

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ESCAPE AND FORCED MIGRATION: HISTORY AND DESTINIES

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The Evacuation of the Customs Administration from the Kingdom of Poland to Russia in 1914* **

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The customs administration in the Kingdom of Poland operated mainly in the borderlands. After the Triple Alliance was formed, it became obvious that both the German Empire and Austria-Hungary could be potential adversaries of Russia. The state administration in the Kingdom of Poland would be the most vulnerable to possible military conflicts. In the early 1890s, initial attempts were made to design evacuation protocols. The works continued until 1913 when they reached completion. In accordance with these guidelines, the customs administration was evacuated between July and August 1914. Customs offices and their personnel, along with their families, were transported further inland where they were supposed to await the positive outcome of the war, which, in contrast to expectations, never occurred. The way in which the evacuation of institutions managing the empire's western land border was planned and carried out raises several specific and more general questions. The authors focus on the approach to evacuation emphasizing its deliberate character, privileges of the hierarchy of officials, approach to archives, as well as the implementation itself and its effectiveness. Further on, the issue of planning the return of the Russian administration to these territories arose, which could be perceived as real belief in victory. The reconstruction of the subject of research is developed with reference to numerous archival sources from the archives of Poland,

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Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Russia, as well as printed sources: legislation, official departmental publications, and press articles. The work uses or refers to all the literature on the subject that deserves attention. As a result of the analysis of the planning, evacuation, and operation processes in Russia of the examined structures, it can be concluded that the plans were implemented quite accurately and effectively. The authors draw this conclusion after many years of research on the operation and evacuation of other Russian offices of the Kingdom of Poland. These evacuation customs offices operated in a limited number, waiting for the end of the war, but ironically, while escaping from an external enemy, they fell into the hands of an internal one as they served the Bolsheviks in creating their “instruments of power”.

Keywords: customs administration, Kingdom of Poland, evacuation, Russian Empire, office personnel

Российское таможенное управление в Царстве Польском действовало в основном в приграничных районах. В результате образования Тройственного союза стало очевидным, что и Германская империя, и Австро-Венгрия могут быть потенциальными противниками России. Государственная администрация в Царстве Польском более всех других подвергалась бы последствиям войны. В начале 1890-х гг. были предприняты первые попытки разработать протоколы эвакуации. Работы продолжались до 1913 г., когда достигли стадии завершения. На основании этих специальных указаний на рубеже июля и августа 1914 г. таможенные учреждения и их персонал вместе с семьями были перевезены вглубь страны, где они должны были ожидать положительного исхода войны, который, вопреки некоторым ожиданиям, так и не наступил. Планирование и проведение эвакуации учреждений, управлявших западной сухопутной границей империи, рождает ряд вопросов частной и более общей природы. Авторы акцентируют внимание на подходе к эвакуации, отмечая ее плановый характер, преимущества иерархии чиновников, отношение к архивам и успешность ее проведения. Позже возникает вопрос о планировании возвращения российской администрации на эти территории, что может быть воспринято как проявление веры в победу. Реконструкция предмета исследования произведена на широкой базе архивных и опубликованных источников. Работа освещает всю заслуживающую внимания литературу по предмету исследования. Авторы констатируют, что планы были достаточно четко и успешно реализованы. Такой вывод они делают на основании многолетних исследований деятельности и эвакуации других российских ведомств Царства Польского. Таможенные учреждения имели ограниченный штат, ожидая конца войны, но, бежав от внешнего врага, они попали в руки внутреннего – поспособствовали большевикам в их создании инструментов власти.

Ключевые слова: таможенное управление, Царство Польское, Российская империя, чиновники

The customs administration within the Kingdom of Poland, which constituted a part of the special Russian administration, has not attracted significant attention from researchers, neither from Poland, nor outside its borders. As a matter of fact, apart from the works of Konstantin Bokov [Бокoв, 2014; Бoкoв, 2012, p. 27–34], Krzysztof Latawiec and Artur Gorak [Górak; Гoрaк; Górak, Latawiec; Latawiec, Górak, Legieć, Bogdanow], it is futile to search for any other work relevant to this topic.

The western border of the Russian Empire was one of the most lucrative sources of profit for the Russian state. Moreover, the Russian customs administration's structure, as well as its activity, is full of interesting facts and items. Amongst the more distinctive are personnel policies within the territory of the Kingdom of Poland, the efficiency of the organisation and the influence of their employees on the forming of an office intelligence class in sparsely populated areas on the western edge of the Romanov territories. The termination and subsequent evacuation of these offices at the turn of July and August 1914, as well as their movement further inland of Russia's borders, were one of the most unique parts of their existence.

The Russian customs administration's structures on the territory of the Kingdom of Poland were founded in the first half of January 1851. Creating the system of the customs offices based on the framework for the Customs Service that had previously existed on the western border of the Empire for decades was executed via an ukase, an edict of the Russian Tsar, from 17 November 1850 [Ustawa, s. 6–7]. Naturally, this decree was nothing but a Customs Law for the Kingdom of Poland aimed at annexing that territory to the Russian Customs Administration network. It is worth highlighting that despite the appearance of a typical Russian administration, the Kingdom of Poland seemed to exhibit certain traces of independence, compared to other territories of the Empire. The Russian customs administration on the territory of the Kingdom of Poland operating from 13 January 1851 was divided into three administrative units: Kalisz, Wierzbolow and Zawichost. All the three were led by unit heads with their jurisdiction covering the customs offices represented by customs houses (*org. таможня*) of 1st, 2nd and 3rd class, customs sub-chambers (*org. таможенная застава*) and communication hubs within their respective territories [Ustawa; Górak, Latawiec, s. 92–95, 114–115, 143–145; Гoрaк, 2019, c. 116–123].

