Introduction

Beginnings: Questions, Inspirations, Objectives

On the outer wall of my family home in Krzyż – the German town of Kreuz (Ostbahn) before 1945 – it is possible to discern a Cyrillic inscription scraped onto one of the red bricks: "Zubov." It was only when I became interested in the history of the town that I realized that this graffiti was probably carved by a Red Army soldier in the winter of 1945, when the Soviets "liberated" Kreuz on the way to their victorious advance on Berlin. I do not know who Zubov was; I have no way of finding out whether he met the previous owners of my home. But it was this inscription that kept returning to my mind as I wrote this book, a work devoted in most part to the memory of the Others who vanished from their (now our) homes: Germans from the Polish "Recovered Territories" [pl. *Ziemie Odzyskane*], and Poles and Jews from Western Ukraine.

This book, however, was initially supposed to be about something completely different. The research that I embarked on in 2007 was focused on collective memory in Ukrainian Galicia, a region I already knew, having spent time studying at the University of Lviv. I chose to look at the town of Zhovkva, situated between Lviv and the Polish border. I had been there for the first time in 2000. A further visit – a study trip with students from Lviv – gave me the idea that a town with such a complicated history would be interesting to study in terms of its "ordinary" inhabitants and their relationship with the past. After I started my doctoral studies, Zhovkva became the standout candidate for a case study. A multi-ethnic and multi-confessional locality before the Second World War, with Jewish, Polish and Ukrainian inhabitants, after 1945 it became a town of uprooted people. At the same time, because of the relatively good state of repair of the town's material heritage, history here was tangible and close up; thus, the question of how present-day inhabitants relate to the past almost asked itself. I carried out my first pilot interviews, whilst still not having a coherent research concept, in Zhovkva in 2008.

It was at this time that I started working with the Oral History project at the Warsaw-based KARTA Centre, the most important non-university research institute in Poland dealing with the contemporary history of the country and of the broader East-Central European region, with a focus on individual people.[1]

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1 http://karta.org.pl/, last accessed 13.12.2018.

The first project I carried out independently was a documentation of testimonies in my hometown, Krzyż; a town that was brought under Polish administration after 1945, where it is still possible to find traces of its German past. In the course of three years that I spent collecting personal biographies of the town's oldest residents,[2] I started to notice that I was comparing Krzyż and Zhovkva in my thoughts with increasing frequency; that the testimonies from the two places had remarkable parallels; and that I was asking about very similar things. Thus, seemingly by accident, the concept of a comparative analysis between two post-migratory towns was born.[3]

Although the pre-war histories and starting points for post-war transformations in the two towns were different, the existence of a *tertium comparationis* was indisputable: the contemporary faces of both towns are the products of wartime and post-war mass expulsions and other forms of mass population transfer. Both towns lost most of their residents as a result of the Second World War; both towns were repopulated by various, sometimes conflicting, groups of settlers; both towns emerged from the war in a different country with altered state borders; and finally, both towns experienced post-war life in non-democratic political systems that imposed a new, ethnically monolithic collective identity – Polish and Ukrainian, respectively. The testimonies of residents from Krzyż and Zhovkva, superficially so different, rapidly began to come together in a fascinating mosaic of similar experiences and similar memories.

The testimonies also strengthened my conviction that, despite the passing of time, the consequences of mass population transfer are still to be felt in Poland and other European countries. Resettled people not only lose the physical, material foundations of their existence; they are also threatened by a loss of identity, their functioning in society changes, and society itself changes significantly when it is uprooted and transported. Both Poland and Ukraine in the post-war era were countries where a substantial part of the population were faced with the necessity of rebuilding their lives from scratch, in a new place, and in a new political, cultural and material reality. Their situation was not made any easier by the

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2 Cf. https://audiohistoria.pl/zbiory/16-krzyz-kreuz-w-xx-wieku-polska-i-niemiecka-pamiec-p, last accessed 13.12.2018.

3 Post-migratory communities are those that, as a result of mass population transfer (in the Polish and Ukrainian contexts) were rebuilt and reconstituted by settlers and migrants, with a minor role played by the (remaining) autochthonous population, see: Wojciech Łukowski, *Społeczne tworzenie ojczyzn. Studium tożsamości mieszkańców Mazur* (Warszawa: Scholar, 2002); Zdzisław Mach, *Niechciane miasta. Migracja i tożsamość społeczna* (Kraków: Universitas, 1998).

lingering traumas of war or the oppressive political system, which was focused on building a "brave new world" rather than mourning the loss of the old. The experiences of resettled persons appear fundamental to an understanding of how history is interpreted in both countries, how national identity is constructed, how communities position themselves in relation to the past, and also their attitudes to neighboring countries. These experiences also influence the structure and strength of social bonds at various levels, from the cohesiveness of local communities, to the building of essential tenets of civic responsibility in modern societies. This influence is not limited to the individuals who were personally resettled; it also, indirectly, concerns successive generations.

