do Sasa drugi do lasa," *Biały Orzeł*, listopada 15, 1929, 6.

⁴⁴¹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.1533, ark. 35.

⁴⁴² DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 12, ark.1-16.

consideration influenced the work of the military medical commission and increased their power but these factors also did not allow experts to conduct proper evaluation of disability.

Navigating the state and medical bureaucracies often took years, and meanwhile disabled veterans went without meaningful government assistance.⁴⁴³ The case of Andrzej Fedoruk illustrates the extreme negligence of local officials. Although he applied for benefits in 1921, his application was only approved in 1927.⁴⁴⁴ Many applications were rejected due to an unverifiable connection between disability and medical affliction. Though disabled veterans often appealed, many were denied.⁴⁴⁵ Mikołaj Mironowicz, one of the leaders of the Lviv branch of the Invalid Legion, also admitted that numerous medical re-examinations of those veterans who had disabled soldier status resulted in delays of the allowance, which caused an additional financial burden for disabled servicemen.⁴⁴⁶

According to the law, the government also had to provide prostheses, wheelchairs, watches, and assistance dogs for blind veterans. Special commissions also decided if soldiers were eligible to receive these additional benefits. Though prostheses were initially produced in Lviv after the war, by the late 1920s the prosthetic production facility was refurbished to only repair and not produce orthopaedic devices.⁴⁴⁷ In January 1925 the newspaper *Inwalida* criticized the bureaucratization of the repair of artificial limbs. As disabled soldiers had to wait months to have their prostheses repaired, the Ministry of Military Affairs started the investigation and some local Voivodeship officials actually wrote about the failures of this service.⁴⁴⁸ In March 1930, the members of the Union of Organizations of Jewish Disabled Veterans, Widows, and Orphans

⁴⁴³ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3327, ark. 22, 261-261 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3664, ark. 27-40.

⁴⁴⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3327, ark. 261-261 zv.

⁴⁴⁵ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3731.

⁴⁴⁶ Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 1-2 (1939), 10-11.

⁴⁴⁷ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3693, ark. 16 zv.; DALO, f. 7, op.1, spr. 1474; DALO, f. 7, op.1, spr. 1777.

⁴⁴⁸ Ludwik Stachecki, "Mniej biurokratyzmu," *Inwalida*, January 11, 1921, 3-4; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2065, ark. 61-72.

wanted to change the system of prostheses distribution for Lviv disabled veterans. As orthopaedic devices were now mass-produced in Warsaw, they were often ill-fitting and caused the amputees' conditions to deteriorate. Members of the Union believed that the production of the prostheses in Lviv would allow for custom fittings, thus improving the quality of the prostheses and the quality of lives for disabled veterans.⁴⁴⁹ Moreover, it was even harder to receive a wheelchair, since the commissions refused such requests when disabled servicemen could move using prostheses.⁴⁵⁰ Though the government passed legislation on disabled veterans and guide dogs in 1921, it took more than five years for a training facility in Bydgoszcz to be established. Even then, this facility could only train three dogs per month. Soldiers entitled to a guide dog then had to travel to Bydgoszcz and spend three weeks there learning how to live with their canine assistant.⁴⁵¹

Disabled activists demanded wide-ranging improvements to veterans' services. Long trips to the Voivodeship centre were often unbearable for disabled soldiers from the countryside. Bachner, the president of the Union of the Organizations of Jewish Invalids, Widows, and Orphans informed the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour that disabled veterans from Sanok and Sambir County had to travel roughly 170km and 75km respectively to Lviv for their medical examination. There were no military doctors who could conduct such examinations in those locations. First of all, Bachner emphasized that forcing veterans to travel was expensive for the state, as it covered the cost of the veterans' trips. He reasoned that sending doctors out instead of bringing patients in was the better solution. At the same time, Bachner mentioned that these areas were far from Lviv and that it was very inconvenient for disabled veterans to travel such distances.⁴⁵² In their struggle for better and more state assistance, disabled activists emphasized not only the needs of veterans

⁴⁴⁹ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1987, ark 31 zv.

⁴⁵⁰ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2472, ark. 74.

⁴⁵¹ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 3-3 zv.

⁴⁵² DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 98-98 zv.

but also benefits for the state. A more efficiently organized welfare system could result in lower budget expenditures.

At the end of 1929, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare took over the medical provision for disabled veterans. The Voivodeship also had to hire doctors who worked in military commissions, most of whom were retired military doctors. For instance, the former head of the medical service of the Lviv Corp District Command, Franciszek Czechowicz, started his work with the Lviv Voivodeship.⁴⁵³ The Great Depression, however, influenced both the quality of assistance for disabled soldiers and the pay of professionals who worked in the welfare system. For instance, the doctors' wages in the Voivodeship Department for Disabled Veterans were set at between seven and ten złoty per hour in 1929, depending on their qualifications. However, in June 1932, doctors were only paid between four to five złoty per hour and in September their wage was reduced to four złoty per hour, regardless of their qualifications.⁴⁵⁴

Due to the same reform at the end of 1929, the responsibility for providing medical assistance to disabled servicemen was transferred from military hospitals to the Health Insurance Fund. This resulted in a period of transition and the establishment of new principles for the treatment of disabled veterans.⁴⁵⁵ According to its guidelines, the Health Insurance Fund only covered the treatment of medical conditions connected to military service. However, in December 1929, the administration of the Lviv House of Invalids requested the guidelines be changed. One of the residents of this institution developed cancer and there was no obvious connection between his condition and his military service. However, Edwin Wagner, the director of the House, underlined that the administration of the House of Invalids was responsible for the medical care of

⁴⁵³ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3693, ark. 16 zv.-17, 41.

⁴⁵⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3693, ark. 2-3, 17.

⁴⁵⁵ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1569, ark. 16, 18-19 zv.

all institutionalized veterans, even if there was no clear cause and effect between disability and military service. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare agreed with Wagner's arguments and changed the guidelines of the Health Insurance Fund.⁴⁵⁶ This case showed that the welfare system for disabled veterans was flexible. Government officials paid attention to the feedback and adjusted the system to meet some needs of veterans.

Despite bureaucrats' portrayal in veteran organization newspapers as obstructionist and willfully unhelpful, some documents indicate that local officials were in fact willing to help disabled servicemen. For example, in December 1932 the Lviv Voivodeship asked permission to increase the percentage of disability to 15% for those veterans whose percentage was defined by the military medical commissions as 14.5%. Such a change would ensure that this group of disabled soldiers qualified for a state allowance.⁴⁵⁷ However, severe economic crises reduced government welfare expenditures. Even though the general health of disabled soldiers was likely to deteriorate more quickly over time than that of able-bodied people, implying an increased need for complex and costly care, the government continued to slash funding for disabled veterans during the 1930s. The officials claimed that the medical commissions were too liberal after the war and many soldiers had received the status of disabled veteran as a result of their wrong approach. The government announced the review of all previous decision and 22% of them were considered questionable after the first round of the review. Between June 1932 and June 1934 authorities denied benefits to more than half of the disabled servicemen whose documents were re-examined during the second round of the review.⁴⁵⁸ According to disabled veterans' re-

⁴⁵⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1569, ark. 18-19 zv.

⁴⁵⁷ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3688, ark. 37-37 zv.

⁴⁵⁸ Jan Sobociński, "Rewizja orzeczeń lekarskich inwalidzkich komisij rewyzijno-lekarskich inwalidzkich komisij odwoławczych na zasadzie art. 7 ustawy z dnia 13 marca 1932 r. o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim," *Praca i Opieka Społeczna. Kwartalnik Organ Ministerstwa Opieki Społecznej*, no. 2 (1934): 148-155.

examination reports from September 1938 to March 1939, medical commissions often lowered a disabled veteran's percentage of disability or questioned the links between a veteran's disability and his military service. As a result, veterans could lose either their allowance or their legal status as a disabled veteran. The follow-up medical reports suggest a deliberate government policy of questioning war disability and minimizing expenditures on veterans.⁴⁵⁹

Legislation vs Practice: Putting Disabled Veterans Back to Work

The inability of disabled veterans to find meaningful employment was one of the central problems they faced during the interwar period. The mainstream rehabilitation discourse declared that the welfare system for disabled soldiers existed to return them to productive life. At the same time, representatives of disabled servicemen insisted that veterans did not want to be the object of charity; rather, they aimed to provide for their families and work for the well-being of the Polish state.⁴⁶⁰ The Invalid Act of 1921 and 1932 obliged central and local government and entrepreneurs to hire one disabled veteran per 50 employees.⁴⁶¹ However, activists of veterans' organizations emphasized that this statute was usually ignored by various employers who preferred to hire healthy workers.⁴⁶² In order to improve the situation, the central authorities pressured local administrations and reminded them of the requirements to hire disabled veterans.⁴⁶³ The Great Depression sharply increased unemployment in Poland and disabled veterans found it more

⁴⁵⁹ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3660.

⁴⁶⁰ Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 10.

⁴⁶¹ "Ustawa z dnia 18 marca 1921 r. o zaopatrzeniu inwalidów wojennych i ich rodzin," in *Ustawa Inwalidzka* ed. by Marjan Buszyński and Bolesław Matzner (Warszawa: Główna księgarnia wojskowa, 1931), 34-36; "Ustawa z dnia 18 marca 1921 r. o zaopatrzeniu inwalidzkim," in *Zbiór przepisów o zaopatrzeniu inwalidów wojennych i wojskowych* (Warszawa: Nakładem Zarządu głównego związku inwalidów wojennych, 1935), 45-46.

⁴⁶² Sejm II RP. 2 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 72 posiedzenie*, łam 112-113; Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 45 posiedzenie*, łam 10.

⁴⁶³ DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010.

difficult to find work. In spring 1936 the situation in Lviv became critical when thousands of workers participated in the demonstrations and strikes. According to the official reports 14 people were killed, more than 102 injured and 700 arrested during the clashes with police in the middle of April⁴⁶⁴ (other sources indicated 49 workers killed and more than 3000 arrested⁴⁶⁵). Lviv became the centre of not only national but also of grave social conflict.

The State Employment Agency created by the Lviv Voivodeship facilitated the process of finding disabled servicemen gainful employment. This institution became the intermediary between potential employers and disabled veterans. However, the Agency was ineffective and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare investigated its activity in 1927. Warsaw bureaucrats suspected that the Lviv State Agency of Employment completely neglected its responsibility towards disabled veterans and did not force the state, municipal, and private institutions to report job vacancies to former servicemen.⁴⁶⁶ Simultaneously, one of the main goals of the disabled veteran movement was to ensure a source of income for every disabled soldier. Issues relating to the disabled veterans' employment and the resistance of the local administration to relevant laws (among others Lviv authorities) were discussed in the newspaper *Inwalida*.⁴⁶⁷ Activists demanded that the Ministry of Interior Affairs establish stricter oversight over local bureaucrats.⁴⁶⁸

The documents of the Lviv city administration illustrated the sometimes tense relationship between Warsaw and Lviv bureaucrats regarding the implementation of the Invalid Act.⁴⁶⁹ At the

⁴⁶⁴ Grzegorz Mazur, *Życie polityczne polskiego Lwowa 1918-1939* (Cracow: Księgarnia akademicka, 2007), 407-409.

⁴⁶⁵ Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 243-244. This report was produced by Lviv communist activists.

⁴⁶⁶ DALO, f. 1, op. 33, spr. 2912, 2-2 zv.

⁴⁶⁷ Stanisław Szulczyński, "Obowiązek Zatrudniania Inwalidów Wojennych przez Samorzady," *Inwalida*, May 11, 1930, 1-2.

⁴⁶⁸ Stanisław Szulczyński, "Obowiązek Zatrudniania Inwalidów Wojennych przez Samorzady," *Inwalida*, May 11, 1930, 1-2.

⁴⁶⁹ DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010.

end of 1932, the Ministry of the Interior ordered Lviv administrators to employ disabled veterans in communal enterprises. The deputy minister underlined that non-compliance would result in punishment.⁴⁷⁰ In January 1933, the Ministry sent a reminder about the previous order.⁴⁷¹ The Voivodeship and the city administration issued demands to civic communal enterprises emphasizing that they had to hire one veteran with more than 35% disability per 50 workers. Moreover, disabled veterans were to be given hiring priority in cases where they had the same qualifications as non-disabled applicants.⁴⁷² According to reports from communal enterprises, the municipal water supply department, the gasworks, and the municipal electric enterprise all failed to employ enough disabled veterans. The city administration ordered that four disabled workers be employed in the gasworks plant and another eighteen workers in the municipal electric enterprise. However, the administration of the latter refused to hire disabled soldiers because of the financial crisis. Municipal authorities insisted on the orders' implementation and did not recognize the communal enterprises' financial exigency arguments as valid.⁴⁷³ In the case of the gasworks, it was allowed to employ only two disabled veterans after negotiations with city authorities. The gasworks' administrators planned to automatize many processes, which would result in across the board layoffs.⁴⁷⁴ At the same time, some municipal departments announced new positions for which disabled veterans could readily apply. For instance, the Department of Food Supply created the position of night caretaker, though no disabled veterans applied.⁴⁷⁵

The conflict between the electric enterprise and municipal authorities lasted several months. The administration openly stated that it could not afford to hire utterly “unproductive”

⁴⁷⁰DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 2.

⁴⁷¹DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 6.

⁴⁷²DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 3-3zv, 7-7zv.

⁴⁷³DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 3-3zv, 9-17.

⁴⁷⁴DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 27.

⁴⁷⁵DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 24.

people. The majority of highly disabled soldiers previously employed by the administration were illiterate and lacked the necessary qualifications.⁴⁷⁶ However, when educated disabled veterans applied, the electric company's administrators claimed that it needed only manual workers.⁴⁷⁷ Despite the reluctance of the administration, several disabled veterans were eventually hired. Local authorities ignored the concerns from communal enterprises and continued to insist on the implementation of the legislation. In January 1934, Lviv voivode and former colonel in the Polish Legion Władysław Belina-Prażmowski issued an order that compelled the Lviv municipal electricity company to hire two specific disabled veterans.⁴⁷⁸

In addition to the central authorities, the local Organization of Polish War Invalids lobbied for the employment interests of disabled veterans. The activists also sent letters to the municipal administration and demanded that they comply with the law. They stressed that among the unemployed veterans were the “defenders of Lviv” and volunteers of the Polish Army. The desperate economic situation of disabled servicemen could result in “catastrophic” consequences.⁴⁷⁹ The tension between disabled veterans and local authorities increased and in March 1934, activists' threats became less abstract. Disabled veterans promised to stage hunger strikes unless the municipal administration employed a number of them in communal enterprises.⁴⁸⁰ However, some former soldiers were unable to work after they were hired. For instance, one of the veterans whose employment was demanded by Belina-Prażmowski, left his position soon after receiving it. The working conditions, the veteran argued, exacerbated his health problems. It was not clear if the communal enterprise purposefully assigned the veteran work he

⁴⁷⁶DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark.34-34 zv.

⁴⁷⁷DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 46.

⁴⁷⁸DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 53.

⁴⁷⁹DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark.54-54 zv.

⁴⁸⁰DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 56.

was unable to do.⁴⁸¹ Although some disabled veterans frequently applied for similar positions at various municipal companies, they were usually rebuffed. Employers not only refused to hire veterans but were deliberately rude. Leon Samuczkiwicz applied for multiple jobs in the Railways Administration in Lviv, but was routinely denied. In January 1930, in a letter, the Railways Administration underlined that there would be no vacancies in the foreseeable future and that even if there were, they would not consider Samuczkiwicz for employment.⁴⁸²

Despite the pressure of the central authorities, veteran organizations often reported indifference from local bureaucrats. Representatives of the Organization of Polish War Invalids mentioned that the applications of some disabled veterans had been submitted up to two years prior, but they had yet to receive a response.⁴⁸³ Activists followed the changes in employment status of disabled veterans. In cases where disabled veterans were unable to accept a position, the Organization often suggested other disabled veterans.⁴⁸⁴ In March 1937, the Lviv municipal electric company dismissed three disabled soldiers and the Union of Disabled Veterans suggested five new candidates who could fill these positions.⁴⁸⁵ The local Organization also supported applications of disabled veterans by providing references. The majority of applicants to the electric company wrote not only about their qualifications, but about their affiliation to the Polish Army or their contribution to the “defence” of Lviv.⁴⁸⁶ It appears that disabled veterans considered their professional qualifications to be secondary to their military sacrifice for independence. The only candidate who gave a detailed description of his education, skills, and work experience was a

⁴⁸¹DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark.63-63 zv., 141.

⁴⁸² DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3685.

⁴⁸³DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 109.

⁴⁸⁴DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 110.

⁴⁸⁵DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 112.

⁴⁸⁶DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 127-153.

disabled Greek-Catholic soldier of the former-Austrian army. Although he mentioned his religious affiliation, he stressed his Polish nationality in his application.⁴⁸⁷

The Lviv city administration never seriously implemented laws about the employment of disabled veterans. According to August 1934 report, Lviv communal enterprises had to hire 24 disabled servicemen. The municipal recruitment agency suggested 39 candidates, the majority of whom were manual workers with 15 to 65 % disability. Only one veteran had graduated from a gymnasium and four disabled soldiers were illiterate.⁴⁸⁸ Voivodeship authorities demanded a new report from the city council about the effects of disabled veterans' legislation in late 1934 and mentioned pressure from the Ministry of Social Welfare.⁴⁸⁹ In April 1937 the law that defined the minimum number of disabled veterans employed by government and business changed—the ratio of able to disabled workers fell from 50:1 to 33:1. A conflict with the Lviv municipal electric enterprise over its reluctance to employ disabled veterans continued throughout the 1930s. In August 1937, the electric company confirmed that, according to legislation, 21 more disabled soldiers had to be hired. Yet, the company's administrators sought a reprieve from municipal authorities claiming that Ministry of Communication guidelines stressed that they could only employ healthy people.⁴⁹⁰ Extant documents failed to give insight into how city officials responded to the electric company's legal *legerdemain*. Thus, the largest communal enterprise refused to hire disabled veterans, ignoring their sacrifice and merit. Moreover, local municipal authorities could not or did not want to compel local companies to employ disabled veterans in accordance with national law.

⁴⁸⁷DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 152.

⁴⁸⁸DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark.80 zv.-81 zv.

⁴⁸⁹DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 85 zv, 104.

⁴⁹⁰DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark.114-114zv., 116-117 zv.

These examples show the gap between legislation and practice in the Second Polish Republic. Despite the pressure of central authorities, the Lviv officials could not force the municipal enterprises to employ disabled veterans. Presumably, local bureaucrats had even less influence on private businesses. At the same time, despite mainstream nationalistic discourses that glorified veterans, many businesses and people did not accept their special position in society and were not ready to provide benefits. In time of economic crisis, the administrations of vital municipal enterprises often preferred to violate legislation and did not employ disabled soldiers who, for example, had “defended” Lviv from Ukrainians. Thus, they considered veterans to be not heroes but disabled unproductive bodies and burdens to the smooth operation of their enterprises.

Abusing the System: Corruption and War Disability

Lviv bureaucrats often tried to reduce veterans’ state benefits in violation of legislation. Yet, some disabled servicemen also tried to cheat the welfare system. Some welfare beneficiaries had never actually served in the military of any country. In 1927 and 1928, Lviv state police investigated Kazimerz Reczyński’s application for a disabled veterans’ allowance. Local authorities had heard rumours that Reczyński was injured before the war and had never served. In the early 1920s, he submitted his military service documents and received both an allowance and a tobacco kiosk near the Lviv railway station. Police reports, however, claimed that Reczynski’s supporting testimony from his “fellow soldiers” was fraudulent, as none of them had served in the Austrian army with him.⁴⁹¹ A similar cases was reported in Lviv newspapers in April 1930 and January 1933.⁴⁹² In 1937, *Dilo* informed readers that Vladyslav Ianishevskyyi, a disabled kiosk-owner, had been

⁴⁹¹ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3329, ark. 4-61.

⁴⁹² “Falszywy inwalida wojenny,” *Wiek Nowy*, April 10, 1930, 7; “Bohater Wielkiej wojny,” *Gazeta Poranna*, April 10, 1930, 7.

sentenced to two years in prison for fraudulently claiming military service. Moreover, the two witnesses who gave false testimony about his military service had to pay fines.⁴⁹³ In cases where it was revealed that institutionalized veterans had committed fraud, they had to leave their place of residence.⁴⁹⁴ These cases show that those who unlawfully acquired the status of disabled veterans were interested in both a state allowance and additional economic benefits.

Law breaking and fraud were only possible because of local government corruption. Lviv newspapers sometimes informed readers about bribery and corruption among officials of the Lviv Voivodeship Department for Disabled Veterans.⁴⁹⁵ In summer 1938, some department officials were accused of corruption. A police investigation revealed that dozens of veterans had illegally received benefits throughout the 1930s. After a presidential order in October 1933, disabled veterans with less than 25% disability were deprived of an allowance. As a result, about 2000 disabled soldiers claimed that their disability had worsened, thus requiring a medical re-examination. A positive outcome from a re-examination would allow veterans to increase their disability percentage and thus regain their allowance. Many veterans, however, were unsatisfied with the result of the new examination and bribed officials of the Lviv Voivodeship Department for Disabled Veterans to falsify the necessary documents. The employees of the Department usually did not contact disabled veterans but used intermediaries. Among others violations were the falsification of a veteran's original application date. This allowed disabled veterans to backdate their application and claim additional benefits. After this criminal scheme was revealed, local authorities conducted a year-long investigation.⁴⁹⁶ Thus, corrupt bureaucrats, whose task was to

⁴⁹³ "Falshyvyi Invalid," *Dilo*, October 30, 1937, 8.

⁴⁹⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3329, ark. 185.

⁴⁹⁵ "Falshyvi Invalidy u Lvovi," *Novyi Chas*, February 14, 1936, 9.

⁴⁹⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3655; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3656.

shrink welfare rolls in the 1930s, sabotaged the orders by illegally granting state benefits to unentitled applicants.

All-Polish Organizations of Disabled Veterans in Lviv

Large metropolises usually became the centres of various forms of activism. The first grassroots organization of Lviv disabled veterans formed in summer 1919. As the Ukrainian-Polish war had just finished, the relationships between the ethnic groups was extremely tense; veteran activists argued over who could belong to Polish organizations of disabled soldiers. One of the main principles of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic was the inclusion of all disabled veterans regardless of their ethnic or religious background. Lviv's disabled veterans established the separate Union of Disabled Veterans in Eastern Małopolska in July 1919. Due to interethnic tension after the Ukrainian-Polish War, this organization did not accept Ukrainian disabled veterans. According to reports in *Slowo Polskie* and *Gazeta Poranna*, the leaders of the Lviv organization decided not to join the central, Warsaw-based organization in April 1920. The members of the Union in Eastern Małopolska believed that such an approach would not work in Galicia on account of the large minority group of "Rusins and neutrals [Jews]."⁴⁹⁷ However, newspaper reports about the meeting of activists and the decisions of this organization contradicted each other. The Jewish newspaper *Chwila* published a completely different account. It revealed that only National-Democrats were against the inclusion of Jewish and Ukrainian disabled veterans into the Union. The only group of disabled veterans excluded from the organization were veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army. In other words, according to the Lviv-based Jewish newspaper, the members accepted the main principles of the all-Polish organization and joined it. *Chwila*

⁴⁹⁷"Zgromadzenie inwalidów," *Slowo Polskie*, April 20, 1920, 2; "Zebranie inwalidów," *Gazeta Poranna*, April 21, 1920, 3; "Wieści z Czerwonej Rusi," *Inwalida*, August 3, 1919, 3.

accused *Slowo Polskie* of deliberately falsifying the facts.⁴⁹⁸ Undoubtedly, various newspapers issued confusing and contradictory reports of the meeting. What is clear, however, is that the issue of national minorities in disabled veteran organizations became a contested ground between various political and ethnic groups. This issue turned into a struggle between competing narratives of “truth.”

Regardless of the decision made by members of the Union of Disabled Veterans in Eastern Małopolska in April 1920, by early 1921 the Lviv organization became a branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic.⁴⁹⁹ This implied, at least, a tacit acceptance of the main principles of the central organization. A report from the Lviv branch published in April 1921 did not classify its members along ethnic lines. It indicated that, among its members, 1000 disabled veterans had served in the Austrian army, 104 in the Polish army, 14 were veterans of the January uprisings of 1863-64, and 16 were disabled veterans of previous wars. This report also highlighted the socio-economic profile of its members; the majority belonged to the working class. Only three members were former officers and five had a university education. The majority of disabled veterans worked as tradesmen or artisans.⁵⁰⁰

Members of the Lviv organization launched their active work immediately after its establishment. At the end of July 1919, the representatives of the Union of Disabled Veterans in Eastern Małopolska visited Warsaw. The aim of their trip was to lobby for the interests of their fellow veterans; *Inwalida* published a report about this visit. Activists visited the Constitutional Assembly, various ministries (the Ministry of Military Affairs, the Ministry of Communication, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare), institutions (the Central Welfare Council, the

⁴⁹⁸ “Z wiecu inwalidów,” *Chwila*, April 22, 1920, 6.

⁴⁹⁹ “Z działalności Koła Lwów,” *Inwalida*, February 27, 1921, 5.

⁵⁰⁰ “Lwów,” *Inwalida*, April 10, 1921, 7.

Department of Assistance of the Ministry of Military Affairs) and even met Prime Minister Ignacy Paderewski. Among the issues discussed were the payment of allowances to Galician disabled soldiers, the status of civilians injured during the Ukrainian-Polish War, railway restaurant management, and credits to establish agricultural colonies. Veterans were shocked by the ignorance and unfamiliarity of the deputies of the Constitutional Assembly regarding the needs of disabled soldiers. The chair of the Military Committee of the Constitutional Assembly suggested that veterans petition local, not central, authorities. Lviv veterans reacted most negatively to the Department of Assistance within the Ministry of Military Affairs. This institution was responsible for the organization of the welfare system for disabled veterans. However, the Union of Disabled Veterans often disagreed with the Department and *Inwalida* usually depicted the work of the institution in a negative way. In contrast, the newspaper enthusiastically relayed details of the activists' meeting with the prime minister and wrote empurpled prose about Paderewski, himself. The trip's only practical result was an allotment of clothing for Lviv's disabled veterans, which they received from the Central Welfare Council and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour.⁵⁰¹

After joining the Warsaw-based organization Lviv activists focused on solving their financial problems. According to the poorly preserved minutes from the general meetings of the Lviv branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic, the issue of national minorities was not discussed in the early 1920s. Rather, disabled veterans focused on debates about their material hardships and the failure of central and local authorities to establish adequate systems of assistance.⁵⁰² Members proclaimed that one's army affiliation should not be grounds to deny benefits and thus to divide the veterans' movement. Lviv disabled veterans, for example, demanded similar rights for the pre-Great War disabled veterans of imperial armies. However,

⁵⁰¹“Delegacja Lwowskich Inwaliów w Warszawie,” *Inwalida*, August 10, 1919, 2-3.

⁵⁰² DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 814, ark. 3-6zv., 12-12zv., 16-16zv.

there were categories of division other than ethnic origin or army affiliation that were rooted in the nature of one's disability and in military hierarchies. Disabled veterans talked about the lack of solidarity between veterans with varying degrees of disability. Veterans with less serious disabilities had better access to various benefits. The traditional division between officers and enlisted soldiers also manifested itself in the Union. Some members of the Lviv branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic asked officers to join with common soldiers and to work together for the common cause.⁵⁰³

The organizations of disabled veterans reinforced the common identity of servicemen. The Małopolska Organization of Blind Soldiers "*Spójnia*" appealed to all blind disabled soldiers from Małopolska and invited them to become members of the organization "for their benefit and because of a shared struggle."⁵⁰⁴ The improvement of the wellbeing of disabled veterans was one of the most important tasks of the movement. The Lviv organizations often demanded better economic opportunities for their members. For instance, they requested permission to sell state monopoly goods such as tobacco and alcohol.⁵⁰⁵ Veteran organizations also opposed the decision to relocate the House of Invalids from Lviv; their activism likewise shaped public opinion.⁵⁰⁶ Moreover, the disabled veterans' organizations served as mediators between former soldiers and the authorities. For instance, they supported veterans' applications for additional welfare payments or job positions and for rooms in temporary hostels or in the Lviv House of Invalids.⁵⁰⁷ These organizations received additional payments from governmental funds, which were later divided

⁵⁰³DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 814, 12-12zv, 16-16zv.

⁵⁰⁴"Do wiadomości ociemniałych inwalidów wojennych," *Wiek Nowy*, February 26, 1924, 8.

⁵⁰⁵ "Ze zjazdu delegatów Związku Inwalidów Wojennych R.P. województwa Lwowskiego," *Inwalida*, July 13, 1930, 29.

⁵⁰⁶ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 134-135 zv., 160-164 zv.; "Wobec zamachu na prawa inwalidów," *Dziennik Ludowy*, July 10, 1924, 6.

⁵⁰⁷ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1542, ark. 32-33 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2532.

between their poorest members.⁵⁰⁸ Activists of the local branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans also demanded that their representatives be allowed to attend meetings of the appeal commission in order to oversee the work of military bureaucrats.⁵⁰⁹ Some veterans believed that the organizations would even be able to defend them when they violated rules or procedures. One of the disabled soldiers who was expelled from the House of Invalids because of alcoholism and violent behaviour threatened to complain to the Association of Polish Legionnaires.⁵¹⁰ However, disabled veterans could also use their position in veterans' organizations for personal benefit.⁵¹¹ For instance, the Lviv branch of the Invalid Legion nominated Adam Veit, a member of the executive board, to represent disabled members in various negotiations with the local government; he illegally charged his fellow veterans for his services.⁵¹² In another case, the treasurer of the Lviv branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans was sentenced for embezzling members' money.⁵¹³ In February 1934 the Lviv socialist newspaper *Dziennik Ludowy* claimed that the leaders of the organization benefited financially and they expelled from the Union every disabled veteran who tried to challenge them.⁵¹⁴

Disabled activists often criticized the authorities but veteran organizations were not above reproach. In January 1928, *Wiek Nowy* reported on disabled veterans begging near Lviv churches. Limbless veterans sang military songs and begged for money. The author of a short article blamed the Union of Disabled Veterans and not the authorities for misusing money to support disabled servicemen. *Wiek Nowy* transferred responsibility from the state to the organization and portrayed

⁵⁰⁸ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1499.

⁵⁰⁹ Doroczne Walne Zebranie Związku Inwalidów Wojennych Koło Lwów," *Wiek Nowy*, March 6, 1924, 7

⁵¹⁰ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1563, ark. 12.

⁵¹¹ DALO, f. 1, op.54, spr. 1276, ark. 63; Defraudacji v lvivs'komu 'Zvionzku Invaliduv,'" *Novyi Chas*, June 19, 1936, 9; "Spółdzielnia inwalidów – żerowiskiem dla aferystow," *Dziennil Ludowy*, December 31, 1927, 9.

⁵¹² DALO, f. 1, op.54, spr. 1276, ark. 63.

⁵¹³ "Defraudacji v lvivs'komu 'Zvionzku Invaliduv,'" *Novyi Chas*, June 19, 1936, 9.

⁵¹⁴ "Z inwalidzkiej doli," *Dziennil Ludowy*, February 22, 1934, 7.

the Union negatively, as failing to assist “defenders of the fatherland.”⁵¹⁵ As tensions between the sanacja government, which tried to take control over veteran organizations, and the disabled veteran movement grew during the late-1920s, these attacks in the Lviv press can be read as part of a deliberate state movement to delegitimize the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans.

Though the government took control of the disabled veteran movement in the late 1920s, Lviv activists continued to criticize the Lviv authorities. As proof of local officials’ indifference, the activists of the Małopolska Organization of Blind Soldiers “*Spójnia*” reported that only 88 of its 248 members had received the additional allowance for assistance animals in 1930.⁵¹⁶ In July 1930, the representative of the Lviv Voivodeship informed delegates of the Lviv Union of Disabled Veterans about better cooperation between local authorities and this organization after transferring some responsibilities from the military to civil authorities in 1929.⁵¹⁷ The situation changed for the worse, however, because of the advent of the Great Depression. In April 1934, the Lviv branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans warned the Voivodeship that the loyalty of its members towards the government depended on their material well-being. Half of its members had a low percentage of disability and had recently lost their allowance. Disabled activists informed the Voivodeship that the organization required the support of the authorities to help its members.⁵¹⁸ Numerous applications for one-time payments indicated that many disabled soldiers frequently needed financial assistance.⁵¹⁹ The socialist newspaper *Dziennik Ludowy* published the story of disabled veteran Roman Krupiński who died from the heart attack after learning about losing both his job

⁵¹⁵ “Inwalidzi Wojenni Żebrakami,” *Wiek Nowy*, January 11, 1928, 10.

⁵¹⁶ “Działalność ‘Spójni’ Małopolskiego Związku Ociemniałego Żołnierza we Lwowie,” *Ociemniały Żołnierz*, November 1930, 13.

⁵¹⁷ “Ze Zjazdu Delegatów Związku Inwalidów Wojennych R.P. Województwa Lwowskiego,” *Inwalida*, July 13, 1930, 28.

⁵¹⁸ DALO, f. 1, op.54, spr. 1365, ark. 2.

⁵¹⁹ DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 561; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 3733; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4102; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4093; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4104; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4105; DALO, f.1, op.34, spr. 564; DALO, f.1, op.34, spr. 563.

position and allowance.⁵²⁰ The desperate financial situation of many disabled veterans was also reflected in the assistance programs offered by the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. In November 1937, Adolf Twardowski, the director of the House of Invalids, informed the Lviv Voivodeship that House residents refused to wear the clothes of deceased veterans. He received permission to donate these clothes to the Union so that it would give them to poor, unemployed disabled veterans who lacked an allowance.⁵²¹

In the late 1930s, the merger of the disabled veteran movement's discourse with that of the mainstream pro-government political discourse was visible locally. Local administrators tied to the Lviv Voivode and the President of the City participated in a meeting of the delegates of the Lviv Union of Disabled Veterans.⁵²² In November 1937 at a meeting in Lviv, the president of the Union, Edwin Wagner, stressed that disabled servicemen were always loyal to the government. At the same time, Voivode Alfred Biłyk, as a former soldier, declared his deep personal connection to the disabled veteran movements. He argued that the government had cut the allowance due to the desperate economic situation and that he would do everything possible to improve the quality of assistance for disabled veterans.⁵²³ Moreover, the composition of the organization's Lviv executive board demonstrated the Union's loyalty. Among seven members, three were deputies of the Polish Parliament who belonged to the pro-government party BBWR (The Nonpartisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government).⁵²⁴ In summer 1939, the members of the Lviv branch proclaimed that they were ready to join the Polish army and fight in any upcoming war.⁵²⁵

⁵²⁰ "Z inwalidzkiej doli," *Dziennik Ludowy*, February 22, 1934, 7.

⁵²¹ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3729, ark. 16-17.

⁵²² "Zjazdu Delegatów Okręgu Lwowskiego Zw. Inwal. Woj. R. P.," *Inwalida*, November 1, 1937, 14.

⁵²³ "Zjazdu Delegatów Okręgu Lwowskiego Zw. Inwal. Woj. R. P.," *Inwalida*, November 1, 1937, 14.

⁵²⁴ DALO, f. 1, op. 54, spr. 1365, ark. 6.

⁵²⁵ "Zdecydowana postawa bojowa Związku Inwalidów Wojennych R. P.," *Inwalida*, July 1, 1939, 8.

Relations within the disabled veteran movement were also sometimes tense. For instance, the Invalid Legion had a strained relationship with the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. The Legion exclusively united disabled soldiers of the Polish army and its members believed that they deserved special standing among disabled veterans. They depicted the Legion as the stronghold of morality and the Union as an extremely corrupt organization.⁵²⁶ At the same time, the Legion was the smallest organization of disabled servicemen in Lviv. This organization united a very small circle of disabled veterans and its office was located on the city outskirts. Similar to other organizations, the Legion helped its members in financial troubles, assisted in their job searches, and provided medical and legal advice. In early 1939, Mikołaj Mironowicz published the history of the Lviv Invalid Legion in *Front Inwalidzki*. Mironowicz, who worked as a radio and print journalist, was secretary of the Lviv Invalid Legion. He argued that the local administration thought poorly of the organization and did not support it. Despite this, disabled activists had been to swell the organization's ranks and move the office closer to the city centre.⁵²⁷ However, other documents suggest that Lviv officials favored the Legion. Though authorities closely surveilled the organization, according to a July 1935 report, the local leaders of the Invalid Legion were actually "apolitical." For them, this meant that the majority of its members had pro-government attitudes, while the rest supported the Polish People's Party. Considering the Legion's ideological stance, Lviv officials believed that it deserved governmental subsidies.⁵²⁸

However, several months after the favourable report, the Lviv members of the Legion participated in a campaign against Edwin Wagner, the president of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and the former director of the Lviv House of Invalids, who took part in the parliamentary

⁵²⁶ "'Legja Inwalidów wojsk polskich' informuje opinię publiczną," *Dziennik Ludowy*, 28 January 1927, 6.

⁵²⁷ Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 1-2 (1939): 8-9.

⁵²⁸ DALO, f. 1, op. 54, spr. 1276, ark. 56.

election as a candidate from the BBWR. At the beginning of September 1935, the Lviv County confiscated anti-Wagner campaign literature. The County officials believed that false information about the candidate could cause public unrest. The Lviv criminal court did not agree with this decision and allowed the distribution of these leaflets. It seemed that the leaflets were written by activists of the Invalid Legion who criticized the leader of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. First of all, the pamphlets implied that Wagner received financial kickbacks, though the author(s) focused more on his ideological “sins.” Wagner was accused of constructing a narrative that described disabled soldiers of the imperial armies as people who had struggled for Polish independence. The author(s) of the leaflet opposed such an approach and stressed that the majority of disabled veterans in Eastern Małopolska belonged to a hostile nationality.⁵²⁹ They used the singular “nationality” and most probably meant “Ukrainian.” As a former officer in the Austrian (and also Polish) army, Wagner probably had his own reasons to promote an inclusive discourse. In contrast to the activists of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, the Invalid Legion insisted on the exclusive right of soldiers of the Polish army to call themselves sole fighters for Polish independence.

The tension between the Lviv organizations of disabled veterans increased during the second half of the 1930s. The Legion activists argued that the Lviv branch of the Union could not be part of the pro-government umbrella organization, the Polish Associations for the Defence of the Fatherland, as the majority of its members were disloyal Ukrainians.⁵³⁰ Leaders of the Legion understood “Polishness” as an ethnicity and excluded Ukrainians from the national project. The Ukrainian minority were considered to be “others” and such attitudes contributed to Lviv’s political radicalization. Moreover, disabled members of the Invalid Legion argued that they were

⁵²⁹ DALO, f. 139, op.5, spr. 1557.

⁵³⁰ “Problem Polskiego Stanu Posiadania w Małopolsce,” *Front Inwalidzki* 10 (1936), 7.

a separate group of veterans and wanted not only symbolic recognition but additional state benefits. At the end of 1938, the Lviv branch of the Invalid Legion demanded that disabled veterans of the Polish army be legally classified as a special group of disabled veterans.⁵³¹ The government never granted such new benefits to disabled soldiers of the Polish armies, who were actually already a privileged group after November 1934. The discourses constructed by the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and the Polish Legions illustrated the main competing political concepts of the Second Polish Republic, which defined the Polish nation as either a political or ethnic entity.

Statistical data showed that despite the polarization of political life before the Second World War many members of Lviv's disabled veterans' organizations were minorities. In early 1939, the Department for Disabled Veterans in Lviv Voivodeship gathered statistics from relevant organizations that indicated national identity. According to the reports these were 2008 members of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic in Lviv county and 57% of them were Poles, 41% Ukrainians, and 2% Jews. Only 30% of disabled veterans were former soldiers of the Polish army, while the rest belonged to the Austro-Hungarian army. The Union of Blind Soldiers had 323 members of whom Roman Catholics were 59%, Greek Catholic 34%, and Jews 7%. The organization's report showed not only the religious but also the national affiliation of blind veterans, which did not match the usual categories of Roman-Catholic-Pole/Greek-Catholic-Ukrainian. 22% of those surveyed reported their nationality as Ukrainian, while 78% identified as Polish. Jews were not represented as a separate group, but were obviously included in the "Poles." Only 10% of blind disabled veterans had served in the Polish Army, one member was reported as a veteran of the "Ukrainian" army, and the rest were demobilized soldiers of the imperial armies. By contrast the Invalid Legion of the Polish Army was the smallest and the only homogeneous

⁵³¹ "Kampania we Lwowie," *Front Inwalidzki* 10-11 (1938): 26.

organization of disabled veterans in Lviv district. It consisted of 191 veterans of the Polish army, 188 of whom were Roman Catholic.⁵³²

Army Affiliation as Identity: Organization of Habsburg Disabled Veterans

The largest disabled veterans' organizations were established before the 1930s. As the Polish government gradually took over the public sphere, it restricted new organizational initiatives. For instance, the Lviv Voivodeship refused to register the separate Union of Disabled Veterans of the former Austro-Hungarian Army in Małopolska at the end of 1934.⁵³³ Though the veterans of the imperial armies were the largest group in the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans, they were "blended" with others. They were also not divided into separate groups as soldiers of the different imperial armies. The welfare system for disabled veterans was one of the factors that reinforced the common identity of disabled veterans of the former Austro-Hungarian army. The attempt to establish a new organization in Lviv was made less than a year after benefits for disabled veterans were reduced in October 1933.⁵³⁴ In other words, this benefit reduction could spark the need for a separate organization more than fifteen years after the end of the First World War. I found no evidence that disabled veterans of other imperial armies tried to establish a similar organization in other parts of Poland. At the same time, former soldiers of imperial Vienna constituted the largest homogeneous group of veterans in Lviv, which explains why such an organization was founded in the first place.

This was markedly a grass roots initiative whose founders, some illiterate, gathered in the Lviv suburb Lychakiv, were clearly working-class and, apart from their involvement in disabled

⁵³² DALO, f. 1, op.54, spr. 1585.