It should be highlighted that in the 1860s many significant structural changes occurred in the Russian Ministry of Finance. Instead of the previously mentioned Department of International Trade under the Ministry of Finance, on 7 November 1864 a new structure was created, called the Department of Duties and Tariffs under the Ministry of Finance (DDTMF) [Бубнoв, c. 966–972]. All customs offices operating on the territory of the Kingdom of Poland were under direct or indirect command of the DDTMF head.

The most prominent customs administration reform in the Romanov Empire (including the Kingdom of Poland) occurred at the turn of 1912–1913. On 10 June 1912, Tsar Nicholas II signed an ukase sanctioning

a complete overhaul of the customs administration on the territories of the empire [Собрание узаконений, № 103, ст. 865, с. 1783–1786]. As a direct consequence, customs units were to be dissolved, their respective heads dismissed and, in their place, new inspectors were appointed with assigned districts. It had been decided that most of the already existing offices were to remain, including customs houses and customs sub-chambers. In regard to these two, the alterations were merely cosmetic. The lowest category of customs offices – the communication hubs – were replaced with a customs post. The Russian customs administration, in its new shape and form began its activity on 14 January 1913 [LVVA. Stock 545. List 2. Dos. 26b. Л. 244; ДАХО. Ф. 309. Оп. 1. Д. 1233. Л. 4; Личный состав Департамента таможенных сборов, с. 14–15, 17; Górak, Latawiec, с. 163].

How can we describe the customs administrative structures in the Kingdom of Poland on the eve of World War I? As previously stated, the scope of the General Governorate was divided between three district customs inspectors. Each of them had customs offices with one assigned category type out of four, customs houses of the 1st class, customs houses of the 2nd class, customs sub-chambers, and customs posts. The importance of each customs institution depended on their competence scope with regard to goods' tariffs as well as prearranged staffing levels¹.

It is worth highlighting the uniqueness of the personnel within these offices. It is important to distinguish three types of positions in the customs administration. The first group, referred to as Group 1 later in the text, consisted of the roles appointed directly by the director of the DDTMF with the consent of the finance minister. The second group was made of

¹ At the beginning of the summer of 1914, we can distinguish the following customs offices:

¹. The Vilnius Customs District (VCD) – Customs House (CH) Wierzbolow (*today's Virbalis*) 1st class 2nd category, CH Grajewo 1st cl. 2nd cat., CH Vincenta 2nd cl., CH Wladyslawow (*today's Kudirkos Naumiestis*) 2nd cl., CH Raczki 2nd cl., CH Filipow 2nd cl., Customs Sub-chamber (CSC) Bakalarzewo 2nd cl., CSC Bogusze, CSC Wysztyniec (*today's Vištytis*), CSC Dabrowa, CSC Kibarty (*today's Kybartai*), CSC Kirkily (*today's Kirkilai*), CSC Rakowek, CSC Romaniszki, CSC Tworki, CSC Upidamiszkki (*today's Tuniszki*), CSC Czarnowek, Customs Post (CP) Reszki and CP Peltzy.

². The Warsaw Customs District (WCD) – CH Aleksandrow 1st cl. 2nd cat., CH Szczypiorno 1st cl. 2nd cat., CH Sosnowiec 1st cl. 2nd cat., Herby 1st cl. 3rd cat., CH Mława 1st cl. 3rd cat. CH Wieruszow 1st cl. 4th cat., CH Niezawa 1st cl. 4 cat., CH Słupca 1st cl. 4 cat., CH Wilczyn 2nd cl., CH Gola 2nd cl., CH Dobrzyn 2nd cl., CH Zielun 2nd cl., CH Lubicz 2nd cl., CH Modrzejow 2nd cl., CH Osiek 2nd cl., CH Pyzdry 2nd cl., CH Piotrkow 2nd cl., CH Podleze 2nd cl., CH Praszka 2nd cl., CH Radziejow 2nd cl., CSC Boleslawiec, CSC Borzykow, CSC Gniazdow, CSC Gostynczyk, CSC Grodzisk, CSC Zakrzewo, CSC Karw, CSC Lezec, CSC Niezdara, CSC Podgrabow, CSC Skulsk, CSC Chorzele, CSC Czolnochow, CSC Czeladz, CSC Szczypiorno, CSC Janowo, CP Bobrowniki, CP Herby, CP Gnojno, CP Zychce, CP Czerwony Krzyz, CP Mława, CP Pęplowek, CP Polajewek, CP Służewo and finally CP Czołow.