On a broader scale, the post-war outcome in the area usually known as Central or East-Central Europe was the result of two major historical events: the Second World War as a total war, and the ethnic cleansings and genocides that began during the Stalinist Terror of the 1930s and continued in different forms until some years after the end of the war. The specific character of this region is poignantly conveyed by the title of Timothy Snyder's book *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*.[4] Enormous bloodshed and two totalitarianisms – these are the reasons behind the demographic, political and economic situation of East-Central Europe in the second half of the twentieth century. Considering questions of identity and collective memory, however, it is vital to add a third factor, one that followed directly from those first two: mass population transfers on an unprecedented scale. Another book title can serve as an apt metaphor for the resonance of this theme: *Der Verlust* [*Loss*], authored by the German journalist Thomas Urban in 2004 in the wake of Polish-German debates concerning the Centre Against Expulsions.[5] The book's introduction features a one-and-a-half page summary of all of the European nationalities that were subjected to

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4   Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

5   Thomas Urban, *Der Verlust. Die Vertreibung der Deutschen und Polen im 20. Jahrhundert* (München: C.H. Beck Verlag, 2004). The Centre Against Expulsions (German, *Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen*) was an initiative of the German Union of Expellees, a political organization that brings together individuals who were deported from the formerly German territories that were transferred to Poland and Czechoslovakia, as well as their descendants. The Centre was supposed to commemorate the expulsions of Germans and other ethnic groups during and after the Second World War. In Poland, the idea of the planned documentation center caused controversy, because of fears that it could relativize German responsibility for war crimes and lead to claims of equality between German victims and other victims of resettlement. The Centre has still not been built.

deportation, flight or other forms of forced migration in the years 1939–1956; the list includes all of the ethnicities that lived in the interwar Polish state. After 1945, both Poland and Ukraine became republics with completely new borders. Poland was "shifted" westwards, losing the eastern provinces known informally as *Kresy Wschodnie* [Eastern Borderlands],[6] gaining territories to the north and west that had previously been part of Germany.[7] The Germans in these areas either escaped or were deported. A similar plight met the Poles who had lived in the former eastern provinces, which became part of the Soviet Union; they departed under various degrees of duress during a series of "repatriation" waves.[8] Soviet Ukraine was expanded by three southeastern Voivodeships of interwar Poland; as Poles left these territories, Ukrainians and Russians from eastern Ukraine and other Soviet Republics arrived in Galicia, as did ethnic minority Ukrainians deported from the south-western provinces of the new Polish state.[9]

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6   The concept of Eastern Borderlands has many different connotations in Polish, but it is most commonly used as a neutral term to denote the pre-war provinces that Poland lost as a result of the war and the post-war settlement. On the memory of the Eastern Borderlands and the use of the term, see: Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, *Transmisja pamięci. Działacze "sfery pamięci" i przekaz o Kresach Wschodnich we współczesnej Polsce* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2017). On the ideological disputes over the idea of *Kresy*, see: Tomasz Zarycki, *Ideologies of Eastness in Central and Eastern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

7   On the post-war border shifts and mass population transfers in Poland and Ukraine, see: Pertti Ahonen, Gustavo Corni, Jan Kochanowski, Reiner Schulze, Tamar Stark and Barbara Stelzl-Marx, *People on the Move. Forced Population Movements in Europe in the Second World War and its Aftermath* (Oxford-New York: Berg Publishers, 2008); Grzegorz Hryciuk, Małgorzata Ruchniewicz, Bożena Szaynok and Andrzej Żbikowski, *Wysiedlenia, wypędzenia i ucieczki 1930–1959. Atlas ziem Polski* (Warszawa: Demart, 2008).