⁵³³ DALO, f. 1, op.54, spr. 1571.

⁵³⁴ "Rozporządzenie Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej poz. 669," *Dziennik Ustaw* 86, 1933, 1696-1700.

veteran organizations, were seemingly apolitical in nature. Most of the leaders of this new organization were Roman Catholic but at least 20% of the founders of the Union of former Habsburg veterans were Greek Catholic. Further nuancing our understandings of disabled veteran identity, according to a police report, one of the Roman Catholic founders was also a member of a Jewish organization of disabled veterans. In fact, ethnic or religious affiliations seemed less important in identity construction than one's general military service for Vienna. As members of pre-existing organizations, veterans often felt they needed to establish new collectives that would bring together disabled veterans with similar experiences and statuses. In contrast, authorities were loath to see them as a separate group of disabled veterans and viewed their activities suspiciously. Administrators of the Lviv Voivodeship felt that the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic fulfilled the same functions and united all Polish disabled veterans, including Austrian veterans. The emergence of a new organization that would divide the disabled veteran movement and unite a less privileged group of veterans was undesirable. The founders of the organization appealed to the Ministry of the Interior, but Warsaw bureaucrats supported the decision of the Lviv Voivodeship.⁵³⁵ The failure to establish this veteran organization highlights the interplay between the local disabled activists of the Austrian army and local/central authorities that considered the local identity of disabled veterans to be a threat to the state. Bureaucrats preferred to deal with an all-Polish disabled veteran organization, which united soldiers of various ethnic backgrounds and armies as its main ideological characteristic and displayed loyalty to the central government.

War Disability and the Minority Question

⁵³⁵ "Rozporządzenie Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej poz. 669," *Dziennik Ustaw* 86, 1933, 1696-1700.

In August 1931, the Lviv Voivodeship received word that Jewish veteran Zygmunt Boritz had unlawfully attained the status of disabled veteran. Though he had served in the Polish army during the Soviet-Polish War, according to some testimonies, he had earlier fought with Ukrainians against Poles in November 1918 and was thus not entitled to receive state benefits. After an investigation, it was established that Boritz had lied about his participation in the “defence of Lviv” and he was deprived of benefits.⁵³⁶ The line between “us” and “them” was often blurred in interwar Lviv and the same person could belong to different “camps.” The interplay between the ethnic and military affiliation of disabled veterans and the inclusion or exclusion of the different groups of veterans from the national body frequently re-emerges as an important topic during the interwar years.

According to the law, all soldiers of imperial armies and the Polish army who had the status of disabled veterans were equal regardless of their ethnic background, but some disabled servicemen were more equal than others. At the local level, there was a clear gap between the legislation and its implementation. For example, in June 1921, the Lviv city council posted Roman Catholic-only jobs, clearly excluding Greek Catholics and Jews.⁵³⁷ In other cases, however, religious or national affiliation was immaterial and officials supported disabled veterans of various backgrounds as potential candidates. For instance, in autumn 1921, the National Museum in Lviv announced six positions for disabled soldiers. Local military authorities recommended both Polish and Ukrainian disabled veterans. However, the museum administration accepted only five Polish veterans as caretakers and refused to hire a Roman-Catholic convert and two Ukrainians. In this case, it was the employer and not bureaucrats who chose ethnic Poles.⁵³⁸ The other categories

⁵³⁶ DALO, f. 7, op. 1, spr. 1454, ark 15-13 zv.

⁵³⁷ DALO, f.1, op 33, spr. 450, ark. 12.

⁵³⁸DALO, f.1, op 33, spr. 450, ark. 16-17.

given preference were disabled veterans of the Polish army and the Polish Legions. For instance, in January 1934, the Lviv voivode Colonel Władysław Belina-Prażmowski issued an order stipulating that two disabled veterans of the Legion had to be employed at the electricity enterprise.⁵³⁹

As previously mentioned, the members of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic opposed the creation of a privileged category of “Polish” disabled veteran.⁵⁴⁰ at the same time, the Union considered itself the “defender” of Polish identity and the state in the Eastern borderlands. Disabled activists tried to implement the Polish national project as a political, not an ethnic project, and thus sought to be inclusive. Despite the radicalization of some groups in Galician Ukrainian society in the late 1920s, representatives of the organization continued to work with its Ukrainian members, hoping to transform them into loyal citizens.⁵⁴¹ In July 1929, Lviv disabled activists began publishing an independent newspaper for disabled soldiers, *Biały Orzeł*. Kikiewicz, one of the most active members of the veteran movement and the leader of the Union, proclaimed that the relations between Poles and minorities groups had to be based on the principle of equality:

Concerning the minorities that dwell together with the Polish nation on the same land, we want to follow the principles of equality and brotherhood; we want our motherland to become their motherland and we want to see them as full citizens with equal rights. At the same time, we will also demand that they fulfil the obligations incumbent on all sons of the motherland.⁵⁴²

⁵³⁹DALO, f. 2, op. 26, spr. 1010, ark. 53.

⁵⁴⁰ L. Stachewski, “Inwalidzi polscy a inwalidzi “polacy”!” *Inwalida*, April 1, 1923, 22-23.

⁵⁴¹Sanus, “Łajdackie metody,” *Nasza Sprawa*, January 15, 1929, 1.

⁵⁴² Bolesław Kikiewicz, “Orli lot z Lwiewo grodu,” *Biały Orzeł*, July 1, 1929, 1.

Despite such statements, interethnic relations between Jewish and Polish disabled veterans became tenser over the years and eventually Jewish veterans established a separate organization. Moreover, in the second part of the 1930s, the Union and its leader, the former Lviv activist Wagner, actively supported the government's anti-Semitic policy.⁵⁴³ However, the "assimilation" of the Ukrainians into the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic was quite successful. In 1939, Ukrainians made up 41% percent of the Union members in Lviv county⁵⁴⁴ and they had never acted as a separate group inside the organization. They also had never publicly complained about unjust treatment by Polish veterans. At the same time, even the right-wing Invalid Legion discussed the apparent failures of the minority policy, which negatively impacted both the disabled veteran movement and the Polish national movement. At the beginning of 1939, *Front Inwalidzki* stated that a lot of disabled Hutsuls⁵⁴⁵ who had served in the Polish army aspired to become members of the Legion. However, the local Kolomyia branch's previous leaders did not accept non-Polish disabled servicemen. The author of the article, Mironowicz, regretted this decision because marginalizing Hutsuls pushed them closer towards a Ukrainian identity. He believed that it was possible "to form loyal citizens of the motherland."⁵⁴⁶ Mironowicz argued that Hutsuls lacked a strong national identity and could therefore become part of either the Polish or Ukrainian national project. Their exclusion from the group of disabled veterans of the Polish army was a demonstrable failure of the local Invalid Legion's leaders.

The Ukrainian-Polish war greatly deepened the rift between different ethnic communities in Lviv. It became a focal point in both Ukrainian-Polish and Polish-Jewish relations. Jews bitterly

⁵⁴³ Edwin Wagner, "Społeczeństwu żydowskiemu pod rozwagę," *Inwalida*, June 15, 1936, 13; "Sprawa żydowska na realnych torach," *Inwalida*, January, 1939, 8.

⁵⁴⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.54, spr. 1585, ark. 4.

⁵⁴⁵ The ethnographic group of Ukrainian highlanders in the Carpathian region. "Hutsuls" In *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine* <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CH%5CU%5CHutsuls.htm>.

⁵⁴⁶ Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939), 10.

remembered the November 1918 pogrom, which was punishment by the Poles for their neutrality in the Ukrainian-Polish conflict. Distrust between the two ethnic groups was mutual, because Poles considered Jewish neutrality treasonous.⁵⁴⁷ Throughout the 1920s, anti-Semitic ideas spread throughout Lviv, culminating in open street violence. Polish students were the most active participants in the clashes of June 1929 and November 1932. Lviv's educational institutions became sites of severe conflict and, by the end of the 1930s, Jewish students were physically separated on separate "ghetto benches" in university classrooms.⁵⁴⁸

The first initiatives to support Jewish disabled veterans as a separate group in Lviv took place at the end of 1921. Female Jewish activists created the Committee for Assistance to Blind and Injured Jewish Soldiers. They appealed to Jewish society and stressed that these veterans needed support because of their physical pain and their emotional suffering. Disabled veterans were breadwinners who had lost the ability to provide for their families and thus became a burden. The Lviv Jewish community, they asserted, was obliged to help minimize the physical and emotional pain of disabled servicemen.⁵⁴⁹ It was a charity project rooted in traditional gender roles. The remasculinization discourse is one of the most common reactions to war disability.⁵⁵⁰ Disabled soldiers lost a defining feature of their masculinity; they were unable to earn a living and needed the help of the community – the Jewish one in this case – to return them to their gendered whole.

⁵⁴⁷ Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 230-234; William W. Hagen, "The Moral Economy of Ethnic Violence: The Pogrom in Lwów, November 1918," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 2 (2005): 203-226.

⁵⁴⁸ Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 241-245; Natalia Aleksion, "Together but Apart: University Experience of Jewish Students in the Second Polish Republic," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 109 (2014): 109-137; Antony Polonsky, "A Failed Pogrom: The Demonstrations in Lwów, June 1929" in *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars*, ed. Yisrael Gutman, Erza Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk (Hanover, London: Brandeis University Press, 1989), 109-125.

⁵⁴⁹ "O Pomoc dla invalidów," *Chwila*, December 1, 1921, 4; "O Pomoc dla invalidów," *Chwila*, February 15, 1922, 5.

⁵⁵⁰ David A. Gerber, "Introduction: Finding Disabled Veterans in History," in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012,) 9-10.

Unlike Poles or Ukrainians, Jews did not have national military units and Jewish veterans constituted a distinct group of demobilized soldiers. They had always served in the armies of “others” and did not create an ethnic-based heroic national discourse connected to the First World War or postwar conflicts. Similar to the Ukrainians, they became part the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic, though anti-Semitic opinions inside the organization led to conflict.⁵⁵¹ In December 1926, Jewish veteran Jakób Bachner accused the Lviv branch of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans of double standards. Though the organization ostensibly provided assistance to all disabled veterans, in reality, Polish disabled soldiers received special privileges and benefits, he contended.⁵⁵²

Following the example of activists in other Polish cities, Jewish disabled veterans in mid-November 1924 created a separate organization in Lviv. Initially, they formed a temporary committee that discussed the main principles of the future organization. A representative of the Jewish Organization of War Invalids in Cracow underlined that disabled soldiers had to unite in order to struggle for their rights. He argued that Jewish disabled servicemen were treated unjustly not only by their fellow veterans from the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and the government, but even by the Lviv Jewish Council itself. The latter often refused to provide disabled veterans with the documents needed to apply for state benefits. In other words, the organization struggled against obstacles both inside and outside of the Jewish community. The Lviv Jewish Organization of War Invalids, Widows, and Orphans was created at the end of November 1924 and it was

⁵⁵¹ L. S., “Jednością silni,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, December 1, 1926, 1-2; J. B., “Sprawedliwości,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, February 1, 1927, 1-2.

⁵⁵² Jakób Bachner, “Męczarnie Żyd. inwalidów,” *Inwalida Żydowski*, December 1, 1926, 4-6.

publicly supported by both local activists and Jewish deputies in the Polish Parliament.⁵⁵³ In April 1926, various Jewish disabled veterans' organizations united to form the all-Polish Union.⁵⁵⁴

The Jewish organization became the mediator between local authorities and disabled veterans. In January 1925, the representative of the Jewish Organization of War Invalids, Widows, and Orphans complained that the military authorities refused to register Jewish disabled veterans in Lviv and Przemyśl. As a result, the Ministry of Military Affairs investigated and ordered the registration of Jewish disabled servicemen.⁵⁵⁵ Besides receiving the regular allowance, disabled soldiers in need could apply to the Lviv Voivodeship for additional payments. The Union supported the numerous applications of Jewish veterans throughout the interwar era.⁵⁵⁶

In April 1926, the organization protested against the perceived treatment of Jewish war victims as second-class citizens.⁵⁵⁷ Among the discriminatory practices of the Polish government was an unofficial ban on Jews in government institutions.⁵⁵⁸ The employment of disabled veterans was an important issue regardless of ethnicity; the Union of Organizations of Jewish Disabled Veterans, Widows, and Orphans demanded that the government give equal consideration to Jewish disabled soldiers.⁵⁵⁹ However, the unofficial state policy held and Jews rarely worked for the state.

Although in 1929 in Lviv, they complained about unjust treatment by local administrators, the late 1920s witnessed a short period of “normalization” between Jewish disabled activists and

⁵⁵³ “O byt inwalidów Żyd,” *Chwila*, November 17, 1924, 7; “Stworzenia ‘Związku Żyd. Inwalidów, Wdów i Sierót Woj.’,” *Chwila*, December 2, 1924, 3; The problems with the Jewish self-govern institution and were not solved and in August 1937 the organization informed the Lviv Voivodeship that the Jewish register office refused to provide the necessary documents to disabled veterans without charges (DALO, f.1, op 34, spr. 1555, ark. 16-26.).

⁵⁵⁴ “Ogólno-państwowy zjazd Żydowskich organizacyj inwalidzkich,” *Chwila*, April 29, 1926, 9.

⁵⁵⁵ DALO, f.1, op 33, spr. 2065, ark. 19-19zv.

⁵⁵⁶ DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 3733, ark. 69-79; DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 561, ark. 95; DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 563, ark. 44 zv.- 45 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 1484, ark. 9 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 1483, ark. 76 zv., 78 zv.

⁵⁵⁷ “Ogólno-państwowy zjazd Żydowskich organizacyj inwalidzkich,” *Chwila*, April 29, 1926, 9.

⁵⁵⁸ Brian Porter-Szücs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 131.

⁵⁵⁹ “Ogólno-państwowy zjazd żydowskich organizacyj inwalidzkich,” *Chwila*, April 29, 1926, 9; DALO, f.1, op 33, spr. 1987, ark. 31 zv.

authorities.⁵⁶⁰ In the 1930s, the Union of Organizations of Jewish War Invalids publicly emphasized its loyalty to the Polish state. The participation of local bureaucrats, such as the head of the Department for Disabled Veterans, in the meeting of the Union of Organizations of the Jewish Disabled Veterans, Widows, and Orphans in Lviv and the effusive speeches offered at the meeting indicated cooperation between authorities and the organization at the beginning of the 1930s.⁵⁶¹ During this period the Union achieved some positive changes for its constituents. Religious Jewish disabled veterans had special dietary needs and the Union offered to provide kosher food for veterans during their treatment in state sanatoriums. At the end of 1930, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare officially satisfied this demand of Jewish disabled activists.⁵⁶² However, this regulation was not applied in the Lviv House of Invalids, where diets were prescribed by doctors without considering the residents' religious needs.

In addition to ethnic discrimination, leaders of the Union protested against social injustice. For instance, they claimed that Jewish parliamentary deputies defended the interests of wealthy Jewish entrepreneurs but not disabled soldiers. Both groups competed for the right to sell or produce monopoly products.⁵⁶³ Despite tension between the Polish and Jewish veterans' organizations, some Polish activists defended their Jewish fellow-soldiers. *Biały Orzeł* discussed the unjust treatment of Jewish disabled veterans by Polish authorities. At the beginning of September 1929, Kikiewicz, who envisioned the veteran movement and the Polish state as "inclusive" projects, published a story about Mojżesz Liebman, a disabled veteran. He applied for

⁵⁶⁰ "Nadzwyczajne Walne Zgromadzenie Związku Żyd. Inwalidów Wdówi Sierót Woj. we Lwowie," *Inwalida Żydowski*, November, 1929, 11.

⁵⁶¹ "Walne Zgromadzenie Związku Żyd. Inwalidów Wdówi Sierót Woj. we Lwowie," *Inwalida Żydowski*, February-May, 1930, 19.

⁵⁶² "Rytualne Wyżywienie Żyd. Inwalidów Woj. w Sanatorjach i Uzdrowiskach," *Inwalida Żydowski*, November-January, 1930-31, 8.

⁵⁶³ "Koło Żydowskie a nasze postulaty," *Inwalida Żydowski*, March 1, 1927, 2-3; He-Sch, "Quo Vadis..." *Inwalida Żydowski*, April 1, 1927, 1-2; Bolesław Kikiewicz, "Kto ma Pierszeństwo," *Biały Orzeł*, September 1, 1929, 5-6.

an alcohol production concession but it was granted to a wealthy Jewish merchant.⁵⁶⁴ This article illustrated how Kikiewicz considered disabled veterans to be a separate group that consisted of soldiers of various backgrounds. The contrast between the poor Jewish disabled veteran and wealthy merchant showed that the activist understood conflict between former servicemen and the government as possibly socio-economic and not necessarily ethnic in nature.⁵⁶⁵

Ignacy Mościcki's order of October 1933 that deprived disabled servicemen with less than 25% degree of disability their allowance was designed to reduce government expenses. As a result, a large number of disabled soldiers were deprived of income during the Great Depression. At the same time, the authorities did allow those in desperate financial situations to apply for a one-time payment. The Lviv Voivodeship Department for Disabled Veterans received numerous requests from disabled veterans. Local bureaucrats granted this one-time payment to all "low percent" disabled veterans regardless of ethnicity or religion.⁵⁶⁶ The rise of anti-Semitism caused both the deterioration of Jewish-Christian relations and an outbreak of violence between their respective communities in Lviv at the end of the 1920s. The radicalization of ethnic Poles and Ukrainians continued during the next decade.⁵⁶⁷ However, sources suggested that despite a change in government policy, the attitude of Lviv Voivodeship officials towards Jewish disabled veterans had hardly changed by 1937. At least, they usually did not reject outright veterans' requests but granted them the one-time payment, similar to Roman-Catholic or Greek-Catholic veterans.⁵⁶⁸ The

⁵⁶⁴ Bolesław Kikiewicz, "Kto ma pierszeństwo," *Biały Orzeł*, September 1, 1929, 5-6.

⁵⁶⁵ Bolesław Kikiewicz, "Kto ma Pierszeństwo," *Biały Orzeł*, September 1, 1929, 5-6.

⁵⁶⁶ DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 3733, ark. 69-79, 93-101, 128-131, 136-145; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4102, ark. 13-23, 33-41, 55-55 zv.

⁵⁶⁷ Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 241-243; Antony Polonsky, "A Failed Pogrom: The Demonstrations in Lwów, June 1929" in *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars*, ed. by Yisrael Gutman, Erza Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk (Hanover. London: Brandeis University Press, 1989), 109-125.

⁵⁶⁸ DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 561; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 3733; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4102; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4093; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4104; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4105; DALO, f.1, op.34, spr. 564; DALO, f.1, op.34, spr.

Voivodeship continued to make such payments even to those Jewish veterans who were denounced as swindlers.⁵⁶⁹

Selig Gosches, a disabled Jewish veteran, applied 11 times for a one-time payment between April 1934 and March 1936. As a disabled soldier of the Austrian army whose capacity to labour was reduced to less than 25%, he lost the right to receive an allowance, according to the presidential order issued in October 1933. In April 1934, Gosches justified his application by his need to provide for his bedridden wife and his inability to work due to tuberculosis. The Lviv Voivodeship administration ordered an investigation into his material conditions. According to the local official's report, Gosches' wife was a market vender and earned enough money to meet their needs. As a result of this, his application was denied. He appealed to the Voivodeship and accused the local district administration of anti-Semitism and emphasized that the report contained inaccuracies. Gosches' wife had not worked for the previous eight months and they had no income from trade. Gosches accused the Lviv official of anti-Semitism. As his words were underlined in red, it is clear that the authorities took such an accusation seriously. Bureaucrats investigated this case again and noted the desperate financial situation of the Gosches family. He was granted a one-time payment and applied for it again numerous times over the next two years. Many of his applications were successful and he received financial support from the local Voivodeship government.⁵⁷⁰ This story shows the tension between Jewish disabled veterans and local administrators. Former soldiers believed that a refusal to provide assistance stemmed from anti-Semitism. However, at the same time, it illustrated that the authorities were willing to re-investigate the matter and, perhaps, change their decision.

563. Unfortunately, the applications for one-time payments that were submitted by Lviv disabled veterans after 1936 have not been preserved.

⁵⁶⁹ DALO, f.1., op.33, spr. 3733, ark. 31-68.

⁵⁷⁰DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 561, ark. 95.

The other distinct minority category of disabled veterans was demobilized soldiers of the Ukrainian People's Army (or Petliura's army). In April 1920, it allied with the Polish army, thus conferring on its veterans a special status. After the Peace of Riga signed in March 1921, the majority of Petliura's army veterans lived in displacement camps, though those from Galicia returned home. In November 1922, the Ministry of Military Affairs reported that soldiers of Petliura's army did not have the status of "Polish disabled veterans" and could not receive an allowance. It ordered payments stopped in cases where such benefits were mistakenly granted. At the same time, the Ministry decided to support disabled soldiers of Petliura's army and admitted those veterans who needed surgery to military hospitals. The Polish government also provided prostheses to amputees. Soldiers who suffered from internal diseases could be treated at military hospitals only in exceptional cases. In March 1923, the Ministry of Military Affairs supplied prostheses and orthopaedic devices to disabled veterans of Petliura's, Denikin's, Wrangel's, Poremykin's and Balachovich's armies. The Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour included them in the category "civilian invalid" and provided assistance to those who were citizens of Poland and found themselves in difficult financial situations. Though the Polish government did not grant the formal status of disabled veteran to veterans of Petliura's army in the early 1920s, it did not rule out such a possibility in the future and provided some benefits in the interim. In autumn 1923, Warsaw decided to medically examine servicemen and to classify those who were injured or fell ill between 10 April 1920 and 17 March 1921 based on their degree of disability. Though these were only preliminary examinations that did not result in disability status changes, they indicated that the government was preparing to include Petliura's veterans in the welfare system for Polish disabled soldiers. The system was changing gradually and disabled veterans of Petlura's, Bałaczowicz's, and Poremykin's armies, and Jakowlew's Cossack division were allowed in

military hospitals in July 1925. After the approval of the military medical commission, veterans could be treated in these hospitals, though only when it did not interrupt medical operations for Polish disabled veterans. The status of Petlura's army soldiers completely changed in November 1927 when they were finally included in the category of "Polish disabled veteran" and were granted benefits.⁵⁷¹ Twelve years later confusion still reigned, however. In March 1939 the Ministry of Social Welfare emphasized that disabled servicemen of Petliura's army were not in fact veterans of the Polish army. They belonged to a separate category—"allies" of the Polish army—and Voivodeship officials were warned that in cases of mistaken classification they had to inform the Ministry.⁵⁷² In other words, the criteria for classifying veterans were often unclear and sometimes even bureaucrats did not know to what group disabled servicemen belonged.

Bureaucratic procedures often delayed Petlura's veterans from receiving state assistance by several years. A double leg amputee, Emilian Wąsiwicz, applied for prostheses in March 1923. His old prostheses from 1920 had broken and he was unable to use them. The Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour agreed to repair his prostheses and that he was entitled to receive new ones. However, this decision was never implemented because of financial crises. The officials of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour mentioned that the Ministry of Military Affairs had started to register disabled veterans of Petliura's army and it would grant them the status and benefits of Polish disabled veterans in the future. Meanwhile in June 1924, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour ordered local authorities to investigate the circumstances that had caused Wąsiwicz's disability. Finally, in April 1926 he received a pair of artificial legs as a "civilian invalid";

⁵⁷¹ CAW, I. 300.62.16.

⁵⁷² DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3822, ark. 78.

however, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour refused to provide the second pair because it did not have enough financial resources to provide assistance to “Ukrainian” disabled veterans.⁵⁷³

Similar to other veterans, some disabled soldiers of Petliura’s army applied to the Lviv Voivodeship to request a one-time payment. Grzegorz Nakonieczny, a former soldier of Petlura’s army, lived in the Ukrainian House of Invalids but did not have enough money to buy clothes. A representative of the Lviv district administration noted a favourable report about the desperate material situation of the Ukrainian veteran who could not work.⁵⁷⁴ Despite his residence in an institution established and managed by the Ukrainian community, Nakonieczny received a one-time payment from the Voivodeship in February 1929 and again in December 1929.⁵⁷⁵ However, his next application, at the beginning of 1930, was rejected and the official letter informed him that he was not “entitled to receive state assistance.”⁵⁷⁶ The reason for such a decision was not noted in the documents but this example showed that the policy of the Lviv local administration towards Petliura’s veterans was flexible and their approach could change over time.

As minorities constituted a large part of Poland’s population, failures of the national minority policy had serious consequences for the integrity of the state. Due to its heterogeneous population, Lviv provides an ideal site for the study of interethnic relations in the Second Polish Republic. Besides ethnicity, army affiliation was an important component of disabled veteran identity that further complicated the picture. In this chapter, I focused only on those groups of disabled veterans who belonged to minority groups but whose army affiliation allowed them to receive the status of a “Polish disabled veteran.”⁵⁷⁷ The evidence demonstrates that the minority

⁵⁷³DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1223, ark. 1-71.

⁵⁷⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2473, ark. 11.

⁵⁷⁵ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2473, ark. 9-17.

⁵⁷⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 2473, ark. 18.

⁵⁷⁷ I will study the policy of the Polish state towards the disabled soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army and the response of the Ukrainian community in the next chapter.

policy of the central or local authorities was not rigid and changed over time. The division between self and other was determined not by ethnicity but by one's legal status as a "disabled veteran" who could access state benefits. As some examples showed, this division was not always clear and the same person could belong to different armies and his disability status could change over time. Ukrainian disabled soldiers of the imperial armies were well-integrated in to all-Polish veteran organizations and never complained about ethnic discrimination by their fellow soldiers or the government. Veterans of Petliura's army were a separate group without a defined legal status, but in 1927 they also received state benefits. Though Jewish disabled soldiers of the imperial and the Polish armies had a legal status similar to other veterans, their position was different. Because of anti-Semitism, they established a separate Jewish organization of disabled veterans. Jewish activists complained about numerous cases of discrimination by the central or local government. At the same time, the documents suggest that the Lviv Voivodeship usually used the same criteria regardless of the ethnic background of disabled veterans when granting them some state benefits, particularly onetime-payment.

Conclusion

As disabled soldiers of the various armies returned to Lviv, the central and local administration of the newborn Polish state decided to provide assistance to veterans and reintegrate them into society. The experience of disability of Lviv servicemen was formed in the interplay between various ideological and professional discourses and postwar activism. The organization of the welfare system and management of war disability in the Eastern borderlands was complicated by economic crises and ethnic tensions. The metropolis of the region, Lviv, was the administrative, financial, and symbolic centre and although the central authorities established the main principles

of the system, the work of the Lviv Voivodeship and municipal administrations, as well as some private initiatives, was essential for the implementation of welfare projects. Army affiliation was the most important criteria that determined access to state benefits. At the same time, legislation was not always enforced equally or equitably. Lviv disabled soldiers complained about the subjectivity of the doctors' decisions during medical examinations. Doctors also recognized that their lack of knowledge did not always permit accurate decisions. In addition, Jewish activists accused officials of anti-Semitism and unjust treatment. While many veterans waited years for benefits, corrupt bureaucrats granted the disabled veteran status to others who were not entitled to receive it. The correspondence between officials and the Lviv municipal enterprises showed that city companies openly resisted implementing some legislation and authorities did not compel them to obey the law.

Disabled veterans' organizations tried to monitor the work of bureaucrats and demanded the improvement of the welfare system for former soldiers. Despite the split in the disabled servicemen's movement in the middle of the 1920s, the main factor that was common to various organizations was the struggle for the rights of their members. In addition, the members of the Union of Organizations of Jewish Disabled Veterans, Widows, and Orphans opposed the unjust treatment of former soldiers from within the Jewish community. The relations between authorities and disabled activists changed throughout the interwar period. Thus, veterans' organizations could harshly criticize the government and demanded necessary changes in the 1920s. The slow drift towards authoritarianism in the 1930s impeded Polish civil society. Occasionally, activists could protest and threaten hunger strikes, though such actions were exceptional. The government took control over the movement and even denied the disabled veterans of the Austrian army a new

organization. By the end of the 1930s, disabled soldiers' organizations still represented the disabled servicemen in everyday matters, but they fully supported the policy of the government.

The largest Lviv-based organization of disabled veterans represented men of various religious and ethnic backgrounds who served in different armies. Poles constituted the majority of members but national minorities were also significant. Ethnic differences did not prevent disabled veterans from uniting in the early 1920s. A similar legal status, fighting experiences, and perspectives on disability overcame potential ethnic divisions. Ukrainian members of the Union of Disabled Veterans did not create a separate group but merged into a homogeneous organization. At the same time, it must be noted that because of anti-Semitism inside the Union, Jewish disabled soldiers established a separate organization in the mid-1920s. As a result, they were not well represented in all-Polish organizations. However, some Jews were still members of the Union of Disabled Veterans and others disabled veterans' organizations in Lviv. Moreover, the Union of Blind Soldiers even "assimilated" 7% of its Jewish members and reported them as ethnically Polish. The Invalid Legion was the second organization that was established by former members of the Union. Legion members chose ethnic exclusivity and they accepted only veterans of the Polish army while promoting the idea of their exceptional position in Polish society. The Union of Disabled Veterans and the Invalid Legion represented two competing visions of the Polish nation. The first organization united all disabled veterans based on their legal status while the second chose its members based on affiliation with the Polish army (usually such an affiliation also meant Polish ethnic origin). Similar to broad national trends, the rise of anti-Semitism inside the Lviv branch of the Union alienated Jewish disabled veterans and destroyed the idea of a united disabled veterans' movement.

CHAPTER FOUR

MANGING DISABILITY: THE INSTITUTIONS FOR DISABLED VETERANS IN LVIV

Their home stands lonely on the hill among the wreaths
Made from the black lace of spruces and the white lace of snow,
Strange people lie inside it, far from the shore of an incomprehensible country,
The country of people alive and insane

Marja Kazecka "The House of Invalids"⁵⁷⁸

Like any special architectural arrangements, "the architecture of injury" was a part of urban social space in Lviv, and it shaped the urban experience of disability.⁵⁷⁹ This chapter examines various institutions established in the early 1920s by the Polish government in Lviv to facilitate disabled veterans' transition to civilian life. These included an orthopaedic surgery hospital, a prosthesis factory, a residence for severely disabled veterans, a school for disabled soldiers, a residence for veterans who were studying, and a temporary hostel for disabled servicemen.⁵⁸⁰ All of these facilities were located in a building named the "House of Invalids," which was initially constructed by the Austrian authorities in the middle of the nineteenth century. By the mid-1920s, however, many of these institutions would be closed, victims of the economic crisis.

The Lviv House of Invalids was built in the neo-Romanesque style by Viennese architect Theophil Hansen in 1855-63.⁵⁸¹ It was located in the Żółkiewskie district, an area described in the

⁵⁷⁸ *Biały Orzeł*, January 1, 1930, 7 (my translation).

⁵⁷⁹ John M. Kinder, "Architecture of Injury: Disabled Veterans, Federal Policy and the Built Environment in Early Twentieth Century," in *Veterans' Policies, Veteran Politics: New Perspective on Veterans in the Modern United States*, ed. by Ortiz Stephen R. (University Press of Florida, 2012), 66.

⁵⁸⁰ Derzhavnyi Archiv Lvivskoi Oblasti (DALO), f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 39-39 zv.; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3689.

⁵⁸¹ Mieczysław Orłowicz, *Ilustrowany przewodnik po Lwowie* (Lwów-Warszawa: Książnica-Atlas, 1925), 168-169; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 831, ark. 39; Hansen was one of the architects who replanned

Illustrated Lviv Guidebook (1925) as a “dirty and shabby northern part of the city populated by Jews.”⁵⁸² Despite its location, the House of Invalids was impressive. It consisted of three wings and had about 225 rooms. It was a modern facility with running water, gas, and electricity surrounded by a park, in which a small chapel was built. The 1933 edition of the *Illustrated Lviv Guidebook* listed “the House of Invalids” among major public buildings and praised it for its well-planned space.⁵⁸³ But the building also housed a complex history of social and political relations. By the 1920s, it was a special state facility that was part of the welfare system and embodied the social policy of the Polish government, but at the same time it was an institution inherited from the imperial era. Not only did the Polish authorities use the Austrian building of the “House,” but prewar Austrian disabled veterans continued to reside there, emphasizing the continuity of the House of Invalids. To complicate matters, in the first years after the war the House of Invalids also accommodated various military institutions and offices that were not part of the system of assistance to disabled soldiers.⁵⁸⁴

Ringstrasse; he was the architect of the Austrian parliament, among other buildings. The fortress-like Lviv House of Invalids resembled another of his works, the Vienna Arsenal, and the House manifested the influence of Viennese architectural trends on the provincial capital. (Ihor Zhuk, “The Architecture of Lviv from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Centuries” in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 113; Jacek Purchla, “Patterns of Influence: Lviv and Vienna in the Mirror of Architecture” in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* ed. by John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2005), 134-135).

⁵⁸² Mieczysław Orłowicz, *Ilustrowany przewodnik po Lwowie* (Lwów-Warszawa: Książnica-Atlas, 1925), 164.

⁵⁸³ *Ilustr. Przewodnik po Lwowie* (Lwów: Nakładem Gazety Mieszkaniowej, 1933), 10; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 831, ark. 39.

⁵⁸⁴ CAW, I 300.62.65.



Figure 2. **The Lviv House of Invalids** (The National Library of Poland)

Marja Kazecka's verse, which opens this chapter, suggests that residents of the Lviv House of Invalids were separated from the rest of society. They were far from "the country of alive and insane people." Scholars have indeed argued that such institutions excluded disabled persons from everyday life.⁵⁸⁵ Although new, more inclusive projects based on the concept of the Garden City—which was discussed in Chapter 2—aimed to prevent the segregation of disabled veterans, the state initially chose traditional forms of institutionalization over the implementation of such new models for veterans who needed special care.⁵⁸⁶ According to the poet, this separation was visible in urban

⁵⁸⁵ John M. Kinder, "Architecture of Injury. Disabled Veterans, Federal Policy and the Built Environment in Early Twentieth Century," in *Veterans' Policies, Veteran Politics: New Perspective on Veterans in the Modern United States*, ed. by Ortiz Stephen R. (University Press of Florida, 2012), 66.

⁵⁸⁶ Roman Feliński, *Kwestia mieszkaniowa przyszłości a siedziby i byt invalidów wojennych* Warsaw, 1919; Roman Feliński, "Project założenia kolonji invalidów na obszarze 200 morgowym Fundacji St. Badeniego w gminie Radziechów, w Galicji," *Inwalida Polski* no. 3 (1919): 1-4.

space, as the institution was located on a hill. At the same time, many of the institutions located in the House of Invalids in Lviv (such as a hospital, residences, and hostel) aimed to return disabled servicemen to productive life or provided temporary accommodation to those who visited Lviv, signalling a larger vision of social integration. Disability historians have acknowledged that “disability” itself is a socially constructed notion, and that an individual’s particular impairments “have no meanings in and of themselves.”⁵⁸⁷ Rather, the experience of bodily or psychological difference is mediated by a complex set of social and cultural beliefs and conditions, and this chapter explores how these state facilities and their location influenced veterans’ experience both of disability and of the city and its social order. This chapter will also examine the interplay between various discourses constructed by the disabled veterans, military and civilian authorities, and medical experts, which together formed the Lviv institutions and determined injured soldiers’ experiences of disability—or, to put it differently, how their wartime wounds translated into lives of disablement. But the soldiers were hardly passive, and I will argue that activism and resistance to disciplinary regulations were crucial factors that shaped these state facilities and daily experience of their residents.

The Lviv Hospital of Orthopaedic Surgery

The Lviv Hospital of Orthopaedic Surgery was established in 1919, after the end of the Ukrainian Polish War, within the existing building of the Lviv House of Invalids. The First World War had enormous influence on the development of orthopaedic medicine.⁵⁸⁸ For instance, in

⁵⁸⁷ David A. Gerber, “Introduction: Finding Disabled Veterans in History,” in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012).

⁵⁸⁸ Julie Anderson and Heather R. Perry, “Rehabilitation and Reconstruction: Orthopaedics and Disabled Soldiers in Germany and Britain in the First World War,” *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 30, no. 4 (2014): 227-250; Heather R. Perry, *Recycling the Disabled. Army, Medicine and Modernity in WWI Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014).

Germany, seriously injured soldiers were no longer considered irreversibly or permanently impaired. Moreover, medical experts and authorities believed that disabled bodies could be “recycled” and still prove useful to the war effort.⁵⁸⁹ Orthopaedic medicine was also a crucial factor for those who were supposed to become productive citizens again.⁵⁹⁰ Yet, the story of the foundation of the Lviv Hospital of Orthopaedic Surgery in particular exposes the ambiguous relations between military medical experts and the various levels of the local and central military authorities. It shows that the different groups of officials and experts had different agendas and often lobbied for their personal interests.

The lack of special facilities for treating war injuries in the first months after the Ukrainian-Polish conflict caused serious problems for Lviv’s doctors. In summer 1919, numerous injured soldiers of the Austrian and Polish armies needed immediate medical treatment.⁵⁹¹ Captain Dr. Józef Aleksiewicz suggested opening a hospital of orthopaedic surgery, as well as a prostheses factory; as a military orthopaedic surgeon, he became the hospital’s main promoter. Aleksiewicz was also the owner of a private prostheses workshop. Although he initially transferred his business to the military authorities, the workshop could not provide enough orthopaedic devices for disabled veterans, and Aleksiewicz started to lobby for the idea of a larger hospital of orthopaedic surgery that would provide the full complement of medical services to injured Galician soldiers. Yet Aleksiewicz’s efforts would not always go smoothly. The first misunderstanding between the captain and the local military authorities involved Colonel Karol Kempski, the commandant of the district, and Colonel Jasiński, the commandant of “the House of Invalids.” Their disagreement

⁵⁸⁹ Julie Anderson and Heather R. Perry, “Rehabilitation and Reconstruction: Orthopaedics and Disabled Soldiers in Germany and Britain in the First World War,” *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 30, no. 4 (2014): 227-250.

⁵⁹⁰ Julie Anderson and Heather R. Perry, “Rehabilitation and Reconstruction: Orthopaedics and Disabled Soldiers in Germany and Britain in the First World War,” *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 30, no. 4 (2014): 227-250.

⁵⁹¹ CAW, I 300.62.65

with Aleksiewicz started during discussions about the location of the future hospital. Aleksiewicz insisted that the large Austrian building of the House of Invalids, which could accommodate up to 1500 patients, would be an appropriate place for the hospital of orthopaedic surgery and the prostheses factory. Colonel Kempski, however, believed that it would be inconvenient to establish such a hospital in the Lviv suburb. At the same time, Jasiński had personal reasons to oppose this project: he realized that he would not be able to preserve his position as the commandant of the House of Invalids. Though both military officials were opposed to Aleksiewicz's idea, the military authorities in Warsaw agreed to organize the hospital in the building of the House.⁵⁹²

The conflict continued throughout the practical implementation of the project and soon involved various levels of local and central military authorities. In mid-October 1919, Aleksiewicz visited Warsaw and received permission from the Department of Assistance to Disabled Veterans (within the Ministry of Military Affairs) to organize the hospital and factory in the Lviv House of Invalids. He also received medical supplies for the future hospital. The doctor started renovations on the building in November 1919, and despite the ongoing construction, the hospital began to accept patients. However, because Colonel Kempski refused to provide employees, neither the newly organized medical facility nor the factory employed enough administrative staff. Such obstacles made the task of providing medical assistance to disabled veterans even more challenging. Moreover, Colonel Kempski's and Colonel Jasiński's negative attitudes towards the project meant that the local military bureaucrats tried to delay the establishment of the hospital—in fact, the local military authority even suggested transferring the hospital of orthopaedic surgery and the factory of prostheses to the smaller provincial town Drohobych. But Aleksiewicz deliberately chose to ignore them. In his report from January 1920, Aleksiewicz openly stated that,

⁵⁹²CAW, I 300.62.65.

as a doctor, he diagnosed Colonel Kempski with “*dementja senilis*.” According to Aleksiewicz, Kempski had a number of unrealistic ideas and plans that were impossible to implement, but at the same time, he opposed others’ projects and proposals. His mental condition, the orthopaedic surgeon argued, had a negative influence on his work and resulted in conflict with Aleksiewicz. In his report of May 1920, the doctor levelled a similar accusation against Kempski, though in a less emotional tone.⁵⁹³

The founders of the hospital of orthopaedic surgery had ambiguous relationships not only with local military authorities, but also with Warsaw officials. In order to avoid a long bureaucratic process, Aleksiewicz did not send the documents for the approval of the final renovation plans to the Department of Assistance of the Ministry of Military Affairs. Instead, he started the renovation of the House of Invalids without the permission of central authorities. Although the House of Invalids was under the jurisdiction of the Department of Assistance, the cost of the renovation was covered by the General District Command [*Dowództwo Okręgu Generalnego*]. When the Ministry of Military Affairs became aware of the illegal renovation at the House of Invalids officials started an investigation of Aleksiewicz’s personal relations and financial affairs in Lviv, and in March 1920 a special commission examined Aleksiewicz’s actions and sent a report to the Ministry. The commission reported that it was impossible to track every financial transaction that had been made during the renovation of the House of Invalids. Aleksiewicz was accused of financial fraud, but the chair of the commission, Lieutenant Fryderyk Kamieniobrodzki, also considered his illegal actions to be unintentional, and held that Aleksiewicz had simply tried to finish the renovation as soon as possible in order to provide medical service to disabled veterans. Moreover, the chair of the commission believed that implementing this project would be extremely useful for the Polish

⁵⁹³ CAW, I 300.62.65.

government's image, while suspending the project could cause increase expenses for the state budget in the future. Kamieniobrodzki ultimately advised continuing to provide financial support to Aleksiewicz's renovation plan. Aleksiewicz, for his part, explained that because of a lack of personnel, errors had been made in the bookkeeping, and he accused the local military bureaucrats of intentional resistance to the implementation of the project.