³. South-Western Customs District (SWCD) – CH Granica 1st cl. 2nd cat., CH Baran 2nd cl., CH Dolhobyczow 2nd cl., CH Zawichost 2nd cl., CH Igolomia 2nd cl., CH Korczyn 2nd cl., CH Michałowice 2nd cl., CH Sandomierz 2nd cl., CH Tomaszow 2nd cl., CSC Krzeszow, CSC Łazek Zaklikowski, CSC Niesulowice, CSC Opatowiec, CSC Podbelzec, CSC Podmajdan, CSC Rataje, CSC Sieroslawice i CSC Szyce. Moreover, the most prominent customs house on the Kingdom of Poland's territory was CH Warsaw 1st class, 2nd category, which was directly under the Director of the DDTMF [Личный состав Департамента таможенных сборов].

clerks, whose selection heavily depended on the customs district inspector (and before 14 January 1913 on the customs unit head) and the customs house director. Finally, the third group consisted of attendants, whose employment depended on the director of the customs house. Just before the breakout of World War I, we may have been only able to outline a rough guesstimate of staff members in the customs offices. However, based on the approved budget spend for DDTMF in 1914, and the distribution of lower ranking clerks, one can attempt an informed evaluation. The most credible number for office staff can be established for Group 1, defined earlier in this article. Based on the number of the office staff employed in the chancelleries of customs inspectors, customs houses, customs sub-chambers and customs posts, Group 1 in the Kingdom of Poland consisted of 497 office employees (VCD – 107, WCD – 247, SWCD – 71, CH Warsaw – 82). The number of chancellery clerks was at 540 (VCD – 116, WCD – 265, SWCD – 69, CH Warsaw – 76) while 828 people were employed at the lowest ranking position of attendant (VCD – 155, WCD – 439, SWCD – 111, CH Warsaw – 123) [LVVA. Stock 545. List 2. Dos. 27. P. 37 rev.side – 44; Личный состав Департамента таможенных сборов]. Thus, in total, 1865 staff members were employed in the customs administration structures.

The conflicting interests of superpowers on the European continent in the last two decades of the nineteenth century led to certain political and military alliances. Tsarist Russia, with its eternal political ambitions regarding control of the Black Sea straits and influence over the Balkan lands, found itself on a collision course with Austria-Hungary. The tensions arising due to these opposing interests in that part of Europe could have eventually developed into a military conflict. However, close collaboration of the Habsburg Monarchy with the German Empire could also lead to serious trouble for the Romanov Empire. Russia's western border (running through the Kingdom of Poland) was not strategically convenient. The Warsaw General Governorate was at risk of an abrupt occupation, in the event of a potential military conflict with the German Empire and Austria-Hungary and any concentrated attack on the region. Russian headquarters' staff members were aware of this predicament and their efforts were focused on the increase of military potential in this area. In consequence, this translated into increasing military forces and maintaining active fortifications on the territory [Dobroński].

On 1 April 1909, the Warsaw General-Governor issued a decree stating that the security of the state's finances was the main reason for moving further inland. Hence, the three customs units' heads (Vilnius CU, Warsaw CU and Radom CU), whose jurisdiction covered the territory of Warsaw General-Governate, were tasked with focusing on securing all fiscal assets, such as cash and bonds. Moreover, the Warsaw General-Governor allowed for transporting any valuables that would have enabled the enemy to make considerable gains of an either military or strategic character. Any remaining possessions were to be burned on the spot. In autumn 1909, various offices within the Kingdom of Poland employing civil servants were sent dedicated

evacuation questionnaires for themselves and their families. Heads of the Warsaw Military District demanded detailed information on the cargo (the departure railway station), the direction of evacuation (the chosen railway route: Vilnius–Peterburg, Siedlce–Polotsk–Bologoye, Baranovichi–Moscow, Luninets–Gomel, Sarny–Kiev, Kovel–Koziatyn–Kiev), the destination, number of adults, number of children, as well as the luggage weight (weighed in poods, one pood was equal to about 36 lbs). Similar documents were necessary to move state assets from their respective offices. The objective of the questionnaires was to create a foundation for a more detailed evacuation plan, as well as to assess the feasibility of the entire operation [РГИА. Ф. 1282. Оп. 1. Д. 1007. Л. 9–10; Latawiec, с. 43–44].

In parallel, similar attempts in this area were made by the Vilnius Military District, the structures of which were located in the Suwalki Governorate. This meant that, in the case of a military conflict breaking out, all civil servants were subordinate to this district's head. It is vital to keep in mind that on 24 December 1912, the deputy for the Vilnius Military District's head signed temporary guidelines for transporting state assets as well as staff members and their families in the event of a military conflict [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 5]. These procedures were to be upheld by, for example, customs offices in this governorate: CH Wierzbolow, CH Władysławow, CH Filipow, CSC Wysztyniec, CSC Raczki, CSC Reszki, CSC Bakalarzewo, CSC Kibarty, CSC Kirkily, CSC Rakowek, CSC Romaniszki, CSC Upidamiszki, and CP Reszki.