8   The resettlement of Poles from the former eastern provinces, and of Germans from the post-war western and northern regions of Poland, have been discussed in a range of studies, e.g. the documentary collections: Stanisław Ciesielski, ed., *Przesiedlenie ludności polskiej z Kresów Wschodnich do Polski: 1944–1947* (Warszawa: Neriton, 1999); Włodzimierz Borodziej and Hans Lemberg, *Niemcy w Polsce 1945–1950. Wybór dokumentów*, Vol. 1 (Warszawa: Neriton, 2000). The resettlement of the Polish Ukrainians in 1944–47 is discussed in: Orest Subtelny, "Expulsion, Resettlement, Civil Strife: The Fate of Poland's Ukrainians, 1944–1947," in: *Redrawing Nations. Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948*, ed. Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), pp. 155–172.

9   On post-war migration to Galicia, see: Tarik Cyril Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv. A Borderland City between Stalinists, Nazis, and Nationalists* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015).

Thus, East-Central Europe of the second half of the twentieth century was not only the Europe of murdered bodies, but also of resettled persons. It was a Europe of lost friends and family, but also of lost homes and homelands. At its core, this book is about this fundamental loss and its consequences.

However, this book is not a history of resettlement and deportation; it is about the ways in which population transfer was experienced by concrete individuals, how they remember those ordeals today, and how the fact of resettlement influences successive generations of residents in contemporary Zhovkva and Krzyż. It is therefore a study of personal experience, local memory, and identity, not a reconstruction of history on the micro scale.[10] Maurice Halbwachs long ago proposed the notion that collective (social) memory is distinct from history; for him, history was an objective picture of what happened, whereas memory was a source of tradition that could vary as long as different social groups existed. Elsewhere, Halbwachs opposed "living history," or in other words collective (social) memory, to academic history.[11] Polish historian Robert Traba, an expert in the culture of the German-Polish borderlands, argues that the essential difference between history and memory lies in the role the latter plays in group identity. As he puts it: "Cultural memory, that is, the recollections that contribute to the creation of meaning and identity, always carry with them the danger of being forgotten, erased, or of concealing that which would cast doubt on individual and collective identity: most often, guilt."[12] Another historian, Jay Winter, wrote, "History is memory seen through and criticized with the aid of documents […]. Memory is history seen through affect."[13] Thus, memory belongs to a completely different order to history; memory is non-normative and its objectives are distinct to those of history, as are the expectations placed on it. Memory is that

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10 At the same time, I am indebted to many studies that do employ a microhistorical approach, especially in the context of the Polish-German and Polish-Ukrainian borderlands, e.g.: Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians, 1919–1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Andrzej Sakson and Robert Traba, *Przeszłość zapamiętana. Narracje z pogranicza: materiały pomocnicze do analizy polsko-niemieckich stosunków narodowościowych na przykładzie warmińskiej wsi Purda Wielka* (Olsztyn: Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Kulturowa "Borussia," 2007).

11 Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

12 Robert Traba, *Historia – przestrzeń dialogu* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2006), p. 34.

13 Jay Winter, "The Performance of the Past: Memory, History, Identity," in: *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, ed. Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), p. 12.

which transforms history into individual experience; or in other words, it turns the past into a material from which identities are constructed.[14] On the other hand, the pursuit of history is itself an act of remembrance.[15] A hard opposition between history and memory is ultimately useless: perhaps it is better to understand both processes as different modes of remembering in culture. The past is not something given; rather, it must always be constantly reconstructed and represented.[16] "Professional" history written by academics is undoubtedly distinct from the memory of "ordinary" individuals, but they also remain in a dynamic relationship of interdependence as cultural methods of facing the past. A consequence of accepting the equal status of history and memory is the unconditional rejection of a research methodology that aims to show the chasm between what people remember and what "really happened." Memory is a research object in and of itself.

What, then, did I wish to find out from the residents of Krzyż and Zhovkva? At the most fundamental level: what they remembered, what they had forgotten or suppressed, and why. More specific questions were divided into three groups. The first category concerned the resettlement and its direct and indirect consequences. I was interested in how respondents interpreted questions of guilt, punishment and responsibility, as well as their personal evaluations of the benefits and losses of resettlement. I considered it important to understand the dynamics of how these processes took root in different generations: whether a new, internally cohesive community was successfully created which identified with the new post-war place; and also the extent to which the pre-war history of the town was recognized by residents as "their own." I tried to interpret the extent to which the older generation still felt attached to their former places of residence, and whether this question had any significance at all for young people. The second group of questions concerned the memory of the previous residents of the town: the vanished "Others." Was this a troublesome memory; was it screened off, or associated with a specific set of problems? Did it in any way affect attitudes towards present-day Poles, Jews and Germans? The third group of questions revolved around the transmission of memory. Did accounts

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14 Cf. David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