The second governmental commission stated that, despite a lack of permission, the renovation had been conducted according to the established rules. It also underlined that while Aleksiewicz had exceeded his authority, he had done so with the best intentions; the doctor had believed in the necessity of opening the hospital because of the enormous number of disabled veterans. The local military authorities, by contrast, had resisted his plan and had tried to create numerous bureaucratic obstacles. The commission also agreed that because of inflation, delays in the implementation would have caused an increase in the cost of the project and financial losses for the state budget.⁵⁹⁴

After the renovation, the House of Invalids was divided into three departments: the hospital of orthopaedic surgery, the factory of prostheses, and the department for veterans with a high percentage of disability. Dr. Bronisław Skalkowski was appointed director of the House, and Aleksiewicz was appointed deputy-director and head of the hospital. The administration also hired the necessary staff.⁵⁹⁵

In April 1924, Aleksiewicz wrote a short history of the foundation of the hospital and the factory in *Inwalida*. This narrative was very similar to his previous reports. He accused Colonel Kempski of sabotaging the project, and he asserted that he had been correct about Kempski's mental condition. Later the Colonel had been indeed institutionalized in the Kulparkiv Psychiatric

⁵⁹⁴ CAW, I 300.62.65.

⁵⁹⁵ CAW, I 300.62.65.

Hospital. The military authorities in Warsaw had been under the influence of a mentally unstable person, whose delusions could have prevented the establishment of a necessary institution. Aleksiewicz underlined that society had to control bureaucrats and defend disabled veterans, who had sacrificed their health for the good of the state.⁵⁹⁶ Aleksiewicz's story illustrates the tension between the experts and bureaucrats and the lack of communication between them. At the same time, it also shows that the establishment of important state institutions after the war depended on personal initiatives and individual activists who could find the means to achieve their goals. When necessary, officials could turn a blind eye, forgive activists' misconduct, and use their projects to benefit the state.

The Lviv School for Disabled Veterans

Like those of other countries, Poland's rehabilitation programs aimed to return disabled soldiers to productive life. Re-education was one of the most important parts of the rehabilitation process. In order to make injured men into useful citizens, the government established special vocational schools. In theory, the state would provide free accommodation and food for disabled soldiers during the study program, and their newly acquired skills would allow them to find a job after graduation.

Theory, however, did not always translate into practice: the established schools were very different from the planned ones, and practices were substantially different from the imagined models. Disabled Polish veterans publicly complained about the living conditions in medical and educational institutions in the early 1920s, and the Lviv facilities were no exception. In April 1920, for example, the newspaper *Inwalida* published an article about the unbearable conditions at the

⁵⁹⁶Józef Aleksiewicz, "W kwestji inwalidzkiej," *Inwalida*, April 20, 1924, 6-10.

Lviv School for Disabled Veterans. Though the educational institution was located in the building of the Austrian House of Invalids, it was managed separately from the other facilities. The author of the article underlined that the School had nothing in common with Dr. Aleksiewicz's hospital and accused the administration of negligence, emphasizing that the hygienic conditions in both in the school and the temporary hostel for its students were unacceptable. It contended, shockingly, that the disabled soldiers who studied there lived in unheated rooms, and some actually starved.⁵⁹⁷ This, however, was the only negative report about the school; subsequent articles mentioned the launch of new classes but never discussed the everyday conditions in the school.⁵⁹⁸ At the beginning of 1921, for example, fifty disabled veterans started a course that would allow them to work in some governmental institutions. The ceremony of inauguration included religious and national rituals, starting with a Roman Catholic service and ending with the singing of Maria Konopnicka's patriotic song "Rota." Although the ceremony had signs of Polish national ritual, *Inwalida* emphasized that the authorities accepted disabled veterans regardless of their ethnic origin.⁵⁹⁹ Unfortunately, the lack of sources does not allow to reconstruct the daily life in the school beyond these official newspaper reports.

Despite these initial efforts, the financial crisis of the early 1920s had a negative influence on the welfare system for disabled veterans. In 1923, only four years after the Lviv School opened, the government decided to reduce spending for the re-education of disabled servicemen and the School was closed. Officials justified their actions by stating that disabled veterans actually abused the social system. The majority of them left the school during the summer period and returned only

⁵⁹⁷Jak żyją inwalidzi wojenni we Lwowie," *Inwalida*, April 25, 1920, 4-5.

⁵⁹⁸"Ze szkoły inwalidów wojennych we Lwowie," *Inwalida*, January 30, 1921, 7; "Kurs egzekutorów podatkowych," *Inwalida*, February 27, 1921, 8; "Warsztaty szkoły inwalidów we Lwowie," *Inwalida*, June 19, 1921, 8; "Kursy handlowe," *Inwalida*, September 11, 1921, 8.

⁵⁹⁹"Ze szkoły inwalidów wojennych we Lwowie," *Inwalida*, January 30, 1921, 7.

at the onset of winter. According to the report, they were not particularly enthusiastic about learning new skills; rather, disabled veterans simply wanted a nice place to reside during the winter months.⁶⁰⁰ The Ministry of Military Affairs suggested transferring the school to the countryside. However, the new barracks chosen by military officials were located 25 kilometres from the railway tracks and were later declared to be unsuitable for an educational institution and place of residence. At the same time, military authorities used the same arguments about soldiers who were abusing the welfare system and worked on a plan to transfer all disabled veterans from the Lviv “House of Invalids” to alternative facilities.⁶⁰¹

Although the government technically closed down the state-funded school for disabled servicemen, public initiative ensured that it continued to operate for at least a couple more years, alongside the House of Invalids’ other institutions. In June 1925 the military authorities tried once again to transfer the school from the House of Invalids to nearby barracks; this is the last record of the vocational school for disabled veterans in Lviv.⁶⁰² It seems that the ideal of re-education had failed and the government stopped funding the retraining of disabled servicemen in Lviv. Similar institutions were also closed in other cities, likely due to a lack of students. In 1931, for instance, officials decided to shut down the school in Piotrków. In 1932, there were only three re-educational institutions for disabled servicemen remaining in Poland (in Cracow, Niepołomice near Cracow, and Poznań), and disabled activists agitated for the chance to receive training in them.⁶⁰³ Yet at the beginning of 1938, *Inwalida* reported that few disabled veterans were interested in re-education and the government was also considering the closure of the vocational school in

⁶⁰⁰ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.831, 40-43zv.

⁶⁰¹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 65 zv.

⁶⁰² DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 192-192 zv.

⁶⁰³ L. A. “Szkolnictwo zawodowe inwalidów woj.,” *Inwalida*, April 10, 1932, 5-7.

Poznań.⁶⁰⁴ They seem to have followed through: the only institutions mentioned in the report of the Ministry of Social Welfare in March 1939 were schools in Cracow and Niepołomice.⁶⁰⁵ Presumably, the severe economic crisis made it impossible for disabled veterans to compete with able-bodied workers and neither they nor the government considered re-education to be an effective way to improve their well-being. This could be one of the reasons why the state primarily focused its efforts on providing financial compensation for injured soldiers, rather than reintegration into society. The experience of disability was shaped by the push and pull of public services and national finances, and the realities of the labour market.

Hostel for Disabled Veterans

As Lviv was the capital of the Voivodeship, it was the home of the main bureaucratic and medical institutions. The city also became a transitional space and meeting point for urban and rural dwellers, as disabled veterans from the countryside and small towns usually visited Lviv to resolve bureaucratic or medical issues related to their disability status. Disabled veterans were required to complete numerous bureaucratic procedures, medical examinations, and treatments, which increased the mobility of those who lived outside the city, and they often needed accommodation during their stay. In May 1922 the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour issued an order to organize temporary hostels for disabled veterans.⁶⁰⁶ However, in February 1923 a temporary hostel for disabled soldiers was still not established, as the local authorities had been unable to find a suitable space. After negotiation, the military administration agreed to locate the hostel in the House of Invalids, but they underlined that this institution was under the military's

⁶⁰⁴ "Inwalidzi winni korzystać z bezpłatnego szkolenia zawodowego," *Inwalida*, March 1, 1936, 16.

⁶⁰⁵ DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 3729, ark. 112.

⁶⁰⁶ DALO, f. 1, op. 11, spr. 815, 48.

control and that the residents of the hostel had to obey military discipline.⁶⁰⁷ The economic crisis further complicated the situation because construction prices were increasing rapidly and it was difficult even to estimate the costs of a new institution.⁶⁰⁸

Though the temporary hostel was opened at the end of March 1923, the administrators of the House of Invalids faced new problems. Disabled veterans from the countryside often did not follow basic hygiene rules. As a result, lice and various infectious diseases spread in the House. The commandant of the temporary hostel suggested providing disabled servicemen with special clothes for the duration of their stay.⁶⁰⁹ Yet no one intended the hostel to be permanently located in the House of Invalids, especially since the military authorities still planned to use the building for a number of additional institutions. In winter 1924, the military authorities offered to organize a temporary hostel for disabled veterans in the barracks across from the House of Invalids, but the special commission decided that they were unsuitable for disabled soldiers, as the barracks could not be properly heated and the bathrooms were outside the buildings.⁶¹⁰ Despite the decision not to move the hostel out of the House of Invalids in 1924, military authorities still hoped to find a new site for it, and the matter—along with the possible establishment of a military hospital—was discussed in summer 1925. After negotiations between the Ministry of Military Affairs and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour, the latter decided to locate disabled veterans who visited Lviv and needed accommodation for up to two weeks in the barracks near the House. The commission reiterated that the barracks needed renovation and were unsuitable for people with disabilities, but it is not clear from the documents whether they were ever adapted for the

⁶⁰⁷DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 815, ark. 77.

⁶⁰⁸DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 815, ark. 88.

⁶⁰⁹DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 815, ark.94-94 zv.

⁶¹⁰DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, ark. 99-100.

veterans.⁶¹¹ Problems, moreover, continued: at the end of 1928, the military authorities reported appalling hygienic conditions in the Lviv hostel that could cause epidemics, and the special commission recommended various changes and renovations.⁶¹² But yet again, the conditions did not change; in November 1935 the administrators of the hostel informed the Voivodeship about the poor hygiene of the disabled veterans who stayed in their institution and asked about the possibility of additional financial resources to attend to the issue.⁶¹³

At the beginning of the 1930s, this institution was not only a place of temporary residence for veterans who came to the city for short visits, but also a place for Lviv's homeless disabled soldiers.⁶¹⁴ This was not a matter of official policy; rather, it seems that the director broke the rules and tolerated the existence of an illegal residence for homeless veterans alongside the official function of temporary hostel. In April 1930, *Wiek Nowy* published an appeal from the disabled residents located in the barracks next to the House of Invalids. Edwin Wagner, the new director of the House and future head of the Union of Disabled Veterans, was trying to close down the temporary hostel, but the residents were desperate, and they pleaded for Lviv's citizens to intervene and prevent their expulsion. Though Wagner himself was a disabled serviceman, the residents characterized him as privileged and claimed that he could not sympathize with his poor fellow veterans.⁶¹⁵ In other words, the disabled soldiers presented their conflict with the new director of the House of Invalids as a matter of social status. Wagner's attempt to close down the institution was perceived by disabled veterans—many of whom were homeless and there illegally—as a deprivation of their rights.

⁶¹¹DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, ark.190-199.

⁶¹² DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3267.

⁶¹³ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3689, ark. 220-222.

⁶¹⁴ At the of the 1920s, the military hospitals often had a similar role because homeless disabled veterans lived there. This practice was officially forbidden in September 1923 (CAW, I.300.62.16).

⁶¹⁵ "Gorzka dola dla inwalidów wojennych," *Wiek Nowy*, April 9, 1930, 7.

In the late 1930s the hostel was still in operation, but it had been relocated again from the barracks into the building of the House of Invalids.⁶¹⁶ The Lviv Voivodeship also provided closer supervision over the institution and authorized the overnight stay of every person. In August 1938, the director of the House informed the Lviv Voivodeship that many disabled veterans requested permission to spend the night in the hostel but did not have the necessary permit from the Voivodeship. As the administration of the institution could not allow them to stay, veterans slept on the city streets in summer and in the railway station in winter. The director, Adolf Twardowsky, asked for permission to authorize disabled veterans to stay overnight in the hostel and the Voivodeship officials allowed him to accommodate those veterans who came to Lviv too late in the evening to apply for permits. Their visits also had to be related to their disability status, such as attending a mandatory examination by the medical commission or at the hospital.⁶¹⁷

The example of the temporary hostel in Lviv demonstrates that some state institutions that were essential for the “transit” city could not in fact meet basic standards, such as elementary hygienic norms. Moreover, an institution could sometimes change its operating principles unofficially and turn from a hostel to accommodation for homeless disabled soldiers. At the same time, even minor adjustments to bureaucratic procedures could have a serious influence on the wellbeing of disabled servicemen. For instance, a failure to come to the Voivodeship and obtain a permit during office hours could leave disabled veterans who visited Lviv on the street. Because of the high number of medical re-examinations, appeals, and other procedures, many disabled veterans had to come to Lviv, and those who did not have or could not afford accommodation went through yet another marginalizing experience.

⁶¹⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3689, ark. 220-222; DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 3729, ark. 9.

⁶¹⁷ DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 3729, ark. 9-10.

The State House of Invalids

The right to reside in the state House of Invalids was conditional: demobilized male soldiers were allowed to stay in the House only if they were either 75-100% disabled or were veterans with 47-75% disability but could not perform paid labour because of mental disorders and could not receive adequate assistance at home.⁶¹⁸ In summer 1924, 194 disabled veterans resided in the Lviv House of Invalids.⁶¹⁹ The number of institutionalized servicemen decreased over the years; only 86 veterans resided in the institution in 1931. Among them were 61 disabled veterans who had served from 1914-1921, 15 prewar veterans, one participant in the January uprising of 1863-1864, and nine people who did not enjoy the status of disabled veterans. The majority of the residents of the Lviv House of Invalids were 100% disabled.⁶²⁰

Institutionalization in the House of Invalids meant the loss of personal freedoms, such as freedom of movement. Moreover, disabled veterans could be institutionalized against their will. They could not leave the House without the permission of its administration. Residents could be granted “vacations,” but they had to return to the institution or else the authorities would start an investigation.⁶²¹ According to instructions issued in 1929, the Lviv Voivodeship made decisions about the admissibility of disabled veterans to the House of Invalids. The Department of Assistance to War Invalids conducted its own investigations into the applicants’ families, and bureaucrats often delved into a family’s most private and intimate details. Local authorities also refused to

⁶¹⁸“Rozporządzenie Ministra pracy i opieki społecznej poz. 659,” *Dziennik Ustaw* 84, 1923, 969-970.

⁶¹⁹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 1544, 12.

⁶²⁰ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3477, ark. 3-5 zv.

⁶²¹DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 826, ark.14, 73-81; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1553, ark. 98-101 zv.

admit disabled veterans to the House of Invalids when their health conditions were potentially dangerous to other residents of the institution.⁶²²

Before disabled veterans were placed in the House of Invalids, they had often spent years in military hospitals, victims of the convoluted procedures and policies involved in patient transfer, which delayed the process of moving to the House.⁶²³ For example, in spring 1927, the Lviv military hospital informed the Voivodeship that one of its patients, Michał Woźniak, did not need further medical treatment and had to leave the hospital. At the same time, the veteran applied for permission to reside in the Lviv House of Invalids because his family could not care for him. The investigation of the family's finances and communication between the various levels of the local administration took more than two years. Woźniak was granted permission to move to the House of Invalids only at the end of 1929.⁶²⁴

Veterans could also be removed from the House of Invalids in the early 1920s if the medical commissions determined that there was an insufficient connection between military service and the individual's disability. However, in some cases the administration actually suggested prolonging the veteran's stay so that another institution or job might be found for him, since he would otherwise be left homeless and without income. For instance, a soldier of the Polish army, Teodor Kubejko, continued to live in the House of Invalids for years, despite the fact that he was injured not on the battlefield but in a railway accident.⁶²⁵

The various branches of military and civilian administration had different visions of what constituted both institutional care and war-related disability, and in the early 1920s bureaucrats

⁶²²DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.826, ark.13-13 zv., 38-39, 44, 124-124, 134-136; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.504, ark. 33.

⁶²³ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 2535.

⁶²⁴ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 2906.

⁶²⁵ DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 495, ark. 76-122.

often discussed different institutional models for caring for disabled servicemen. In 1923, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour requested that the House of Invalids be transferred to its control.⁶²⁶ Military and civilian medical professionals represented the Ministry of Military Affairs and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour during the negotiations. The representatives of both ministries shared the same opinion about disabled veterans and the institution. The officials agreed that veterans with a high percentage of disability had to be transferred from Lviv to the countryside, and they believed that these new circumstances would force the majority of disabled veterans to find work. In other words, Lviv military and civil bureaucrats considered residents of the House to be loafers who used and abused state benefits. Moreover, they did not approve of the practice whereby disabled patients stayed in the House of Invalids' hospital on the pretext that they were waiting for decisions on their disability status. Officials believed that among the patients were veterans who only "pretended" to be disabled servicemen, and others for whom the connection between their military service and their disability was unfounded.⁶²⁷

At the same time, other reports written by civilian authorities indicated that they opposed the effort by the Ministry of Military Affairs to transfer disabled soldiers from the House of Invalids. The local administration argued that military officials wanted only to use the impressive nineteenth-century "House" building as an officers' residence, even though this utterly contradicted the institution's founding principles. As a possible solution, the representatives of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour proposed transferring the Janowski barracks to the civilian authorities and establishing a residence and school for disabled veterans inside. If the military administration refused to provide the barracks, officials declared that the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour would not consider itself responsible for the welfare of disabled soldiers. The

⁶²⁶ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.831, 40-43 zv.

⁶²⁷DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.831, 40-43 zv, 46.

representatives of the Ministry also underlined that the transfer of disabled veterans to the countryside would have negative consequences for the Polish government. The eastern borderlands and Lviv constituted a special region where the various branches of the government had to cooperate to organize the welfare system for disabled veterans, and any failure of the authorities to support disabled soldiers could be used as anti-Polish propaganda by state enemies.⁶²⁸

Local officials also tried to use the “continuity” argument to keep the House of Invalids open. At the beginning of 1924, the Voivodeship ordered the Director of the Lviv State Archive to find the founding documents of the House of Invalids in the Viennese archive and look through them personally. In June 1925, the Voivodeship presented the specific items that confirmed the establishment of the House by Emperor Franz-Joseph as an institution for disabled veterans.⁶²⁹ Disabled soldiers were caught in a web of politics and history, and these negotiations over the future of the Lviv House of Invalids illustrate the tension between military and civilian authorities and highlight their varying bureaucratic approaches to this issue. After negotiations in March 1924, civilian and military authorities ultimately divided responsibilities over the institutions located in the House. The hospital of orthopaedic surgery and the prosthesis factory were transferred to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour, while the Ministry of Military Affairs kept control over the care of veterans with a high percentage of disability. According to the report, 24 disabled veterans who lived in the hospital had to leave, but they could apply for permission to reside in the institution that stayed under the control of the military bureaucrats.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁸DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.831,65 zv-66.

⁶²⁹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.831, 112, 187-189.

⁶³⁰DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr.831, 118-118 zv.

As the Ministry of Military Affairs took control over the management of veterans with a high percentage of disability, it continued to work on a plan to transfer these residents out of Lviv to the countryside. Among the many factors that influenced the Ministry's plan was the resistance of local disabled veterans' organizations, as well as public opinion. The Lviv Organization for the Assistance to Blind Soldiers ("*Latarnia*"), along with the Małopolska Organization of Blind Soldiers ("*Spójnia*"), and the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic protested to the local authorities in May 1924, and the Union even published a special booklet. Interestingly, the organizations mobilized many of the same arguments that the various authorities had used. The organizations emphasized that the House had been founded as a residence for disabled veterans and had served as such for more than fifty years; they also contended that military authorities did not have the right to evict them. The House of Invalids, moreover, was situated in the region's "metropolis" and could thus offer its residents the conveniences of modern urban life. It would be impossible to provide the same quality of life in any provincial town, and veterans would lack access to adequate medical and cultural services. Disabled veterans would also lose the employment opportunities that came with being in Lviv. In addition, a pastoral location would be an inconvenience for the families, who would have to travel a considerable distance to visit their institutionalized relatives. The activists of "*Latarnia*" stressed the accessibility of the House of Invalids, and they underlined that blind soldiers had already learned the House's physical layout. Activists suspected that the authorities were trying to "hide" them from urban spaces and make them an invisible part of society. In their joint petition, "*Spójnia*" and the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic appealed to their own nascent state's sense of self-consciousness. They explained that the governments of Western European countries had established special institutions for disabled veterans in large cities and capitals, and so too should Poland. They also

accused bureaucrats of wanting to segregate invalids from society. If this were to happen, fellow citizens would forget about disabled soldiers' sacrifices and veterans would lose contact with the rest of the society and the nation.⁶³¹ Veterans were not passive victims in the experience of disability; rather, they effectively appealed to many of the same social and political priorities that had shaped their lives and services in the first place.

Among the defenders of the disabled veterans was Dr. Aleksiewicz. Much like the disabled activists, he believed that servicemen were entitled to assistance and should continue to lobby for their interests. In an article in *Inwalida*, Aleksiewicz emphasized the right of disabled veterans to live in the Lviv House of Invalids, as it was the institution established for them. He argued that while the military authorities might have a financial interest in the conveniently located building with its large park and garden, the space belonged to the veterans. For Aleksiewicz, the Lviv House of Invalids was not only a veterans' residence; it was also an educational and cultural institution that could strengthen the Polishness of the eastern borderlands.⁶³² Thus, the House of Invalids also acquired an additional symbolic meaning. It was a space that represented the Polish state project in Lviv.

Besides written petitions and polemics, disabled veterans publicly discussed the proposed move of the Lviv institution. When one proposal seemed to indicate that the veterans would be transferred to the countryside, and the Lviv House of Invalids converted into private apartments and a hospital for patients with venereal diseases, the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic took action. Among other demands presented during their general meeting in 1924, they passed a motion opposing the plan.⁶³³ This issue was also discussed during the meeting of the Lviv

⁶³¹DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 134-135 zv.

⁶³²Józef Aleksiewicz, "W kwestji inwalidzkiej," *Inwalida*, April 20, 1924, 6-10.

⁶³³"Doroczne walne zebranie Związku Inwalidów Wojennych koło Lwów," *Wiek Nowy*, March 6, 1924, 7.

branch of the Union on 6 July 1924, a meeting that ended tragically when disabled veteran Jan Kos committed suicide in front of his fellow former servicemen.⁶³⁴ The shocking public suicide symbolized the failure of both central and local authorities to provide assistance to disabled veterans.⁶³⁵

Such opposition from disabled veteran organizations and some local bureaucrats was effective, and the House was not closed down; at the end of June 1924, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour reported that it would not be transferred from Lviv.⁶³⁶ But the battle was far from over. Though disabled veterans stayed in the Lviv House of Invalids, in August 1929 the newspaper *Biały Orzeł* stated that the military authorities were still attempting to gain bureaucratic control over the building. According to the anonymous authors, the military had reduced space for disabled veterans and tried to enlarge the military hospital.⁶³⁷ However, aside from this article, there was no further mention of attempts to remove disabled veterans from the Lviv institution.

In 1929, however, the military finally relinquished control. Civilian authorities took over management of the House, and military officers who had private apartments in the facility were evicted. But the transfer was not seamless, and a dispute between the administrators of the House and the military hospital over the attached park lasted about a year. Major Wagner was appointed director of the institution. After an examination of the building, a special commission concluded that it needed serious renovations.⁶³⁸ In summer 1938, the military authorities again tried to regain control over part of the building. Although the local military officials requested the documents that

⁶³⁴ Bolesław Kikiewicz, "Nad grobem ś. p. Jana Kosa," *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 8-10; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1554, ark. 3-4.

⁶³⁵ Bolesław Kikiewicz, "Nad grobem ś. p. Jana Kosa," *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 8; "Tragiczny przebieg wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Lwowska*, 8 July, 1924, 5; "Demonstracyjne samobójstwo inwalidyna wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 9 July 1924, 3; "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sali Sokoła Macierzy," *Wiek Nowy*, 8 July, 1924, 5; "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sokole," *Gazeta Poranna*, 8 July 1924, 3.

⁶³⁶ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 159.

⁶³⁷ TA "W sprawie pezpprawnej rumacji inwalidów z inwalidowni we Lwowie," *Biały Orzeł*, August 15, 1929, 2-3

⁶³⁸ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3689.

confirmed the transfer of the building to the civilian authorities in 1929, employees from the Lviv Voivodeship claimed that they were not able to find them.⁶³⁹ However, it seems that the Voivodeship officials resisted the military authorities. In fact, the transfer of the institution to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in November 1929 was well-documented and these papers are publicly available today.⁶⁴⁰

Everyday Life at the House of Invalids



Figure 3. **The House of Invalids, 1926-1939** (National Digital Archive)

Various rules regulated the operation of the House of Invalids, and its administration established a firm disciplinary regime. In 1925, for example, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare issued nutritional guidelines for House residents. The officials underlined that the menu

⁶³⁹ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3729, 3-8

⁶⁴⁰ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3689

had to consist of a variety of dishes rich in proteins, fats, carbohydrates, and vitamins. The daily norm for veterans was 3643.9 calories and they received, among other products, 800g of bread, 250g of meat, and 18g of coffee. The Ministry also developed guidelines for nutritional substitutions depending upon availability and the season. In addition to food, residents of the House of Invalids also received three cigarettes per day. These norms were not necessarily shared outside the administration, but the nutritional guidelines did have to be displayed.⁶⁴¹ Polish authorities based their institutional care for disabled veterans on a rational scientific approach and they shared some of their guidelines with disabled veterans.



Figure 4. **Kitchen in the House of Invalids** (National Digital Archive)

At the beginning of the 1930s, the administration of the House of Invalids provided food according to the same norms as the military hospitals. In September 1930, the Department of

⁶⁴¹ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1544, ark. 22-26.

Labour and Social Welfare in the Lviv Voivodeship requested a report about food consumption in the Lviv House of Invalids in order to revise the regulations. The reports to the Department submitted by the institution's administration included a sample menu for ten days and a detailed description of components of every dish. According to this menu, there were three different diets for disabled residents of the House: normal, dairy/vegetable, and dairy. Doctors defined the appropriate diet for each veteran and they also could request additional food for some disabled residents.⁶⁴² In 1938 the administration of the House acknowledged that it provided so much food for disabled veterans that they could share it with someone outside the institution.⁶⁴³ In March 1939 a special commission of the State Institute of Hygiene confirmed that the menu at the Lviv House was well-balanced and suggested only minor changes.⁶⁴⁴

The Ministry of Military Affairs documents addressing the state's attempt to regulate daily life in the House before 1929 are not well preserved. However, several newspaper articles paint a rather gloomy picture, including one published in *Inwalida* by a disabled veteran who visited his blind friends in the institution. He claimed that the residents of the House did not have enough food and that their threadbare clothes confined them to the institution and its grounds. Veterans who spoke out, he reported, were expelled from the institution or punished.⁶⁴⁵ In 1929, *Biały Orzeł*, the Lviv newspaper for disabled veterans, wrote about the House's shocking hygienic conditions, its lack of professional care, and the poor quality of its food. The anonymous authors demanded that authorities intervene and provide decent conditions for veterans.⁶⁴⁶ The sorry state of affairs in the House had serious consequences. In August 1928, *Inwalida* reported two suicides in the

⁶⁴² DALO, f. 1, op. 33, spr. 1544, ark. 36-44.

⁶⁴³ DALO, f. 1, op. 33, spr. 1544, ark. 68.

⁶⁴⁴ DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 3729, ark. 112-117.

⁶⁴⁵ Guzik, "List do Redakcji," *Inwalida*, October 25, 1925, 14.

⁶⁴⁶ TA, "W sprawie pezpprawnej rumacji inwalidów z inwalidowni we Lwowie," *Biały Orzeł*, August 15, 1929, 2-3.

Lviv institution.⁶⁴⁷ The same incident was reported in the Ukrainian newspaper *Novyi Chas*, which argued that the suicides were caused by the material hardship endured by the House's disabled veteran residents. The journalist also mentioned that local Polish newspapers had ignored this case.⁶⁴⁸ At that time, the Lviv institution for veterans was still under the control of military bureaucrats, and it was possible that authorities had tried to prevent a public discussion.

Conflicts between residents, with the administration, and with the rules were common in the Lviv House of Invalids after 1929, and their documentation has been well preserved. In general, the numerous clashes and disciplinary violations indicate the failure of the traditional model of institutionalisation. Residents of the institution had different backgrounds and ethnicities, and came from different Polish regions. Some veterans had mental conditions or suffered from alcoholism, both of which often exacerbated conflict with other residents.⁶⁴⁹ In August 1930, the House of Invalids in Płock was closed and 27 disabled veterans were transferred to the Lviv House.⁶⁵⁰ This resettlement of disabled veterans from other regions resulted in an even more heterogeneous environment. But the number of veterans residing at the institution also gradually decreased in the 1930s. In summer 1933, the commission that examined the work of the House administration even recommended a reduction in the number of staff. In the end, in order not to increase the unemployment rate or to dismiss staff during an economic crisis, it was decided to reduce employees' salaries.⁶⁵¹ By the 1930s the Lviv House became the only facility for institutionalized disabled soldiers in Poland, and its work showed the tension between the Polish

⁶⁴⁷“Wcale nie Janie...,” *Inwalida*, August 12, 1928, 5.

⁶⁴⁸ “Samovyvstva v domi derzhavnykh invalidiv u Lvovi,” *Novyi chas*, August 20, 1928, 4.

⁶⁴⁹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 4126, ark. 2-9.

⁶⁵⁰DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 817, ark. 77.

⁶⁵¹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3689, ark. 118-118 zv., 133.

government's managerial strategies and disabled residents' daily resistance to the disciplinary power of this institution.

Disabled activist and journalist Mironowicz published a rare outsider's account of his visit to the Lviv House of Invalids in 1939. Though he was a disabled veteran himself, the visit was a very challenging experience for Mironowicz. He described the "macabre figures" in the park, but the worst place in the House, in his view, was the room for servicemen with severe disabilities. Mironowicz was shocked by faces that looked like "the death masks": "I do not know what to do with myself? Should I ask them something? Or should I leave ashamed?"⁶⁵² It is interesting that the journalist shared his shocking experience of exposure to disabled bodies, which were usually hidden from others, not with the general public but with veteran-readers of the journal for disabled servicemen.

⁶⁵² Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Błaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939), 11-12.



Figure 5. **The House of Invalids, 1926-1939** (National Digital Archive)



Figure 6. **Park near the House of Invalids, 1926-1939** (National Digital Archive)

Though many residents voluntarily chose to live in the Lviv House, some were admitted against their will. State officials, guided by regulations and expert advice, could decide disabled soldiers' futures for them. For instance, in August 1930, Włodzimierz Skwirski was admitted to the Lviv House of Invalids despite his wish to live with his fiancée. After treatment in a psychiatric hospital, local bureaucrats had decided to transfer Skwirski to the House. They investigated the veteran's fiancée's background and concluded that she was not reliable enough to care for her

disabled partner, who was addicted to morphine. However, in April 1931, Lviv Voivodeship authorities sent a request to transfer Skwirski to another institution: his addiction to morphine rendered him ineligible for residence in the House. The veteran, however, wished to stay in the institution and he even demanded a separate room for himself and his wife. The local authorities refused to approve his request.⁶⁵³ Moreover, Skwirski violated the House of Invalid's rules when his wife and dog moved in with him, and other disabled veterans, who lived in the same room, opposed this violation of their personal space.⁶⁵⁴ The relationship between Skwirski and the House administrators deteriorated further after he accused them of financial fraud. Skwirski was finally expelled from the institution in August 1931.⁶⁵⁵ His story illustrates how some disabled veterans tried to lead a "normal" life and ignored the institution's rules. They demanded accommodations that the institution simply could not provide. At the same time, while the administration had the power to admit or expel people from the House of Invalids, it took several months to evict Skwirski.

Disabled residents of the Lviv House of Invalids often suffered from various mental disorders.⁶⁵⁶ In August 1923, 74 war invalids resided in the Kulparkiv Psychiatric Hospital in Lviv, and they constituted only about one quarter of institutionalized disabled veterans.⁶⁵⁷ According to a report from 1931, among 61 disabled residents of the Lviv House of Invalids who had served in the military between 1914 and 1921, ten had various mental disorders.⁶⁵⁸ Sometimes their conditions worsened and their behaviours became dangerous to other veterans and the employees of the institution. In April 1931, the administration of the House requested that Marjan Fischbach

⁶⁵³ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 826, ark. 73-81, 88, 100.

⁶⁵⁴ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 826, 106-106 zv.

⁶⁵⁵ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 826, ark. 73-81, 88, 100.

⁶⁵⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1553, ark. 79; Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Błaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939), 11-12.

⁶⁵⁷ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1544, ark. 12.

⁶⁵⁸ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3477, ark. 3-5 zv.

be transferred to the psychiatric hospital. According to their report, Fischbach had a “demoralizing” influence on other disabled residents and even threatened to shoot the director of the institution and his family.⁶⁵⁹ Two months later, in June 1931, Twardowski, the director of the House of Invalids, wrote to the Lviv Voivodeship about the veteran Kazimerz Klimczak, who had previously resided in the House but whose behaviour had resulted in him being transferred to the Kulparkiw Psychiatric Hospital. The administration of the House of Invalids refused to admit Klimczak to their institution again because of his dangerous history. Before institutionalization in the Kulparkiw hospital, the disabled veteran had threatened fellow-veterans and nurses with a knife and a hammer. Considering that a dozen disabled soldiers might reside in one room, such behaviour caused serious concerns for the administration.⁶⁶⁰

Institutionalized disabled veterans usually lacked close relatives or family members able to care for them. A few, however, were married but simply could not stay in their homes. In the early 1920s several married disabled soldiers even tried to support their children and spouses. They applied for a one-time payment in order to help their families cope with financial problems.⁶⁶¹ A payment of this kind was granted to veteran Piotr Flügel in May 1923. In his letter to the Lviv Voivodeship, the disabled resident of the House mentioned that he needed money to open a cigarette kiosk that would allow his wife to have a source of income.⁶⁶² As the traditional division of the gender roles assigned husbands to the role of breadwinner, disabled veterans tried to find ways to live up to this responsibility.

⁶⁵⁹ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4131, ark. 23-23 zv.

⁶⁶⁰ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1553, ark. 79-88 zv.

⁶⁶¹ DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 1193, ark. 41-47; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 1179, ark. 25-45.

⁶⁶² DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 1179, ark. 44-45.

In many cases, veterans themselves—and occasionally their relatives—applied for residence in the House.⁶⁶³ However, family members could also request that veterans be released from the House. In cases where local authorities recognized relatives as suitable caretakers, they allowed veterans to leave the institution.⁶⁶⁴ Some disabled veterans, however, preferred to stay in the Lviv House of Invalids.⁶⁶⁵ For instance, Piotr Pycek, a former soldier of the Polish Legion, moved to the House in 1935, complaining that his wife was starving him. Although he left the House of Invalids in 1936 and moved back with wife, he again applied for permission to return at the beginning of 1938. Pycek informed the authorities that his wife, Albina, had taken his allowance but had not taken care of him.⁶⁶⁶ In other cases, the wife not only took the veteran's money but also had other lovers and pursued an “immoral lifestyle.”⁶⁶⁷ In times of economic crisis and unemployment, disabled veterans' allowances became a very important source of income for some families. Relatives sometimes took advantage of disabled soldiers, and institutionalization was a way for these men to defend themselves.

Some disabled veterans could be re-admitted to the Lviv House of Invalids several times. Józef Stach did not have family that could take care of him, and he moved into the House in January 1938. However, in October of the same year, he asked the Voivodeship Department of Invalid Affairs for permission to leave the institution. Stach explained that he felt nostalgic and wanted to return to his native village. In July 1939, the veteran applied once again for permission to reside in the House of Invalids, as he found he was unable to live alone and needed professional care. In contrast to his previous statement, Stach claimed that he had left this institution the previous year

⁶⁶³ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 568, ark. 130; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 1553; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 1557; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3302; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4131, ark. 1.

⁶⁶⁴ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3092, ark. 46-49.

⁶⁶⁵ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 565, ark. 31-46; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 1553, ark. 140; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1074, ark. 19.

⁶⁶⁶ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 565, ark. 31-46.

⁶⁶⁷ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1074, ark. 19, 21.

because of troubled relationships with other veterans, but this time he was going to stay permanently in the House. Local authorities allowed Stach to return to the institution.⁶⁶⁸

Although violation of the rules could be a reason to remove war veterans from the House of Invalids, improper behaviour in other institutions did not always factor in to the House's admissions. Józef Służewski was discharged for bad behaviour from the invalid hostel in Cracow. Later, the veteran resided in the Lviv House of Invalids, and the Voivodeship authorities were originally planning to expel him from the institution because of his previous record. However, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare said it would consent to this expulsion only if he violated the regulations of the Lviv House.⁶⁶⁹

Like other aspects of everyday life in the House of Invalids, visits from relatives and friends were regulated. When five disabled veterans asked permission to have visitors in their rooms twice per week, the Voivodeship officials refused to accede. These residents reported that they were unable to move without wheelchairs and it was inconvenient for them to meet visitors in the special room downstairs. However, the doctor testified that the disabled veterans in fact did have wheelchairs and could move downstairs using the electric elevator without harm to their health. Moreover, some of them went to cinemas, theatres, or the park near the House, so they should certainly be able to meet their visitors in the special room.⁶⁷⁰ These strict regulations divided the space of the institution into "private" and "public" parts. Families and friends could not see the private part, which was open only to residents and employees of the House. This denied the veterans the privacy to meet with friends and relatives outside the designated public meeting space.

⁶⁶⁸DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 565, ark.89-104 zv.

⁶⁶⁹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3477, ark. 115.

⁶⁷⁰ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3729, ark. 18-20.

Tensions continued in the form of ethnic conflict. Technically, the administration of the Lviv House of Invalids did not classify servicemen according to their nationality or army affiliation. Rather, residents' lists indicated only the percentage of disability and the diagnosis of House residents.⁶⁷¹ But while the administration showed little concern about the background of disabled servicemen, national and regional divisions caused many conflicts. For instance, although veterans of Petliura's army were allowed to reside in the Lviv House of Invalids, they did not always have a pleasant stay. In September 1931, for example, the Central Ukrainian Committee in Warsaw requested that two Ukrainian veterans, who were about to be expelled, be allowed to remain temporarily in the House. The members of the Committee needed time to find them another residence. Antoni Slusarczyk, a veteran of Petliura's army and Atrachowicz Szymon, an 85-year-old veteran of Denikin's and Petliura's armies, were not typical residents of the Lviv institution (and veterans in general). They had been transferred from the Płock House to the Lviv House of Invalids in 1930. After this transfer, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare decided that the former soldiers did not have the right to reside in the Lviv institution. The Ministry reasoned that the veterans had served in Petliura's army before it became an ally of Poland and that legally they were not entitled to the status of disabled veteran. The local authorities informed the Ministry that the residents of the House of Invalids and the other local disabled activists were unsatisfied that disabled servicemen who did not have the official status of "Polish disabled veterans" were allowed to stay there.⁶⁷² Legal regulations had likely governed the course of events, however; perhaps the reason for their expulsion was more prosaic. Indeed, it seems that the key reason for the departure of these two Ukrainian veterans stemmed from a nationalist-based personality conflict between Slusarczyk and a soldier of the Polish army, Adam Gryglewski. Slusarczyk was

⁶⁷¹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 3477, ark. 3-5 zv.

⁶⁷² DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3477, ark. 6, 14-41.

a Ukrainian patriot and openly expressed his political views. He publicly declared his desire for Lviv to become a Ukrainian city. Such statements irritated Gryglewski and resulted in a serious conflict between the two residents. On 20 February 1931, Slusarczyk was listening to a Ukrainian record when the furious Polish veteran smashed the recording and beat him. Eight months later, Slusarczyk left the Lviv House of Invalids and was directed to the Central Ukrainian Committee in Warsaw. The other disabled Ukrainian veteran, Atrachowicz, was forced to move from Lviv to Kalisz at the end of May 1932.⁶⁷³

Although disabled veterans of various ethnic origins were accepted in the House of Invalids, Jewish veterans rarely resided in this institution. In May 1936, Leopold Steier wrote to the Lviv Voivodeship that he was the only Jewish veteran among the total of 57 residents in the House. Steier complained that he did not feel welcome in this environment and asked for a transfer to a Jewish facility with Kosher food and co-religionists. The Jewish disabled veteran was transferred first to the Jewish institution for elderly people in Przemyśl; after his second transfer request, Steier was moved to a similar institution near Poznań.⁶⁷⁴

The political climate outside the institution also influenced the interethnic relations inside it. In the late 1930s, some disabled residents denounced their fellow veterans as German, Ukrainian, or Soviet sympathizers.⁶⁷⁵ In July 1939, for example, the Pole Franciszek Nowak and the Ukrainian Cyryl Kowalczyk accused each other of anti-Polish views, as well as German and Ukrainian sympathies.⁶⁷⁶ Veterans' reports, moreover, described not only national but also regional differences between disabled servicemen in the Lviv House. In September 1938, Józef Irla, a former soldier of the Polish army, informed the Voivodeship that the so-called "Warsaw

⁶⁷³ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3477, ark. 14-41.

⁶⁷⁴ DALO, f. 1, op. 33, spr. 4126, ark. 21-95.

⁶⁷⁵ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 99-99 zv.

⁶⁷⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 99-99 zv.

group” of disabled veterans was linked to Lviv criminal circles and that it terrorized other residents of the institution.⁶⁷⁷ Many veterans also believed that one’s region of origin determined one’s political orientation. For instance, a person from Poznań would be labelled a German sympathizer because this city had previously belonged to the Second Reich.⁶⁷⁸ At the same time, these reports show that, despite institutionalization, disabled veterans were not isolated from society and were well aware of political developments outside the House.