Both the General Headquarters Command and the Cabinet Ministers worked together on creating clear and accurate executive orders regarding preparations for military and civilian structures for military conflict. After months of consultations, a legal act named *Положение о подготовительном к войне периоде* was formed and accepted by Tsar Nicholas II on 2 March 1913 [РГИА. Ф. 1282. Оп. 1. Д. 1007. Л. 1–8 об.]. Due to its strategic importance, it was given a top confidentiality level and cannot be published in the Official Journal. The document was printed and handed over to chancelleries of central state administration institutions responsible for classified matters [ГАРФ. Ф. 110. Оп. 4. Д. 3617. С. 31–33]. This regulation had key significance in terms of the guidelines to be passed on to state structures located in the borderlands on the eve of the military conflict. An appendix included a detailed plan to be implemented by each of the branches of the political apparatus. The local structures of the DDTMF, which are of interest to this article, were to act as follows:

<...>

12) Управляющие пограничными таможенными доставляют в штабы округов сведения об общем движении грузов через границу, в особенности продовольственных припасов и живого груза, и сообщают штабам округов имена лиц, подозреваемых в неблагонадежности и шпионстве. В случае экстренной необходимости передают их местной полиции для удаления из района. 13) Вывозятся из таможенных учреждений погра-

ничных районов денежные знаки и ценности в ближайшие казначейства внутреннего района с оставлением на местах лишь строго определенных сумм для удовлетворения мобилизационных и других потребностей. Таможенным учреждениям поручается принимать в уплату пошлин по возможности не наличные деньги, а квитанции Государственного банка. 14) Разрабатываются предположения о введении ограничительных мер по вывозу за границу лошадей, скота, хлеба и других припасов, необходимых для успешного ведения войны... [ГАРФ. Ф. 110. Оп. 4. Д. 3617. С. 65; РГИА. Ф. 1282. Оп. 1. Д. 1007. Л. 5–5 об.].

The drafting of evacuation regulations for customs offices gained momentum in 1913. On 20 May 1913, the DDTMF composed a letter to its subordinate structures requesting an assessment of an estimated weight of moveable assets subject to transportation further inland within Russia. This input was essential to formulate the mobilisation of respective military districts. As per the guidance from the Interdepartmental Committee under the General Headquarters Command, it was crucial to keep in mind the fact that limited transportation options were available, while assessing the importance of state assets. After consulting the authorities of the DDTMF, the following were established as the key assets to be moved: a) financial means such as cash, credit bills and all types of bonds; b) unaudited documents and books; c) documents and cases imperative for the state treasury (mainly court and examining documents pertaining to cases infringing on state treasury interests, e. g. smuggling, proof of ownership, contracts, lease agreements, bookkeeping records); d) personnel data, excluding that which can be issued to employees; e) confidential correspondence with significance for the state (excluding any documentation concerning mobilisation matters, which was to be destroyed locally); f) seals used by customs [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 1–1 об.]. In the case of institutions of particular interest to this article, the primary responsibility for collecting essential information was shifted to the inspectors of the WCD, VCD and SWCD. Apart from noting the values for the weight of the overall assets, it was necessary to be able to match them with not only the military district, but also the governorate, as well as the region from which the customs office had its seat [Ibid.]. The objective and consequent result of this extensive project was collecting statistics outlining the scale of the potential operation. Information on customs staff members was retained for CH Wierzbolow. For this customs house alone, 87 employees with families, along with 34 unmarried employees, were to be transported further inland. In total, this would amount to 204 men and 87 women in possession of 200 poods (over 7200 lbs) worth of luggage. In case of necessity, 122 ad-hoc civilian horse carriages were to be sourced to support the move [Ibid. P. 3].

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne in Sarajevo, led to a breakdown of international relations in Europe. A fortnight after Vienna had issued the 30-day ultimatum to the Kingdom of Serbia did not bring the expected results. The determination

of Belgrade, emboldened by the promise made by the Russia's Romanovs, would lead to an outbreak of war in the Balkans. The customs administration of interest to this article, already prepared for such an eventuality and equipped with suitable means and guidelines, awaited the course of events.

On 28 July 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. On the very same day, the Austro-Hungarian armies entered Serbian territory. Even before invading Serbia, Russia embarked on decisive actions which can be considered as preparations for military manoeuvres against the Austro-Hungarians and Germans. For example, a protocol approved by the Tsar on 25 July 1914 pertaining to a special Council of Ministers' session from the day before which recommended mobilisation preparations in four military districts: Kiev, Odessa, Moscow, and Khazan, as well as the Baltic and Black Sea fleets. This also signified the application of regulations from 2 March 1913 [Особые журналы, с. 200]. The customs offices located in the Kingdom of Poland were telegraphed by the Minister of Finance, Peter Bark, and the DDTMF Director, Sergei Grinwald, on the night of 27 July 1914 requesting an immediate implementation of the aforementioned regulations [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 7–8, 23]. Regardless of the steps taken by Petersburg, the actions of the Warsaw General-Governor and the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Military District, Yakov Zhilinsky, were quite perceptible. It was Zhilinsky who ordered the border control officers to ready the assets for transportation. The families of those officers were subject to the same requirements. Infantry patrols were replaced by mounted units [APL. Janowski Zarząd Powiatowy. Dos. 5. P. 1]. The exact same actions were taken by all customs offices in the borderlands within the Warsaw Military District.