15 Cf. Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

16 Cf. Astrid Erll, "Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction," in: *Cultural Memory Studies. An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Niinning (Berlin–New York: De Gruyter, 2008), pp. 1–18.

of the past play a role in family life? If so, in what ways did the younger generations modify the contents of the experiences of the older generation? If not, why was there no intergenerational transmission of memory? How large was the influence of other factors that affect collective memory, such as official memory, neighbors' accounts, or group representations? These three groups of questions were posed with the contextual background in mind: i.e. local policies of commemoration and identity construction in both Krzyż and Zhovkva. I was interested in how official commemorative policy operated in both towns, whether it approached the pre-war cultural heritage of the towns, and what the relationship was between private and official memory.

Theories: Memory, Politics and Forgetting

But what exactly do I mean when I declare that I am studying memory? Theoretical treatments are so abundant, sophisticated and diverse that it is impossible to provide a comprehensive summary of memory studies, a discipline that emerged relatively recently.[17] Nonetheless, this book employs terms that have specific histories and conventions of usage, so it is important for the sake of clarity that the main ones are explained. The theoretical axis around which my analysis spins is the relationship between individual and collective memory. Collective memory is defined as the sum of cultural narratives about the past, including both knowledge about and judgment of history, that are potentially available to the average citizen (not just the intellectual elites). In my understanding it forms a kind of cultural "background" that includes mediated (i.e. not personal, first-hand) experience, which is essential to the construction and consolidation of group identity.

   Maurice Halbwachs, one of the "founding fathers" of the discipline, argued that all individual memory is immersed in, and formed under the influence of, "social frames" of memory. Individual memory functions in particular (sometimes multiple) networks of referentiality; this is why we cannot separate it from the collective dimension or analyze it without situating it in the context of remembering groups. Social frames of memory carry out a very important

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17 This does not mean that no such attempts have been made on the basis of particular studies, see: e.g. Jeffrey Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (1998), pp. 105–140; and on Polish scholarship on memory, see: Kornelia Kończal and Joanna Wawrzyniak, "Provincializing memory studies: Polish approaches in the past and present," *Memory Studies*, first published 25.01.2017, https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698016688238, last accessed 15.02.2019.

function, in that they create a sense of continuity within a community. For Halbwachs, it is nearly impossible to cleanse individual memory of the influence of social framing and thereby to access a pure, undistorted experience.[18] My research repeatedly confirms this observation: biographical memory is never based solely on individual experience, because each person uses models provided by culture to interpret his or her own experience. There is also an influence in the other direction: individual experiences, if they concern a significant portion of members of a community or are important enough to constitute part of its identity, over time become part of the collective memory. Needless to say, as in every aspect of collective identity, it is the elites who most easily make the cultural "background" their own, i.e. in Central European conditions – the intelligentsia.[19] Nonetheless it remains an important fact that, although the elites have a closer relationship with the dominant narratives of collective memory, they never gain exclusive access to it.

Influential scholars in the German humanities also discuss the internal tension between collective and individual memory. Jan Assmann, who coined the term "cultural memory," defines it as follows: "Cultural memory refers to one of the exterior dimensions of human memory […] the contents of this memory, the ways in which they are organized, and the length of time they last are for the most part not a matter of internal storage or control but of the external conditions imposed by society and cultural contexts."[20] Assmann distinguishes four areas of memory: mimetic memory (modes of action, which we learn through repetition); memory of things (objects, material culture); communicative memory (language and communication); and cultural memory (transmission of meanings). Communicative memory – that is, memories of the recent past as preserved by the closest generations – plays a special role in the interactions between individual and collective remembrance. Like Halbwachs, Assmann argues that there are no pure forms of memory: every individual recollection is a reconstruction of the past immersed in a social and cultural context.

Both Assmann and other scholars who have expanded on his theories make it clear that the two types of collective memory – communicative and cultural – can only be distinguished at the level of theory. As Harald Welzer writes, in

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18 Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*.

19 For a definition of the intelligentsia, see: Maciej Janowski, *Birth of the Intelligentsia 1750–1831*, Vol. 1 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2014), especially Jerzy Jedlicki, "Introduction" in this volume.

20 Jan Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance and Political Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 5.

the social practices of individuals and groups, these two forms of memory are tightly interwoven.[21] The narratives of communicative memory can enter cultural memory through concrete practices of cultural transmission; they can be preserved, or otherwise, they are lost together with the memories of individuals. Communicative memory can also influence the content of cultural memory; for example, it can remove certain elements. Autobiographical memory is formed as a result of a constant interaction between people's internal autonomy as individuals and external influences of which they are often unaware. What distinguishes the autobiographical memory of a given individual from the memories of everyone else is precisely the history of that individual's communication with others.