Disabled servicemen often resisted the disciplinary regime of the Lviv House of Invalids. Alcohol consumption and prostitution were the main reasons for the intervention of local authorities.⁶⁷⁹ Scholars have emphasized that alcoholism was a common problem for institutionalized veterans, especially as such institutions turned them into passive “artifacts.”⁶⁸⁰ Alcohol became an escape from a depressing reality.⁶⁸¹ Some residents acknowledged their alcohol addiction and asked for treatment in special institutions.⁶⁸² Both the administration of the Lviv House and disabled residents themselves also reported numerous cases of intoxication that resulted in conflicts with other dwellers and employees of the institution.⁶⁸³ For instance, in January 1931, veteran Piotr Hołuj was supposed to spend a vacation with his family in Cracow; instead, he stayed outside the House of Invalids in Lviv and pursued an “immoral lifestyle.”⁶⁸⁴ Moreover, during his vacation a drunken Hołuj would occasionally visit the House and terrorize other disabled

⁶⁷⁷ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728.

⁶⁷⁸ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728, 4.

⁶⁷⁹ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 50, 59-59 zv., 62-65; 105; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728, ark. 3-7.

⁶⁸⁰ James Marten, “Nomads in Blue: Disabled Veterans and Alcohol at the National Home,” in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012).

⁶⁸¹ James Marten, “Nomads in Blue: Disabled Veterans and Alcohol at the National Home,” in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012).

⁶⁸² DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 59-59 zv.

⁶⁸³ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1563, ark. 12-12zv.; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 2-3, 23zv.-24, 50, 105.

⁶⁸⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1563, ark. 12-12zv.

servicemen and House employees. As a result, Wagner, the director of the House, asked him to leave the institution. He was finally expelled from the House in March 1931 after he stole money from Wagner's private apartment and robbed several people in the city.⁶⁸⁵

A special committee that examined the work of the Lviv House of Invalids in December 1938 informed the Voivodeship that reports about rampant alcohol abuse and fornication in the House were unfounded.⁶⁸⁶ However, in June 1939, House administrators requested permission to hire an additional watchman. On the evening of June 16, two unknown women fought inside the institution. One of them had been invited by a resident, so the administration suggested tighter rules on visitors.⁶⁸⁷ Yet, a similar incident happened again. On the morning of 15 August 1939, two drunk disabled veterans and three prostitutes were detained in the House's park. They not only disturbed the public peace but also resisted arrest.⁶⁸⁸

While they asserted their independence, residents of the institution could technically participate in the "outside world" only with the permission of the administration. The urban space stood in contrast to the regulated world of the closed institution, and the city was often a space of "sin, immorality and pleasures," where disabled veterans consumed alcohol and spent time with prostitutes.⁶⁸⁹ At the same time, the boundaries between behaviour outside and consequences inside were permeable, as the House would alert local police and authorities about its residents' misbehaviours, and the House's administrators were also alerted to the improper behaviour of disabled veterans outside the institution. By the end of 1938, the Voivodeship questioned the administration of the Lviv House of Invalids about disabled beggars; in response, the

⁶⁸⁵ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1563, ark. 12-12zv., 15.

⁶⁸⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1544, ark. 67 zv.-68

⁶⁸⁷ DALO, f. 1, op. 34, spr. 3729, ark. 121.

⁶⁸⁸ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark.62-65.

⁶⁸⁹ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 1563, ark. 12-12zv.

administration denied that residents of the institution begged on the city streets.⁶⁹⁰ Lew Kaltenbergh, a future Polish writer, lived near the House of Invalids as a teenager and used to spend time in the park near the institution. In his memoirs, Kaltenbergh emphasized that despite the fact that the House was fenced in by barbed wire, the shabby fencing had never been an obstacle for those who wanted to leave or enter the grounds of the institution. Moreover, an illegal “club” where semi-criminals gathered was located close to the facility, and one of the House residents, Miron Łegkij, was its “majordomo.” Amputee Łegkij, “a gadabout and cynic,” was bored by life in “the nursing home” and was sneaking out in order to join a more entertaining group of companions in the “club.”⁶⁹¹

As institutionalization still limited mobility, servicemen frequently opposed the House’s tight regulations. Bolesław Nosarzewsky often stayed overnight outside the institution. In March 1939, Twardowski, the director of the House of Invalids, stated that he would inform the Voivodeship about Nosarzewsky’s behaviour. The director mentioned that he could no longer turn a blind eye because a disabled resident had reported to local authorities that he had been too lax and unable to maintain discipline in the House.⁶⁹² In other words, Twardowski openly admitted that he had ignored rule violators and permitted residents more freedom than what was allowed by regulations, but bureaucratic pressure might soon change that. Moreover, several months later, another resident of the House requested permission to spend three nights per week with his female friend. He argued that he was a young man and that life in the institution was too monotonous.⁶⁹³ In other words, veterans aimed to receive some of the benefits provided by the House while also having some semblance of a normal life.

⁶⁹⁰ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 1544, ark. 68.

⁶⁹¹ Lew Kaltenbergh, *Ułamki słuźzonego lustra. Dzieciństwo na kresach. Tamten Lwów*. (Warsaw, 1991), 71-72.

⁶⁹² DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3092, ark. 32.

⁶⁹³ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3092, ark. 102.

Though the House of Invalids' administration was not always responsible for the shortcomings of the welfare system, disabled soldiers were prone to blame it for them. In May 1931, the director of the House of Invalids reported to the Department of Invalid Affairs in Lviv Voivodeship about delays in the payment of the allowance for the institution's residents. He underlined that his requests to improve the situation had not resulted in positive changes, and that disabled veterans had accused the administration of the House of being responsible for those delays.⁶⁹⁴ Conflicts between administrators and residents could have serious consequences. For example, in June 1931 the employees of the House suspected that some disabled veterans had obtained weapons. As a result, Lviv police searched disabled resident Fischbach, but they did not find a gun. In fact, not only the veteran who had been searched, but also some other residents, were shocked by actions of the House administration and police. Fischbach threatened to appeal to Piłsudski's wife, while a disabled soldier named Jan Piekieski was going to report these events to one of the Lviv newspapers.⁶⁹⁵ In spring 1939, Twardowski informed the Voivodeship that some disabled veterans were threatening him. The authorities had not granted a one-time payment to disabled soldier Franciszek Struś at the end of March 1939, and according to the director, the disappointed resident came to his office and criticized the government.⁶⁹⁶ As Twardowski tried to placate him, Struś threatened that the director would soon be unable to work in the institution.⁶⁹⁷

In June 1939 the Ministry of Social Welfare warned the administration that an inspection of the House was imminent. Warsaw bureaucrats were aware of the conflicts in the Lviv House and insisted that residents of the institution had to behave in accordance with the regulations and

⁶⁹⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 88 zv.

⁶⁹⁵ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4131, ark. 23-23 zv.

⁶⁹⁶ When Struś was accepted to the House of Invalids in November 1937, the administration worried about his mental health, drug use, and alcohol abuse. His difficulties with anger control were a result of his mental condition and Struś was honest about his health issue. (DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3404).

⁶⁹⁷ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3092, ark. 6-6 zv.

that all troublemakers had to be expelled.⁶⁹⁸ However, a strict administrative policy could cause dissatisfaction and a desire for revenge among veterans. For example, disabled residents could accuse the administration of various crimes. Disabled veteran Józef Irla had been one of the major troublemakers in the House and he was expelled from the institution in July 1939. In his letter to the prime minister, he accused the director of embezzlement, leading Warsaw officials to conduct an investigation in the Lviv House of Invalids one week before the start of the Second World War. Though central authorities took this accusation seriously and requested the necessary information, the Lviv Voivodeship confidently concluded that Adolf Twardowski had not committed a crime.⁶⁹⁹

Still, the administration of the Lviv House of Invalids continued to fail in its efforts to maintain discipline, and it even tolerated some bending of the rules during the years before the Second World War. The House's model of institutional care needed serious revision. At the same time, periodicals frequently described life in the House of Invalids differently. Mironowicz, one of the activists of the Lviv branch of the Invalid Legion, wrote about the House for an article in *Front Inwalidzki* at the beginning of 1939. He was well aware of the institution's challenges. Mironowicz stressed that even though Twardowski was a disabled veteran himself he was a very capable director. He acknowledged that it was hard to work with various groups of disabled veterans of the imperial and the Polish armies who often had mental disorders, but stressed that Twardowski had been able to establish "exemplary discipline and order" in the House.⁷⁰⁰ The director described his job to Mironowicz: "It is hard and exhausting work. A person often faces various nuisances and unfounded criticism, remarks or accusations but there are also bright

⁶⁹⁸ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3822, ark. 47.

⁶⁹⁹ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728, ark. 3-7; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3729, ark. 124-126; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3092, ark. 21-32, 43, 104.

⁷⁰⁰ Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939), 11.

minutes.”⁷⁰¹ Although Twardowski and Mironowicz revealed that the administration faced some problems, they tried to present the Lviv House of Invalids as a well-managed institution and a successful state project.

Conclusion

The fortress-like House of Invalids emerged as a visible urban landmark in a poor suburb of Lviv in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was a present from the emperor to injured men who had sacrificed their health for the Habsburg monarchy. At the same time, even the location of the House—built on a hill and surrounded by a park—emphasized the separation of disabled veterans from the rest of the city’s inhabitants. After the proclamation of an independent Polish state, the government organized a welfare system for disabled servicemen of the imperial and the Polish armies, and the institutions located in the former Austrian “House of Invalids” in Lviv became a part of this project. As an outcome of the rehabilitation discourse of the period, they were supposed to provide assistance in helping disabled veterans adapt to civilian life, but some of the institutions struggled throughout the interwar era with challenges that ranged from maintaining safe hygienic conditions to keeping ethnic tensions at bay. The challenges were compounded by the complex nature of the institutions’ clients. The majority of the beneficiaries of these institutions belonged to the poorest and most disadvantaged groups of society. Demobilized soldiers usually resided in these facilities (except the House of Invalids) for a relatively short period and they returned home after their medical treatment, re-education, or brief city visits. Moreover, because of bureaucratic procedures, new mobility patterns emerged and many veterans who lived in the villages and small towns had to visit Lviv, but they were not always

⁷⁰¹ Mikołaj Mironowicz, “Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej,” *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939), 12.

able to find accommodations in the special hostel. As a result, their experience of disability involved also the experience of homelessness in the large metropolis.

Activism was one of the important factors influencing these institutions during the first decade after the wars. Disabled servicemen were not passive beneficiaries; rather, they struggled for their rights. As a result, they participated in the formation of the public sphere, and in numerous ways. While some public campaigns were led by disabled veterans' organizations, for example, others, such as the letters of homeless disabled soldiers to *Wiek Nowy*, were grassroots initiatives. Moreover, both disabled veterans and experts promoted ideas that shaped the rehabilitation discourse and the facilities that were part of it. All activists shared the idea that disabled veterans were entitled to assistance from the government, which was supposed to fund these institutions and manage them in the most effective way for veterans. Dr. Aleksiewicz, who believed that disabled servicemen had to pressure and control bureaucrats, openly violated the regulations, but the military authorities forgave his misconduct because his project was considered beneficial to the state. Sometimes the tensions between the various levels of military and civilian authority allowed activists to win their case. At the same time, disabled activists' or experts' lack of support for some projects could contribute to their failure. The re-educational discourse, for example, did not gain much popularity among disabled soldiers, and they did not protest the closure of the special vocational school.

In the early 1920s, the military and civilian authorities debated different approaches to the institutionalization of veterans, and some officials even suggested purging the urban space of the architecture of injury and transferring the Lviv House of Invalids to the countryside. They considered disabled veterans to be welfare profiteers and believed that the new rural circumstances would force former servicemen to find alternative sources of income. Both disabled veterans'

organizations and some civilian officials opposed their isolation in the countryside, and they struggled to find alternative spaces for disabled veterans in the metropolis. Both groups also used the argument of continuity of rights. As the Austrian emperor had first established the House of Invalids for disabled veterans, these men still had the right to live there; despite the dissolution of empire, the new Polish state had to absorb the imperial tradition. In some cases, they actually presented institutionalized life in the urban centre as the life of a person incorporated into society, rather than exiled to a remote rural area. Indeed, although everyday life in the state House of Invalids was supposed to be regulated and rule bound, the reality was quite different. Many residents were not completely isolated from everyday urban practices; rather their behaviours were rather shaped by both the life inside and outside the House. Sometimes this had negative consequences: disabled veterans often resisted the disciplinary regime of the institution and the state House of Invalids turned into a site of various conflicts. At the end of 1930s, the administration could not maintain discipline consistently and the Lviv House of Invalids became an example of the failure of the state-promoted institutionalization model. Disabled veterans' experiences had been shaped by a complex combination of individual initiative, group activism, ethnic tension, and political, fiscal, and military priorities, a combination that the vision of rehabilitative institutionalization had proved too simplistic to manage.

CHAPTER FIVE

“WE WILL CARRY THE LEGLESS AND FEED THE ARMLESS”: LVIV’S UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY AND DISABLED VETERANS OF THE GALICIAN ARMY

The Polish Invalid Act of 1921 excluded disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army from the newly established welfare system, as they were soldiers who had fought against the Polish state. They were left without the government’s financial support and the dominant Polish narrative described them as enemies of the state. “The defence of Lviv” became the most important aspect of the Polish national myth in interwar Lviv. This myth resulted in an elaborate system of political rituals and texts where former soldiers of the Galician army were depicted as the “other.” The Ukrainian community, too, engaged in national mythmaking. Lviv had symbolic meaning for Poles and Ukrainians, both of whom created different national narratives before the First World War. However, in the 1920s and 1930s, Lviv was transformed from a city of multiple meanings for multiple peoples into a battleground of contested memory discourses that served to radicalize the city’s ethnic communities.⁷⁰²

Invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army became part of a Ukrainian national mythology and were depicted as the embodiment of sacrifice for Ukrainian independence. An article in a Ukrainian journal *Litopys Chervonoi Kalyny* argued that, by their very existence, Ukrainian invalids were making a great contribution to the future of Ukrainian society.⁷⁰³ The author considered their bodies to be “site of memory” that recalled the national struggle. Through the act of organizing assistance for disabled veterans of the Galician army, the Ukrainian community constructed a counter-memory and participated in commemorative rituals.

⁷⁰² Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914-1947: Violence and Ethnicity in Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 220-248.

⁷⁰³ Z diial'nosty ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi,” *Litopys chervonoi kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1931): 15.

After World War I, the majority of Western European and North American countries established social security programs to provide assistance to disabled demobilized soldiers. However, some governments adopted different approaches and did not provide sufficient support for war invalids. The British model was one such example where charity organizations were in charge of rehabilitation programs.⁷⁰⁴ In other words, the Ukrainian case was not unique and activists established systems of the type that complemented or replaced state assistance in other countries. The main difference between these cases was the relation between civil society and the authorities. In contrast to Britain, the public sphere in Poland was restricted by the government. Ukrainians did not have their own national state and the minority policies of the Polish government limited the activity of Ukrainian organizations.

At the same time, Ukrainian civil society did not emerge in a void but it was one of the aspects of imperial heritage. The second part of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century was an era of the steady development of civil society in Austro-Hungary and this development had enormous influence on the growth of national movements inside the empire.⁷⁰⁵ Ke-chin Hsia shows that even when the state took full control over the various spheres during the First World War, civil society played an important role, especially in the realm of medical care and welfare provision. Moreover, grass root initiatives were a significant factor in organizing assistance to disabled veterans in wartime Austria.⁷⁰⁶ Thus, the development of Ukrainian civil

⁷⁰⁴Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001).

⁷⁰⁵ Gary B. Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914," *Central European History* 40 (2007): 241-278.

⁷⁰⁶ Ke-chin Hsia, "Who Provided Care for Wounded and Disabled Soldiers? Conceptualizing State-Civil Society Relationship in First World War Austria," *In Other Fronts, Other Wars. First World War Studies on the Eve of the Centennial* ed. by Joachim Bürgschwentner, Matthias Egger and Gunda Barth-Scalmani (Brill, 2014), 303-328.

society in Poland continued in the political reality of the 1920s and 1930s and the work of the Ukrainian intelligentsia was a natural continuation of this previous activism.

The Ukrainian national narrative claimed that it was not only a national obligation but also an honour to establish organizations and institutions that supported Ukrainian disabled veterans. The activists proclaimed that caring for war invalids, together with the support of the Ukrainian educational associations “Ridna Shkola” (“Native School”) and “Prosvita,” (“Enlightenment”) were the main tasks of the Ukrainian community. It was an act of gratitude towards those who had sacrificed their health in the struggle for an independent Ukrainian state.⁷⁰⁷ In 1922, the activists created the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids that sought to replicate the state welfare system and establish a social security program for Ukrainian disabled veterans. As Roman Kupchyn'skyi, a Lviv poet, writer, journalist and a former officer of the Ukrainian Galician army promised, the community was going to “carry the legless and feed the armless.”⁷⁰⁸ Lviv, home to modern infrastructure and a sizeable Ukrainian intelligentsia, became the center of the movement. Activists, material resources and institutions concentrated in the city and it was challenging to establish its local branches in other towns of the region. At the same time, this movement had a transnational dimension, as the Ukrainian community abroad became an active participant. The activity of the Ukrainian intelligentsia will be considered here as a special case of civil society. This chapter will explore the many constructed meanings of the label “Ukrainian invalid” as used by activists and how their understandings of the social security program for disabled veterans changed over two decades. Through the study of the interaction between the Ukrainian Association

⁷⁰⁷ Semen Ukrains'kyi, “Invalidy UGA i ukrains'ka suspilnist',” *Dilo*, November 1, 1925, 2; Zynovii Lysiatyn'skii, “Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendarna 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh invalidiv, 1923), 82, 86; “Pamiataite pro ukrains'kykh invalidiv. Vstupajte masovo v chleny Tovarystva dopomohy invalidam,” *Dilo*, October 31, 1929, 2

⁷⁰⁸ Roman Kupchyn'skyi “Ukrains'kym invalidam,” *Svoboda*, July 7, 1929, 2.

for Aid to Invalids and the authorities, I will analyze the more nuanced aspects of the relationships between government and civil society in interwar Poland and show that these relationships were an important aspect of state-building in interwar Poland.

The Formation of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids

After the Ukrainian-Polish War many soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army stayed in prisoner of war camps. In April 1920, the Ukrainian newspaper *Hromads'ka Dumka (Public Opinion)* reported that among those soldiers were invalids in Wadowicy Camp and that they could be freed. However, because of their ill-health disabled Ukrainian veterans were not able to travel alone. The Polish authorities, thus, allowed the relatives of these invalids to come to the camp and take them home.⁷⁰⁹ Many Ukrainian invalids with severe disabilities were also returning from Dnipro Ukraine.⁷¹⁰ Both categories of disabled soldiers were often in desperate financial straits and needed medical treatment.

The first Ukrainian institution that provided assistance to disabled veterans was the Ukrainian Citizens' Committee in Lviv. It was created at the beginning of November 1918 when the Ukrainians took control of the city. After the retreat of the Galician army, the Citizens' Committee became the only Ukrainian humanitarian institution that was allowed to provide assistance to the Ukrainian population. Stepan Fedak, the director of the largest Ukrainian insurance company "Dnister", became the head of this organization. Bureaucratically, it was divided into several sections with different responsibilities. The Samaritan Section, which consisted of female volunteers, provided assistance to Ukrainian soldiers in Lviv hospitals, prisoners of war, and disabled combatants. Some Ukrainian invalids who were in Lviv hospitals

⁷⁰⁹ "Pro Polonnykiv invalidiv," *Hromads'ka dumka*, April 26, 1920, 4.

⁷¹⁰ Osyp Bodak, "Spohady invalida," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 4 (December 1938): 6-9.

wrote to the section and pleaded for help. They did not always or only seek financial assistance; rather, they also sought moral support from representatives of the Ukrainian community.⁷¹¹

In September 1920 this section established the Ukrainian House of Invalids in which 25 Ukrainian disabled veterans could reside. The American Red Cross supported this institution with equipment, food, and medicine. In May 1921 during a meeting of disabled veterans and Ukrainian activists, the war invalids suggested establishing a separate section of assistance to disabled servicemen. They emphasized that society largely ignored their needs and that invalids had to form a new organization that was better attuned to the needs of Ukrainian disabled veterans. The former ZUNR (West Ukrainian People's Republic) Minister of Public Health, Dr. Ivan Kurovets', became the head of the section of assistance to war invalids. This section functioned until September 1921 when the Polish authorities closed down the Citizens' Committee. A wave of repressions against Ukrainian activists and their organizations started after Fedak's son, Stepan Jr., attempted to assassinate the Lviv Voivode Kazimierz Grabowski and Piłsudski. Though the organization was unable to function freely, the activists established the Temporary Committee for Aid to Invalids. By the end of 1922, Polish authorities permitted the establishment of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids; this had a considerable impact on the development of the system of assistance for invalids of the Galician army.⁷¹²

⁷¹¹ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 28, ark. 3; TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 182, ark. 9-9 zv.; Zynovii Lysiatyns'kii, "Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendarna 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 83-84; L. I. Davybid, "Diialnist' Samarytians'koi seltsii Ukrains'koho horozhans'koho komitetu u sferi okhorony Zdorovia (1918-1923 rr.)," *Naukovi praci istorychnoho fakultetu Zaporiz'koho Natsional'nogo Universytetu* 39 (2014): 64; Dmytro Konyukh, "Pochatky organizovanoyi pomochi ukrains'kym invalidam," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (August 1937): 1-3.

⁷¹²Zynovii Lysiatyns'kii, "Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendarna 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 83-84; Zoia Baran, "Stepan Fedak" in *Zakhidno-Ukrains'ka Narodna Respublika 1918-1923. Uriady. Postati*, ed. by Iaroslav Isaievych (Lviv: Instytut Ukrainoznavstva im. I. Kryp'iakevycha, 2009), 298-299; "Sprava ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Svoboda*, June 13, 1921, 1; Dmytro Konyukh, "Pochatky organizovanoyi pomochi ukrains'kym invalidam," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (August 1937): 1-3; Roman Osinchuk, *Medychnyi svit Lvova* (Lviv – New York: Naukove Tovarystviim. Shevchenka, 1996), 28-29; TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 12, ark. 3-4; TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 178, ark. 1.

Initial published narratives that discussed the issue of assistance for disabled Ukrainian veterans did not focus exclusively on invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army. In contrast, the author of an article from the newspaper *Vpered (Forward)* in October 1919 insisted that Ukrainian society had an obligation to support disabled veterans of both the Austrian and the Galician army. The Polish government had issued temporary regulations about assistance for invalids of the Austrian army at the beginning of 1919; however, the article contended that the regulations failed to provide proper financial support. The author underlined that the Ukrainian community did not want to acknowledge this problem and help those victims of war. He insisted that Ukrainian war invalids could not accept assistance from “strangers.” It was the duty of Ukrainian society, therefore, to establish a habilitation system that would return every disabled veteran to productive life for the well-being of the nation.⁷¹³ Questions relating to assistance for war invalids of the imperial armies became a symbolic battlefield between Ukrainian activists and Polish authorities. Both sides understood that establishing a welfare system for disabled veterans would win the loyalty of those who benefited from such a system; the beneficiaries would either become supporters and advocates for the newly independent Polish state or for the Ukrainian national project.

The definition of “Ukrainian war invalid” used by members of the Citizens’ Committee was inclusive during the first years after the First World War and the Ukrainian-Polish War. Activists provided assistance to disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician and the Austrian army. The majority of veterans who resided in the Ukrainian House of Invalids in the early 1920s had served in the Austrian army. Moreover, the questionnaire for gathering information about Ukrainian invalids included a question about the “nationality” of the demobilized disabled

⁷¹³ I. T. “Polozhennia invalidiv, vdiv i syrit,” *Vpered*, October 25, 1919, 1-2.

soldiers.⁷¹⁴ In other words, this organization considered not only ethnic origin as a crucial factor in determining one's status as a "Ukrainian invalid" but also accepted the idea that soldiers of other nationalities who had served in Ukrainian military units could be "Ukrainian invalids." Yet, Ukrainian society lacked the resources to create a social security program for all Ukrainian disabled servicemen. The activists focused on providing assistance for disabled veterans of the Galician army after the majority of disabled veterans of the imperial armies had already received state benefits. As a result, the notion "Ukrainian invalid" changed and it came to refer only to disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army.

At the beginning of the 1920s the organization had ambitious plans that included numerous projects. Though precise statistics were not available, the activists believed that about 10,000 Ukrainian war invalids lived in former Eastern Galicia after the Ukrainian-Polish war. These numbers included civilians whose disability was the result of imprisonment or detention in Polish POW camps. Among the projects undertaken by the Citizens Committee were the establishment of special rehabilitation craft and agricultural schools for 500 disabled veterans, a hospital for invalids, a prosthesis factory, a sanatorium in the mountains, and the administrative work of issuing a monthly allowance to 2,000 war invalids. Such projects needed sufficient funding and members of the Association appealed to the Ukrainian community in North America. According to calculations, the organization would need \$40,000 (around 522000 now) year for veterans' allowances alone.⁷¹⁵

The Ukrainian activists appealed not only to the Ukrainian community abroad but also to international humanitarian institutions. Several letters in Ukrainian and English that requested help

⁷¹⁴ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 183, ark. 5; DALO, f. 262, op. 1, spr. 2, ark. 2-2 zv.

⁷¹⁵ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 12, ark. 28-30.

from unspecified international institutions were preserved in the Lviv Historical Archive.⁷¹⁶ The leaders of this organization created a narrative that emphasized Ukrainian suffering under Austrian and Polish rule. They claimed that the Austrian authorities had considered Ukrainian soldiers cannon fodder and conscripted a higher number of soldiers from Eastern Galicia than from other regions of the Empire. Thus, the number of Ukrainian war invalids after the First World War was proportionately higher compared to other ethnic groups. The newborn Polish state had failed to organize an adequate system of assistance even for disabled soldiers of Polish origin. Though all disabled soldiers of imperial armies received some sort of state benefits, the activists argued that disabled veterans of Ukrainian origin were not treated equally to Polish veterans. The medical military commissions, for example, often lowered Ukrainians' percentage of disability, which in turn resulted in a lower allowance, and governmental institutions preferentially hired ethnic Poles.⁷¹⁷ Members of the organization stressed that the predominately rural Ukrainians were in a much weaker material situation than the largely urban Poles:

They [Polish invalids] are living chiefly in the towns, have their cooperative societies and are advantaged at getting food in official shops. Ukrainian disabled soldiers are living chiefly in villages and of course cannot avail themselves of the above advantages.⁷¹⁸

In other words, one's place of residence, either urban or rural, greatly determined how demobilized soldiers reintegrated into civilian life. In turn, urbanites had better access to all forms of state assistance, which resulted in a different experience of "disability" for Polish and Ukrainian

⁷¹⁶ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180.

⁷¹⁷ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180, ark 1,3, 16-17, 9-10.

⁷¹⁸ This quotation is from the original English text. (TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180, ark. 17).

soldiers. Due to an agrarian reform that granted land to Poles, Ukrainian activists argued, even rural Poles had a different understanding of disability and better material conditions than Ukrainians.⁷¹⁹

The representatives of the Temporary Committee for Aid to the Invalids particularly emphasized the dire situation of disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army. They claimed that the Polish government had breached many an international agreement by giving ethnic-based preferential treatment. This remark, however, disappeared from an English translation of the letter.⁷²⁰ Committee members stressed that ethnic Ukrainians were forced to assume some state responsibilities and support invalids of the Galician army, though they were consistently short of funds. They itemized urgent needs and prioritized the most important projects. In contrast to the appeal to the Ukrainian Diaspora, the activists did not mention a specific sum of money needed to establish a social security program for Ukrainian disabled veterans.⁷²¹ The further work of the Temporary Committee for Aid to Invalids and the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids would show that the leaders of the movement were never able to obtain such funds and that the majority of their plans were neither fully implemented nor started at all.

Activists of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids appealed to the Ukrainian community in various publications.⁷²² They argued that Ukrainian invalids were entitled to the same level of assistance as the disabled veterans of other “cultured” nations. Disabled soldiers of

⁷¹⁹ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180, ark. 10, 17.

⁷²⁰ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180, ark. 3, 12.

⁷²¹ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 180, ark. 3-4, 13-14, 20-21.

⁷²² “Pamiataite pro ukrains'kykh invalidiv. Vstupajte masovo v chleny Tovarystva dopomohy invalidam,” *Dilo*, October 31, 1929, 2; Zynovii Lysiatyn'skii, “Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (L'viv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 82; “Zeleni Sviata – dni ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Dilo*, June 7, 1924, 4; Semen Ukrains'kyi, “Invalidy UGA i ukrains'ka suspilnist',” *Dilo*, November 1, 1925, 2; “Lystopad - misiac' ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Dilo*, November 3, 1931, 5; “Lystopad - misiac' ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Dilo*, November 1, 1934, 1; “Pomozhem invalidam z ukrains'koi viny,” *Hromads'kyi visnyk*, April 13, 1922, 6; “Pamiataite pro koliaduna invalidiv!” January 6, 1924, 4; “Pidgotovliaitesia do zbirky invalidiv UGA,” *Novyi chas*, November 20, 1929, 3; “Masove chlenstvo v UKTODI,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (June 1938): 3-4.

the Galician army were to be honoured and well-cared for members of Ukrainian society. The leaders of the Association called for action and requested material support in order to provide assistance to the large number of Ukrainian invalids.⁷²³ At the beginning of 1923, the Association felt that Ukrainian society did not support establishing a system of assistance for disabled veterans of the Galician army. However, the activists believed that the broader society simply lacked information about the desperate material plight of Ukrainian invalids. They stressed that the Ukrainian community had to self-organize in order to provide the necessary support for disabled veterans. For instance, demobilized officers of the Ukrainian Galician army and local activists had to establish Houses of Invalids, similar to the Lviv House, in small towns. Moreover, peasants who served in the Galician army should organize campaigns to gather food for those institutions. One article argued that Lviv County had to set the example for other regions and its dwellers should start to gather food for the Lviv House of Invalids.⁷²⁴ Yet, the Association's efforts were slow to bear fruit: it was only North American donations that allowed activists to support invalids. The appeal published in the Ukrainian newspaper *Dilo* stated that above all else residents of Lviv were responsible for providing assistance to invalids of the Galician army.⁷²⁵ Thus, activists started to consider the Ukrainian population of Lviv as the main potential donors to support disabled veterans.

In 1923 *Ukrains'kyi Invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* reported that 5000 disabled⁷²⁶ veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army were registered in the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. However, it did not have sufficient funds to provide assistance to such a large number of invalids.

⁷²³Zynovii Lysiatyns'kii, "Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 82.

⁷²⁴ "Pomozhim invalidam," *Slovo*, February 18, 1923, 2-3; "Pomozhim invalidam," *Slovo*, March 4, 1923, 3

⁷²⁵ "Zeleni Sviata – dni ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Dilo*, June 7, 1924, 4.

⁷²⁶ The number of war invalids reported in 1923 was exaggerated. According to the official report of the Association, 2007 disabled veterans were registered by the organization in 1938 ("Zagal'ni zbory Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (May 1939): 5).

The Association housed about 35 veterans in the Ukrainian House of Invalids and paid allowances to another 100.⁷²⁷ The official number of invalids who received an allowance was much lower in 1926. The Association paid an allowance to 37 disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army but increased the number of beneficiaries to 89 the next year. In addition to allowances and one-time payments, the Association covered the costs of hospital treatments, surgeries, and medicine for all war invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army. In 1927, the Association established a small residence near Lviv for disabled veterans with tuberculosis. It accommodated 12 invalids of the Galician army between 1927 and 1930.⁷²⁸

In 1926, the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids decided to provide a home for a larger number of Ukrainian war invalids. It bought a piece of land near Lviv and was going to build a new House of Ukrainian Invalids.⁷²⁹ Though the plan was publicly announced and drawings were rendered, the project was never implemented. The activists were simply not able to raise enough money. In addition, they realized that the majority of invalids opposed institutionalization and preferred to live with their families. The leaders of the Association decided not to build the House but, rather, to pay a consistent allowance that would allow invalids to meet their needs.⁷³⁰

Amputees were one of the largest group of Ukrainian disabled soldiers and among other achievements of Ukrainian activists was the construction of a workshop that produced prostheses for disabled veterans. Prosthetic manufacturing and distribution reduced expenses and provided

⁷²⁷Zynovii Lysiatyns'kii, "Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 85.

⁷²⁸ Semen Ukrains'kyi, "Invalidy UGA i ukrains'ka suspilnist'," *Dilo*, November 1, 1925, 2; "Materialne zabezpechennia invalidiv ukrains'kogo viiska," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 9-10.

⁷²⁹ "Pivrrichna diialnist' Ukrains'kogo tovarystva opiky nad invalidamy," *Svoboda*, August 10, 1926, 2; "Zeleni Sviata – dni ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Svit*, no. 11-12 (June 1926), 19.

⁷³⁰ "Dim Ukrains'kogo Invalida u Lvovi," in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalid na 1937* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1936), 24; Semen Ukrains'kyi, "Ukrains'ke tovarystvo dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi," in *Z dniv radosti i smutku. Odnodnivka presviachena ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy Invalidam, 1929), 7, 24.

direct assistance to a large number of Ukrainian disabled veterans.⁷³¹ The workshop, established in 1921, was also an employer for some residents of the House of Invalids. The average prosthetic device produced in the workshop cost between \$15-20 (220-280 now) and the activists appealed to Ukrainian society for financial assistance. They underlined that many amputees waited too long for their prostheses and that it was the civil duty of the Ukrainian community to collect the necessary funds.⁷³² In April 1922, the American Ukrainian newspaper *Svoboda (Freedom)* published activist Zenon Lukavets'kyi's grateful letter to one of the priests who had gathered donations for Ukrainian servicemen. These funds had been used for prostheses and Lukavets'kyi wrote that veterans "w[ere][previously] crawling as non-humans but [now] could stand on their feet again and it did not matter that they were artificial."⁷³³

Rehabilitation was the central goal of the system of assistance to disabled veterans. Invalids had to be re-educated in order to return to productive life. However, Andriy Voloshchak, a blind invalid of the Austrian army who in the 1930s became a well-known Ukrainian left-wing poet, claimed that society was very sceptical about the idea of productive disabled veterans. In contrast, Voloshchak argued that, for instance, a blind invalid could learn to type and be employed in an office. Work became the means through which an veteran overcame his disability.⁷³⁴

Although only some rehabilitation projects were implemented, residents of the Ukrainian House of Invalids studied various skills and apprenticed soon after the founding of the institution.⁷³⁵ Among other projects suggested in summer 1921 was the sale of vegetables in Lviv;

⁷³¹Zynovii Lysiatynskii, "Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (L'viv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 84; TsDIAL, f. 462, op.1, spr. 181, ark. 1-1 zv.

⁷³²Zynovii Lysiatynskii, "Iaku pomich maiut' nashi iInvalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (L'viv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 85-86; TsDIAL, f. 462, op.1, spr. 181, ark. 1-1 zv.

⁷³³ "Na pomich ukrains'kym invalidam u Lvovi," *Svoboda*, April 22, 1922, 3.

⁷³⁴ DALO, f. 262, op.1, spr.8, ark. 1-2.

⁷³⁵ Semen Ukrains'kyi, "Invalidy UGA i ukrains'kasu spilnist'," *Dilo*, November 1, 1925, 2; TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 12, ark. 3.

the activists, however, failed to find suppliers who offered acceptable prices.⁷³⁶ The leaders of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids stressed that Ukrainian institutions and enterprises had to provide invalids with jobs. Similar to narratives created by other war invalids, Ukrainian disabled activists stressed that they did not want to become a burden to society. In 1922, the Union of Ukrainian Invalids was founded with the expressed intent to create job opportunities for disabled Ukrainian veterans. By 1924, it had opened two shops and a basket manufactory and planned to expand its activity outside Lviv. Every person could become a member of this cooperative Union, support its development, and receive income from its profits. At the same time, the founder of this organization underlined that it was, foremost, the duty of disabled veterans to join the cooperative and take care of themselves.⁷³⁷

The political situation in Galicia in the early 1920s had a great influence on organizations that provided support for Ukrainian invalids. Activists created an “official” narrative on the establishment of a social safety net for invalids of the Ukrainian army, which idealized their work on behalf of disabled veterans. Yet, tensions inside the inner circle of activists were never discussed publicly. One such example was a conflict between members of the Citizens’ Committee and Dr. Kurovets'. The arrests of the leaders of the Citizens’ Committee after the assassination attempt on Grabowski and Piłsudski in September 1921 had a negative influence on the work of the activists and resulted in tension between them. In December 1921, Dr. Kurovets', the head of the Temporary Committee for Aid to Invalids, resigned his position. In his letter to Stepan Fedak, Kurovets' explained that the organization did not have the material and moral support of the

⁷³⁶ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 182, ark. 21, 24, 25.

⁷³⁷“Soiuz ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Hromads'kyi visnyk*, April 29, 1922, 3; Zynovii Lysiatyns'kii, “Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (L'viv: Nakladom Soiuz Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 86; Iaroslav Teodorovych, “Pid rozvagu ukrains'kii suspilnosti,” *Dilo*, October 24, 1922, 4; “Ukrains'ki invalidy!” *Hromads'kyi visnyk*, May 13, 1922, 6; “V spravi nashykh invalidiv,” *Hromads'kyi visnyk*, March 7, 1922, 2.

Citizens' Committee after the arrest of its leaders. In fact, the Polish authorities had already shuttered the Committee but Kurovets' believed it still had resources and supported the work of the Temporary Committee. Despite Kurovets' requests, the residents of the Ukrainian House of Invalids neither received enough food nor basic necessities. The former members of the Citizens' Committee were not only indifferent to the needs of disabled veterans, he asserted, but also treated them rudely in person. Ideological differences also fuelled such conflict. Dr. Kurovets' alleged that the "*bilshovyk*" Stavnychy, one of the residents of the House, provoked other invalids and intrigued against the most active veterans and members of the Temporary Committee. Some Ukrainian disabled veterans had left the Ukrainian House of Invalids, while one of the residents even tried to commit suicide. Although Kurovets' had asked the Citizens' Committee to intervene numerous times, the institution did not make an effort to resolve the issue. He decided to resign, but asked the Committee to support Ukrainian invalids and help solve the problems caused by Stavnychy's "anarchical behaviour."⁷³⁸ I was unable to find more information about conflict between House residents; however, the Kurovets' report suggested its ideological roots. Moreover, his narrative illustrated concern over spreading "Bolshevism," which was common political discourse in Poland after the Polish-Soviet war. Similar conflicts between Ukrainian activists and leftist Ukrainian invalids plagued the work of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids in the late 1920s.⁷³⁹

Conflict also stemmed from competition between Ukrainian organizations for funds and public attention. The development of Ukrainian culture and institutions in the Second Polish Republic depended on the support of broader society. The Ukrainian community in Eastern Poland

⁷³⁸ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 178, ark. 3-4.

⁷³⁹ "UNDO-Fashystivs'ka klika i invalidy UGA," *Sel'rob*, May 26, 1929, 2; "Z ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam. Ruinytska robota 'Sel'robu'," *Dilo*, June 13, 1929, 4.

promoted various national causes; among them educational institutions for children were deemed most important. For instance, the Ukrainian insurance company “Dnister” leased its building not only to the House of Invalids but also to a daycare. In July 1921, a representative of the section of assistance for war invalids wrote to the director of the daycare and demanded it vacate the building. He explained that a group of disabled veterans was scheduled to arrive soon and the House needed the space. The director disagreed with such a request and appealed to “Dnister.” The administration of the company did not support the Section’s demand and stated that the Ukrainian daycare was as important as the House of Invalids.⁷⁴⁰

Tensions between Lviv’s Polish and Ukrainian communities were exacerbated by the process of national myth making. That said, connections existed between institutions of the two communities that provided assistance to war invalids. In early 1921, Jan Silhan, the director of the state residence for blind veterans, sent a thank-you letter to the Citizens Committee in Lviv for organizing a Christmas Eve party for institutionalized blind soldiers. Indeed, there were Ukrainian disabled veterans of the imperial armies among the residents, but both the willingness of Ukrainian activists to organize the event and the willingness of Polish authorities to host such an event indicated that both sides, at times, worked and negotiated for common cause.⁷⁴¹

The activity of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids, which was formed in late 1922, was under the strict control of the Polish government. The authorities granted permission for fundraisers that were crucial to the organization’s existence.⁷⁴² The Association organized such events twice annually, one at Pentecost, the other in November. Local bureaucrats also established rules for those who solicited donations. For example, in fall 1926, every participant in the

⁷⁴⁰ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 182, ark. 18-18 zv.

⁷⁴¹ TsDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 182, ark. 6.

⁷⁴² “Ukrains'ke Kraieve T-vo opiky nad invalidamy,” *Dilo*, October 30, 1924, 3; “Zelenosviatochna zbirka na invalidiv,” *Dilo*, June 10, 1927, 2.

campaign had to have special photo identification. Clearly, this posed a problem for rural fundraisers who largely lacked ready access to a camera. Although the local administration introduced this requirement to prevent fraud, an article in *Dilo* underlined that the Lviv Voivodeship did not implement the same rules for Jewish and Polish organizations and accused the authorities of a double standard. The author of the article argued that such actions harmed the state by further alienating Ukrainian disabled veterans.⁷⁴³

The local administration sought to remove from the public sphere organizations that provided assistance to disabled veterans of the Galician army and supported the creation of a Ukrainian heroic myth. The activity of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids constructed a counter-memory that was potentially dangerous to the Polish state. The relationship between the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids and the authorities deteriorated during the second half of the 1920s. Local administrators banned public fundraisers for disabled Ukrainian veterans, which limited the activity of the Association. In 1927 the population of the Małopolska region suffered a flood and this disaster was used as the reason to prohibit fundraising. The Ukrainian community as a whole needed financial support after the natural disaster; yet, they were prohibited from engaging in ethnic-based fundraising efforts.⁷⁴⁴ Polish authorities also prohibited fundraising in the future. Moreover, some Lviv Voivodeship officials considered the organization's actions illegal and suggested closing down the Association in December 1928.⁷⁴⁵ Such a negative attitude could possibly be explained by a sharp increase in tensions between Ukrainians and Poles in Lviv after Independence Day clashes in November 1928.