One of the indications that the regulations from March 1913 had been put into action was the restriction of movement by customs offices. Hence, before noon, 28th July, a ban on issuing short-term tickets and passports was introduced that aimed at prohibiting Russian citizens from leaving the country [Kuryer Śląski, s. 3]. Despite such actions, roads and railways were still operating, although noticeably less frequently. Customs staff members were in a state of readiness. Measures were taken to execute a potential evacuation and, moreover, actions were accelerated due to rumours of the impending Austro-Hungarian invasion on Serbia. It is vital to mention that not all staff members were eligible for departure from the borderlands. The outbreak of the Balkan conflict coincided with a holiday period. Some employees, thus, benefitted from recreation or family leave away from the place of their employment [ДАОО. Ф. 201. Оп. 2. Д. 61. Л. 125].

On 29 July, the next day, the state finance administration structures located in the borderlands, including customs, began sending monetary means and bonds to Petersburg. The goods exchange on the borders came to a standstill from either road or railway routes. The institutions of interest to this article were prohibited from allowing horses and feed (such as hay, oats, or barley) to leave the country [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 14; Kuryer Śląski, s. 3; Gazeta Toruńska, 1914, № 173, s. 1]. Wherever an open

customs office was located on any of the communication routes, dedicated military units and Isolated Gendarmerie Corps officers were sent [APL. Janowski Zarząd Powiatowy. Dos. 5. P. 10–11; Czas, 1914, № 309, с. 3].

From the next day, all customs offices in the vicinity of the border worked in an unprecedented system. Staff members of those institutions along with their families were prepared for leaving their then place of employment despite the fact they were still performing their duties to a certain extent. Records and official documents were sorted and packed. One of the most peculiar circumstances concerned one of the more prominent customs offices in Kibarty – CH Wierzbolow. In the words of the Director of that institution, Vladimir Vysotski, in a telegram describing the events of 30 July to the Director of the DDTMF:

Таможня с семнадцатого бездействует, восемнадцатого рогатка закрыта. Германия русских пассажиров возвращает. В Россию отходит один поезд в сутки. Жители разбежались, съестные лавки и буфет закрыты. Чиновники удовлетворены содержанием пособиям. Губернатор (сувалкский. – А. G., К. L.) назначил вывоз документов двадцать первого июля. Распоряжения от командующего войсками нет. Положение критическое. Документы упакованы, сегодня грузу [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 10a].

Moreover, CH Wierzbolow, similarly to other customs houses (CH Aleksandrow, CH Mława, CH Sosnowiec, CH Herby, CH Grajewo, CH Szczypiorno and CH Granica) was quite well prepared. Through adjacent railway connections, they can swiftly transport both people and assets. The two dozen other offices had to make do with ad-hoc horse carriages for the delivery of customs staff members, their families and personal belongings, as well as state assets and records to the nearest railway station designated as a loading bay [APL. Janowski Zarząd Powiatowy. Dos. 5. P. 5–5 rev. side].

On 31 July 1914, the Warsaw Military District commander-in-chief declared the final evacuation of the customs offices in the borderlands. All further actions depended on his decision in that regard. This order was motivated by the initial concentration of military units taking the default positions for a potential attack on either German or Austro-Hungarian territories (which can also be used as defensive stance depending on the course of military actions). All customs offices' staff members were obliged to leave their place of employment after having secured the collection of state assets for transport. The last office employees, who according to the procedure were to be the last to leave, were the heads and supervisors as well as their closest associates [ГАРФ. Ф. 1459. Оп. 1. Д. 86; Ф. 1777. Оп. 1. Д. 94, 99]. The destination points for evacuees were places designated as temporary residences for the offices of interest to this article, at least during the point of drafting the procedures. During that time, the move of the customs offices from the borderlands was assumed not to be extensive, considering former military conflicts and assuming it would have led to a war no longer than a couple of months. The scope of customs

offices justified the decision to move them inland since re-establishing this civil service would only be possible after the international situation had calmed down. Furthermore, it is important to mention that the destination for the evacuees was not always consistent with the place indicated as a temporary residence for a staff member and their family.

During the design phase of the evacuation plans, it had been assumed that office staff members and their families would have been eligible for financial assistance for the time of travel. However, at the moment of the evacuation, the source of financing for these subsidies created some confusion. Directors of customs offices posted telegrams addressed to the director of the DDTMF requesting appropriate decisions on the issues arising from the move. In response, the DDTMF director sent the following telegram on 31 July:

Ввиду возбужденных таможенными вопросами сообщая к руководству нижеследующее... прекращение деятельности таможенных учреждений выезд чиновников и их семейств с выдачею последним пособий зависят от указания командующего войсками. <...> В случае получения указания могут быть выданы служащим суточные а их семействам пособия из кассовой наличности таможни а если таковой нет из местного казначейства... Размеры суточных и пособий нижеследующие... таможенным инспекторам и управляющим всеми таможенными учреждениями суточных три рубля и пособия семействам сто двадцать пять рублей прочие таможенные чиновники в штатных должностях от пятого до восьмого класса включительно суточных два рубля двадцать пять копеек и пособия семействам семьдесят пять рублей с девятого до четырнадцатого (класса. – А. Г., К. Л.) суточных рубль двадцать пять копеек пособия семействам пятьдесят рублей нижние чины и прочие служащие не исключая вольнонаемных суточных сорок пять копеек и пособия семействам двадцать пять рублей. Суточные выдаются рассчитывая в сутки... по железным дорогам триста верст и водою сто верст а по грунтовым дорогам пятьдесят верст. <...> ...Пособия выдавать по требовательным ведомостям с указанием, из какой кассы получены, а копии ведомостей представлять в департамент таможенных сборов и местную контрольную палату... <...> ...Вывоз государственного имущества учреждений и служащих с их багажом производится... железным дорогам вольным путем по предложениям для перевозки войск и воинских грузов а грунтовым на почтовых лошадях за прогоны и [на] обывательских подводах по правилам поставки для войск [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 31–33, 36].