Another German scholar, Astrid Erll, argues that "cultural memory" can serve as an "umbrella term" that covers various related meanings employed by researchers in different disciplines, such as: "social memory" (a point of departure for studies in the social sciences), "material memory" or "communicative memory" (objects of interest in studies of literature and media) and "mental" or "cognitive memory" (the field of research in psychology and cognitive science).[22] Erll points out that the concept of "collective" or "cultural memory" is ultimately a figurative metaphor, whereby the mental act of remembering (a cognitive process that takes place in individual minds) is metaphorically transferred to the realm of culture.

Collective memory can also be understood as a communicative and ritualistic framework that gives biographical memory a collective dimension.[23] It thus supplies "keys" through which individual experiences can be interpreted, creating a symbolic and cultural medium for the group in which one functions. This is precisely why in many of the testimonies analyzed here, the boundary between what someone personally experienced and what he or she only heard from others is often blurred. Asymmetry between biographical and collective memory – which arises when significant personal experiences do not become absorbed into collective memory – can lead to serious disturbances of identity, as well as marginalization and exclusion. Autobiographical memory, based on personal experience, is also sometimes described as "primary" memory, in

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21 See Harald Welzer, "Communicative Memory", in: *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook,* ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2008), pp. 285–300.

22 Erll, "Cultural Memory Studies."

23 Kaja Kaźmierska, *Biography and Memory. The Generational Experience of the Shoah Survivors* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2012), p. 57.

contradistinction to the "secondary memory" of derivative "knowledge about" events,[24] as well as "postmemory," i.e. memory passed down to successive generations.[25]

Whilst the concept of collective memory is methodologically attractive, it does have its critics. One of the most interesting alternatives to the theory of collective memory is provided by Jay Winter, who argues: "If the term 'collective memory' has any meaning at all, it is the process through which different collectives, from groups of two to groups in their thousands, engage in acts of remembrance together."[26] For Winter there is no such thing as the memory of a state or nation; at most, there are memories held by people who are connected to the other people by virtue of belonging to the same group. If there are no remembering individuals – for example if they lose interest in a particular aspect of history, pass away, or physically relocate – the remembering collective also vanishes. This is, according to Winter, what Halbwachs had in mind when he wrote about memory disappearing when the social frames of memory disappear. Rather than "collective memory," therefore, Winter proposes that we think in terms of "collective remembrance." The essential questions for such an approach concern the intentions of individuals who are publicly active in spheres related to the past, i.e. those involved in the "work of memory." Collective memory becomes only a metaphorical term, which in reality denotes a "set of practices of collective remembrance." What matters, then, is not what people think about the past, but how they act. Winter's critique of the term "collective memory" allows us to consider memory as a social phenomenon that is changing, procedural, constantly renegotiated, and always situated in the here and now.

An important question that follows from Winter's critique is the distinction between collective and official memory. By official memory I mean the vision of the past constructed and transmitted by authorities through the available means of symbolic enforcement: education (curriculums and textbooks), various forms of public commemoration (museums, a monopoly on shaping symbolic space, the organization of holidays and anniversaries, etc.), and the media. The form of official memory that most frequently features in this study is the memory propagated by the state; nonetheless, it is worth noting that there are

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24 Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (Chicago: Cornell University Press, 1998).

25 Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames. Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

26 Winter, *Remembering War*, p. 4.

also official memories whose carriers are groups other than (smaller than) the state. In any situation where a social group creates a structure of power, they may also advance an official memory. A good example is the official memory of tightly knit ethnic minority groups, which have their own means of education and information distribution, such as the Polish minority in Ukraine and the Ukrainian minority in Poland. Official memory maintains various relationships of interdependence with biographical and collective memory. In a democratic society, collective memory is a foundation for official memory, whilst official memory can convey aspects of collective memory to individual memories. The less democratic a society is, and the more its governance relies on a ruling ideology, the more collective and official memory are out of joint. For example, Polish memory of the resettlement from the pre-war eastern territories was only inscribed into official memory after 1989.[27]

Thus, collective memory is inextricably entwined with group identity: a common memory turns a group into a remembering collective. Lech M. Nijakowski provides a useful description of remembering collectives as