⁷⁴³ "Moralna sanatsiia i ukrains'ki invalidy," *Dilo*, November 2, 1926.

⁷⁴⁴ "Lystopad – misiats' ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Svoboda*, November 1, 1927, 4.

⁷⁴⁵ DALO, f. 110, op. 4, spr. 871, ark. 6.

Activists for Ukrainian Disabled Soldiers

The first wave of activists who visited Ukrainian invalids in hospitals belonged to the Samaritan Section of the Ukrainian Citizens' Committee in Lviv. This work was usually performed by female members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. However, female activists, who organized traditionally important fundraising events like concerts and socials in the early 1920s, virtually disappeared from the leadership ranks after the resignation of the head of the Association, Maria Bilets'ka, in 1926. By the late 1930s, board members of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids were exclusively male.⁷⁴⁶

The Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids was a grassroots organization created by representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia who believed that supporting disabled veterans was their national obligation. Some leaders of the organization were active members of the community before or during the Great War. At the same time, the majority of its activists were not disabled servicemen. Among the organization's leaders were a judge Zenon Lukavets'kyi (1922-1924), a charity activist Bilets'ka (1924-1926), an editor and politician Dmytro Paliiv (1926-1930) and a director of the insurance company "Karpatia" Ivan Hyzha (1930-1939). The two heads of the Association Paliiv and Hyzha had served in the military. Paliiv was also politically active in the Ukrainian community and a hero of the "November Deed," the central event for the Ukrainian national discourse in interwar Poland.⁷⁴⁷ In general, the organization included many active former

⁷⁴⁶L. I. Davybida, "Diiialnist' Samarytians'koi selcii Ukrains'kogo gorozhans'kogo komitetu u sferi okhorony zdorovia (1918-1923 rr.)," *Naukovi praci istorychnogo fakultetu Zaporiz'kogo Nacional'nogo Universytetu* 39 (2014): 64; Semen Ukrains'kyi, "Ukrains'ke tovarystvo dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi," in *Z dniv radosti i smutku. Odnodnivka presviachena ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy Invalidam, 1929), 6.

⁷⁴⁷Dmytro Konyukh, "Pochatky organizovanoi pomochi ukrains'kym invalidam," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (August 1937): 3; "Invalidy ukrains'koi armii musiat' buty zabezpecheni," in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalid na 1939* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy u Lvovi, 1938), 23; TsDIAL, f. 358, op. 1, spr. 131, ark. 8. On November 1st 1918 the Ukrainian officers seized power in Lviv. This event, which caused the beginning of the Ukrainian-Polish war, was described as the "November Deed" in the Ukrainian national narrative.

officers. For instance, Colonel Ievhen Konovalets' and General Myron Tarnavs'kyi signed the Association's proclamation in the early 1920s, though they later became inactive members.⁷⁴⁸ In contrast, Colonel Andriy Melnyk was a board member of the organization into the 1930s.⁷⁴⁹

The role of experts was crucial for developing state assistance to disabled veterans in Poland and the movement that supported soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army developed according to the similar patterns. The notion of creating a separate organization emerged among a circle of Ukrainian doctors (Marian Panchyshyn, Maksym Muzyka, and Kurovets') who worked in the Citizens' Committee and at the House of Invalids. As physicians, they had direct contact with soldiers, understanding their needs and the requirement for greater assistance.⁷⁵⁰ Though doctors never became leaders of the Association, they were active members and ardent supporters. Ukrainian disabled soldiers received free treatment in the Ukrainian hospital "*Narodna Lichnytsia*" (Peoples' Hospital) in the 1920s and 1930s. Ukrainian doctors volunteered their services to treat Ukrainian soldiers in the 1930s. Dr. Kurovets', for instance, who became head of the section of invalids of the Ukrainian Citizens' Committee, was director of this hospital and provided medical assistance to disabled veterans until his death in 1931.⁷⁵¹ The Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids provided medical care to all veterans of the Galician army even in instances where no clear connection existed between military service and the malady.⁷⁵²

The leaders of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids were comparative moderates who sought compromise with the authorities in order to provide assistance to disabled veterans. That said, many had varied connections with right-wing radical groups, like the Ukrainian Military

⁷⁴⁸"Poklyk z krayu," *Svoboda*, June 22, 1922, 2.

⁷⁴⁹"Ukrainske Tovarystvo dopomohy invalidam" in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalida 1937* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy u Lvovi, 1936), 27.

⁷⁵⁰Roman Osinchuk, *Medychnyi svit Lvova* (Lviv – New York: Naukove Tovarystvi im. Shevchenka, 1996), 28-29

⁷⁵¹"Ukrains'kyi shpytal' u Lvovi," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 4 (December 1938): 4.

⁷⁵²"Invalidy ukrains'koi armii musiat' buty zabezpecheni," in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalid na 1936* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1935), 19.

Organization (UVO) and later the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Paliiv, who belonged to UVO, was also a member of the moderate UNDO (The Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance) in the 1920s (expelled from the party in 1932). The other prominent member of the Association for Aid to Invalids, Melnyk, was one of the founders of OUN in 1929, but he actually retired from active political life in the 1930s.⁷⁵³ At the same time, the organization also had a close relationship with the supportive Greek-Catholic Church. The Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids and the Ukrainian Association for the Protection of War Graves requested permission from Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi to collect donations after the Pentecostal liturgy. When in the late 1920s Polish authorities banned fundraising, church donations became especially important for the organization.⁷⁵⁴ Some leaders of the Association avoided the political spotlight. Although the director of the insurance company, Hyzha, was the head of the organization throughout the 1930s, it was hard to find his biographical information. Moderate Ukrainian professionals rather than politicians led the organization in the years leading up to the Second World War. These activists tried to work within the legal framework in order to provide assistance to Ukrainian soldiers in time of economic crises and political radicalization.

Though Ukrainian disabled veterans were not among the leaders of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids, they did take part in its work. They participated in the general meetings of the organization and sometimes protested against the policy of its leaders.⁷⁵⁵ The residents of the House of Invalids also personally collected donations during the first part of the 1920s.⁷⁵⁶ The most famous activist among the disabled veterans was Semen Ukrains'kyi, who was

⁷⁵³ Ivan Kedryn. *Zhyttia. Podii. Liudy. Spomyny i komentari* (New York: Vydavnycha koperatyva "Chervona Kalyna," 1976) 93, 307.

⁷⁵⁴ TsDIAL, f. 358, op. 1, spr. 131, ark. 5-6.

⁷⁵⁵ S. Ukr., "Sud'ba invalidiv ukrains'kogo viis'ka," *Novyi chas*, May 3, 1929, 3-4; "Vyiasnennia pro 'Dim ukrains'kogo invalida' u Lvovi," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 17.

⁷⁵⁶ "Ukrains'ke Kraieve t-vo opiky nad invalidamy," *Dilo*, October 30, 1924, 3.

the deputy head of the section of invalids in the Citizens' Committee. He also worked for the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids throughout the interwar period. Ukrains'kyi was often the organization's spokesman and even gave an interview to journalist Anatol' Kurdydyk in 1934. Ukrainian activists believed that disabled veterans better understood the needs of fellow invalids and were, thus, better advocates for the invalids of the Galician Army. As a result, the Association hired Ukrains'kyi to be in charge of its day-to-day operations.⁷⁵⁷

The main task of the organization was to promote the idea that supporting disabled veterans was an obligation of every Ukrainian. However, despite attempts to build its membership, by 1923 only 70 people paid monthly dues.⁷⁵⁸ The majority of activists lived in Lviv, the largest city of the Małopolska region. Though all institutions for disabled veterans of the Galician army were established in Lviv and their various projects were implemented by local activists, Ukrainians generally speaking showed considerable indifference to war invalids. Organizations sought not only the community's financial support, but its moral support and sincere concern, too. In June 1926, 120 people were invited to attend a graduation ceremony for disabled veterans—only three showed up. This event highlights the Lviv's intelligentsia's indifference towards the heroes of the Ukrainian-Polish War.⁷⁵⁹

North America's Ukrainian Diaspora and the new House of Invalids

The financial help of the Ukrainian Diaspora in North America was essential to establishing social assistance programs for invalids of the Ukrainian Galician Army. Numerous appeals were

⁷⁵⁷ "Vidvidyny invalidiv," *Svoboda*, June 28, 1929, 2; Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934); Semen Ukrains'kyi, "Invalidy UGA i ukrains'ka suspilnist'," *Dilo*, November 1, 1925, 2; Dmytro Konyukh, "Pochatky organizovanoi pomochi ukrains'kym invalidam," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (August 1937): 3.

⁷⁵⁸ "Stan Invalidiv Ukr. Gal. Armii. Shcho dala im ukrains'ska suspilnist' (Korespondentsia zi Lvova)," *Svoboda*, October 3, 1925, 2.

⁷⁵⁹ I. G., "Zakinchennia shk. roku osvitnikh kursiv invalidiv UGA," *Novyi czas*, July 4, 1926, 9.

published in various publications, which helped raise significant funds throughout the interwar period.⁷⁶⁰ For instance, Kupchyn'skyi's poem that was quoted at the beginning of this chapter appeared in the Ukrainian newspaper *Svoboda* published in New Jersey in July 1922.⁷⁶¹ At the same time, however, Ukrainian disabled veterans did not want to be the object of charity. For instance, the cooperative known as the Union of Ukrainian Invalids sold books through Ukrainian organizations in North America to help raise funds. Invalids stressed that they were not beggars, and that their efforts were directed at self-sufficiency.⁷⁶² In the early 1920s disabled veterans of the Galician army believed that they would be able to create their own enterprises with the help of the Ukrainian community. However, by the end of the decade it became clear that Ukrainian war invalids were completely dependent on the charitable generosity of society.

The Ukrainian Diaspora quickly coalesced around the idea of supporting disabled veterans. The Association published special brochures that informed emigrants about the work of this organization and its list of donors.⁷⁶³ Besides articles, pictures illustrated the work of the organization. Although the first picture depicted limbless disabled soldiers who had returned from the POW camps, the other images showed positive change. The readers could see the veterans who were working in the various workshops or fitting their prosthesis. Disabled veterans even featured in Diaspora fiction writing. The heroes of the play *Sered gradu kul' abo neustrashyma geroinnia*,

⁷⁶⁰Zynovii Lysiatyn'skii, "Iaku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 86; "Poklyk z krayu," *Svoboda*, June 9, 1922, 2; "Brattia amerykantsi," *Svoboda*, September 30, 1922, 2; "Ne zhdim," *Svoboda*, July 30, 1923, 2; Zeleni Sviata – dni ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Svoboda*, June 10, 1924, 2; "Do ukrains'kykh zemlyakiv v Ameryci," *Svoboda*, May 6, 1925, 3; "Dorogi zamors'ki braty ukraintsi. Dopomozhit' ukrains'kym bortsam-kalikam," *Svoboda*, June 11, 1927, 2; "Pomozhim ukrains'kym nvalidam," *Svoboda*, June 22, 1929, 2; "Na sviatvechir," *Svoboda*, January 6, 1931, 1; "Dolia ukrains'kykh invalidiv zagrozhena," *Svoboda*, November 11, 1933, 3; "Lystopad – misiats' ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Svoboda*, November 1, 1935, 1; "Splatimo velykyi dovgh," *Svoboda*, November 1, 1937, 1.

⁷⁶¹Roman Kupchyn'skyi "Ukrains'kym invalidam," *Svoboda*, July 7, 1929, 2.

⁷⁶²"Na Pomich invalidam," *Svoboda*, September 12, 1923, 2.

⁷⁶³*Ukrains'ka emigraciia ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Drukarnia "Chas", 1931); *Ukrains'ka emigraciia ukrains'kym invalidam (Vykaz zhertv za rr. 1936-1937)* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva dopomohy invalidam u Lvovi, 1937).

written by the Ukrainian Canadian writer Dmytro Gun'kevych, established an organization, staffed by medical volunteers, that provided assistance to Galicians.⁷⁶⁴ The two doctors and a nurse who founded the organization were so committed to the cause that they also moved to Galicia. Among the characters of the play was a war invalid in need of medical care.⁷⁶⁵



Figure 7. **Disabled veterans (Ivan Fostiak, Ivan Popovych, Onuf Sak and Vas. Seneta) returning from POW camps, 1920** [*Z dniv radosti i smutku. Odnodnivka presviachena ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy Invalidam, 1929)]

⁷⁶⁴ Thank you to Jars Balan for drawing my attention to Dmytro Gun'kevych's play.

⁷⁶⁵ Dmytro Gun'kevych, *Sered hradu kul' abo neustrashyma heroinnia* (Winnipeg: Nakladom ukrains'koi knygnarni, 1923).



Figure 8. **Tailors' workshop for disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician Army** (*Z dniv radosti i smutku. Odnodnivka presviachena ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy Invalidam, 1929))

The activists' campaign on behalf of Ukrainian disabled veterans was quite successful. In 1927, donations from North America allowed for war invalids to be cared for throughout all of Galicia. But more importantly, 1927 was the first year when fundraising efforts were able to pay for special medical examinations for all disabled veterans of the Galician Army. For the first time, this gave the organization an accurate figure of the number of Galician Army invalids. According to a report published at the end of 1927, 348 invalids now received a monthly allowance.⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶⁶ "Orentovannia ukrains'kykh invalidiv, znachnyi krok vpered," *Svoboda*, February 10, 1928, 2.

One of the most important initiatives of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids in the second half of the 1920s was the construction of a larger House of Invalids near Lviv. This project required considerable funds; Lviv activists hoped for support from the North American Diaspora. Indeed, in June 1927 a Ukrainian businessman from New York, Kalenyk Lesiuk, appealed financially to fellow businessmen and underlined that it was their duty to the motherland to establish the House of Invalids for disabled heroes. He sent a 100 (1393 now) dollar cheque and asked other businessmen to follow his example.⁷⁶⁷ By the beginning of 1930, 100 individuals, community groups, and various Ukrainian organizations had donated 100 dollars each for the construction of the House of Invalids.⁷⁶⁸ In 1932, the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids reported that the North American Diaspora had gathered \$32,500 (548769 now) for this project.⁷⁶⁹ The activists of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids stressed that the construction of the House of Invalids signified the deep respect of the North American Diaspora towards the invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army.⁷⁷⁰

The concept of the House of Invalids completely changed over time. In the late 1920s the leaders of the Association decided that it would be more beneficial to establish not a residence for Ukrainian veterans, but a “representational” House of Invalids. The costs of maintaining a residence in Lviv were simply too high and the number of beneficiaries, too low. As a result, the Ukrainian activists decided to build the House of Invalids, but disabled veterans would not actually live there. It was planned as a commemorative space that represented invalids and reminded the public of their existence. Instead the organization tried to give invalids of the Galician army the

⁷⁶⁷ “Biznesmeny invalidam,” *Svoboda*, June 11, 1927, 2.

⁷⁶⁸ “Z-za okeanu – nashym invalidam,” *Svoboda*, February 17, 1927, 30.

⁷⁶⁹ “Zvidomlennia z dialnosti UKTODI za 1931 r.,” *Svoboda*, June 18, 1931, 3.

⁷⁷⁰ “Dim ukrains'kogo invalida u Lvovi,” in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalid na 1938* (Lviv: Nakladom ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1937), 18; “Dim ukrains'kogo invalida u Lvovi,” in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalid na 1939* (Lviv: Nakladom ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1938), 22.

opportunity to stay with their families, usually in the countryside. According to the new project, the House would be a rental property and the income would go towards veterans' allowances. At first, the activists made an agreement with the Ukrainian Theatrical Cooperative that owned the land. However, the construction costs of the new House of Invalids were too high, exacerbated by the economic crises of the early 1930s. The organization decided to purchase a rental property and turned it into a "representational" House of Invalids. The building would bear the name and proceeds from rents would go to support disabled veterans. At first, it tried to find a suitable building in the city centre but prices were too high.⁷⁷¹

In September 1932 the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids bought a two-story building at 48, Potocki Street. The building had been constructed by Lviv architect Alfred Zachariewicz for the Bromilski family in 1904.⁷⁷² It consisted of six large modern apartments with several offices on the second floor. It also had a backyard with a small building in which the Association opened an office and a millinery.⁷⁷³ The office and the workshop were the only visible marks that affiliated the building with disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army. At the same time, the House on St. Sofia Street, where Ukrainian invalids resided, existed till 1933. Thereafter, four invalids who did not have family and who needed special assistance were moved to a small residence in Lychakiv.⁷⁷⁴

A luxury rental building in the most prestigious area in Lviv was transformed into a place of constructed memory. Initially, it embodied the sacrifice of Ukrainian invalids in the Ukrainian-

⁷⁷¹ "Dim ukrains'kogo invalida u Lvovi," in *Kalendar Ukrains'kyi Invalid na 1937* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy u Lvovi, 1936), 24-25; "Dim ukrains'kogo invalida u Lvovi," in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi irnvalid na 1938* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy u Lvovi, 1937), 18.

⁷⁷² The building on the Potocki Street became the hospital during the Soviet period.

⁷⁷³ "Dim ukrains'kogo invalida u Lvovi," in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1937* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1936), 24-25; DALO, f. 2, op.1, spr. 2860.

⁷⁷⁴ "Materialne zabezpechennia invalidiv ukrains'kogo viiska," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 9; Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 20-22.

Polish War; later its focus became more inclusive. According to the agreement between representatives of the Ukrainian community and the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids, the new House of Invalids was to become a Military History Museum in the future. After Ukrainian disabled veterans passed away, the building would exhibit the material culture and testimonies of those who had struggled for Ukrainian independence. Preparations started in 1936, when three rooms of the House of Invalids were reserved for the display.⁷⁷⁵ Although the House was established as an institution that represented only one group of heroes, it was to become a museum that would transmit a coherent narrative about the national struggle to future generations.

The Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids in the late 1920s and 1930s

The discourse created by Ukrainian activists in the late 1920s and 1930s centred on disabled veterans of the Galician army. However, Ukrain's'kyi mentioned in a 1934 interview that the organization also supported disabled veterans of Petliura's army who originated from Galicia.⁷⁷⁶ The Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids shared responsibility for the care of the veterans of Petliura's army with the Ukrainian Association of War Invalids, headquartered in Kalisz. The latter provided assistance to invalids from Dnipro Ukraine.⁷⁷⁷ Invalids of Petliura's army were a marginal part of the national myth in Galicia. Their image was much more controversial and appealed less to Galician Ukrainians.⁷⁷⁸ The discourse of the heroic struggle for an independent Ukraine was based on the Ukrainian-Polish war and conflict in Eastern Galicia. As

⁷⁷⁵ "Zagalini zbory ukrains'kogo t-va dopomogy (Ukdoti)," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 5

⁷⁷⁶ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kog invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 7.

⁷⁷⁷ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 7.

⁷⁷⁸ The main reason of this controversy was the Warsaw agreement between UNR and the Second Polish Republic signed by Petliura. According to it, Galicia became a part of the Polish land.

the soldiers of Petliura's army were not part of this narrative, the activists of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids often ignored them as potential beneficiaries of social security.

The organization largely also ignored Ukrainian invalids of the imperial armies, as they already received state benefits. However, at the end of the 1920s the Association supported the Ukrainian deputies in their struggle for additional registration of World War I disabled veterans. Politicians argued that many ethnic Ukrainians who had served in the imperial armies had not applied for state benefits by the end of official registration in 1922. The status of Galicia was not officially clarified until March 1923 and often Ukrainians boycotted the official Polish institutions. As a result, many Ukrainians who had served in the imperial armies did not receive state assistance.⁷⁷⁹ When, in 1929, the government allowed servicemen who had not applied for benefits by 1922 to register, the Association decided to help all applicants. It published a public announcement that outlined important information for potential applicants. Moreover, the organization represented and assisted applicants who wanted to apply for benefits and who paid a one-year membership fee.⁷⁸⁰ In other words, though Ukrainian disabled veterans of imperial armies were neither the primary object of activists' charity activity nor the main heroes in a constructed national discourse (the Sich Riflemen were the exception), the leaders of the organization decided to help them nonetheless.

The organization's activists often compared the allowances of Ukrainian Galician army invalids to those of veterans who had the official status of war invalid. Allowances for Ukrainian Galician invalids were much lower, as charity efforts could not match the comparative largesse of the Polish state. They also underlined that Ukrainian disabled veterans were upset as a result of this. Thus, the leaders of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids continued to advocate for

⁷⁷⁹ "V obroni ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Novyi chas*, December 17, 1928, 4.

⁷⁸⁰ "Dodatkova reyestracia invalidiv," *Sel'rob*, May 19, 1929, 8.

their members. They hoped that Ukrainian civil society would be able to establish a system that would provide adequate financial support for Ukrainian disabled veterans and replace the welfare system of the Polish state.⁷⁸¹

The second half of the 1920s was characterized by relative economic stability, which resulted in increased state benefits for Polish war invalids. The leaders of the Association were also optimistic about the future and they believed that the organization would be able to increase both the number of beneficiaries and the amount of the allowance.⁷⁸² However, the financial realities of the Great Depression drastically curtailed such ambitious plans.⁷⁸³ In 1933, the Association reduced the allowance paid to war invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army three times. The House of Invalids, the institution where disabled veterans actually resided, was closed the same year. The expenses for the maintenance and administration of the House were too high, especially compared to the allowance paid to other war invalids.⁷⁸⁴ Donations collected declined from 122,297 *złoty* in 1929 to 50,042 in 1933. Rents from the new “House of Invalids” covered only 18% of the organization’s expenses. In October 1933, the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids lamented that it lacked enough funds to pay the allowance for war invalids in November. The activists stressed that despite the new Invalid act that included disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army into the welfare system, no Ukrainian veterans received state benefits. This strongly implied that Ukrainian society was still responsible for their well-being.⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸¹“Materialne zabezpechennia invalidiv ukrains'kogo viiska,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 11; “Z diial'nosti Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi,” *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1931):14

⁷⁸² “Materialne zabezpechennia invalidiv ukrains'kogo viiska,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 10.

⁷⁸³“Zvidomlennia z diialnosti UKTODI za 1931 r.,” *Svoboda*, June 18, 1931, 3; “Dolia ukrains'kykh invalidiv zagrozhena,” *Svoboda*, November 11, 1933, 3; “Lystopad – misiac' ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Svoboda*, October 29, 1934, 3.

⁷⁸⁴“Lystopad – misiac' ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Svoboda*, October 29, 1934, 3; “Iak Praciue Ukrains'ke tovarystvo dopomogy invalidam,” *Svoboda*, May 11, 1934, 3; “Materialne zabezpechennia invalidiv ukrains'kogo viiska,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 9.

⁷⁸⁵ “Chuiete? Dolia ukrains'kykh invalidiv zagrozhena!!!” *Novyi chas*, October 6, 1933, 5.

The Polish government's ruthless pacification campaign of 1930 (the campaign was a reaction to the numerous acts of sabotage conducted by OUN) negatively affected the work of Ukrainian cultural, education, and economic organizations, and increased inter-ethnic tensions. The local administration continued to restrict the fundraising projects of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. Although it did not forbid the public collection of donations, the government set rules that limited the work of activists. As a result, for instance, in 1934 the amount of donations decreased sharply and the leaders of the organization asked Ukrainians not to wait for a public donation campaign but to send donations to the main office in Lviv. The organization reminded the public that donations could be collected at private events, such as birthdays and weddings.⁷⁸⁶ Yet, state officials of Ukrainian origin were concerned that participation in ethnic-based fundraising could be seen by the Polish state as an act of disloyalty. Generally, they were reticent to participate in such efforts.⁷⁸⁷ The threat of possible censorship also limited public discussions and the distribution of literature about disabled veterans of the Galician army and the work of the Association.⁷⁸⁸

Although the Great Depression was a serious challenge for the organization, the Lviv activists continued their work. They created an aggressive discourse that linked support for disabled veterans to national honour. It was not enough to declare one's nationality in official documents; Ukrainians had to prove it by fulfilling their obligations. In May 1934, the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids announced that the number of its members would increase from

⁷⁸⁶“Invalidy Ukrain'skoi armii musiat' buty zabezpecheni,” in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalid na 1936* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrain'skogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1935), 19.

⁷⁸⁷Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrain'skogo tovarystva dopomogy Invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 18.

⁷⁸⁸Z diial'nosty Ukrain'skogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi,” *Litopys chervonoi kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1931): 15; “Dopomoga gromadyanstva invalidam ukrains'koi armii” *Ukrains'ka emigraciia ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Drukarnia “Chas”, 1931), 4; The brochure *Z dniv radosti i smutku*. was published a second time after the confiscation of the first edition. (*Z dniv radosti i smutku. Odnodnivka presviachena ukrains'kym invalidam. Odnodnivka* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrain'skogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam, 1929)).

2300 to 10000 by the end of the year. Though the leaders of the Association insisted that it was the duty of every Ukrainian and every Ukrainian organization to become members, their target membership figure was never reached.⁷⁸⁹ In 1934 journalist Anatol' Kurdydyk visited the Ukrainian House of Invalids and interviewed Ukrains'kyi. *Dvi hodyny v domi ukrains'kogo invalida* was published as a separate brochure that informed readers about the work of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids and tried to promote its cause. The interviewee answered numerous questions on the plight of Ukrainian invalids. Ukrains'kyi walked a fine line in the interview between expressing gratitude for Ukrainians' past support and stressing the need for increased community assistance.⁷⁹⁰ This interview showed the ambiguous relationship between the organization that represented invalids and broader Ukrainian society. Activists of the Association created a discourse that simultaneously expressed both disappointment and gratitude.

It was disappointment that came to dominate the discourse, however. In 1935 the Association stressed that Ukrainian society had become even more indifferent towards disabled veterans of the Galician army over the past years. Though activists admonished less and claimed that they were “begging for invalids of the Ukrainian army,” the results were not satisfying. The Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids reminded fellow veterans that they had an obligation to support war invalids.⁷⁹¹ Indeed, the organization believed that former soldiers also had more responsibilities towards invalids. Membership did grow, but more veterans also needed support. All the while, Ukrainian war invalids grew older and their health conditions worsened. According to the last report before the Second World War, in 1938 5,524 people paid dues as members of the

⁷⁸⁹ “Za pogolovne chlenstvo v ‘UKDOTI,’” *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1934): 23-24; “Dolia ukrains'kykh invalidiv zagrozheni,” *Svoboda*, November 11, 1933, 3.

⁷⁹⁰ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi hodyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934).

⁷⁹¹ “Lystopad – misiats' ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Dilo*, November 1, 1935, 1; “Lystopad – misiats' ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 11 (November 1935): 2.

Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. These payments guaranteed a steady income but the organization continued to promote the idea of mass membership as the main solution of their financial problems.⁷⁹²

In the late 1930s, the Association launched a new project intended to promote the idea of assistance to disabled veterans of the Galician army among the Ukrainian population. The organization published an annual journal *Kalendar "Ukrains'kyi Invalid"* and, for example, it printed 15,000 copies of the first issue in 1936. The journal was published for a broad audience. Most articles focused on issues of military and general history or were short stories. Issues surrounding disability, besides the reports of the Association, were largely ignored. Though the income from selling the *Calendar* itself was low, its main purpose was to attract new donors. As the number of donations increased, the activists believed that the *Calendar "The Ukrainian Invalid"* had fulfilled its task.⁷⁹³ However, cause and effect are hard to determine. Was the increase in donations due to the *Calendar* or to the improved macroeconomic climate of the late 1930s? The 1939 issue of the journal acknowledged the generosity of the Ukrainian community.⁷⁹⁴

The only business-oriented project supported by the Association in the 1930s was the millinery. It produced various types of hats in the 1930s and employed a small group of invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army. The design of those hats had some "national" Ukrainian features, though some types of hats were officially forbidden by the Polish authorities and could not be manufactured. For instance, a person had to receive special permission to wear a "*mazepynka*"

⁷⁹²"Zabezpeka invalidiv," in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1939* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1938), 20; "Lystopad – misiats' ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Dilo*, November 1, 1935, 1; "Lystopad – misiats' ukrains'kykh invalidiv," *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 11 (November 1935): 2.

⁷⁹³ The Association reported a one-third increase in donations between 1935 and 1937 ("Zabezpeka Invalidiv" in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1939* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1938), 19; "Zagalini zbory Ukrains'kogo t-va dopomogy (Ukdoti)," *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 5).

⁷⁹⁴"Zabezpeka invalidiv" in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1939* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1938), 18-20.

hat.⁷⁹⁵ The founders of the workshop acknowledged that their hats irritated some Polish fellow citizens. The leaders of the Association, nonetheless, appealed to the Ukrainian community and suggested that buying their products was a patriotic act. In 1936 the workshop employed seven disabled veterans, who produced about 80 hats per day. The workshop was closed at the beginning of 1939 and a new shop “Berkut” was found instead.⁷⁹⁶

Lviv was the center of activism and a main challenge was to expand the work of the organization to the countryside. Yet, the intelligentsia was often passive and did not join the cause. Zynovii Pelenskyi wrote in *Hromads'kyi Visnyk* that the Association tried to gather information about the invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army in 1922 by sending 4000 questionnaires to different parts of the Małopolska region. However, the rural intelligentsia, whom the activists considered to be their main potencial and participants, ignored it and only 188 questionnaires were sent back.⁷⁹⁷ At the end of the 1920s nine branches of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids worked outside Lviv and the leaders of the organization continued to emphasize that Ukrainian society was obligated to increase support to Ukrainian war invalids.⁷⁹⁸ In June 1929, activists of the Association reminded priests that a mere 901 parishes and priests among 3000 parishes had fundraised for disabled veterans in 1928.⁷⁹⁹ However, it should also be noted that the Ukrainian community was relatively poor and that peasants could not support all national cultural or charity

⁷⁹⁵ This type of hat was designed as part of Sich Riflemen uniform and was based on seventeenth century Cossacks hats.

⁷⁹⁶“Shapkarnia ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (May 1939): 1; “Zagal'ni zbory Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 2 (May 1939): 8; “Shapkarnia ukrains'kykh invalidiv,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 3 (November 1937): 15; “Zagalini zbory Ukrains'kogo t-va dopomogy (Ukdoti),” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 5; Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 28-29.

⁷⁹⁷ “V spravi nashykh invalidiv,” *Hromads'kyi visnyk*, March 7, 1922, 2.

⁷⁹⁸ “Dolia invalidiv Ukrains'koi galyts'koi armii,” *Novyi czas*, April 8, 1929, 3.

⁷⁹⁹ TsDIAL, f. 358, op. 1, spr. 131, ark. 6.

projects. Thus, it is fair to conclude that donations from only one third of Galician parishes actually indicated wide concern on behalf of Ukrainians for Ukrainian war invalids.

The leaders of the organization stressed that former soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army should be the group's most active members and that they had an obligation to help their fellow soldiers. However, at the beginning of the 1930s, only veterans who lived in Lviv actively worked for the organization; rural veterans and veterans from other urban centers were seemingly uninterested. For example, it was difficult for the Association to open a branch in the former capital of the ZOUNR, Stanisławów. The Ukrainian community in this provincial city believed that the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids had enough funds to provide assistance for invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army and did not need additional support.⁸⁰⁰ The constant misunderstanding between the Lviv activists and the intelligentsia in other parts of the region became a serious obstacle to the organization's work. The results of the activists' efforts, were quite modest and the Association had fewer than ten branches in Małopolska by 1931. Moreover, the relationship between the Lviv Association and the branches was often tense. For instance, in May 1931 *Litopys Chervonoi Kalyny* reported that the central Lviv branch had almost no control over the local branches. As a result, donations collected by local activists outside Lviv were often not sent to the central office. The Lviv activists argued that this lack of control and communication negatively affected the implementation of the organization's projects.⁸⁰¹

There were other clear signs of miscommunication between the centre and the periphery. Although the Association presented its work as transparent and published annual reports, even members of the organization suspected fraud. Construction delays facing the House of Invalids in

⁸⁰⁰ "Dopomoga hromadianstva ukrains'kym invalidam," *Litopys chervonoi kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1931): 13.

⁸⁰¹ "Dopomoga hromadianstva Ukrains'kym Invalidam," *Litopys chervonoi kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1931): 13; Z Diial'nosti Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi," *Litopys chervonoi kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1931): 14-15.

the early 1930s fuelled various rumours. People believed that the organization was flush with Diaspora funds that were not being used to help Ukrainian invalids. In order to stop rumours, the organization stated that it would buy the new House of Invalids.⁸⁰² This decision, however, failed to satisfy previous discontents and even created a few more in the process.

The organization's supposed beneficiaries, the invalids, were sometimes its main critics. A report on the 1929 general meeting, published in *Novyi Chas* in May, highlighted conflict between invalids of the Galician army and the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. Veterans were dissatisfied with the size of the organization's allowances. One war invalid activist, Ukrain's'kyi, wrote that veterans' dissatisfaction needed to be understood not as the failing of a single organization but rather as the failing of the entire Ukrainian community to ameliorate their misery.⁸⁰³ Though the article in *Novyi Chas*, which was edited by the head of the Association Paliiv, provided little insight into specific disagreements between veterans and the Association, it is clear that the general antipathy between the two parties soon turned into an ideological conflict.

The left-wing newspaper *Sel'rob* became the defender of a group of war invalids who did not agree with the organization's policies. Although it published the proclamation of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids in May 1929, it soon after adopted a new negative stance towards this organization. An article published two weeks later and titled "*UNDO-Fashystivs'ka klika i invalidy UGA*" accused the organization's most active members, including its head, of fraud. The anonymous authors described the leaders of the organization as "fascists" and argued that the voices of disabled veterans were ignored. Moreover, these "activists" were accused of embezzlement. The article explained that some "class-conscious" invalids, for instance, Vasyl' Kosteï and Ivan Datskiv, had tried to oppose such theft but they were expelled from the House of

⁸⁰² "Dopomoga hromadianstva ukrains'kym invalidam," *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 5 (May 1931): 13.

⁸⁰³ S. Ukr., "Sud'ba invalidiv ukrains'kogo viis'ka," *Novyi chas*, May 3, 1929, 3-4.

Invalids and the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. Ideological pluralism in the Association was limited and disabled veterans with different political views were seemingly repressed.⁸⁰⁴

These accusations discredited the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids and negatively impacted its work. *Dilo* published the Association's rebuttal, which claimed that the anonymous authors were those expelled individuals. The Association decided not to offer a point-by-point rebuttal, but rather to sue *Sel'rob*.⁸⁰⁵ The war in the press continued, however, and *Sel'rob* published a new inflammatory article about the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids, which claimed that they could not be bullied into silence and that they had evidence to support their allegations. *Sel'rob* also published a short notice from businessman, Ia. Skopliak, who had actually borrowed money from the Association. He underlined that he had returned the loan with interest as soon as he learned that Ukrainian disabled veterans opposed the organization's financial policy.⁸⁰⁶

In January 1930, the court heard a case against *Sel'rob*'s editor Fedir Iavors'kyi. The famous Ukrainian lawyer Stepan Shukhevych represented the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. He publicly stated that this organization would expel from the House of Invalids every Ukrainian veteran who advocated communism.⁸⁰⁷ As I could not find any further reports on the course or outcome of the suit and the Association continued its work, it seems safe to assume that *Sel'rob* lost the lawsuit. This story illustrates the tension among members of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. First, the organization's finances were not as transparent as its leaders contended. This caused opposition among a leftist group of Ukrainian veterans that led to their removal from the Association. The authors of the articles in *Sel'rob* believed that the ideology

⁸⁰⁴ "UNDO-fashystivs'ka klika i invalidy UGA," *Sel'rob*, May 26, 1929, 2.

⁸⁰⁵ "Z Ukrain's'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam. Ruinnytska robota 'Sel'robu'," *Dilo*, June 13, 1929, 4.

⁸⁰⁶ "Undo-fashystivs'ki 'Opikuny' Invalidiv," *Sel'rob*, June 23, 1929, 2.

⁸⁰⁷ "Fashysts'ka uprava UKDOTI proty invalidiv UGA," *Sel'rob*, February 2, 1930, 3.

of invalids should be irrelevant as to whether invalids received the Association's support. In contrast, the leaders of Association argued that disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army had to fit into the heroic national discourse.

A few instances, however, do indicate that some invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army challenged a few of the organization's governing principles in the late 1930s. In June 1937 *Ukrains'kyi Invalid* published an article about the management of the new House of Invalids in Lviv. A group of disabled veterans was dissatisfied with how the organization managed the property. They opposed the idea that the "House of Invalids" was a rental building and not a residence for disabled veterans. Specifically, Ukrainian invalids were disappointed that the Association had used Diaspora funds to buy a rental property and then leased its luxury suites to non-Ukrainians. Administrators explained that when the organization purchased the building, none of its residents were Ukrainian, but that the tenants had agreed to remain there and continue to pay considerable rent. These apartments were so expensive that the Association had trouble finding Ukrainian residents when there were vacancies. The activists argued that income from the property paid the allowance for disabled veterans and that the House of Invalids as a residence was, in fact, a more necessary institution following the war, when disabled Ukrainian veterans needed medical care or did not have places to live. The organization believed that it was more important to provide a higher allowance to a larger group of invalids than to establish a residence for a small group of disabled Ukrainian veterans.⁸⁰⁸

Ukrainian politicians lobbied for the inclusion of invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army into the state welfare system throughout the 1920s. The turning point in state policy began with the "normalization" of Ukrainian-Polish relations in the early 1930s. After the brutal pacification

⁸⁰⁸ "Vyiasnennia pro 'Dim ukrains'kogo invalidau Lvovi,'" *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937): 17.

both the government and the moderate UNDO sought compromise, and the new Invalid Act passed in March 1932 signified this spirit of détente. The law granted state benefits to invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army who were more than 45 percent disabled. However, four years later, not a single Ukrainian had received the status of war invalid. The Polish authorities always found reasons to reject the applications of Ukrainian invalids. The activists argued that the administration often used the nebulous notion of “loyalty” to disqualify veterans. For instance, local bureaucrats refused to grant the status of war invalid to Marko Stashkiv for just this reason. This veteran was 100% disabled and had a serious mental condition. He was unable to speak or feed himself; that a malnourished mute could be accused of disloyalty is suspect.⁸⁰⁹ Another obstacle was the requirement that witnesses testify as to the causes of an invalid’s injuries. As the Ukrainian-Polish War had ended about 20 years prior, such testimonies were hard to gather. Additionally, the medical military commissions did not accept as valid the testimony of medical staff who provided first aid to soldiers; and patient hospital charts often lacked enough information to satisfy these commissions.⁸¹⁰

Ukrainian members of Parliament publicly discussed the reluctance of the authorities to fulfill their duties towards Ukrainian invalids. They stressed that such a policy was first of all harmful to the Polish state. In January 1936 Deputy Volodymyr Tselevych⁸¹¹ stated during a budget committee meeting that the government had made a mistake when it passed the law. It would have been much better not to have had a law that granted benefits to disabled veterans of the Galician army in the first place if the government had no intention of implementing it. Indeed,

⁸⁰⁹ “V spravi invalidiv UGA i avstriyskykh emerytiv,” *Novyi chas*, January 17, 1936, 5.

⁸¹⁰ “Materialne zabezpechennia invalidiv Ukrains'koi galyts'koi armii v 1935-omu rotsi,” in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1937* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy u Lvovi, 1936), 30.

⁸¹¹ He was also one of the founders of the House of Invalids in 1920 (“Pomozhim invalidam,” *Slovo*, February 18, 1923, 2-3).

he asserted, these actions of the Polish government were self-defeating as they undermined the loyalty of Ukrainians towards the state more so than the propaganda of OUN. Tselevych believed the implementation of the Invalid Act was an issue of prestige for the parliament and the government.⁸¹² Another deputy, Stepan Biliak, delivered a speech about the status of invalids of the Galician army at the end of February 1936. He emphasized that 963 veterans applied for benefits but that none of them were granted the status of war invalid. Moreover, although the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids took over the responsibilities of the state, the Polish authorities did not support its efforts; rather, they tried to limit its activities. Biliak appealed to the government and demanded a change of policy towards Galician Army invalids and the organizations that served them.⁸¹³ Besides the demanded material benefits, Ukrainian Galician invalids requested symbolic recognition from the Polish state. Ukrainian disabled veterans were officially defined as “soldiers of Ukrainian detachments that fought against the Polish army” and not as veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army. This “government language” caused offence.⁸¹⁴ Documents from the Lviv Voivodeship indicated that the official language did change. In 1936, officials defined Ukrainian invalids as “soldiers of Ukrainian detachments” and by the middle of 1937 Lviv bureaucrats referred to them as to “Ukrainian invalids.”⁸¹⁵ In other words, the official language used by the Polish government in describing Ukrainian Galician Army invalids came to mirror the language used by Ukrainian invalids themselves.

Pressure from Ukrainian members of Parliament forced the state authorities to rethink how the bureaucracy interacted with Ukrainian veterans. In July 1936, the deputy minister of the

⁸¹² “V Spravi invalidiv UGA i avstriyskykh emerytiv,” *Novyi chas*, January 17, 1936, 5.

⁸¹³ “Ukrains'ki invalidy i zlokavtovani uriadovci (Promova D-ra Stepana Biliaka na zasidanni soimu),” *Novyi chas*, February 26, 1936, 3.

⁸¹⁴ “V spravi invalidiv UGA i avstriyskykh emerytiv,” *Novyi chas*, January 17, 1936, 5.

⁸¹⁵ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3088; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3377.