As can be observed, the final go-ahead on the exact moment of departure for the Kingdom of Poland's customs office staff was dependent on the military district commander-in-chief. Unfortunately, no documents detailing the circumstances of transporting the office staff and their families from the borderlands in the Warsaw Military District to the pre-planned destination have survived.

On 31 July, when most of the Kingdom of Poland's custom offices were being evacuated, the circumstances were entirely different in the Suwalki Governorate, which as previously mentioned, was in the Vilnius Military District jurisdiction. On this day, the director of CH Wierzbolow sent the following telegram on the then circumstances in Kibarty:

Объявлена мобилизация... Досмотры прекратились... большую часть досмотрщиков [и] артельщиков призывают. Завтра отправляю документы [в] Москву, рабочих нет... нет возможности принимать заграничные товарные поезда. Поезд для семейств и служащих назначен завтра. Я... и часть чиновников уедем с последним поездом [Ibid. P. 25].

The tension was palpable since the concentration of Russian military units only fuelled local expectations of the war to come [Gazeta Toruńska, 1914, № 174, s. 2].

On 1 August 1914 at 7am, the German Empire declared war on the Russian Empire. The offices of interest to this article along with their staff subordinate to the Warsaw Military District commander-in-chief were meant to be on their way east. However, it is quite impossible to say why the staff of CH Lubicz remained in their posts on that day, and which had disastrous ramifications. On the day of the declaration of war by the Second Reich, the German army attacked the Russian controlled borderlands near the city of Torun. Both the towns of Aleksandrow Przygraniczny [Gazeta Toruńska, 1914, № 175, c. 1], as well as Lubicz, were seized on the first day of war, along with their customs offices. While CH Aleksandrow managed to successfully evacuate without any losses, the director of CH Lubicz, Peter Puchnarewicz, along with his associates (among others, Ivan Kociubko-Kociubukov, the Customs Warehouse Supervisor delegated from CH Dobrzyn) were captured [ДАОО. Ф. 201. Оп. 2. Д. 61. Л. 69–69 об.]². This was an isolated exception since, given the level of preparation for the evacuation, it should not have been the case. Sadly, the reason for their presence in Lubicz on 1 August 1914 is impossible to trace from the available evidence.

On the first day of the war, the evacuation from the borderlands within the Suwalki Governorate began with few of the lower ranking but secluded customs offices, without direct railway connection. However, in Kibarty, the staff members of CH Wierzbolow remained on duty. We can ascertain the activity during the final hours before the evacuation of this customs office from the report received by the DDTMF director. The CH Wierzbolow Director reported the following:

Ввиду объявления Германией войны России 19-го июля сего года действие вержболовской таможни было прекращено, причем казначей таможни надворный советник Мосино сдал мне всю наличность денег,

² The families of the captured office employees only gained the right to receive their salaries on their behalf in 1915 (based on the resolution of the Council of Ministers from 13 July, 1915 signed by the Tsar Nicholas II on 2 March the same year) [ДАХО. Ф. 378. Оп. 1. Д. 34. Л. 6].

хранившуюся в кассе таможи по 19-е июля в сумме 28279 р. 23 коп. и в ночь с 19 на 20-е июля помощн. бухгалтера губернский секретарь Леонович сдал мне под расписку в приходном журнале наличность денег вырученных... в сумме 177 руб. Всего получено мною денег для сдачи в казначейство 28456 р. 23 коп. Из сданных мне денег явилось крайняя необходимость произвести... расходы. 1. Выдано артельному старосте Колебову по счету за доставку... материалов потребных для отправки дел и книг вержболовской таможи в Киев 270 руб. 2. Помощн. секретаря Рыбасевичу выдано пособие согласно отношения Сувалкской казенной палаты 60 руб. <...> и 5. Выдано досмотрщику Суханову 75 руб. на путевые расходы по доставке вагона с грузом таможи в киевскую таможду. Всего израсходовано 583 руб. 65 коп. <...> Оставшиеся у меня на руках... 27872 руб. 58 коп. 24-го сего июля сдано мною в С. Петерб. казначейство... [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 41 rev. side -42 rev. side].

As per the available sources, CH Wierzbolow was evacuated between 2 and 3 August. Hours earlier (1 August) a consignment of ongoing and archival records for this customs house, escorted by the Suchan's customs attendant, was dispatched (in the same railcar) for Kiev, for temporary safekeeping in CH Kiev [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 42; Dos. 2. P. 50]. It is important to observe that a section of employees began to leave Kibarty from 31 July, since it brought no benefit keeping the full staffing for this office on site. This can be proven by the following announcement from the CH Wierzbolow director:

Сим объявляю гг. чиновникам таможи, что кто несвоевременно будет являться на службу по наряду и не находиться на месте, о тех будет немедленно по телеграфу сообщено Департаменту таможенных сборов с представлением об увольнении их от службы [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 44].

Was this announcement deliberate? It can be assumed that a similar approach was used by other directors of customs offices. Imposing the departure from the place of employment to the destinations indicated in the questionnaires due to the military invasion led to a dispersion of customs civil servants within the European part of Russia. The selection of a destination was based mostly on staff members' individual preferences. For example, it was necessary to declare if their choice was a place where they would stay with friends or family. Additionally, it was more likely to be within large urban areas with governorate status, and less likely a town of regional status.

As most staff members originated from further East in the Romanov empire, nearly all customs offices employees were to leave for central Russian governorates. Naturally, events at the turn August 1914 confirmed these assumptions. The extant sources indicate that staff members departed for, among others: Petersburg, Moscow, Riga, Kaluga, Yuryev (*today's Tartu*), Bela Cerkev, Priluk, Kamenskoje (*today's Kamianske*), and Yaroslavl. [ГАРФ. Ф. 1459. Оп. 1. Д. 86; Ф. 1777. Оп. 1. Д. 74, 83, 94, 99, 107; ДАОО.

Ф. 201. Оп. 2. Д. 61. Л. 299–299 об., 357]. However, there were some unusual exceptions. One example includes the peculiar case of the Director of CSC Podgrabow, Ignacy Kloczkovski. The head of this office had his roots in the Grodno Governorate and was a son of a priest of the Russian Orthodox Church. On the last day of July of 1914, I. Kloczkovski was transported to Bielsko in the Grodno Governorate. He remained in his hometown until at least the end of March 1915 [ДАОО. Ф. 201. Оп. 2. Д. 61. Л. 54].

It seemed obvious that any reconstruction of the customs offices in exile would take days or weeks. Moreover, the fact that they would not be entirely operating as usual was definitely taken into account. Staff members were given an appropriate amount of time for their families, as well as themselves, to reach their destinations safely.

The office staff and their families had received financial assistance to help them during the travel inland, as per the telegram of the DDTMF Director from 31 July [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 31–33, 36]. This fact alone allowed the administration structures to enjoy more convenient circumstances than the residents who were also affected by the military conflict and were forced to leave abruptly to save their lives and assets.

The only customs institutions which functioned without interruption in the Kingdom of Poland after the breakout of war were the WCD inspector and their chancellery, as well as CH Warsaw and the VCD inspector in Vilnius. On the opposite side of the spectrum was the chancellery of the SWCD. As the chancellery's seat was neighbouring the Austro-Hungarian border in Radyviliv, the inspector was transported to Berdiansk in the Taurida Governorate [ДАХО. Ф. 378. Оп. 1. Д. 34. Л. 3].

While coordinating the design phase of evacuation planning, the DDTMF along with the representative of the general administration and military districts' headquarters devised new locations for each of the customs offices in case of a potential military conflict. Considering the possibility of war against either Austria-Hungary or the German Empire, it was decided to place the offices in areas furthest from the borders with any of the aforementioned powers. Relatively large urban areas were chosen. These assumptions were executed, and the offices were relocated³. It is

³ Petersburg (Petrograd) – CH Aleksandrow, CH Radziejow, CH Herby, CH Sosnowiec, CH Wierzbolow, CH Wladyslawow, CH Raczki, CH Filipow, CSC Bakalarzewo, CSC Wysztyniec, CSC Kibarty, CSC Kirkily, CSC Rakowek, CSC Romaniszki, CSC Upidamiszki, CH Piotrkow, CP Czerwony Krzyz, CP Sluzewo; Moscow – CH Nieszawa, CH Mlawa, CH Dobrzyn, CH Lubicz, CH Osiek, CZ Zielun, CSC Chorzewek, CSC Karw, CSC Janowo, CP Peplowek, CP Mlawa and CP Gnojno; Taganrog – CH Szczypiorno, CH Granica, CH Modrzejow, CH Podleze, CSC Gniazdow, CSC Czeladz, CSC Niezdara, CP Herby, CP Bobrowniki and CP Zychcice; Odessa – CH Wieruszow, CH Wilczyn, CH Gola, CH Pyzdry, CH Praszka, CSC Gostynczyk, CSC Zakrzewo and CP Polajewek; Yaroslavl – CH Grajowo, CH Vincenta, CSC Bogusze, CSC Tworki, CSC Czarnowek, CSC Dabrowa, CP Pely and CP Reszki; Voronezh – CH Sandomierz, CH Zawichost, CH Baran, CH Igolomia, CH Korczyn, CH Michalowice, CSC Niesulowice, CSC Opatowiec, CSC Rataje, CSC Sieroslawice and CSC Szyce; Pskov – CH Slupca; Penza Governorate – CH Tomaszow, CH Dolhobyczow, CSC Krzeszow, CSC Lazek Zaklikowski, CSC Podbelzec and CSC Podmajdan; and finally Nizhny Novgorod oblast – CSC Grodzisk [ГАРФ. Ф. Р-1041. Оп. 1. Д. 852; Д. 854; Справочник об эвакуированных; Список адресов, с. 104–110].

important to make note that in August 1915 the inspector of the WCD along with their chancellery were moved from the capital of the Warsaw General-Governorate to Odessa [Wiedeński Kuryer Polski, s. 4].