Economy Tadeusz Lechnicki wrote to the Lviv Voivode that despite 963 applications of demobilized soldiers of the Galician army, the Ministry had received only 23 decisions about granting the allowance to disabled veterans. He underlined that Ukrainian deputies already accused the government of indifference and that these new figures would further fuel ethnic discontent. More importantly, it is clear that Polish authorities were genuinely concerned about Ukrainian public discontent during legislative sessions. As a result, Lechnicki ordered medical commissions to process applicants from the Ukrainian community faster.⁸¹⁶ At the beginning of August, the Lviv County sent an urgent report to the Voivodeship about the examination of Ukrainian invalids. The report claimed that 364 disabled veterans of the Galician army had applied for benefits but that decisions were rendered in only 65 cases. A total of nine war invalids, each with more than 45% disability, had received a state allowance. Another report from January 1937 showed that a total of 421 applications were submitted throughout the Lviv Voivodeship but that only 16 disabled veterans had been granted allowances. However, 84 files were still under consideration and the commission had yet to make a decision. Predominately, applications were rejected because of a lack of a verifiable connection between military service and disability. Although local authorities conducted interviews, officially no Ukrainian invalids were deprived of an allowance due to political disloyalty.⁸¹⁷ Thus, the authorities did not want to be seen as deliberately violating the Invalid Act and even rejected loyalty as a criterion for benefits; at the same time, however, the medical military commissions found various “legal” reasons for benefits to be withheld from the majority of Ukrainian invalids.

The case of invalid activist Ukrains'kyi illustrates the caution demonstrated by Polish authorities in using the label disloyal. In the early 1920s, local police suspected that he was not

⁸¹⁶ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3088, ark. 1.

⁸¹⁷DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1983; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1986, ark. 23-54; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3088, ark. 14.

only a student of the secret Ukrainian University and a member of the UVO, but that he even participated in terrorist acts. In October 1922, Ukrains'kyi was arrested as a suspect in the murder of Ukrainian poet and politician Sydir Tverdochlib. This was the first assassination conducted by UVO members of a Ukrainian politician who agitated for cooperation with the Polish government. The police failed to prove Ukrains'kyi's guilt and he was released from prison.⁸¹⁸ In the second half of the 1930s, he applied for state benefits and the police investigated his connections with various political groups. According to the report, besides the Tverdochlib case, Ukrains'kyi was under investigation in 1926 when authorities suspected communist sympathies. In 1931, the police received a report that he was a member of a sabotage group in Stanisławów. Polish authorities were almost sure of his disloyalty, but were unable to prove it. At the very least, they were concerned about the image of legality and due process. Although Ukrains'kyi's application was ultimately rejected, it was not for political disloyalty: the official reason was that his income was too high.⁸¹⁹

State benefits for invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army were either marginal or nonexistent. While state authorities “pretended” that they granted benefits to disabled veterans, leaders of the government-controlled invalid movement expressed negative attitudes towards the idea of benefits for veterans of the Galician army. The President of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans and the former head of the state Lviv House of Invalids, Wagner, was on record as being against benefits by the end of 1938. He believed that state assistance should be predicated on the political loyalty of ethnic Ukrainians to the Polish state. However, the author of an anonymous article in *Ukrains'kyi Invalid* wrote that such a position did not upset the majority of Ukrainian

⁸¹⁸DALO, f. 271, op. 1, spr. 361; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1462, ark 22 zv.; Ivan Kedryn, *Zyttia, Podii, Luidy. Spomyny i komentari* (New York: Vydavnycha Kooperatyva “Chervona kalyna”, 1976), 163.

⁸¹⁹DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1462, ark 22 zv-23, 25.

invalids as they did not actually receive state benefits.⁸²⁰ By the end of 1938, only about 50 disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army had been granted an allowance. *Ukrains'kyi Invalid* emphasized that the government was not willing to fulfill its obligation towards some citizens of the Polish state. Ukrainian war disabled veterans were the same as citizens who had fought for other armies; they were entitled to similar rights and benefits. However, the authorities continued to exclude them long after the promulgation of the new Invalid Act. The medical military commissions frequently lowered the percentage of disability in order to deny Galician veterans access to state benefits. The other reason to refuse the allowance was too high an income. Yet, *Ukrains'kyi Invalid* gave several examples when officials rejected the applications of poor veterans but cited income as the determining factor. The author argued that the Polish state was never going to provide assistance to Ukrainian invalids and that Ukrainian society had to continue its active support of veterans.⁸²¹ Polish and Ukrainian activists understood citizenship in a different way. The representatives of the Polish invalid organization demanded loyalty towards the state. In contrast, the leaders of the Ukrainian community considered that Polish citizenship and paying taxes entitled disabled veterans of the Galician army to state benefits.

Conclusion

The Polish and the Ukrainian national discourses proclaimed Eastern Galicia and Lviv as “their” land and both communities believed that this region and city should become a part of their respective nation states. This, in part, resulted in the Ukrainian-Polish war of 1918-1919, which further aggravated ethnic relations in interwar Poland. The Ukrainian Galician army lost the war and the region was incorporated in the Second Polish Republic. Each of these ethnic communities

⁸²⁰ Invalid UA, “Pos. E. Vagner ta ukrains'ki invalidy,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 4 (December 1938): 1.

⁸²¹ P. D., “Derzhavne zabezpechennia invalidiv UGA,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 3 (November 1938): 3-7.

constructed competing narratives that became central to their national mythologies, and veterans became the embodiment of these myths. Soldiers of the Galician army were depicted as the “enemy” by the Polish national discourse and were officially deprived of state benefits before March 1932. In response, the Ukrainian Lviv intelligentsia decided to create their own social security programs for Ukrainian disabled veterans as an act of gratitude to their national heroes.

The work of Ukrainian activists became one of the means to construct a national narrative and it was shaped by the political discourse of the Second Polish Republic. Among other things, this discourse influenced how “Ukrainian invalid” was defined, in particular, the fact that, after Ukrainian veterans of the imperial armies had received the right to state benefits they were not described as “Ukrainian invalid.” Despite numerous claims of indifference from Ukrainian society, a group of Lviv intelligentsia was able to establish a system of assistance to disabled veterans and the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids provided an allowance and medical treatment during the interwar era. Though these social programs were often presented as inadequate, arguably they show a great commitment on the part of activists, the local Ukrainian community, and the Ukrainian diaspora. However, the organization’s leaders had a single vision for the movement and excluded those disabled veterans who belonged to alternate political circles. Leftist ideology did not fit the Ukrainian national narrative and its ideological adherents could not become beneficiaries of the Ukrainian Association.

The other factor that influenced the movement was the social structure of the Ukrainian population in Poland, which contained a centre/periphery dichotomy with several dimensions. The majority of invalids of the Ukrainian Galician army were peasants who lived in the countryside. In contrast, the narrow circle of the activists who established the Association and worked for veterans’ well-being lived in Lviv. In the early 1930s, the nature of assistance offered by the

Association changed and the residence for Ukrainian invalids was shuttered. Instead, the new House of Invalids became a space that represented rather than directly served disabled veterans. Invalids received an allowance and the majority of them stayed with their families in the countryside. One of the challenges faced by the movement was its inability to establish branches in provincial settings; this contrasts with the transnational character of the movement itself. Perhaps, however, this last fact indicates more about the self-organization of the Ukrainian community in North America than the work of the Lviv activists.

In Austrian Galicia, the Ukrainian civil society had been shaped before 1918 and it continued to develop in a framework set by the Polish authorities. Strict government control, numerous prohibitions on fundraising, and press censorship limited the activity of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids. Although a “normalization” of Polish-Ukrainian relations resulted in state benefits being granted to disabled veterans of the Galician army in March 1932, government policy was discordant with government action. Years after the law was passed, no Ukrainian veteran had received benefits. Despite the fact that the Polish parliament lacked real power in the second half of the 1930s, Ukrainian deputies used it to pressure Polish authorities. The government tried to avoid public expressions of dissatisfaction and streamlined bureaucratic procedures to make decisions about benefits for Ukrainian disabled applicants. However, the majority of disabled servicemen were denied state assistance. Polish authorities did not use the ambiguous notion of disloyalty and even mimicked the Ukrainian discourse by using the term “Ukrainian invalids.” Yet, officials found other legal reasons to reject the applications of Ukrainian disabled veterans. Such government actions deepened Ukrainian disappointment even among moderate circles of intelligentsia and proved that the Ukrainian community would be responsible for the well-being of its disabled veterans in the future.

This chapter demonstrates that government policy towards the Ukrainian minority cannot be understood only as a series of repressive measures. Rather, it was a complex but ultimately unsuccessful process of striking a balance that would stop the development of the Ukrainian nationalist movement and would turn Ukrainians into loyal citizens of the Polish state. Polish bureaucrats were afraid of social radicalization and understood the necessity of compromise, but their efforts in search of this balance led to further radicalization of the Ukrainian community.

CHAPTER SIX

(SELF)REPRESENTATION OF WAR DISABILITY IN INTERWAR LVIV

Dear Honorable Marshal of Poland,

I am writing to you about the issue of my war disability benefits. I will describe my request in short. I [Grzegorz Nakoneczny] was born in Eastern Małopolska and I am a citizen of the Second Polish Republic. As a former soldier in Petliura's army I fought against the Bolsheviks and defended Poland's borders against Bolshevik onslaught.⁸²²

I am [Helena Szumańska] a defender of Lviv and a disabled veteran who was granted 56% disability status by the medical commission [...] I justify my request by the following circumstances:

I have been unemployed for the last four years and provide for my ill husband and underage child. Besides my disability allowance, (81 zł) I do not have any income.⁸²³

[...] I [Schleicher Abraham Jakób] justify my request by the fact that I have been unemployed since September 1929. I used to work as a shop assistant but despite all efforts I cannot find work. I am very poor, do not have any property, and have never received any benefits. (December 23, 1930)⁸²⁴

[...] I [Leon Hawalewicz] want to register as a disabled veteran and I have been coming to the various military, municipal, and Lviv county offices since 1921. They ignored me at every office because I did not have proof of my disability. It is impossible for the ordinary person to get access to hospital records that would prove my disability [...] (May 19, 1932)⁸²⁵

In 1914, 40-year-old Mykhailo Iatskiiv, a Ukrainian writer based in Lviv, was mobilized to the Austrian Army. He personally experienced the horrors of war and, similar to many other writers who served as soldiers, his postwar work had strong pacifist undertones. At the same time, Iatskiiv's experiences reflected the tense political struggle and conflicts of interwar Galicia. In the early 1920s, Iatskiiv supported Galicia's continued inclusion in the Second Polish Republic. For this, he

⁸²² DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3328, ark. 204. More on the practice of writing to Piłsudski see Natalia Aleksium, "Regards From my *Shtetl*: Polish Jews Write to Piłsudski, 1933-1935," *The Polish Review* 56, no. 1-2 (2011): 57-71; Eva Plach, *The Clash of Moral Nation. Cultural Politics in Piłsudski's Poland, 1926-1935* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), 48-76.

⁸²³ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.1056, ark. 33-33 zv.

⁸²⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4105, ark. 1.

⁸²⁵ DALO, f. 7, op.1, spr.1611, ark.80.

was seen as a traitor and was ostracized by the Ukrainian community. As a result, publishers would not consider his manuscripts.⁸²⁶ His 1923 short story “Hermes Praksytelia” (“Hermes of Praxiteles”) was only first published twenty-nine years later in the collection *Opovidannya (Short Stories)*.⁸²⁷

Set on a train, “Hermes of Praxiteles” focuses on the interactions of people of varied socioeconomic backgrounds. Among the passengers of the first-class car were a handsome young officer of the Austrian army, several young debutantes, and an overweight gentleman. The ladies admired the young officer and gazed longingly at him, while one even surreptitiously sketched a portrait of him in her notebook. One lusty observer compared him to an ancient Greek statue of Hermes. The passengers started a conversation in which the overweight gentleman argued that war was the natural state of humanity. In contrast, the officer stated that war was a disaster and a shame. He did not understand why he had to hate and kill other people. Their conversation quickly grew tense: “What!? Is an officer talking in such a way about a holy deed that rescues the motherland from an enemy? This is a rebellion against national ethics and is a sacrilege against social morality!” The gentleman screamed that he would denounce the young officer, demanding his arrest. He asked the officer to produce identification and insisted that he follow him immediately. The officer’s servant removed his master’s overcoat, revealing a limbless veteran. Some of the shocked passengers started to wail and cry, while “dozens of women’s hands rose up and started to punch the fat gentleman.”⁸²⁸ This strongly pacifist story contrasts the beautiful and the terrifying. It contrasts classical beauty and disability. Ana Garden-Coyne has argued that classical ideas about the body shaped reconstruction discourses in Anglophone countries. Society mended

⁸²⁶ Mykola Il'nytskyi “Myhailo Iatskiv” in Myhailo Iatskiv *Vybrani tvory* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1973), 18-21.

⁸²⁷ Myhailo Iatskiv, *Vybrani Tvory* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1973), 445.

⁸²⁸ Myhailo Iatskiv, “Hermes Praksytelia,” in Myhailo Iatskiv, *Vybrani tvory* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1973), 160-161.

its political and economic wounds and sought to rehabilitate and return broken bodies to the ideal productive form.⁸²⁹ Yet, for the hero of Iatskiv's story, such a reconstruction was impossible—the classical body of the young officer was damaged beyond repair. The horrible consequences of war were starkly visible and served to reinforce his argument for peace. Ultimately, Iatskiv's story juxtaposed an individual who glorified war, yet had never served as a soldier, with a disfigured veteran, the literal embodiment of anti-war sentiment and disability.

Iatskiv challenged the authority of non-combatants to shape understandings of war and demonstrated that Romantic notions of combat often broke upon the bodies of traumatized disabled veterans. At the same time, the classical beautiful body attracted, while the mutilated and broken repulsed. Unfortunately, Iatskiv's intended audience could not read his message—the ideological struggle within the Ukrainian community did not allow the writer to publish his story before the Second World War. Nonetheless, "Hermes of Praxiteles" reveals tensions between different experiences of war. These tensions are the main focus of this chapter. At the start of my academic career, Iatskiv's story made me consider the meaning of war disability and became the first step in this research. This chapter explores how Lviv's disabled veterans described their experiences of war disability and how they perceived their relations with the state and society. The analysis of ex-servicemen's letters shows that they learned/ were learning the language of modern welfare discourse. At the same time, this chapter studies how those "bystanders," like the passengers from Iatskiv's story, reflected on disabled soldiers' experiences. Although I analyzed personal documents, most sources examined the public presentation and consumption of disability. What sort of (self)representations of war disability were constructed in the public sphere (for instance, in the popular press, fiction, and the memory discourses) by both disabled veterans and interested

⁸²⁹ Ana Garden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism and the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 315-317

observers? The chapter examines the entangled (self)representation of war “heroes” and “victims” that was constructed in Lviv and was a fragment of the urban imaginary of the interwar era.

Narration of Disability

We have very few extant memoirs or texts written by Lviv disabled soldiers that narrated their experiences of disability. The majority of disabled men belonged to the urban proletariat and remained part of a silent majority. Usually bureaucrats or activists (often abled-bodied) spoke for disabled veterans; unravelling the threads of representation and lived experiences lies at the heart of my project.

Disabled veterans often had difficulty coming to terms with their wounds. Osyp Bolan, a soldier of the Ukrainian Galician army, described the horrifying moment when he regained consciousness in a hospital in Odessa and realized that his feet had been amputated. Bolan’s memoir was published in the Lviv journal *Ukrain'skyi Invalid* in 1938 and was one of the rare personal stories that appeared in periodicals for disabled servicemen. For the 20-year-old Bolan, the thought of living his life as a disabled person was unbearable. At first, he wanted to die. Eventually though, kind nurses and staff helped him cope with his bodily impairment. He survived unbearable conditions during the Russian Civil War and returned to Galicia in the early 1920s.⁸³⁰

Disabled veterans suffered both observable physical trauma and hidden psychological wounds. The short story *Przy oknie, w grube kraty żelazne oprawnym* (By the Window with the Thick Iron Bars) was written by the disabled veteran W. Łobodycz and published in *Inwalida. Kalendarz 1924*. The main hero stood by the window in Kulparkiv psychiatric hospital in Lviv where demobilized soldiers with mental conditions were treated after the war. Łobodycz’s story

⁸³⁰ Osyp Bolan “Spomyn invalida,” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 4 (1938): 7.

was rather unusual because it described not physical but mental disability. Little information about the protagonist was offered to the reader, except that he was a demobilized soldier and a patient at the hospital in the suburbs of Lviv.⁸³¹ Łobodycz's story depicted his personal experiences of psychiatric institutionalization. The hero stood by the barred window at night, gazed at the nearby park, and relived terrifying moments of loss, suffering, and survivors' guilt: "Those military uniforms came and destroyed my small group... the short and desperate bark of weapons' fire came through the thicket and the groan of the dying arose... at the end... only the forest sang the last farewell song to my guys..."⁸³² As Jay Winter has noted, shell shocked soldiers had a different feeling of time that was non-linear. They were focused on a particular moment or military experience that could return and "when it happen[ed], a past identity hijack[ed] or obliterate[d] present identity; and the war resume[d] again."⁸³³

Łobodycz's story ended with a short poem in which the author expressed his doubts about the possibility of ever returning home. However, the former soldier coped with his anguish patiently and stoically.⁸³⁴ Although this story showed a soldier's emotional torment, it also hinted that it was possible to overcome mental distress in a "heroic" manly way. The protagonist "suffered silently" and "did not want to show his pain or complain."⁸³⁵ This narrative presented society's "ideal" model of behaviour for how disabled veterans should cope with suffering.

⁸³¹ W. Łobodycz, "Przy oknie, w grube kraty żelazne oprawnym," in *Inwalida. kalendarz 1924* (Warszawa: Nakładem Zarządu Głównego ZIWRP, 1923), 96-97.

⁸³² W. Łobodycz, "Przy oknie, w grube kraty żelazne oprawnym," in *Inwalida. kalendarz 1924* (Warszawa: Nakładem Zarządu Głównego ZIWRP, 1923), 96

⁸³³ Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 75.

⁸³⁴ W. Łobodycz, "Przy oknie, w grube kraty żelazne oprawnym," in *Inwalida. kalendarz 1924* (Warszawa: Nakładem Zarządu Głównego ZIWRP, 1923), 96-97.

⁸³⁵ W. Łobodycz, "Przy oknie, w grube kraty żelazne oprawnym," in *Inwalida. kalendarz 1924* (Warszawa: Nakładem Zarządu Głównego ZIWRP, 1923), 97.

Requests for one-time disability payments or permission to reside in the Lviv state House of Invalids are among the few sources that give voice to disabled veterans. At the same time, they are a special type of document. Often, disabled servicemen had to present their case in a formulaic way so that their suffering could be understood by a distant bureaucrat.⁸³⁶ The majority of the requests followed the same pattern and described the desperate material position and failure of disabled fathers and husbands to provide for their families.⁸³⁷ Similar to many other disabled veteran Eliaz Berggrum wrote: “I justify my request by the following circumstances: my family (wife and six children) and I are very poor. Because of my disability and the general economic crisis, I am unemployed and I cannot provide for them.”⁸³⁸ Other veterans also emphasized their special position as former soldiers of the Polish Legions, the Polish army or/and “defenders of Lviv.”⁸³⁹ Although disabled veterans narrated their personal experiences, welfare and memory discourses shaped the letters to the Lviv Voivodeship.

Most applications were devoid of personal details and mentioned only those facts that could increase the odds of a successful appeal. For instance, Mendel Natan Zim Hertel, a former legal assistant, stressed that he could not find appropriate work due to his injured right hand. As he was unable to write, he was unable to find gainful employment in his former profession.⁸⁴⁰ Other

⁸³⁶ The Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic and the Union of Organizations of the Jewish Disabled Veterans, Widows, and Orphans provided samples of such requests letters to their Lviv members. As a result, the requests written according to these samples were almost identical and authors changed only few personal details. (DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1052, ark. 4, 28zv., 49, 69, 97, 119, 157, 190; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1053, ark. 15-17, 64; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 2087, ark. 85, 100, 107; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.559, ark. 56zv., 99, 151zv.).

⁸³⁷ DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 3733; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4102; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 547; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1057; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.563; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.1056; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.2087; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4103; Maria Cristina Galmarini-Kabala mentioned that Soviet male and female petitioners often used the “family trope” in their letters to the Commissariat of Social Assistance. This trope indicated the traditional gender roles in the family as male breadwinner and female dependant. (Maria Cristina Galmarini-Kabala, *The Right to Be Helped: Deviance, Entitlement, and the Soviet Moral Order* (DeKalb: NIU Press, 2016), 74).

⁸³⁸ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4104, ark. 45.

⁸³⁹ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.559, ark. 11, 76, 78 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1052, ark. 56; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.1056, ark. 33-33 zv.

⁸⁴⁰ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.563, ark. 35-36.

claimants argued that disability affected not only their ability to work but also other important quality of life issues. Leib Schatz, for instance, mentioned both his spinal paralysis and his related impotence.⁸⁴¹ Several disabled soldiers informed the Voivodeship that they were homeless and lived in their kiosks.⁸⁴² Of note, these applications were the only documents that reflected the experiences of female veterans.⁸⁴³ Although women had worked as nurses and some even served as soldiers, the war disability discourse was predominantly male. The voices of disabled female veterans were absent from veterans' periodicals and the popular press. Their letters to the Lviv Voivodeship, however, showed that they struggled with financial challenges similar to those of their male counterparts.⁸⁴⁴ For example, as shown in epigraph, Helena Szumańska, a disabled veteran of the Polish army, claimed that she had to provide not only for herself but for her daughter and ill husband, too.⁸⁴⁵ Anna Luciów, who had worked as a nurse in the Red Cross, took care also of her ill underage sister.⁸⁴⁶ Disabled female veterans were the most underrepresented "invisible" group of disabled veterans. The war disability discourse, grounded in notions of masculinity, was constructed around a male hero or a male victim and completely excluded women.

Though applicants usually belonged to the poor urban proletariat, some were from the intelligentsia. For instance, Marjan Jakubowski, a chaplain in the Polish army and the Voluntary Legion of Women, and Aleksander Diegtiarew, a former officer of Petliura's army and engineer, applied for one-time payments respectively in June 1932 and April 1936.⁸⁴⁷ Both disabled veterans

⁸⁴¹ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.559, ark. 62; During the investigation, the authorities learnt that Schatz was working as a teacher of Hebrew and refused to grant him the one-time payment. (DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.559, ark. 63-64).

⁸⁴² DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1052, ark. 56, 133-134zv.

⁸⁴³ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.1056, ark. 33-33 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr.4103, ark. 64-97 zv.

⁸⁴⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.1056, ark. 33-33 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr.4103, ark. 64-97 zv.

⁸⁴⁵ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.1056, ark. 33-33 zv.

⁸⁴⁶ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr.4103, ark. 86. In her next letter to the Voivodeship Luciów wrote: "I hope you will grant me the additional payment. My financial situation is desperate. I am heavily indebted because of the medical treatment and death of my sister. I will use this payment only for purchase of the necessary medication and fuel." (DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr.4103, ark. 91).

⁸⁴⁷ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 547, ark. 254; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1057, ark. 118-126.

were unemployed and asked for additional financial assistance. The former needed costly treatment to improve his health, while the latter aimed to provide an education for his only daughter and later to move to Vilnius.⁸⁴⁸ In another case, Antoni Szczepański, a veteran of the Polish Legion and an actor at the Lviv city theatre asked to be granted some allowance. Formally, he had never applied for state benefits but in 1931 his health deteriorated. As he could not work in the theatre anymore, Szczepański wrote a request letter to Piłsudski and then his documents were sent to Lviv Voivodeship.⁸⁴⁹ These requests were rather exceptional because the majority of educated disabled veterans had a steady income and were not eligible for state benefits.

The request letters also gave insight into how Lviv Voivodeship officials perceived such representations of war disability, as well as into some bureaucratic practices. Thus, officials underlined with pencil the most important information in veterans' letters and usually they were interested in the applicant's income, number of dependent family members and percentage of disability. Disabled men's experience was reduced and standardized to several main factors. At the same time, a scrupulous and invasive bureaucratic gaze studied the personal life of disabled soldiers and their families. Lviv bureaucrats conducted thorough investigations of every case and verified whether disabled veterans had provided truthful facts. Subsequently, they based their decisions on the reports of the Lviv district authorities that confirmed or confuted this information.⁸⁵⁰

Official complaints, denunciations, and interview records of those housed in the Lviv state House of Invalids allow for an examination of the relationship between different groups of disabled

⁸⁴⁸ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 547, ark. 254; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1057, ark. 120, 123.

⁸⁴⁹ DALO, f. 7, op.1, spr. 1453, ark. 95-96zv.

⁸⁵⁰ DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 3733; DALO, f.1, op.33, spr. 4102; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 547; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1057; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.563; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.1056; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr.2087; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4103.

residents. As this was the only House of Invalids in Poland in the 1930s, where disabled soldiers from various regions lived together, the Lviv institution was a microcosm of broader social trends and tensions. Divisions between veterans were determined not only by ethnicity or army affiliation but also by local and political differences. The “other” could be Ukrainian/Greek-Catholics, Ukrainian soldiers of Petliura’s army, Poles from Warsaw or Poznań, and Poles who sympathized with the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany.⁸⁵¹ Though the mental delusions and alcohol abuse of many disabled veterans contributed to clashes and fantasies about “spies” and “sympathizers,”⁸⁵² the political situation of the Second Polish Republic and in Lviv in particular, also reinforced conflicts in the House. In July 1939, a Polish disabled veteran from Poznań, Franciszek Nowak, wrote a letter to the Lviv Voivodeship about the unsavoury intrigues of the Ukrainian disabled veteran, Cyryl Kowalczuk. Both veterans lived in the House of Invalids and shared a room. A Uniate Ukrainian, Kowalczuk had previously denounced the Polish Nowak as an anti-Polish agitator. Kowalczuk said that Nowak had encouraged anti-Polish sentiment among Ukrainians. Kowalczuk wrote that Nowak promoted the idea that a German invasion would lead to the proclamation of an independent Ukrainian state. However, in response Nowak wrote that Kowalczuk’s comments came from a place of revenge as he, Nowak, often publicly mentioned the inferiority and disloyalty of Ukrainians in Poland. Moreover, he stressed that Kowalczuk visited St. Iura’s Cathedral every day, code for an affiliation with the Ukrainian national movement. Nowak acknowledged the constant tension between Ukrainian and Polish disabled veterans, since former soldiers had long memories of the painful experience of the Ukrainian-Polish war. In order to solve the problem and stop Ukrainian intrigues, Nowak asked that Kowalczuk be moved to

⁸⁵¹ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 3477, ark. 14-41.

⁸⁵² DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 99-99 zv.; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 4126, ark. 8.

another room.⁸⁵³ Although the veracity of these claims and counter-claims is questionable, accusations of supporting Ukrainian independence or being a German sympathizer reflected how outside political discourses made their way past the walls of the institution.

Despite personal conflicts, some disabled residents believed that all veterans were victims of martial engagements and bureaucratic mismanagement. Józef Irla, one of the main trouble makers in the Lviv House of Invalids wrote to the Voivodeship: “However, because of war all those scandalous disabled veterans are ill. They are anxious because of war. War! War is the reason and this is the consequence of it. The House of Invalids is not for the director [Adolf Tarnawsky] but for disabled veterans. Instead of eliminating the reasons for the problem, they expel disabled veterans.”⁸⁵⁴ Irla presented disabled veterans as war victims justly entitled to proper state assistance. Though Tarnawsky himself was a disabled soldier, he was perceived as the “other” by the residents of the institution because of his administrative position. As a bureaucrat, he represented the state that tried to limit the rights of war victims.

One of the interesting issues that my documents revealed was the relationship between disabled soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army and other veteran groups. Ukrainian activists, for example, often did not mention the Polish organizations of disabled veterans. However, in a 1934 interview with Anatol' Kurdydyk, Semen Ukrains'kyi acknowledged that some time earlier the Lviv Voivodeship branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic had made a donation to the Ukrainian Association for Aid to the Disabled.⁸⁵⁵ Though he offered few specifics, it is clear that at times a common veteran identity often transcended nationality. This meant that

⁸⁵³ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 99-99 zv. In his article about the House of Invalids Mironowicz described Nowak as a “harmless madman” and “maybe the happiest resident of the House of Invalids” who believed that he had invented the radio. (Mikołaj Mironowicz, “Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej,” *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939), 12).

⁸⁵⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3728, ark. 7.

⁸⁵⁵ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi hodyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 19.

by the early 1930s the aggressive Polish national discourse in Lviv, which was based on the commemoration of the Ukrainian-Polish war, did not necessarily create a rupture between different groups of veterans.

Narration of Disability: Andrii Voloshchak⁸⁵⁶

Andrii Voloshchak, a young Ukrainian poet, was injured at the end of August 1914 and lost his vision. He was initially treated in Vienna and then studied at a university in Prague from 1916 to 1918. During the interwar era, he belonged to a left-wing group of Ukrainian writers. After the Soviet army annexed the city in September 1939, Voloshchak became the head of the Lviv Union of Disabled Veterans and the Union of Blind Soldiers and he continued his career as a Soviet Ukrainian writer after the Second World War.⁸⁵⁷ In his poetry, Voloshchak underlined that thousands and millions had suffered for the “motherland” and monarchy and his work often reflected the experience of war disability and visual impairment in particular.⁸⁵⁸ The same motif was repeated in his poems following a head injury. This young man was in despair as the sun was extinguished and he lived in eternal darkness.⁸⁵⁹ In 1915 he wrote:

Many times I want to
Cry and yell endlessly:
Just for a second give me light –
I can't live without the Sun –

⁸⁵⁶ Thank you to Iulia Kysla for drawing my attention to Andrii Voloshchak's poetry.

⁸⁵⁷ Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv-muzei literatury i mystetstva Ukrainy, f. 590, op. 5, spr. 236, 4-4 zv., 11.

⁸⁵⁸ Andrii Voloshchak, *U t'mi horiu* (L'viv: Z drukarni naukovohto tovarystva im Shevchenka, 1934), 59.

⁸⁵⁹ Andrii Voloshchak, *U t'mi horiu* (L'viv: Z drukarni naukovohto tovarystva im Shevchenka, 1934), 15, 54-55, 59.

Please, just a drop of light!⁸⁶⁰

Though this image of darkness was always present in Voloshchak's poetry, in 1920 he wrote about a gleam of light⁸⁶¹ and six years later he wrote that "darkness won't extinguish the fire in my soul."⁸⁶² His poetry written in the mid-1930s was more optimistic:

Though space around covered in darkness,
My soul is full of colours,
As grey earth is full of underground treasures.⁸⁶³

Darkness was the most common trope Voloshchak used to describe his experience of visual impairment.⁸⁶⁴ Though he could not see, his imagination and memories helped him envision the surrounding world.⁸⁶⁵ He reflected that if the impossible happened and he regained his sight he would see the world differently than other people. Due to his experience of disability, he would see "miracles" in banal everyday objects and interactions.⁸⁶⁶

At the same time, Voloshchak did not discuss war disability only in his poetry. In 1921, he was employed in the Educational section of the Ukrainian Citizens' Committee in Lviv. Soon after he got this position, he shared his views on organizing assistance for disabled Ukrainian soldiers. He wrote the article, "My future work and how I am going to do it," in which he argued that

⁸⁶⁰ Andrii Voloshchak, *U t'mi horiu* (L'viv: Z drukarni naukovooho tovarystva im Shevchenka, 1934), 55 (My translation).

⁸⁶¹ Andrii Voloshchak, *U t'mi horiu* (L'viv: Z drukarni naukovooho tovarystva im Shevchenka, 1934), 15.

⁸⁶² Andrii Voloshchak, *U t'mi horiu* (L'viv: Z drukarni naukovooho tovarystva im Shevchenka, 1934), 5.

⁸⁶³ Andrii Voloshchak, *Vybrane* (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Khudozhn'oi literatury, 1961), 51.

⁸⁶⁴ Andrii Voloshchak, *U t'mi gorii* (L'viv: Z drukarni naukovooho tovarystva im Shevchenka, 1934), 15, 54-55, 59; Andrii Voloshchak, *Vybrane* (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Khudozhn'oi literatury, 1961), 51.

⁸⁶⁵ Andrii Voloshchak, *Vybrane* (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Khudozhn'oi literatury, 1961), 51.

⁸⁶⁶ Andrii Voloshchak, *Vybrane* (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Khudozhn'oi literatury, 1961), 54.

disabled soldiers could and should work to provide for themselves.⁸⁶⁷ He also mentioned society's antipathy towards blind working ex-servicemen. Voloshchak explained not only how he planned to work as a blind office clerk but he also outlined plans for a vocational school for Ukrainian disabled veterans.⁸⁶⁸ Following the mainstream rehabilitation discourse, he argued that the most important task was to become "a productive part of society again."⁸⁶⁹ Labour would help disabled veterans overcome their disability and earn a living. All those accepted to the Ukrainian House of Invalids in Lviv (except those who were completely incapacitated) would have to work and would be expelled if they failed to do so. Voloshchak suggested that disabled veterans could learn handicrafts, which could be sold for income.⁸⁷⁰ Voloshchak, who was taught Braille in Vienna during his convalescence, planned to teach it to blind soldiers in Lviv. However, save for one alphabet book, there were no Ukrainian-Braille books and he planned to encourage Ukrainian women "to translate" books for blind veterans. This project could become the first step in establishing a Ukrainian school for the blind. Voloshchak believed that in order to be a civilized nation, the Ukrainian community had to fill a void in Ukraine's education system and establish schools for the blind and deaf.⁸⁷¹

Voloshchak saw himself as the de-facto director of the Ukrainian House of Invalids or School for the Blind, but he was never actually appointed to these positions.⁸⁷² Some elements of his projects were implemented and activists organized special courses and workshops for

⁸⁶⁷ DALO, f. 262, op.1, spr. 8.

⁸⁶⁸ DALO, f. 262, op.1, spr. 8, ark.1.

⁸⁶⁹ DALO, f. 262, op.1, spr. 8, ark. 1 zv.

⁸⁷⁰ About the similar rehabilitation institutions in Great Britain see Jeffrey S. Reznick, "Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldier in Great Britain in the First World War: The Case of Shepherd's Bush Military Hospital, London," in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 185-203.

⁸⁷¹ DALO, f. 262, op.1, spr. 8, ark. 2- 2 zv.

⁸⁷² DALO, f. 262, op.1, spr. 8, ark. 2 zv.

Ukrainian disabled veterans.⁸⁷³ However, the School for the Blind never materialized. Moreover, the poet parted ways with Ukrainian national circles and by the end of 1920s joined a pro-Soviet group of Ukrainian intelligentsia.⁸⁷⁴

Although Voloshchak's poetry often depicted a young man struggling with disability, his "My future work and how I am going to do it" showed a different approach. Here, Voloshchak did not reflect on the complex experiences of impairment but suggested a clear solution. One's ability to work and earn a living were the main ingredients in the successful recipe for social reintegration. Those veterans who did not want to work had to be disciplined and would benefit from "work therapy."⁸⁷⁵ Ultimately, a discourse focused on productivity and restoring the labouring body dominated among doctors, bureaucrats, and disabled veterans themselves. This discourse, and its attendant notions of reintegration and normalization, crowded out other visions for rehabilitating and mending broken soldiers.

Representations of Disability: Society, State and Disabled Veterans

Understanding the triadic relationship between state, society, and disabled veterans is essential for understanding the postwar experience of disability.⁸⁷⁶ The relationship between disabled soldiers, society, and the state in interwar Poland was the central focus of disabled activists. Similar to the relationship between disabled soldiers and the state, relations between disabled soldiers and society were at times equally ambiguous. Deborah Cohen has argued that the negative attitudes of German society towards disabled veterans were key to understanding their

⁸⁷³ Zynovii Lysiatyn'skii, "Taku pomich maiut' nashi invalidy, in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendarna 1924 rik* (L'viv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 85-86; f. 462, op.1, spr. 181, ark. 1-1 zv; I. G., "Zakinchennia shk. roku osvithnich kursiv invalidiv UGA," *Novyi czas*, July 4, 1926, 9.

⁸⁷⁴ Andrii Voloshchak, *Vybrane* (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Khudozhn'oi literatury, 1961), 179.

⁸⁷⁵ DALO, f. 262, op.1, spr. 8.

⁸⁷⁶ David A. Gerber, "Introduction: Finding Disabled Veterans in History," in *Disabled Veterans in History: Enlarged and Revised Edition* ed. by David A. Gerber (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 25.

turn away from the Weimar Republic.⁸⁷⁷ The author of an anonymous article in the Lviv “independent radical” newspaper *Sprawedliwość* claimed that city dwellers only reluctantly talked about disabled soldiers and even then in hushed tones. Like bankruptcy or suicide, war disability was stigmatized because it existed apart from middle-class urban norms. Disabled veterans who should have been treated as heroes were forced to beg and scrounge. The author believed that what few benefits were afforded to poor veterans, such as vendor permits, would do little to actually end their suffering. In reality, such measures allowed for liberal middle-class self-congratulation. The newspaper encouraged readers to change their attitudes and offer substantial support to disabled veterans not out of pity but out of a sense of responsibility. Society could only wield a successful military if servicemen were confident that they would be well treated if injured.⁸⁷⁸

In the interwar era, activists often lamented that it was society and not the state that forgot about injured soldiers. Ukrainian activists, who tried to mobilize the community and create a system of assistance for disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army, used this argument as often as their Polish counterparts.⁸⁷⁹ At the same time, representatives of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic also discussed their grievances publicly in the local press.⁸⁸⁰ Adam Maguder argued that society and local authorities did not support the central government’s attempts to improve veteran wellbeing. He accused Lviv dwellers of indifference, especially the younger generation. Such attitudes were manifested daily in urban public space, when, for example, tram or bus passengers offered pity but not their seats to disabled veterans.⁸⁸¹ Although

⁸⁷⁷ Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home. Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001).

⁸⁷⁸ “Gorsze nizeli śmierć,” *Sprawedliwość*, August 27, 1922, 2-3.

⁸⁷⁹ See Chapter 5.

⁸⁸⁰ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 87. The disabled deputies of the Parliament expressed a similar point of view about the indifference of society (Sejm II RP. 4 kadencja, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 15 posiedzenie*, łąm 124, 126).

⁸⁸¹ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 87.

the heroic official discourse proclaimed the special place of veterans in the society, the everyday interactions between disabled veterans and the city dwellers revealed that the disrespectful behaviour in urban public space had sometimes extreme forms. For example, in November 1936 the newspapers reported a fight between a disabled veteran and a teenager in one of the Lviv cinemas. The young man not only hit the disabled veteran but he also spat twice on the disabled soldier's decorations.⁸⁸² Additionally, the city administration did not implement the letter of the Invalid Act and failed to employ disabled veterans in municipal enterprises or provide permits to those veterans wanting to sell monopoly goods. Local authorities granted some exemptions to disabled soldiers—they received 50 reduced-price tram tickets if they suffered from more than 60% disability. However, Maguder considered such assistance paltry. He quoted the words of the Minister of Welfare and Labour about society's need to change its passivity towards disabled veterans. The activist encouraged Lviv to follow the examples of Warsaw, Poznań, and Cracow and establish a Friends of War Invalids Society.⁸⁸³ Although disabled activists argued that the local authorities did not provide proper support for veterans, officials definitely paid attention to criticism. Maguder's article was preserved among the documents of the Lviv Voivodeship and all accusations against local bureaucrats were highlighted in red.⁸⁸⁴ However, according to some testimonies, the situation changed little throughout the decade. In 1939, disabled activist Mikołaj Mironowicz was still reporting numerous cases of unjust treatment of veterans by the authorities and society.⁸⁸⁵

Society imposed its image of “war heroes” on disabled veterans and policed their behaviour. For instance, some Ukrainian disabled soldiers wrote to Metropolitan Andrei

⁸⁸² “Plyunuv na viiskovi vidznaky polskoho invalida,” *Novyi chas*, November 26, 1936, 9.

⁸⁸³ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 87.

⁸⁸⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 87.

⁸⁸⁵ Mikołaj Mironowicz, “Blaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej,” *Front inwalidzki* 1-2 (1939), 10-11.

Sheptyts'kyi about their desperate material situation and asked for help. However, the leaders of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to the Disabled had doubts that veterans of the Galician army would lower themselves to ask Sheptyts'kyi for allowances and argued that those petitioners only pretended to be Ukrainian veterans.⁸⁸⁶ In other words, Ukrainian activists argued that “real” disabled soldiers behaved according to some established norms; certainly “real” disabled veterans would not beseech the Metropolitan. Ukrainian civil society created a safety net for disabled servicemen of the Galician army and constructed the image of an “ideal” veteran. Those who did not fit this representation were marginalized. For instance, leftist disabled veterans were often excluded from the broader veterans’ community.⁸⁸⁷

Even though disabled veterans often accused the public of indifference, they sometimes directly appealed to the public for support. For instance, activists asked Lviv dwellers to support their economic demands during a demonstration at the end of October 1921 and during their struggle for the right to reside in the House of Invalids in 1924.⁸⁸⁸ In the first case, the shift from blaming the local community for their misfortune to seeking its support was so unexpected that *Gazeta Wieczorna* published an article with the title “Change of Front.”⁸⁸⁹

Although the tension between local bureaucrats and disabled veterans was often visible, the central authorities were not usually criticized by local disabled activists. Maguder, the chair of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic in Lviv, stressed in a newspaper article from the early 1930s that the Polish state “fulfilled its obligation towards invalids.”⁸⁹⁰ However,

⁸⁸⁶ CDIAL, f. 358, op. 1, spr. 131, ark. 4.

⁸⁸⁷ CDIAL, f. 462, op. 1, spr. 178, ark. 3-4; Invalidy UGA, “UNDO-Fashystivs'ka Klika i Invalidy UGA,” *Sel'rob*, May 26, 1929, 2; “Z Ukrain'skogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam. Ruinytska robota ‘Selrobu’,” *Dilo*, June 13, 1929, 4; “Undo-fashystivs'ki ‘opikuny’ invalidiv,” *Sel'rob*, June 23, 1929, 2; “Fashysts'ka uprava UKDOTI proty invalidiv UHA,” *Sel'rob*, February 2, 1930, 3.

⁸⁸⁸ “Zmiana frontu. Sprawozdanie z wiecu inwalidów,” *Gazeta Wieczorna*, October 25, 1921, 4; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 831, 134-135 zv.

⁸⁸⁹ “Zmiana frontu. Sprawozdanie z wiecu inwalidów,” *Gazeta Wieczorna*, October 25, 1921, 4.

⁸⁹⁰ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1225, ark. 87.

veterans argued that sometimes local officials openly reduced veterans' benefits provided by the Polish government. For example, disabled veterans were allowed to sell alcohol. But in January 1928, city authorities announced that those veterans granted such a concession would face an increased tax bill. Disabled soldiers opposed the measure and asserted that veterans, widows, and orphans should not be the only ones so burdened. Disabled soldiers had sacrificed their health and they sought a financially stable life. They claimed that the local administration undermined all attempts of the central government to improve the economic wellbeing of "war victims."⁸⁹¹

Representatives of Polish veterans' organizations in Lviv especially highlighted their loyalty to the central authorities before the beginning of the Second World War. In the late 1930s, disabled Lviv activists publicly supported state remilitarization efforts. According to a report from a general meeting of the Lviv Voivodeship branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans published in July 1939, its members did not discuss the issue of benefits for disabled veterans but, rather, focused on contemporary politics, military readiness, and the consolidation of society. After Wagner's speech, Lviv disabled activists declared that they were prepared not only to support the Polish army financially but also to join it and fight for the Polish state.⁸⁹²

The "love-hate" relationship between disabled activists and the rest of the Lviv community lasted throughout the interwar era. Both had expectations of the other. Disabled servicemen demanded financial benefits and societal respect. They were heroes who had sacrificed their health for the state and believed that they deserved care and respect from their fellow citizens. Though Lviv disabled activists organized demonstrations and criticized the central government in the early 1920s,⁸⁹³ their relationship with the central authorities completely changed in the 1930s. As Poland

⁸⁹¹ "Zamach na kieszeń inwalidów wojennych," *Wiek Nowy*, January 21, 1928, 6.

⁸⁹² "Zdecydowana postawa bojowa Związku Inwalidów Wojennych R. P.," *Inwalida*, July 1, 1939, 8.

⁸⁹³ "Wiec inwalidow we Lwowie," *Wiek Nowy*, May 1, 1923, 4; "Wiec inwalidów wojskowych," *Wiek Nowy*, October 26, 1921, 5; "Zmiana frontu. Sprawozdanie z wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Wieczorna*, October 25, 1921, 4.

slowly turned to authoritarianism, the public sphere shrank and only criticism of local bureaucrats was tolerated.

Gender and War Disability

Traditional gender roles dictate that men be breadwinners. Injured soldiers often lost the ability to perform paid labour and, instead, became burdens and liabilities. For instance, the Lviv Committee for Assistance to Blind and Injured Jewish Soldiers in 1921 stressed that the community had to help disabled veterans cope with emotional suffering caused by their inability to support their families financially.⁸⁹⁴ Narratives about war disability were usually focused on male suffering. At the same time, Jessica Meyer has argued that within this masculine narrative “there is another story, that of the women who experienced this suffering intimately, particularly the wives of the men who had been disabled by war.”⁸⁹⁵ The majority of Lviv’s disabled servicemen mentioned that their families were affected by their inability to provide. Yet, the experiences of female caregivers are often missing. Rarely, these caregivers, such as wives and mothers, who were the legal guardians of their husbands or sons, petitioned on their behalf for additional payments, free medical treatment, or permission to be placed in the House of Invalids. Such applications usually emphasized financial exigency and did not mention other quality of life issues.⁸⁹⁶ At the same time, material hardship could force women to take radical steps. For instance, the widow of disabled veteran Edward Jakubowski could not provide for their son

⁸⁹⁴ O Pomoc dla invalidów,” *Chwila*, December 1, 1921, 4; “O Pomoc dla invalidów,” *Chwila*, February 15, 1922, 5

⁸⁹⁵ Jessica Meyer, “‘Not Septimus Now:’ Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain,” *Women’s History Review* 13, no. 1 (2004): 118.

⁸⁹⁶ DALO, f. 7, op.1, spr. 1955, ark. 106-106 zv, 114-114 zv; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 559, ark. 2; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 2087, ark. 47; DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 1052, ark. 136.

Mieczysław after the death of her husband and placed him in an orphanage.⁸⁹⁷ At the same time, vulnerable disabled soldiers were sometimes abused by the women in their lives.⁸⁹⁸

Although the war changed gender roles, those changes were temporary and postwar life re-imposed traditional gender relations.⁸⁹⁹ Like women in other countries, Lviv female dwellers acquired new roles. They became breadwinners, entered new occupations, were more visible in the public sphere, and even served as soldiers.⁹⁰⁰ However after their return, veterans and in particular injured soldiers felt threatened by women and demanded the restoration of traditional roles.

The Union of Disabled Veterans insisted that disabled veterans be given preferential employment over women. Activists believed that demobilized soldiers needed these jobs more than female employees. For instance, in October 1919, *Inwalida* appealed to the administration of Lviv University and asked that disabled veterans be given priority hiring.⁹⁰¹ Several months later, this issue was even discussed in the Constitutional Assembly. At the beginning of January 1920, Władysław Herz, a deputy from the National Christian Labour Club, protested against prioritizing female workers and insisted that disabled veterans be hired instead.⁹⁰² However, according to local disabled activists, this problem was not solved and veterans continued to feel threatened by women in the workplace. At the end of April 1923, during a meeting organized by The Union of Disabled

⁸⁹⁷ Mieczysław Jakubowski. *Uratowane dzieciństwo. Lwowskie wspomnienia*, (Caldra House: Hove, 1995), 9

⁸⁹⁸ DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 565, ark. 31-46; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1074, ark. 19.

⁸⁹⁹ Erika Kuhlman, *Reconstructing Patriarchy after Great War: Women, Gender, and Postwar Reconciliation between Nations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 1-10; Jassica Meyer, "Not Septimus Now: Wives of Disabled Veterans and Cultural Memory of the First World War in Britain," *Women's History Review* 13, no. 1 (2004): 118-120.

⁹⁰⁰ "O pracę dla kobiet," *Kurjer Lwowski*. – 1915. – 16 wrzes, 7-8.; Grabowski K., "Równouprawnienie kobiet," *Kurjer Lwowski*, May 9, 1918, 2; AGAD, Komenda m. Lwowa, j. 84; F. O. Sh, "Lystopad 1918 r.," *Litopys chervonoi kalyny* 11 (1937): 20; "Legja kobiet," *Słowo Polskie*, January 7, 1919, 2.

⁹⁰¹ "Grzeczność na Lwowskiej Wszechnicy," *Inwalida*, October 12, 1919, 3-4.

⁹⁰² SU, posidz 107, lam 32.

Veterans in the courtyard of Lviv city hall, veterans complained that some institutions were firing disabled soldiers and hiring women instead.⁹⁰³

By the 1930s, the attitudes of disabled veterans' organizations towards women's employment had hardly changed. In July 1933, *Inwalida* suggested an "effective" method to overcome the mass unemployment among disabled veterans. According to the author, female married office workers whose husbands had jobs should be fired from government positions and replaced by disabled soldiers.⁹⁰⁴ The next issue of the newspaper informed readers that the Ministry of Communication and the Administration of Railways had dismissed married female workers. It encouraged other institutions to follow their lead.⁹⁰⁵ At the same time, such policies also had negative consequences for some disabled veterans' families. At the beginning of 1939, one of the members of the Lviv branch of the Invalid Legion complained that his wife had not been promoted. She had been working for a Lviv municipal enterprise for 12 years, but was not promoted because of her marital status.⁹⁰⁶

War disability affected the most intimate aspects of life for disabled veterans and their families. In his letter to the Voivodeship, Leib Schatz lamented his impotence, calling himself an "impotent old cripple."⁹⁰⁷ Usually, impotence stemmed from war injuries.⁹⁰⁸ According to the

⁹⁰³ "Wiec Inwalidów we Lwowie," *Wiek Nowy*, May 1, 1923, 4. Similar discourses were also widespread in other Central European countries. After the war some women in Austria were granted unemployment benefits. According to the widespread opinion, they took "advantage of men's losses," enjoying a luxurious lifestyle "while real victims suffered." (Catherine Edgecombe and Maureen Healy, "Competing Interpretations of Sacrifice in the Postwar Austrian Republic," in *Sacrifice and Rebirth. The Legacy of the Last Habsburg War* ed. by Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016), 25-26.

⁹⁰⁴ "Inwalidzi wojenni winni zająć miejsca mężatek w urzędach państwowych," *Inwalida*, July 30, 1933, 3. In general, female married civil servants experience additional obstacles in interwar Poland. They could not be hired without permissions of their husbands. (Eva Plach, *The Clash of Moral Nation. Cultural Politics in Piłsudski's Poland, 1926-1935* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), 60).

⁹⁰⁵ "Mężatki muszą ustąpić miejsc bezrobotnym inwalidom!" *Inwalida*, August 6, 1933, 4.

⁹⁰⁶ Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Blaski i cieni Legii Inwalidów we Lwowie," *Front Inwalidzki*, no. 1-2 (1939): 11.

⁹⁰⁷ DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1555, ark. 62.

⁹⁰⁸ Ana Garden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism and the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 176.

guidelines issued for military doctors in 1920, medical professionals had to grant disability status (33 percent of disability) to soldiers whose injuries had caused impotence.⁹⁰⁹ The government tried to change this regulation in summer 1922, but deputies of the Polish parliament voted against it.⁹¹⁰ During the discussion, some deputies admitted that disabilities related to male sexual dysfunction would often render a man not marriage material:

A healthy man who has all parts of his body can make not only a career and a thousand other things, but also can experience other pleasures of life. If he is young, he can get married but a disabled veteran does not have all this and that is why he has rights to these benefits.⁹¹¹

However, many other groups of disabled soldiers who could not have a “normal” family life did not receive compensation from the government, for instance, institutionalized disabled veterans. Married residents of the Lviv House of Invalids were separated from their wives and children and single veterans had almost no chance to start relationships with someone outside the institution.⁹¹² As we have seen, in one case a disabled veteran violated these regulations and invited his wife to live in the House with him.⁹¹³ Some other institutionalized men chose the company of prostitutes.⁹¹⁴

⁹⁰⁹ “Instrukcja Ministra Spraw Wojskowych, Ministra Skarbu, Ministra Pracy i Opieki Społecznej,” in *Ustawa Inwalidska*, 137-152.

⁹¹⁰ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 17, 38.

⁹¹¹ Sejm Ustawodawczy, *Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 334 posiedzenie*, łam 16-17.

⁹¹² DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 565, ark. 31-46; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 1074, ark. 19; In rare cases, disabled veterans could find a lover outside the House but were not allow to allow to stay overnight in the city (DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3092, ark. 102).

⁹¹³ DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 826, 106-106 zv.

⁹¹⁴ DALO, f. 1, op.34, spr. 3092, ark. 62-65; DALO, f.1, op. 33, spr. 1563, ark. 12-12zv.

The Representation of the “Disabled Veteran” in Public Discourse: Jan Kos’ Suicide

On 6 July 1924 members of the Lviv branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic gathered for a meeting. Tensions rose as attendees discussed the inadequate social welfare system for disabled soldiers and the neglect of the central and local authorities, who in addition to various abuses, tried to turn the state House of Invalids into a military hospital. A representative of the Union from Warsaw, Bolesław Kikiewicz, and the parliamentarian Czesław Mączyński (the Polish Commander-in-Chief during the “defence of Lviv”) were among the presenters. At the end of the meeting, one disabled veteran from Lviv, Jan Kos, delivered a bitter and caustic speech about the tragic fate of Polish disabled veterans. However, in contrast to other presenters, Kos not only spoke, he acted as well. He took out his gun and committed suicide in front of a room packed with disabled veterans.⁹¹⁵ This was a shocking public spectacle that various groups of disabled veterans and the authorities tried to spin to their benefit.

The interpretation of the suicide put forth by the leaders of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic was published in the newspaper *Inwalida*. The author, Bolesław Kikiewicz, participated in the meeting and witnessed the tragic event. He published two telegrams that he sent to Warsaw after Kos’ suicide. They were almost identical; the first was sent to disabled Deputy Edmund Bigoński and the second to the executive board of the Union. Kikiewicz mentioned that the disabled veteran who shot himself was also the recipient of Poland’s highest military honour, the *Order Wojenny Virtuti Militari* [the Order of Military Virtue]. However, his telegram to Bigoński started with a lament on the despair of demobilized disabled veterans and the failings of the state to care for them.⁹¹⁶ Despite Kikiewicz’s admission that Jan Kos was a “defender of Lviv,”

⁹¹⁵Bolesław Kikiewicz, “Nad grobem ś. p. Jana Kosa,” *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 8-10; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 1554, ark. 3-4.

⁹¹⁶Kikiewicz, “Nad grobem,” *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 8.

he presented this public suicide as a noble act of protest on behalf of all disabled veterans. Even though Kos had been well cared for, he could not accept how the Polish state treated disabled veterans: “[...] his honest soul thought that if Poland was not the country it should be, it meant that not enough blood had been sacrificed [...].” According to Kikiewicz his last words were: “Long live Poland our beloved motherland. I fought for Poland and I will die for Poland!”⁹¹⁷ The Warsaw representative Kikiewicz emphasized the government’s responsibility for the suicide and he tried to use it to benefit the broader disabled veteran movement.

At the same time, *Inwalida* never mentioned Kos’s religious affiliation. The only newspaper that reported that the deceased veteran was actually a Greek Catholic was Lviv’s *Dziennik Ludowy*, which was published by the Polish Socialist Party.⁹¹⁸ The suicide of the disabled veteran provoked further controversy and conflict. Maguder, a disabled Lviv activist, wrote a public note of gratitude to Oscar Mitschke, an Evangelical pastor, who conducted the funeral service. As Kos had committed suicide, Catholic priests refused to participate in his funeral. Maguder made a scathing remark about double standards, especially as Catholic clergy had recently buried other suicide victims: “However, those were humans and Kos was an invalid.”⁹¹⁹

The tragic events in Lviv also coincided with the struggle of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic to prevent the reduction of the allowance for disabled veterans. In June 1924, the government decided to reduce the support given to war orphans, while a deputy from the left-wing *Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe “Wyzwolenie”* [Polish People’s Party “Liberation”], Waław Łypacewicz, suggested cutting the allowance to disabled veterans instead. The indignant leaders of the Union persuaded him to renounce such budget changes. However,

⁹¹⁷ Kikiewicz, “Nad grobem,” *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 8-9.

⁹¹⁸ “Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sokole,” *Dziennik Ludowy*, July 9, 1924, 6.

⁹¹⁹ “Podziękowanie Związku inwalidów,” *Dziennik Ludowy*, July 14, 1924, 6.

activists were disappointed that Łypacewicz repeated half-truths and clichés on issues of assistance for demobilized disabled veterans. For example, he mentioned that the veterans of the Polish army should have more privileges than the disabled veterans of imperial armies, that veterans with a low percentage of disability should be deprived of allowances, and that the status of disabled veteran should be granted only to those who could prove their disability.⁹²⁰ In contrast, the equality of all disabled veterans was one of the main tenets of the veteran movement.⁹²¹ The government tried to introduce legislation that would have split the disabled veteran movement and alter the minimum percentage of disability required for an allowance. Fortunately, parliamentary deputies, under pressure from the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic, voted against such a decision.⁹²² In order to underline the consequences of government policy, Kikiewicz deployed a narrative in which Jan Kos became a symbol in the struggle for the rights of disabled veterans. Kos became the victimized hero who was ready to die to ensure better care for his military comrades. Other periodicals likewise emphasized the personal responsibility of some deputies like, Łypacewicz, whose attempts to reduce veterans' benefits were the reason for the public suicide in Lviv. Warsaw representatives of the Union admitted that another disabled veteran had also tried to committed suicide following Kos' example. Moreover, Kikiewicz threatened that the soon-to-be mass suicide of disabled veterans, emboldened by Kos, would stem from the neglect and mistreatment by the government.⁹²³

The local military authorities published their official account of the suicide. First, they argued that as Kos was the owner of a cigarette kiosk, he was financially secure and had no legitimate financial complaints. Moreover, they argued that his suicide was not motivated by

⁹²⁰ Kik, "Pan poseł Łypacewicz," *Inwalida*, June 8, 1924, 1-3.

⁹²¹ "Dwukrotne zwycięstwo," *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 1-3.

⁹²² Ebi, "Dalszy etap walki," *Inwalida*, July 13, 1924, 1-4; "Dwukrotne zwycięstwo," *Inwalida*, July 20, 1924, 1-3.

⁹²³ Kikiewicz, "Nad grobem," 8-10; "Co mówią P. S. L. o Wyzwoleniach," *Inwalida*, July 27, 1924, 3.

grievances against the state but, rather, that he had killed himself because of personal reasons. An investigation revealed his alleged philandering tendencies, which caused trouble at home. These personal complications, not any state action, were the real reasons behind Kos's suicide.⁹²⁴

However, Kos' suicide did ignite a broader discussion on the welfare system for disabled veterans, and local and central attitudes about disabled soldiers.⁹²⁵ The Lviv newspaper *Gazeta Poranna* even suggested that society had a moral obligation to care for disabled veterans, especially as weak economic conditions undermined the ability of the state to provide.⁹²⁶ In contrast to *Inwalida*, Lviv-based newspapers did not construct the heroic representation of a disabled veteran who died for a common cause. The Lviv press stressed that Kos's speech was indeed very personal but that his reasons for suicide stemmed from the labyrinthine civic regulations that made it almost impossible for him to run his small kiosk and not from any grievances stemming from the broader (mis)treatment of disabled veterans.⁹²⁷ *Kurjer Lwowski* emphasized that disabled veterans also spoke about a system that gave preference to Jews and profiteers and not disabled soldiers who had sacrificed their health for Poland and Lviv.⁹²⁸ Some newspapers refused to publish the official explanation as a sign of respect to the deceased veteran.⁹²⁹ His widow had published a letter so soon after his suicide describing him as an ideal family man clearly belied the official version of events.⁹³⁰ *Kurjer Lwowski* even admitted that all

⁹²⁴ "Z powodu tragicznej śmierci Inwalidy," *Inwalida*, July 27, 1924, 6-7.

⁹²⁵ "Tragiczny przebieg wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Lwowska*, 8 July, 1924, 5; "Demonstracyjne samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 9 July 1924, 3; "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sali Sokoła Macierzy," *Wiek Nowy*, 8 July, 1924, 5; "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sokole," *Gazeta Poranna*, 8 July 1924, 3.

⁹²⁶ "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sokole," *Gazeta Poranna*, 8 July 1924, 3.

⁹²⁷ "Tragiczny przebieg wiecu inwalidów," *Gazeta Lwowska*, 8 July, 1924, 5; "Demonstracyjne samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 9 July 1924, 3; "Samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu w Sokole," *Gazeta Poranna*, 8 July 1924, 3.

⁹²⁸ "Demonstracyjne samobójstwo inwalidy na wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 9 July 1924, 3.

⁹²⁹ "Demonstracyjne samobójstwo na wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 10 July 1924, 4.

⁹³⁰ "List wdowy po Śp. J. Kosie," *Wiek Nowy*, 13 July 1924, 9; "W sprawie demonstracyjnego samobójstwa na wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 14 July 1924, 4.

accusations against the local and central government mentioned during the meeting of disabled veterans were true. As such, rumours and innuendos about Kos' personal life were intended to obscure the simple fact that the state authorities had failed to establish an adequate welfare system for disabled veterans.⁹³¹

The representatives of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic and the local newspapers interpreted this public suicide in different ways. Lviv-based newspapers considered the indifference of the local government towards this disabled veteran to be the main reason for the tragedy. Kos committed suicide not because of his frustration with the state's failure to establish an adequate welfare system for disabled veterans but because of his inability to manage successfully his business due to the burdensome regulations of local authorities. The narratives constructed by leaders of both the disabled veteran movement and the local newspapers eschew the category of national identity or army affiliation. They overcame divisive memories of the war. Although Kos was a former member of the Polish army and was a storied "defender of Lviv," neither the disabled veteran movement nor the press presented him as a Polish national martyr. Kos' case highlights the complicated and often contested notions of identity in interwar Poland. He was at once a disabled veteran, a former soldier of the Polish army who had participated in the Ukrainian-Polish conflict, a member of the local organization of disabled servicemen, a kiosk owner, and a possible Greek-Catholic buried by an Evangelical pastor.

Disability and Crime in the Popular Press

On 5 February 1934 Lviv dwellers read a blood-curdling story in the local newspapers. Jan Czyż, a caretaker, had found human remains in Kiliński Park. The police suspected that the victim,

⁹³¹ "List wdowy po Śp. J. Kosie," *Wiek Nowy*, 13 July 1924, 9; "W sprawie demonstracyjnego samobójstwa na wiecu," *Kurjer Lwowski*, 14 July 1924, 4.

a woman, had endured a grotesque and sexually violent end.⁹³² More body parts were found in other locations and the police quickly launched an investigation. It took the Lviv constabulary less than 24 hours to find the murderer, the disabled veteran Hieronim Cybulski.⁹³³

In the first part of the twentieth century dwellers of modern cities often experienced urban life through the reading of popular newspapers, which in turn shaped the images of the city.⁹³⁴ Over the next several weeks, Lviv newspapers published details of Cybulski's case. Journalists scrupulously reported on the numerous murders, suicides, and various everyday dramas. Journalistic sensationalism was a characteristic feature of the European press during the second part of nineteenth and the early twentieth century.⁹³⁵ The crime committed by the disabled veteran was horrifying and every article emphasized the stark cruelty of the murderer, while also reporting every lurid detail. The murderer owned a cigarette and newspaper kiosk on the corner of St. Sophia square and Poniatowskiego Street. Cybulski had received his kiosk because he was a war invalid with 33% disability. *Gazeta Lwowska* mentioned that he had been injured in the Austrian army,⁹³⁶ but the other newspapers informed their readers that he was a soldier of the Polish army who had participated in the "defence of Lviv" and that in his kiosk hung a sign reading "Hieronim Cybulski, an invalid of the Polish Army."⁹³⁷ Even though the kiosk provided a good income, he was unhappy

⁹³² "Potworna Zbrodnia w Parku Stryiskim," *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 7 1934, 9; "Poćwartowane Części Zwłok w Parku Kilińskiego," *Chwila*, February 7, 1934, 13; "Dalsze Części Poćwartowanych Zwłok Kobiety Znaleziono w Trech Punktach Miasta," *Chwila*, February 8, 1934, 3; "Nienotowana Zbrodnia we Lwowie," *Wiek Nowy*, February 7, 1934, 5; "Kiosk Grozy przy ulicy Św. Zofji," *Wiek Nowy*, February 8, 1934, 5; "Straszna zbrodnia wampira ze Lwowa," *Dziennik Ludowy*, February 7, 1934, 5.

⁹³³ "Wyjaśniona Tajemnica Ohydnej Zbrodni. Kioskarz-Inwalida Mordercą Nieznanej Dziewczyny," *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 8 1934, 3.

⁹³⁴ Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Harvard University Press, 1998).

⁹³⁵ Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago University Press, 1992); Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Harvard University Press, 1998); Nathaniel D. Wood, *Becoming Metropolitan: Urban Selfhood and the Making of Modern Cracow* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

⁹³⁶ "Morderca Cybulski i jego Wspólnik Kołodziej Staną Przed Sądem Doraźnym," *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 9, 1934, 4.

⁹³⁷ "Kiosk Grozy przy ulicy Św. Zofji," *Wiek Nowy*, February 8, 1934, 5; "Potwór Cybulski przed sądem doraźnym," *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 28, 1934, 9; "Lwowski Kuerten przez sądem doraźnym przy drzwiach

with his family life. In addition to being an alcoholic, Cybulski was syphilitic and had separated from his wife three years prior. His child lived with relatives and his wife had moved from Lviv to Zolochiv. He had sold his apartment and lived in his kiosk, where he often spent time with prostitutes. On the day of the murder, Cybulski met prostitute Emilja Szeffówna and invited her to his kiosk on St. Sophia Street. They drank heavily and the woman did not notice that he had poisoned her vodka. Later, he explained that he was simply curious about the effect of the poison. The woman died several minutes thereafter and Cybulski decided to dismember her body in order to hide his crime. Though he had disposed of her mutilated corpse throughout the city, the police still found evidence of her death in his kiosk. After the murder, Cybulski behaved normally, selling his wares during the day and hiding body parts at night. He even asked his friend Michał Kołodziej to help him dispose of the corpse; Kołodziej was sentenced as an accomplice to murder.⁹³⁸

After his arrest, the press continued to report various details of the investigation. Some newspapers emphasized Cybulski's sexual perversions.⁹³⁹ The Lviv press also mentioned similar crimes throughout Europe and North America.⁹⁴⁰ A crowd frequented the crime scene, hoping to observe the investigation and glean the latest details. Neighbourhood residents were shocked by the murder and gathered near the kiosk the next morning. A lot of them had frequented Cybulski's

zamkniętych," *Chwila*, February 28, 1934, 11; "Potwór po zbrodni grał w szachy," *Wiek Nowy*, February 9, 1934, 5.

⁹³⁸ "Szczegóły potwornego mordu przy ul. Św. Zofji," *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 8 1934, 8; "Przed wizją localną na miejscu potwornego mordu przy Uł. Zofiji we Lwowie," *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 10, 1934, 8; "Cybuwski na miejscu swojej zbrodni," *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 11, 1934, 4; "Potwór Cybulski przed sądem doraźnym," *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 28, 1934, 9-10; "Inwalida Cybulski prznał się do zbrodni," *Chwila*, February 9, 1934, 13; "Cybulski na miejscu zbrodni," *Chwila*, February 11, 1934, 16; "Kiosk grozy przy ulicy Św. Zofji," *Wiek Nowy*, February 8, 1934, 5; "Zwłoki dziewczyny poćwartowano w budce inwalidzkiej," *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 8, 1934, 2; "Morderca Cybulski i jego wpólnik Kołodziej staną przed sądem doraźnym," *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 9, 1934, 4; "Czy Cybulski miał wpólników," *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 10, 1934, 7; "Otrzuł czy zamordował?" *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 12, 1934, 7; "Straszna zbrodnia w kiosku inwalidy," *Dziennik Ludowy*, February 9, 1934, 7.

⁹³⁹ "Lwowski wampir przed karą śmierci," *Dziennik Ludowy*, Febtuary 8, 1934, 5.

⁹⁴⁰ "Ponura Galerja Kriwiożernych Zbrodniarzy," *Wiek Nowy*, February 11, 1934, 4; "Potworny czyn mordercy Cybulskiego," *Dziennik Ludowy*, February 11, 1934, 9.

kiosk. *Wiek Nowy* described the changes on St. Sophia Square: “There was also the unusual movement among the tradeswomen on St. Sophia Square, who had known Cybulski very well, too. Everything was as a fevered pitch on this square and trade almost stopped because everyone was talking only about this terrible crime.”⁹⁴¹

The judge decided to conduct a closed trial in order to restrict public access and did not publicize some details of the murder. Experts believed that such sensational cases negatively affected public wellbeing, particularly that of the youth.⁹⁴² Unfortunately, the court records and the materials of the investigation are not available for scholars and such lack of the sources does not allow to analyze the official version of events. Although the police and press considered the case to be a sex crime,⁹⁴³ the judge concluded that Cybulsky was motivated by robbery. Those convicted of such crimes were usually sentenced to death but Cybulski received a life sentence instead.⁹⁴⁴

Cybulski belonged to the most prestigious group of veterans in Lviv. He was not only a soldier of the Austrian and the Polish armies but had also participated in the “defense of Lviv” and received the kiosk for his service and sacrifice. These kiosks created geographies of interaction between disabled servicemen and other urban dwellers. The disabled veterans’ kiosks became a part of Lviv urban space that reminded civilians about recent wars. However, Cybulski’s kiosk instead became a crime scene and the disabled veteran was depicted not as a national hero but as

⁹⁴¹ “Kiosk Grozy przy ulicy Św. Zofji,” *Wiek Nowy*, February 8, 1934, 5.

⁹⁴² “Sąd doraźny nad Cybulskim będzie się toczył częściowo przy drzwiach zamkniętych,” *Chwila*, February 22, 1934, 13; “Cybulski przez sądem doraźnym,” *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 28, 1934, 7; “Sprawa Cybulskiego,” *Wiek Nowy*, February 15, 1934, 7; “Cybulski przez sądem doraźnym,” *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 28, 1934, 7; “Potwór z budki inwalidzkiej,” *Dziennik Ludowy*, February 27, 7.

⁹⁴³ “Mord seksualny i żądza Mordu w oświetleniu nowoczesnej kriminologii,” *Wiek Nowy*, February 9, 1934, 5.

⁹⁴⁴ “Cybulski skarany na dożywotnie więzienie,” *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 29, 1934, 8; “Cybulski przez sądem doraźnym,” *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 28, 1934, 7; “Przed procesem Cybulskiego. Opinia prof. dra Makarewicza i Kuratora Gadomskiego,” *Chwila*, February 26, 1934, 10.

“a vampire invalid from the kiosk” or “a monster from an invalid’s kiosk.”⁹⁴⁵ Though Cybulski’s extraordinary cruelty resulted in the construction of a counter narrative about disabled veterans, the popular newspapers did not discuss in detail his war experience or disability. Some newspapers did, however, speculate on a couple head injuries that he may have endured during the “Lviv defense.”⁹⁴⁶ The Jewish newspaper *Chwila* wrote that Cybulski suffered from shell-shock.⁹⁴⁷ The local press stressed that he tried to use his war experiences as an excuse. Journalists from *Kurjer Lwowski* claimed that Cybulski believed that his disability, venereal disease, and alcoholism would temper his sentence.⁹⁴⁸ Another newspaper reported that he reminded the prosecutor about his head trauma and neuro-syphilis.⁹⁴⁹ When the doctors, however, performed a head x-ray, they could find no corroborating evidence of his injuries; *Gazeta Lwowska* wrote that he might be lying about his disability.⁹⁵⁰

Newspaper articles did not explain why the judge sentenced Cybulski to life imprisonment and not to death. They were also silent on why the crime was classified as a robbery and not a sex crime. The war invalid’s status and participation in the “defense of Lviv” might have been a mitigating factor. Lviv authorities tore down his kiosk soon after his conviction, as it was a constant reminder of the crime.⁹⁵¹ Disabled veterans’ kiosks were meant to be public reminders about sacrifice and heroism and they had to integrate disabled veterans into urban space; by removing his kiosk, Lviv authorities quickly erased a stark reminder that linked wartime trauma and sadism.

⁹⁴⁵ “Lwowski Kuerten przez sądem doraźnym przy drzwiach zamkniętych,” *Chwila*, February 28, 1934, 11; “Potwór z budki inwalidzkiej,” *Dziennik Ludowy*, February 27, 7.

⁹⁴⁶ “Kiosk Grozy przy ulicy Św. Zofji,” *Wiek Nowy*, February 8, 1934, 5.

⁹⁴⁷ “Inwalida Cybulski prznał się do zbrodni,” *Chwila*, February 9, 1934, 13.

⁹⁴⁸ “Cybuwski na miejscu swojej zbrodni,” *Kurjer Lwowski*, February 11, 1934, 4.

⁹⁴⁹ “Los Cybulskiego w rękach psychiatrów,” *Wiek Nowy*, February 10, 1934, 5.

⁹⁵⁰ “Badania roentgenologiczne mordercy Cybulskiego,” *Gazeta Lwowska*, February 15, 1934, 7; “Sprawa Cybulskiego,” *Wiek Nowy*, February 15, 1934, 7.

⁹⁵¹ “Cybulski w brygilkach, chyli nadzwyczaj spokojny morderca,” *Tajny Detektyw*, June 17, 1934, 12.

Commemoration Discourses and War Disability

As the war experience was “inscribed” on disabled veterans’ bodies, they embodied war memory.⁹⁵² Scholars who examine the process of memorialization of war in the twentieth century argue that the focus should shift from “memory” to “remembrance.” Collective remembrance goes beyond professional historical practice or state-sponsored rituals and includes the personal and non-official forms of remembrance.⁹⁵³ It focuses on the personal narratives of the individuals who act “not all the time, and not usually through institutions from on high, but as a participant in a social group constructed for the purpose of commemoration.”⁹⁵⁴ Jay Winter has underlined that the process of recalling past events is fluid, gaining new dimensions sometimes many years after the original experience.⁹⁵⁵ Despite states’ construction of memorial practices, we should not underestimate the role of grassroots initiatives and civil society. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan have emphasized that the main issue lies in the tension between factors of remembrance.⁹⁵⁶ The example of the Lviv Ukrainian community, which constructed a different narrative than the official Polish memory discourse, illustrates this situation.

In Lviv, official legal status and participation in the welfare system were not the only lines along which disabled soldiers were divided. For instance, they were also divided by their affiliation with different commemorative discourses. As Polish veterans participated in the state-sponsored political rituals, disabled soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army took part in the creation of an

⁹⁵² Jay Winter, “Forms of Kinship and Remembrance in the aftermath of the Great War,” in *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* ed. by Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999), 47.

⁹⁵³ Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, “Setting the Framework,” in *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* ed. by Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999), 8-10.

⁹⁵⁴ Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, “Setting the Framework,” in *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* ed. by Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999), 10.

⁹⁵⁵ Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 3-4.

⁹⁵⁶ Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 34-35, 38.

alternative model of remembrance about the Ukrainian-Polish war.⁹⁵⁷ The latter became part of a Ukrainian national discourse and were presented as heroes who had struggled for an independent Ukrainian state.⁹⁵⁸ Injured bodies were “sites of memory” that reminded Ukrainians about an unfinished state project and the process of establishing assistance programs for disabled veterans turned into an act of remembrance.

Both the Polish and Ukrainian commemorative discourses linked disabled bodies to the bodies of deceased soldiers. Ukrainians compared the bodies of disabled veterans to the graves of soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army: “Both are the same witnesses of the Great Dash and Immortal Struggle for the high ideals.”⁹⁵⁹ The only difference was that the former was a living testament to the “Great Days” while the latter were dead. However, this literal difference between the living and the dead was quickly transcended. Pentecost, the day on which Ukrainians commemorate dead friends and relatives, became the day of national remembrance for both the war dead and disabled veterans. The Ukrainian Association for Aid to the Disabled and the Ukrainian Association for the Protection of War Graves gathered donations to provide assistance for disabled veterans and to maintain the graves of their national heroes.⁹⁶⁰ Thus, commemorative narratives and commemorative practices established an equivalence between the war dead and war wounded.

⁹⁵⁷ Z diial'nosti Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy Invalidam u Lvovi,” *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 5 (1931), 15; “Inwalidzi, bacznosc!,” *Gazeta Poranna*, November 11, 1928, 8; “Program obchodu swięta XX-tej rocznicy odzyskania niepodleglości Państwa Polskiego,” *Gazeta Lwowska*, November 11, 1938, 2.

⁹⁵⁸ Z diial'nosti Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalida u Lvovi,” *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 5 (1931), 15

⁹⁵⁹ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kog invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 1.

⁹⁶⁰ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v domi Ukrains'kog Invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 1; CDIAL, f. 358, op. 1, spr. 131, ark 4-5.



Figure 9. Cartoon published in the Lviv newspaper *Sprawiedliwość*, 27 August 1922

In August 1922, the Lviv Polish “radical independent” newspaper *Sprawiedliwość* published a cartoon that criticized both the commemorative and the welfare policies of the local Lviv authorities.⁹⁶¹ The picture depicted numerous monuments that commemorated the fallen “defenders of Lviv.” These included “the eaglets’ chapel” that was constructed on the “Cemetery of Defenders” and a sculpture of a lion (a city symbol) with the inscription “To Lviv’s defenders.” Disabled veterans were drawn as beggars, street musicians, and vendors on the other side of cartoon. The written phrase below stated that “... the living received beggar’ permits.”⁹⁶² The comparison between “dead and alive” was rather negative in this case. The author frowned on both

⁹⁶¹ *Sprawiedliwość*, August 27, 1922, 1.

⁹⁶² *Sprawiedliwość*, August 27, 1922, 1.

expensive monuments to fallen soldiers and on begging disabled veterans who seemingly debased public space. It was not the first time when the press emphasized hypocrisy of commemorative policy. After the clashes between disabled veterans and police in November 1921, *Inwalida* wrote that such a treatment of disabled soldiers by the government showed hypocrisy of Unknown soldiers' veneration.⁹⁶³

This symbolic connection between the disabled and the dead sometimes had a practical dimension. For instance, in September 1921, Dr. Władysław Kubik, who supervised work at the "Cemetery of Defenders," suggested fundraising to hire a disabled veteran to take care of a cemetery that later become part of an ostentatious Polish commemorative project. Even though some families tended their relatives' graves, many were covered by grass and the cemetery was generally neglected the first years after the Ukrainian-Polish war. Kubik argued that it was necessary to employ a full-time worker and that a disabled soldier would be a suitable candidate to care for the graves of fallen soldiers.⁹⁶⁴

One of the main features of post-Great War commemorative practices was the creation of the cult of the Unknown Soldier. France and Great Britain, in November 1920, became the first countries in which monuments to unknown soldiers were established. In 1921, similar monuments were erected in Italy, the United States, and Portugal.⁹⁶⁵ The Polish government "borrowed" the commemorative patterns of Western European countries and at the beginning of 1925 authorities decided to establish the monument of the Unknown Soldier [*Grób Nieznanego Żołnierza*] in Warsaw. Coincidentally, the soldier entombed at the national monument died on a Lviv battlefield

⁹⁶³ "Inwalidzi, Policja i Państwo," *Inwalida*, December 11, 1921, 1.

⁹⁶⁴ "Cmentarz obrońców Lwowa," *Kurjer Lwowski*, September 10, 1921, 2.

⁹⁶⁵ Carole Blair, V. William Balthrop and Neil Michel, "The Arguments of Tombs of the Unknown: Relationality and National Legitimation," *Argumentation*, 25, Vol. 4 (2011): 449-468; Laura Wittman, *The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Modern Mourning and the Reinvention of the Mystical Body* (University of Toronto Press, 2011), 3-4.

during the Ukrainian-Polish conflict.⁹⁶⁶ At the beginning of September 1925, the flag of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic and the Plaque of Unknown Soldiers were blessed near Mickiewicz's monument.⁹⁶⁷ Once again this solemn ritual underlined the symbolic connection between fallen and disabled soldiers. The exhumation and transportation of the Unknown Soldier's remains to Warsaw took place from 29-31 October 1925; it was quickly transformed into an elaborate political ritual that included the participation of Lvivianes. The coffin was moved from the "Cemetery of the Defenders of Lviv," through the decorated crowded streets to a cathedral and then to the railway station. Two disabled soldiers, Grzegorz Strzelecki and Adam Gryglewski, along with two mothers who had lost their sons, two widows, and two orphans were part of an "honour guard" that followed the coffin and stood guard in the cathedral. Representatives of disabled veterans' organizations also participated in the procession from the cathedral to the railway station.⁹⁶⁸

Though the Ukrainian minority also established a cult of fallen heroes, the Ukrainian commemoration ceremonies were limited by Polish authorities.⁹⁶⁹ In June 1938, Myron Tarnavskii, the former supreme commander of the Ukrainian Galician Army, died in Lviv. This became a solemn national manifestation and witnessed mass participation across Galicia. Tarnavskii's funeral was one of the rare cases in which Polish administrators allowed the

⁹⁶⁶ The Historical Office of the General Staff suggested fifteen sites from where remains could be exhumed and special criteria were used to select the battlefield. These included the number of casualties, the size and location of the battlefield, and the importance of the battle to the larger conflict. As such, most of the fifteen battles took place in Galicia and contemporary Belarus. Unknown remains from Lviv were chosen in a lottery conducted in April 1925. (Wanda Mazanowska, "Geneza symbolu nieznanego żołnierza," in *W obronie Lwowa i kresów wschodnich. Polegli od 1-go Listopada 1918 do 30 Czerwca 1919* (Lwów, 1926), 189-190).

⁹⁶⁷ "Program uroczystości święcenia sztandaru Związku inwalidów wojennych płyty Nieznanego Żołnierza," *Kurjer Lwowski*, September 6, 1925, 3; "Hołd Nieznanemu Żołnierzowi," *Kurjer Lwowski*, September 9, 1925, 3.

⁹⁶⁸ Wanda Mazanowska, "Geneza Symbolu Nieznanego Żołnierza," in *W Obronie Lwowa i wschodnich kresów* (Lwów: Nakładem Straży Mogił Polskich Bogaterów, 1926), 189-197.

⁹⁶⁹ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kog invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo tovarystva dopomogy invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 1; CDIAL, f. 358, op. 1, spr. 131, ark 4-5.

Ukrainian public to gather *en masse* in Lviv streets.⁹⁷⁰ The former soldiers of the Galician army paraded in front of General Tarnavskii's coffin, which was placed near St. Iura Cathedral.⁹⁷¹ Despite the similarities between Polish and Ukrainian commemorative rituals, the symbolic role of the disabled veterans was completely different for the two communities. The Polish veterans who were members of the "honour guard" during the exhumation and transportation of the Unknown Soldier's represented the victims of war. As the other war victims and members of the "guard" were women and children, disabled veterans were effectively emasculated. Contrastingly, Ukrainian disabled veterans marched among other former soldiers during the parade. They participated in this political ritual not as victims but as equal fellow-soldiers paying a final tribute to their commander.

The newspapers published by disabled Polish activists discussed the state's commemorative practices and the commemoration of fallen soldiers, in particular. In November 1929, the Lviv newspaper for disabled veterans *Biały Orzeł* argued that the tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw did not represent a universal symbol of the fallen warrior in Poland.⁹⁷² This article demonstrated the tension between the official memory narrative and the individual remembrance of war. On account of several post-World War I conflicts, a soldier killed near Lviv by Ukrainians could not represent someone fallen, for example, in Cieszyn Silesia during the struggle against the Czechs. The author considered the Warsaw memorial to be an official

⁹⁷⁰ Ivan Kedryn. *Zhyttia. Podii. Liudy. Spomyny i komentari* (New York: Vydavnycha koperatyva "Chervona kalyna", 1976) 276, 335.