From the moment the evacuation of the customs offices began, their personnel structures dismantled. Some of the lower-ranking chancellery employees, casual wage stenographers and customs attendants, largely drawn from the class of peasant proprietors, became subject of the general mobilisation or enlisted voluntarily due to their reservist status [ГАРФ. Ф. 1263. Оп. 1. Д. 59; Ф. 1459. Оп. 1. Д. 108. Л. 8; Ф. Р-1041. Оп. 1. Д. 852; Д. 854. Л. 11–13 о6., 20; LVVA. Stock 4935. List 3. Dos. 28. P. 9; Dos. 31. P. 11; Dos. 57. P. 9]. It is important to highlight that chancellery employees were temporarily excused from military service in order to strengthen the office services in auxiliary units embedded on the front or directly involved in military operations. Similarly, a CH Aleksandrow employee, Basil Borozdin, began his duties in the Osowiec Fortress Commissariat Command on 31 July 1914. The Assistant Customs Warehouse Supervisor of CH Sosnowiec, Leonard Sojda, was appointed at a warrant officer rank in the 117th Yaroslavl Infantry team [ГАРФ. Ф. 1263. Оп. 1. Д. 14. Л. 31 о6. –33; Ф. 1777. Оп. 1. Д. 112. Л. 3–4]⁴. Customs attendants conscripted on 31 July and 1 August were excused from their regular posts [ГАРФ. Ф. 1263. Оп. 1. Д. 59; Ф. 1459. Оп. 1. Д. 12. Л. 41; Д. 28. Л. 44; Д. 203. Л. 13; Д. 291; Ф. 1777. Оп. 1. Д. 5].

However, among customs attendants there were a few who were not serving within inland Russia. After the evacuation on 31 July or 1 August, they did not report for duty on 14 November 1914. Therefore, they were discharged [ГАРФ. Ф. 1459. Оп. 1. Д. 14. Л. 4; Д. 15. Л. 10; Д. 16. Л. 15; Д. 17. Л. 6]⁵.

The evacuation of offices was equivalent to their suspension. As per the procedures, the assets to be transported from the Kingdom of Poland were (besides the office personnel) the letters and documentation pertaining to unsettled cases; documents concerning state treasury such as ongoing investigation files regarding breaches of customs law (smuggling, illegal crossing); proprietary documents (acquiring properties for customs departments, lease agreements for any properties used by the customs department); accounting files (account books, correspondence); employee personnel files; secret correspondence [LVIA. Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 1. P. 1–1 rev. side]. The analysis of the remaining records of the customs offices from the Kingdom of Poland which are kept in Russia's state archives (Moscow, Petersburg), in Lithuania (Vilnius), and in Ukraine (Odessa) seem to confirm the DDTMF guidelines were followed at the turn of August 1914, in terms of protecting the documentation for the then ongoing cases and activities [РГИА. Ф. 128. Оп. 1. Д. 1105; Ф. 133. Оп. 1. Д. 208; ГАРФ.

⁴ In July, 1915, B. Borozdin ended up in the chancellery of the Commissariat Command of the 5th Military Corps.

⁵ Such occurrences can be observed e. g. in the CH Herby.

Ф. 1263. Оп. 1. Д. 64; Ф. 1459. Оп. 1. Д. 241; Ф. 1777. Оп. 1. Д. 38; ДАОО. Ф. 222. Оп. 1. 4; LVIA, Stock 1051. List 1. Dos. 5].

The analysis of the extant sources seems to indicate that the DDTMF had adopted a well-thought-out strategy regarding the customs offices in the Kingdom of Poland and their evacuation. It was known that it would have been futile to retain full staffing in the temporary locations of the customs offices. The lower-ranking offices were to close temporarily. These decisions affected the customs houses of the 2nd class, customs sub-chambers, and customs posts. The documentation subject to evacuation was deposited in the archives of the WCD, VCD and SWCD [ГАРФ. Ф. Р-1041. Оп. 1. Д. 852; Д. 854]. In stark contrast, the opposite approach was taken with regards to customs houses of the 1st cl. (four categories) as well as customs districts' inspectorates. Considering the competence scope of these offices, it was decided to uphold their service in a reduced capacity. These institutions, located unfavourably under the circumstances, had limited staffing. Retaining even the bare minimum of employees (the customs house director, deputy director and a handful of clerks) was indispensable for maintaining contact with the DDTMF and other state administration institutions.

The evacuation of the customs offices from the Kingdom of Poland was accomplished without issue. It offers an indication of the highest evacuation preparedness level of the guidelines in place and their subsequent execution. As a result, it proved the only special administration structure that was not severely affected by the evacuation. The main customs offices (chancelleries of the district customs inspectors, customs house of 1st cl.) quickly returned to service, naturally in a reduced capacity, within inland Russia. These aforementioned offices were in service until the close of 1918, when they were either transformed into customs offices under the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) or terminated. Additionally, from the beginning of August 1914, the transported customs office employees served as auxiliary support in the customs administration organisations located across the Russian Empire, which also did not suspend their regular activity throughout the war.

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