⁹⁷¹ Ch., "Invalidy UA defilyuyut," *Ukrainskyi invalid*, no 4 (December 1938): 2; "Gen. Myron Tarnavskiy," in *Kalendar Ukrainskyi Invalid narik 1939*, Lviv, 1938, 24-28; *Pokhorony nachal'nogo vozhdia UGA gen. Myrona Tarnavs'kogo* (Lviv: UKO, 1938).

⁹⁷² "Sprawa Grobu Nieznanego Obrońcy Lwowa," *Biały Orzeł*, November 15, 1929, 2-3. While establishing the tomb of the Unknown Soldiers in Warsaw, authorities banned the local memorials. On 28 October 1925, the government ordered all plaques outside of the capital that commemorated unknown soldiers donated to museums as only the monument in Warsaw "was an appropriate symbol of national sacrifice." Instead local authorities had to establish "modest" monuments with plaques containing the names of local soldiers who perished during the First World War. ("Ku czci Nieznanego Żołnierza," *Gazeta Lwowska*, October 31, 1925, 1).

monument that failed to serve the needs of grieving relatives and suggested establishing tombs of “the Unknown Soldier” that would reflect local narratives of struggle in various regions.⁹⁷³ Though the government did not pay much attention to this grassroots initiative, it promoted the cult of the fallen soldiers, especially by the end of the 1930s. In summer 1938, the prime minister General Felicjan Sławoj Składkowski, issued an order to establish special committees for the protection of the war graves in all regions of Poland. The local communities also were to erect modest monuments to fallen soldiers. While discussing Sławoj Składkowski’s order, the newspaper *Inwalida* stated that disabled veterans, “who were the closest to the immortal glory of fallen soldiers” would be the first to support the prime minister’s initiative.⁹⁷⁴ The discussion of Unknown Soldiers’ monuments revealed the absence of a homogeneous Polish memory discourse and that the official state memory narratives were criticized by civil society.

At the same time, not only bodies but institutions and enterprises established for disabled servicemen were also turned into “sites of memory.” The leaflet published by the Lviv branch of the Union of Disabled Veterans of the Polish Republic in September 1925 called disabled veterans’ kiosks “living monuments” that reminded everyone of the horrors of war.⁹⁷⁵ At the same time, the message these institutions conveyed was not always desirable. The state House of Invalids in Lviv reminded citizens both of the recent wars and the city’s imperial heritage. The impressive building was established by the Austrian government in a city suburb for disabled veterans in the mid-nineteenth century. Despite the Polish military authorities’ efforts to remove the institution from the original building, disabled residents and their supporters argued that there should be a continuity between the Austrian and the Polish institutions. Though the empire ceased to exist,

⁹⁷³ “Sprawa grobu Nieznanego Obrońcy Lwowa,” *Biały Orzeł*, November 15, 1929, 2-3.

⁹⁷⁴ “Czy społeczeństwo zapomniało o poległych bohaterach,” *Inwalida*, August 1, 1938, 4.

⁹⁷⁵ *Jednodniówka inwalidy Lwowskiego. Wydana na uroczystosc swiecen sztanaru powiatowego kola Związku inwalidów wojennych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej we Lwowie*, September 6, 1925.

they believed that disabled soldiers had the right to reside in the House founded for them. Moreover, pre-World War I disabled veterans, in addition to the building itself, continued to remind those about Lviv's imperial past.⁹⁷⁶

At the beginning of 1939, a member of the Invalid Legion, Mikołaj Mironowicz, published a report about the state of the House of Invalids. When he was leaving the institution, he met an old prewar disabled veteran of the Austrian army near the gates. The journalist asked about his life in this institution during the Austrian period. The man felt nostalgic about the good old days. He stressed that both the government and society treated veterans better and with more respect. Though Mironowicz did not argue with the Austrian disabled veteran, he wrote the following:

Hmm... I think that it was past days a poor old man; it was the days of your beautiful youth and delusion of life. A man with "sideburns" robbed our land, so he could make a generous gesture. And what about us? Though we arose from nothing, we have already done so much and did not rob any state or person's treasury. We worked and sacrificed in order to rebuild our state, building from the rubble. However, veteran of the Austrian "c. k." [imperial and royal], your brains were eaten by sclerosis and you could not understand it! End your life in the delusion of the good old times.⁹⁷⁷

Though Mironowicz discarded the views of the old disabled soldier as the fantasies of an old man, the veteran's words emphasized continuity, imperial nostalgia, and reflected ambivalence towards the present institution.

⁹⁷⁶ Mieczysław Orłowicz, *Ilustrowany Przewodnik po Lwowie* (Lwów-Warszawa: Książnica-Atlas, 1925), 168-169; DALO, f. 1, op.33, spr. 831, ark. 39-43zv, 46, 134-135 zv.; DALO, f.1, op. 34, spr. 3729, 3-8.

⁹⁷⁷ Mikołaj Mironowicz, "Błaski i cienie Legii Lwowskiej," *Front Inwalidzki* 3-4 (1939), 12.

In contrast to the Polish authorities, Ukrainian activists consciously constructed the Ukrainian House of Invalids as a “site of memory.” In the second half of the 1920s, the Ukrainian Association for Aid to Invalids decided to build a new Ukrainian House of Invalids. According to the early drawings, the future building was designed in a Ukrainian modernist (folk) style.⁹⁷⁸



Figure 10. **Plan for the Ukrainian House of Invalids** (*Z dniv radosti i smutku. Odnodnivka prysviachena ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Invalidam, 1929))

Though Ukrainian activists initially supported a “traditional” veterans’ residence, they soon

⁹⁷⁸ *Z dniv radosti i smutku. Odnodnivka prysviachena ukrains'kym invalidam* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Invalidam, 1929), 24.

suggested a different concept for the House. The new “institution” should be a “representational space” that commemorated their deeds. The Ukrainian House of Invalids thus became a rental property and the income was allocated towards a modest allowance for disabled veterans.⁹⁷⁹ However, this building was very different from the “imagined” House of Invalids presented on the drawings. It was built in a Gothic Revival style and it visually failed to evoke the Ukrainian national movement. The new House, a luxurious rental property in the prestigious Lviv area outside the city centre, was surrounded by similar buildings. However, Ukrainian activists emphasized the spectacular character of the Ukrainian House of Invalids. In his reports, journalist Anatol' Kurdydyk wrote in 1934: “The building shoots into the sky with its black, high, and imposing contour. All the windows are lighted. This is impressive. This is the presentable expression of the gratitude of a nation to its sons who risked everything for national happiness.”⁹⁸⁰



Figure 11. **The new Ukrainian House of Invalids** (*Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1937* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy u Lvovi, 1936))

The Ukrainian community in North America was the main sponsor of the new Ukrainian House of Invalids, though it demanded that the House be turned into a Military History Museum

⁹⁷⁹ “Dim ukrains'kogo invalida u Lvovi,” in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1937* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy u Lvovi, 1936), 24-25; “Dim ukrains'kogo invalida u Lvovi,” in *Kalendar ukrains'kyi invalidna 1938* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy u Lvovi, 1937), 18.

⁹⁸⁰ Anatol' Kurdydyk, *Dvi godyny v Domi ukrains'kogo invalida* (Lviv: Nakladom Ukrains'kogo Tovarystva Dopomogy Invalidam u Lvovi, 1934), 29.

in the future.⁹⁸¹ As the result, a space that used to represent injured soldiers would become the universal symbol of the struggle for an independent Ukrainian state. The first mention of such a museum appeared several years before the establishment of the representational House. The journal *Litopys chervonoï kalyny* published an article about *Les Invalides* in Paris. The author wrote about the Military History Museum located in this institution and suggested that Ukrainians establish a similar site of memory.⁹⁸² After purchasing the building on Pototski Street, activists could implement both projects. The first three rooms for the future museum were provided to the museum in 1936.⁹⁸³ Thus, in the late 1930s, the representational House of Invalids became partly a museum space that reminded its visitors not only of the nation's injured bodies and their sacrifice but also about the glorious struggle for an independent Ukraine.

Fiction and War Disability

Representations of war disability were also constructed in art and fiction. As I was not able to find Lviv Polish authors who addressed the issue of war disability, this chapter focused on only Ukrainian writers. Although the majority of writers focused on the terrifying consequences of war, some did not consider disability or death to represent the ultimate sacrifice for political independence. For example, in contrast to Iatskiv who condemned war, the young writer Ivan Cherniava glorified it.⁹⁸⁴ He belonged to “The Twelve,” a young group of innovative Ukrainian writers, and published his first novel *Na skhodi – my! Film pryideshn'ogo* (In the East – We! The Film of the Future) in 1932.⁹⁸⁵ Krukevych, the main protagonist, built machines that allowed

⁹⁸¹ “Zagalini zbory Ukrain'skogo t-va dopomogy (Ukdoti),” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937), 5.

⁹⁸² “Dim invalidiv v Paryzhi,” *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 2 (1929):10-11; “Dim invalidiv v Paryzhi,” *Litopys chervonoï kalyny*, no. 3 (1929): 19-20.

⁹⁸³ “Zagalini zbory Ukrain'skogo t-va dopomogy (Ukdoti),” *Ukrains'kyi invalid*, no. 1 (June 1937), 5.

⁹⁸⁴ Ivan Cherniava, *Na skhodi – my! Film pryideshniogo* (Lviv: Vydavnytsvo “Strybozhych,” 1932).

⁹⁸⁵ Myroslav Shkandij, *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology and Literature, 1929-1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 147.

Ukraine to defeat Russia and to expand Ukraine's borders to the Caspian Sea. Though his right leg was paralyzed because of a war-related injury, he proclaimed that "peace and tranquility are the delusions of blind people and of those who cannot live or whose stomachs are stuffed with foreign bread."⁹⁸⁶ Krukevych's disability was mentioned but it did not influence his perception of war. As he worshiped the Ukrainian nation and believed that it was impossible to stop international competition, Krukevych celebrated war as the only means that could guarantee the greatness of Ukraine.⁹⁸⁷ Myroslav Shkandrij argues that although it is not clear whether it had been his intention to write a parody, Cherniava actually had written a "self-condemning antithesis."⁹⁸⁸ The writer was criticized by Lviv (among others also OUN) journals and Dmytro Dontsov, a national ideologist, who may have considered the novel a parody. However, it is not clear if Cherniava's piece is in fact satirical in nature.⁹⁸⁹

Disabled Ukrainian peasants who returned home after the war were frequent heroes of short stories written by Ukrainian writers, published in Lviv newspapers, journals, and collections.⁹⁹⁰ The majority of Galician Ukrainians lived in the countryside and authors usually wrote stories about "the average" rural Ukrainian disabled soldier. Some stories described these veterans' experiences as positive. Despite their disabilities, they were able to reintegrate into society and became valuable members of the community. Pan'ko Nakonechnyi, the hero of Volodymyr Khronovych's story, not only learned a trade in Cracow's School for Disabled Soldiers, he was

⁹⁸⁶ Ivan Cherniava, *Na skhodi – my! Film pryideshn'ogo* (Lviv: Vydavnytstvo "Strybozhych," 1932), 197.

⁹⁸⁷ Ivan Cherniava, *Na skhodi – my! Film pryideshn'ogo* (Lviv: Vydavnytstvo "Strybozhych," 1932), 15, 128, 197.

⁹⁸⁸ Myroslav Shkandij, *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology and Literature, 1929-1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 149-150.

⁹⁸⁹ Myroslav Shkandij, *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology and Literature, 1929-1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 149-150.

⁹⁹⁰ Volodymyr Khronovych, "Invalid," *Hromads'ka dumka*, February 5, 1920, 2-3; Mykola Matiiv-Mel'nyk, "Invalid Petro Hrim," in *Kalendar ukrainskogo invalida na 1937 rik* (Lviv, 1936), 121-123; Marko Cheremshyna, "Selo velyke," in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 61-62.

also more popular with the ladies now than before the war.⁹⁹¹ Though the leg of Petro Hrim, another fictional disabled veteran, did not initially heal, he eventually returned to the countryside. The veteran became a shoemaker, plying his trade for fellow villagers. As his neighbours were impressed by his skills, they built him a new house.⁹⁹² The story was even illustrated. The accompanying images depicted an amputee who continued to serve in the Ukrainian Galician army despite his injury and grateful neighbours who had built a house for him, and Hrim's wedding.⁹⁹³ The authors of these two stories normalized war disability and showed that a return to masculine normalcy was possible. Disabled veterans were not presented as weak or emasculated; with a bit of help, they could return to productive life, notions of which were shaped by masculinity and social expectations.



Figure 12. **Illustrations to the story “Invalid Petro Hrim”** (*Kalendar ukrainskogo invalida na 1937 rik* (Lviv,1936))

Carole Poore has argued that the majority of German disabled soldiers did not have visible injuries. However, while constructing the war disability discourse, artists and writers chose to

⁹⁹¹ Volodymyr Khronovych, “Invalid,” *Hromads'ka dumka*, February 5, 1920, 2-3.

⁹⁹² Mykola Matiiv-Mel'nyk, “Invalid Petro Hrim,” in *Kalendar ukrainskogo invalida na 1937 rik* (Lviv, 1936), 121-123.

⁹⁹³ I Mykola Matiiv-Mel'nyk, “Invalid Petro Hrim,” in *Kalendar ukrainskogo invalida na 1937 rik* (Lviv, 1936), 121-123.

depict disfigured bodies.⁹⁹⁴ Similarly, all disabled servicemen described in print in Lviv were amputees. At the same time, though they often could not hide their disfigurement, their disability was not always obvious to others. Nakonechnyi was able to walk like a healthy person. Even his mother had difficulty believing her son had lost a leg.⁹⁹⁵ In Iatskiv's story that opened this chapter, the young officer concealed his hands under his coat. He did not want the passengers to notice his disability.⁹⁹⁶ In contrast, some individual's injuries were readily apparent: "Instead of a leg he had an iron prosthesis down from his right knee and wooden crutches. His arm and head were bandaged [...]."⁹⁹⁷ In other cases, limb amputation also meant medical castration, which deprived a soldier of a sex life.⁹⁹⁸ In some texts, a disabled body symbolized a "disabled world."⁹⁹⁹ The harsh postwar political, economic, and social realities inspired an image of society crippled by war.¹⁰⁰⁰

Traumatized by war experiences, some disabled soldiers could not come to terms with their new circumstances and simply did not want to live.¹⁰⁰¹ Others heroes returned to "normal" life but war disability influenced their mental state. For instance, they felt that they still had their amputated body parts.¹⁰⁰² War caused enormous psychological damage and many veterans experienced the consequences of psychological trauma. In his story "Marsh," Roman Drahan focused on the emotional state of disabled soldier. This short story was published in the left-wing Lviv literary journal *Vikna* (Windows) in April 1930. Though similar to Iatskiv's story in that it

⁹⁹⁴ Carol Poore, *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 20.

⁹⁹⁵ Volodymyr Khronovych, "Invalid," *Hromads'ka dumka*, February 5, 1920, 2-3.

⁹⁹⁶ Myhailo Iatskiv, "Germes Praksitelia," in Myhailo Iatskiv, *Vybrani tvory* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1973), 160-161

⁹⁹⁷ "Invalid," *Hromads'ka dumka*, May 2, 1920, 2.

⁹⁹⁸ Marko Cheremshyna, "Selo velyke," in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 61-62.

⁹⁹⁹ "Invalid," *Hromads'ka dumka*, May 2, 1920, 2.

¹⁰⁰⁰ "Invalid," *Hromads'ka dumka*, May 2, 1920, 2.

¹⁰⁰¹ "Invalid," May 2, *Hromads'ka dumka*, May 2, 1920, 2.

¹⁰⁰² Mykola Matiiv-Mel'nyk, "Invalid Petro Hrim," in *Kalendar ukrainskogo invalida na 1937 rik* (Lviv, 1936), 121-123.

took place on a train, Tymko, a veteran, was not a passenger. Rather he earned his living by playing the tsymbaly and singing on trains. Tymko had to conceal his suffering and play upbeat songs as his role was to entertain. At the same time, he noticed that people often gazed at him with pity, which made him feel even more miserable. Tymko's wife and children had also left him because of his disability. Once he was asked to play for a group of drunk officers and their female companions. While they were making fun of him, Tymko recognized the officer who was responsible for his disability. For Tymko, as traumatic memories rushed back to him, the boundary between fantasy and reality was blurred and he stabbed the officer.¹⁰⁰³

The war's negative impact on masculinity and male sexual function were discussed in many countries by medical professionals, politicians, and writers (for instance by D. H. Lawrence in his famous *Lady Chatterley's Lover*).¹⁰⁰⁴ The short story *Selo velyke! (The Village is large!)*, written by Ukrainian writer Marko Cheremshyna, was published in *Kalendar Ukrains'kyi Invalid* in 1924. It was republished in Polish in 1934 under the title *Inwalidka (Invalid's Wife)*.¹⁰⁰⁵ Cheremshyna did not serve in the Austrian army but witnessed the terrifying effects of war on the Galician countryside. He described life in Hutsul villages during and after the conflict in a series of short stories.¹⁰⁰⁶ Usually, writers depicted the experiences of disabled males. Cheremshyna, however, focused on the experiences of disabled veterans' wives and narrated his story from their perspective. He showed the influence of war disability on families, arguing that a spouse's disability had profound effects on his wife.

¹⁰⁰³ Roman Drahan, "March," *Vikna*, no. 4 (1930): 43-49.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ana Garden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism and the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 176.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Marko Cheremshyna, "Selo velyke," in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (L'viv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 61-62; Marko Czeremshyna, "Inwalidka," *Sygnaly*, no. 4-5 (1934): 12.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Marko Cheremshyna, *Novely* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1987), 13-14.

Cheremshyna's story focused on a young woman from a Hutsul village who had married a disabled veteran five years earlier. She came to the village elders to complain about her sex life with her husband. In contrast to her friends who had several children, she was unable to reproduce because of her husband's impotence. The woman claimed that the veteran had not told her about his condition before the wedding. The village mayor answered that though she could not obtain a divorce, she had no reason to complain because "the village is large."¹⁰⁰⁷ In other words, he hinted that there were many other fish in the sea. After the woman received "permission" to have extramarital relations, she went to a local pub. While she was drunkenly singing on her way home, her husband "a half-man and half-host who had a waxy face and glassy eyes" waited for her at their house.¹⁰⁰⁸ Using the Hutsuls' well-known liberal attitude towards infidelity,¹⁰⁰⁹ Cheremshyna suggested a rather unorthodox solution. At the same time, the disabled husband, "the half-man," remained the story's only victim, since the wife could seek redress outside of the marriage bed. Carol Poore has argued that castrated soldiers challenged traditional notions of masculinity. Though rehabilitation systems could replace limbs with prostheses and will broken bodies to productivity, not all injuries could be fixed.¹⁰¹⁰

The only short story that focused on war disability and urban space was "The Cloudiest Day," published in *Kalendar ukrainskogo invalidana 1936 rik*. It was written by a young Lviv-

¹⁰⁰⁷ Marko Cheremshyna, "Selo velyke," in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 61-62.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Marko Cheremshyna, "Selo velyke," in *Ukrains'kyi invalid. Kalendar na 1924 rik* (Lviv: Nakladom Soiuzu Ukrains'kykh Invalidiv, 1923), 61-62.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Georgii Kozholianko, "Sim'ia i simeini vidnosyny Hutsulshchi: etnologichniy analiz," *Karpaty: liudyna, etnos, tsyvilizatsiia* 5 (2014), 313-319; Raimund Fridrikh Kaindyl', *Hutsuly* (Chernivtsi: Molodyi bukovynets', 2003), 27-30. Though Cheremshyna's story was fictional, Carol Poore in her work *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* mentioned that in order not to be mocked by others, some German disabled veteran agreed that their wives could have children with other men. (Carol Poore, *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 42).

¹⁰¹⁰ Carol Poore, *Disability in Twentieth-Century German Culture* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2007), 42.

based author named Bohdan Nyzhankivskyi.¹⁰¹¹ He described the experiences of disability in a large modern city. The writer, a known “urbanist,” belonged to a group called “The Twelve.” In 1936, he published a collection of stories titled “Street” that focused on Lviv’s lower classes. The heroes of Nyzhankivskyi’s stories were *batiary* (hooligans) who usually lived in basements and belonged to the Ukrainian proletariat.¹⁰¹² Though the story “The Cloudiest Day” was not published in this collection it was thematically similar to “Street” stories and also described the life of the urban working-class.

Nyzhankivskyi was a young child in 1914, and so he encountered the issue of war disability only after visibly disfigured soldiers returned home. “The Cloudiest Day” focuses on the disabled person’s urban loneliness. Nyzhankivskyi used the modern city as a physical template that highlighted the lived experiences of disability. The main hero, Mykhailo Stohon, was a disabled veteran who had lost his left hand. He lived in a cramped basement room and sold various small items like shoelaces and brushes on the “Square of the Great Victory.” Stohon’s days bled into night as he felt disconnected from society. He used to sell his goods near the “Central Restaurant” but police officers prevented this, so he moved across the street beside a haberdasher. He realized that people like him should either be dead or venture out only at night.

Readers did not learn about Stohon’s past, except that he had not always been a street vender.¹⁰¹³ He did not like his job and frequently returned home at midday, despite not having earned enough for bread. Although, he was entitled to social assistance and could have had food

¹⁰¹¹ Bohdan Nyzhankivskyi, “Naysirishi dni,” in *Kalendar ukrainskogo invalida na 1936 rik* (Lviv, 1935), 132-134.

¹⁰¹² *Dvanadciatka.*” *Naimolodsha Lvivska literaturna bogema 30 rokiv XX stolittia: Antologiiia urbanistychnoi prozy* (Lviv: Piramida, 2006), 13, 37-43.

¹⁰¹³ In summer 1934 *Lwowski ilustrowany express wieczorny* wrote that because of the economic crisis and the high rate of unemployment about 300 people worked as street vendors in Lviv. This occupation was their only source of income that saved them from starvation. Though the majority of them had a permit to sell goods on the streets, they were often harassed by police. (“Na ulicach Lwowa rozgrywa się dzień walka o prawo do życia 300 nędzarzy,” *Lwowski ilustrowany express wieczorny*, August 1, 1934, 3).

and clean clothes, he refused to apply for them. He wanted to be noticed, he wanted to stand out, he wanted his pain and sacrifices validated by society—that he was ignored proved more painful than his physical disability. He would have preferred have died of typhus during the war if he had had the choice. The only thing except his injury that reminded him of his service in the army was an engraved button on his coat that read “USS [Ukrains'ki sichovi stril'tsi]1918.”¹⁰¹⁴

This was a story about a society that willfully ignored disabled veterans regardless of their ethnic origin or army affiliation. Stohon was Ukrainian, but his experiences of being disabled dealt with societal prejudice and not his ethnicity. Similar to Drahan’s Tymko, the disabled soldier is presented not as someone who wants material help or pity, but rather as someone who craves acknowledgement and understanding. Disabled soldiers could be physically isolated not by walls, but by the indifference of able-bodied society. Though they occupied the same urban space, war invalids were frequently overlooked by the able-bodied. Their social exclusion was based on their disability and their disfigured bodies were unpleasant reminders at which people were loath to look.

Conclusion

Numerous (self)representations of war disability presented injured soldiers as disfigured bodies best hidden or as servicemen with invisible wounds. These (self)representations appeared in disabled ex-servicemen’s letters to local bureaucrats, newspapers and journals, and in published memoirs and fiction. They constituted an integral part of Lviv urban social space. Veterans could be the embodiment of courage and bravery or emasculated. They could be ignored by others or become national heroes. At the same time, only male voices were heard in disability discourses.

¹⁰¹⁴ Bohdan Nyzhankivskyi, “Naysirishi dni,” in *Kalendar ukrainskogo invalidana 1936 rik* (Lviv, 1935), 132-134.

Female disabled veterans were excluded. Similarly, although families were enormously affected by war disability, the experiences of wives and women were rarely discussed publically. A few published memoirs described disabled soldiers who struggled to accept their new reality but who eventually came to terms with their disability. They depicted idealized behaviour that was expected from disabled heroes. In contrast, letters to the Lviv Voivodeship showed a desperate helpless citizenry who struggled for survival. However, the same person could describe their experience of war disability differently. Though in his poetry Voloshchak wrote about suffering and loss, he was also less sensitive to veterans' concerns in other texts. The poet argued, for example, that the Ukrainian community had to establish re-education facilities where disabled veterans would be forced to work. Voloshchak believed that mandatory "work therapy" could heal war injuries.

The experience of war disability includes not only physical or mental impairment but the relationship between state and society. Disabled veterans expected and demanded support, attention, and respect and often accused "others" of indifference. Both activists and disabled soldiers who belonged to the urban proletariat "spoke" about their rights as Polish citizens and felt entitled to the assistance of the welfare state. As the public sphere gradually shrank in Poland, leaders of disabled veteran organizations rarely criticized the central government but focused their lobbying efforts on local authorities instead. Indeed, disabled activists blamed Lviv bureaucrats not only for their financial troubles but also for the public's lack of respect.

In this chapter, I focused on two extraordinary examples in order to analyze how the representation of "disabled veterans" was constructed in the public sphere by disabled veterans and Lviv's broader society. The public suicide of a disabled veteran was a seminal event that resulted in much hand-wringing about the Polish welfare system. Warsaw-based activists constructed the image of a hero who had died for the cause of Polish disabled veterans. They used

Kos' very public suicide in their political struggle against the government in order to prevent the reduction of payouts to disabled veterans. In contrast, local newspapers stressed the local context and highlighted the responsibility of Lviv authorities who made life difficult for disabled veterans. The discourse surrounding Kos' death was not ethnic in nature and it did not involve one particular group of disabled soldiers (in this case soldiers of the Polish army); rather, it focused on issues of social welfare and the state's responsibility to care for all veterans.

The brutal murder committed by a disabled veteran was the other case that focused the public's gaze on disabled servicemen and inspired a sensationalized media frenzy. Reading the popular press was an essential part of urban life during the early twentieth century and the examination of representations constructed by popular newspapers was key to understand mainstream discourses. As Cybulski was a "defender" of Lviv, he received a kiosk, which later became a crime scene. These kiosks were an important contact zone between disabled veterans and other city dwellers. The local newspapers described every gory detail, while almost ignoring Cybulski's war experience or disability. It was not even clear what kind of injuries he suffered and whether his martial trauma could explain his crimes. On the other hand, a murderer hardly fit the image of a heroic "defender of Lviv." Authorities demolished the kiosk soon after the verdict in order to purge the crime literally and figuratively from public space.

Disabled veterans' bodies often carried the visible traces of war and, similar to fallen heroes, were an important element of the Polish and Ukrainian commemorative discourses. Both Poles and Ukrainians perceived Lviv as "their city" and politically and symbolically struggled for "ownership" and constructed competing memory discourses. Lviv was a community divided, most evidently by the memory of the Ukrainian-Polish war of 1918-1919 and the city space was used in the symbolic struggle between the communities. Ukrainians established a system of assistance

for disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army that turned into a commemorative practice. Those who donated in support of Ukrainian soldiers participated in it. Ukrainian activists established the “representational” House of Invalids in Lviv as the “site of memory” that represented the sacrifice of disabled soldiers. Later, the House was supposed to be converted into a museum and teach future generations about the glorious struggle for an independent Ukraine. At the same time, the Polish memory discourse was not homogeneous and both the state and civil society took part in its construction. Disabled Polish activists criticised state-sponsored commemorative practices that did not satisfy the personal needs of grieving families. Moreover, some state institutions for disabled servicemen embodied the Austrian imperial memory discourse, which was important to a larger narrative of Lviv disabled veterans struggling for their rights.

Fiction was the other source that reflected various representations of war disability. Some authors proclaimed pacifist ideas, while others glorified war or normalized disability by depicting successful reintegration into society. As the Ukrainian national project was unfinished and a new war for independence might have been considered inevitable or desirable, some Ukrainian writers showed that it was possible to cope with experiences of war disability. Others described a gloomy picture of physical and emotional pain. Nyzhankivskyi’s story united the topics of war disability and life in a large modern city. Despite the system of assistance for disabled veterans and their integration into commemorative practices, disabled veterans were often isolated from society by invisible walls. City dwellers preferred to ignore the out-of-place disfigured body of a disabled street vender in Lviv’s central district. Nobody was interested in a disabled veteran’s origin, army affiliation, or life story. At the same time, despite often living in crushing poverty, disabled soldiers simply wanted acknowledgement from a grateful society.

CONCLUSION

On 23 November 1924, *Frankfurter Zeitung* published a report by the Austrian-Jewish writer and journalist Joseph Roth.¹⁰¹⁵ Born in the Galician town of Brody, he had studied in Lviv before the First World War, but in 1914 he moved to Vienna, and later to Berlin.¹⁰¹⁶ In 1924 Roth travelled back to Galicia and wrote a series of short articles from his native land. In “The Cripples: The Funeral of a Polish Invalid,” Roth described a burial procession that had moved through the gloomy streets of Lviv. It seemed as if every disabled veteran in the city had come to pay his respects to his fellow soldier, who had publicly committed suicide. Although Roth never mentioned the name of this disabled veteran, it was obviously Jan Kos, and the image of thousands of disfigured men—limbless, blind, or bearing mental wounds—walking through the city to the cemetery, haunted the writer. Roth regretted that the funeral took place in remote Galicia rather than in some European centre. In Geneva, for example, home of the League of Nations, this uncanny procession of disabled soldiers would be impossible to ignore, and would ensure that the terrifying consequences of the Great War, as well as its heroes and victims, would not be forgotten.

As these macabre figures bade farewell to their colleague, they also symbolized their society’s failure to deal with war disability. In Poland, the process of defining war disability took place alongside the process of nation-building, and the two were co-constitutive. The question of who belonged to the category of “Polish war invalids” was also a discussion about who was a part of the national body. Although the legal definition of Polish disabled veteran supposedly followed an “inclusive” vision, in practice the category was fraught with the tensions of the Polish nation itself, which was conceptualized on both ethnic and political grounds, grounds that were not

¹⁰¹⁵ Joseph Roth, “Die Krüppel. Ein polisches Invalidenbegräbnis,” in *Werke* Vol.3, ed. by Hermann Kesten (Cologne: Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 1975), 840-842.

¹⁰¹⁶ Jan Koprowski, *Józef Roth* (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1980), 14-34.

always entirely compatible. Affiliation with a particular army became a crucial factor that determined inclusion or exclusion from the welfare system. While Roth did not distinguish between the funeral procession's diversely disabled participants, equating them in horrifying experience, tensions between military affiliation and ethnic affiliation were sharply visible in the metropolis of the eastern borderlands throughout the interwar years. Indeed, studying the experience of disabled soldiers' reintegration in Lviv allows us to examine the minority policy of the Second Republic and the process of defining the "Polish nation."

Politicians, experts, and activists understood war disability as an complex concept that combined medical, ideological, economic, and spatial aspects. As the Polish government strove to build a modern state, it also aimed to manage war disability based on a scientific and rational approach. Disabled bodies were defined and classified, and indescribable experiences of pain and suffering were reduced by medical professionals to a short formula. War disability was seen as something to be fixed by modern medical science or spatial rearrangement. Disabled veterans had to be reintegrated into society and become productive citizens who would participate in the building of the new state. Economic crises and managerial failures, however, precluded the implementation of this ambitious technocratic vision.

The Polish authorities considered the eastern borderlands, populated by large minority groups, to be a special region. Lviv was not only the largest administrative and cultural centre in eastern Poland, it was ground zero in the Ukrainian-Polish conflict. As a result of the Ukrainian-Polish war, both sides produced aggressive nationalist memory discourses. The Jewish community was caught in the middle of this conflict, and also faced growing anti-Semitism. The government realized that a proper system of assistance for disabled veterans could be a key instrument of borderlands Polonization; at the same time, they feared that the project's failure might cause the

simmering disloyalties of the minority communities to boil over. Yet economic factors were a constant challenge. Although the government envisioned a system of assistance that would be comparable to its western European counterparts, Lviv's disabled activists often criticized authorities for their indifference and ignorance. In the early 1920s disabled soldiers took to the city streets and demanded that the central authorities implement new legislation. In the summer of 1924, too, activists wrote openly about the government's responsibility for Kos's suicide. But political changes in the fledgling state constrained the disabled veterans' movement. As Poland's authoritarian tendencies strengthened, the government limited the freedom of the public sphere, and in the late 1920s it actually took control of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. Although activists continued to criticize the authorities, blame for the failure in assistance to disabled soldiers shifted from Warsaw to the local Voivodeship and municipal administrations. Restrictions in the public sphere shaped the disabled veterans' movement and its activism.

The establishment of Poland's modern welfare state and the emergence of a new civil society changed the relationship between citizens and government. For the first time, ordinary disabled men considered themselves entitled to state benefits and spoke about their rights. The numerous letters from Lviv's working-class veterans requesting benefits were shaped by welfare discourse and show individuals who were learning to articulate their rights as Polish citizens. Experts, moreover, played a central role in the modern state. During the early postwar years, the work of professionals, such as the physician Józef Aleksiewicz, was crucial for the establishment of new institutions for impaired servicemen. But in less than five years, disabled veterans themselves would have to fight against the removal of the House of Invalids, for example, from

Lviv to the countryside, defending what Henri Lefebvre called their “right to the city.”¹⁰¹⁷ Taking their cue from this new model of participatory citizenship and the dynamics of urban social space, activism spread beyond the work of the well-educated leaders of the large veteran organizations. For instance, working-class disabled ex-soldiers of the Austrian army (some of them illiterate) gathered in Lychakiv to create a new organization. In another case, homeless disabled soldiers struggled for their right to live in the hostel at the House of Invalids, which was meant only as a temporary residence for visitors to Lviv. With the development of the civil society, formerly marginal urban groups became more visible in the public sphere, which sometimes led to tension with the local authorities.

The Great Depression, however, forced the downsizing of social programs, and the government tried to reduce the number of disabled beneficiaries. Ironically, the first full statistical data about disabled veterans in Poland was gathered not in order to improve services but to cut spending. In November 1934, the government also passed orders that created a two-tiered system of benefits, discriminating between disabled soldiers of the imperial and Polish armies. At the same time, at least before 1937, Lviv’s bureaucrats did not in fact employ any ethnic criteria in granting additional payments. The state also relied on the medical military commissions to implement its austerity measures, a tactic soon criticized by disabled veterans. The commissions would re-examine veterans’ files and often lower their percentage of disability, or even deprive them of assistance altogether; at the same time, some of Lviv’s residents bribed officials to improve their state benefits. The life of a disabled veteran was never divorced from politics and economics.

¹⁰¹⁷ On “the right to the city” see Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 147-159. David Harvey further developed the idea in his “The Right to the City,” *New Left Review* 53 Sept-Oct 2008): 23-40.

At the social level, veterans also found themselves caught between ideals and realities. Despite pressure from the central authorities, the Lviv municipal administration could not implement some legislative norms, such as affirmative action in hiring, because of resistance from employers. Even municipal enterprises tried to avoid hiring what they perceived as “unproductive” bodies. Disabled veterans struggled to find work, and the re-educational aspect of rehabilitation was deemed unsuccessful and was abandoned; Lviv’s vocational school was closed by the mid 1920s. Similar disillusionment plagued the House of Invalids. Although this state institution provided a residence for veterans until 1939, constant violations of the disciplinary regulations—and an administration that often turned a blind eye on these violations—showed the faults of the institutionalization model. At the same, other local institutions, such as the military hospitals and the hostel for disabled veterans, acquired new functions as residences for homeless soldiers. The tension and interplay between legislative norms, bureaucratic practices, and informal rule-bending was crucial in shaping the experience of war disability.

The soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician army were the only Polish citizens who did not receive state benefits; they were instead treated as enemies, an exclusion based not on ethnic background but army affiliation. This policy motivated Lviv’s Ukrainian community to create an alternative system of assistance for disabled veterans of the Galician army. These soldiers became the central heroic figures of Ukrainian national discourse in Poland. Although the Polish authorities restricted the work of Ukrainian activists, they never banned the Ukrainian Association for Aid to the Disabled, and Ukrainian civil society continued to develop in Poland in part through the organizing of assistance to veterans. While only about 16% of Lviv’s inhabitants were Ukrainian, the city was the centre of the Ukrainian national movement and was the only place where activism on behalf of disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army emerged. Thus, one

of the major challenges for the Ukrainian Association for Aid to the Disabled was to extend its work beyond the city to the other parts of the Małopolska region. At the same time, this movement had a transnational character, as financial support from the Ukrainian diaspora in North America was crucial to the work of the Association. While creating the system of benefits for disabled men, the community also participated in commemorative practices. In the 1930s, activists transformed the Ukrainian House of Invalids into a “site of memory” that symbolized the sacrifice of disabled soldiers of the Galician army. As the building was a luxury rental property, veterans did not live there, but the income generated from the rent went to the allowances of Galician soldiers. Leaders of the Association, moreover, hoped one day to turn the House into a museum that would represent the struggle of Ukrainians for their independent state. By establishing the House as the “representational” site, Ukrainian activists not only produced a discourse of memory, but they also rejected the traditional “institutionalization model.” Disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army continued to live with their families as reintegrated members of society; the majority lived in the countryside and did not consider Lviv “their” city. Even Ukrainian writers typically depicted Ukrainian disabled soldiers as peasants, part of a larger phenomenon in which the Ukrainian intelligentsia spoke on their behalf, rarely allowing the voice of ordinary disabled men to be heard. Although on several occasions they criticised the leaders of the Ukrainian Association for Aid to the Disabled, activists from the intelligentsia suppressed any opposition from soldiers inside the movement.

In 1932 the government tried to compromise with the Ukrainian community and granted state assistance to disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army. But it did not actually implement this legislation for years. Pressure from Ukrainian politicians, who were indignant over the unjust treatment of disabled veterans of the Ukrainian Galician army, finally forced the

authorities to speed up the examination of their applications in the late 1930s. Lviv's officials even dropped the controversial issue of loyalty to the Polish state as a necessary criterion for granting benefits. However, it was too little, too late and disappointment with the authorities deepened. The Polish government's attempt to include disabled veterans of the Galician army in the welfare system failed due to conflicting visions of the Polish nation and state, just as the government's minority policies did more generally.

Loyalty to one's former armed forces was a key component of a Lviv veteran's identity. Differentiation of the demobilized soldiers of various armies was visible not only in the political discourse of interwar Poland; it was also a crucial factor in the discourses constructed by disabled veterans themselves. Veterans who belonged to the same armies accrued the same state benefits, which in turn created similar experiences of demobilization and reintegration into civilian life. Service in multinational imperial armies, in fact, led to the emergence of a common identity that blurred ethnic and religious fault lines. For instance, local activists of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans publicly discussed the minority issue only in the first year after the Ukrainian-Polish war. The Ukrainian veterans who had served in the Austrian army were accepted as members of the largest Polish organization of disabled servicemen. Thus, they became part of the general category of Polish disabled soldiers.

At the same time, ideological differences and the strengthening of Polish nationalism caused cracks in the disabled veterans' movement. Because of anti-Semitism in the Union of Polish Disabled Veterans, the majority of Jewish soldiers left and created their own organization in 1924 in order to defend their rights as a distinct group of disabled veterans and also to represent their interests within the Jewish community. Disabled Jewish activists and ordinary veterans accused the authorities and the all-Polish organizations of unjust treatment. In early 1939 Edwin Wagner,

a former Lviv activist and president of the Union, publicly supported the official position of the government, which proclaimed the necessity of mass emigration of Polish Jews. Jews were not the only disabled servicemen to leave the Union; a circle of Polish army veterans who believed in their special place in a Polish national discourse also broke off. They founded the Invalid Legion, which represented a completely opposite vision of the Polish nation to that of the Polish Union of Disabled Veterans. The Union proclaimed the equality of all members regardless of their ethnic origin and army affiliation, while the Legion accepted only former soldiers of the Polish army (usually Poles). However, after the Union of Polish Disabled Veterans changed its position on the Jewish question in the late 1930s, it moved closer to the ethnic concept of the Polish nation. As the government banned the organization of the Habsburg veterans in Lviv, it prevented the emergence of a more articulated self-identification from Austrian army veterans, but it remained difficult to erase the imperial heritage entirely, and state institutions such as the Lviv House of Invalids still stood as reminders of it. In the 1930s the House remained the only such institution in Poland, and its disabled residents came from various regions and backgrounds. This unique mix turned the House into a “laboratory” that highlights the interplay and operation of regional and national identities. Institutionalized disabled soldiers were not completely isolated from the outside world, and political radicalization in the city triggered tensions inside the Lviv House of Invalids in the lead-up to the Second World War.

Disabled veterans were visible in Lviv because of their businesses (such as small kiosks), commemorative rituals, and their institutions, most notably the House of Invalids. Although this large imperial facility was located in the outskirts and enclosed by a wall, some of its residents violated the disciplinary regulations of the House and became part of everyday urban life. But such public exposure could also harm the attempt to create a positive representation of veterans as

disabled heroes. After the former soldier Cybulski committed a dreadful murder in his kiosk, the press dug into every detail of the case. This shattered the heroic image of the “Lviv defender,” and the authorities worked quickly to erase any hint of a connection between crime and war disability. They purified the space by demolishing Cybulski’s kiosk, which would otherwise have stood as a constant reminder of the crime. At the same time, the presence of disabled soldiers in the city highlighted their society’s negligence and the failure of collective memory. Activists often claimed that others did not appreciate their sacrifice and that the public had simply forgotten about them. Thousands of request letters from these veterans indicate that many disabled men and their families were barely surviving. These men also struggled to fit into gender norms that emphasized the role of breadwinner, and constant loneliness and invisibility during daily urban interactions took a toll on their psyches. Residents of a large metropolis like Lviv could ignore disabled street vendors or passengers in trams who needed seats. Employers did not care about past heroic deeds and preferred to hire able-bodied workers, while the Great Depression further decreased the odds of disabled men finding employment. Although the reasons for Kos’s suicide would remain unclear, disabled activists and authorities constructed various narratives to explain his motives, and his death became a rallying point in their struggle for veterans’ rights. In committing his public suicide, Kos was indicating his wish to be noticed by others, and in that, at least for a short period of time, he was finally successful.

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