> aggregates of individuals (not necessarily groups) that are connected by a specific biographical experience, not always of a traumatic nature, as well as their descendants who inherit family frames of memory. Remembering collectives are made distinct from each other not just by the different "objective" histories of their members […], but also through the individual perspectives of their members […] and the emotions that are associated with those perspectives.[28]

Membership of a remembering collective does not have to be based on a familial transmission of memories that are constitutive for a given group; it can also be gained by means other than inheritance. Group memory does not only form a specific sensitivity to historical events that comprise that particular collective identity; it can also influence how people evaluate other elements of social memory. Group memory can define both large collectives (e.g. Red Army veterans in Ukraine) and small, localized groups (e.g. particular groups of settlers in Krzyż and Zhovkva). It can be integrated into collective and official memory, as has happened, for example, with the memory of settlers from the former Eastern Borderlands in Poland, or members of the group can undertake efforts to make it so. Particular remembering collectives in a given community can be in conflict

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27 See: Głowacka-Grajper, *Transmisja pamięci.*

28 Lech M. Nijakowski, *Domeny symboliczne. Konflikty narodowe i etniczne w wymiarze symbolicznym* (Warszawa: Scholar, 2006), pp. 32–33.

with each other; but in this case, it is less likely that their narratives will enter collective and official memory.

Group memory is a particularly fertile foundation on which social practices of remembrance can develop; it is therefore the point at which memory understood as a potential repository of culture transforms into actual activity – a "historical remembrance" in Winter's terms.[29] Nonetheless, if memory is not turned into action, this does not mean that it does not exist; the reasons behind such passivity (or invisibility) can be various, from weak internalization of the narratives of collective memory to limitations resulting from diverse factors. Collective memory is often too weakly connected to personal experience to mobilize people into getting involved in practices of remembrance; autobiographical memory is too particular for such an outcome. This is precisely why remembering collectives are the most influential actors on this stage.

Another concept that is as important as memory for the purposes of this book is forgetting. The centrality of forgetting for collective identity was captured by Ernest Renan at the end of the nineteenth century, who argued that a nation is a collective that remembers together, and even more importantly, forgets in unison.[30] Forgetting – also referred to as non-memory or selective remembering – is the second face of memory. Aleida Assmann states that memory and forgetting are inseparable parts of the same whole, together forming cultural memory.[31] Paul Ricœur, who adapts the theories of Sigmund Freud, transfers psychoanalytical concepts from the individual to the collective, such as: repression; remembering, repeating and working through; excess of memory; and work of memory.[32] In Ricœur's understanding, societies struggle with similar problems to individuals: driven by anxieties about the integrity of their identities, they forget about certain elements of their past, only to later work through them arduously and to struggle with the returning effects of memories banished to the unconscious. The philosopher introduces a key distinction between active and passive forgetting: active forgetting is a conscious and purposeful action, intended to erase a feature of memory in order to preserve the symbolic and material good of the group; passive forgetting, on the other hand, is the

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29 Winter, *Remembering War*, p. 9.

30 Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?," in: *Nation and Narration,* ed. Homi Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 8–22.

31 Aleida Assmann, "Canon and Archive," in: *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook,* ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2008), pp. 97–108.

32 Paul Ricœur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

usually unconscious avoidance of memories sensed to be problematic, difficult, or dangerous.

References to Ricœur's ideas can be found in a broad range of empirical and theoretical studies. For a study based on analysis of personal interviews, an important consideration noted by Kaja Kaźmierska with reference to Fritz Schütze is that at the level of oral narration, "fading out of awareness" acts as the equivalent of passive forgetting.[33] Marek Ziółkowski writes about the strong relationship of identity not only with forgetting, but also with what he calls "painful memory" (in relation e.g. to political and inter-ethnic conflicts). He argues that events that become part of collective non-memory are initially diminished and banished to the subconscious (passive forgetting), before they disappear from public discourse and cease to be a basis for collective action (active forgetting).[34] Analyzing the memory of the Holocaust, Michael Bernard-Donals divides memory into Aristotelian *anamnesis* – recollection of persistently returning narratives that are uncomfortable or previously repressed – and *mneme*: rational, deliberately constructed stories about the past, or cultural memory.[35] *Anamnesis* constantly interferes with *mneme*, trying to impose elements that have been erased from cultural memory. According to Bernard-Donals, these two dimensions of memory can be interpreted both in individuals (in which case *anamnesis* refers to difficult memories for the person) and in entire societies (in which case the repressed memories are those that have been erased from *mneme* by the collective as a whole). He argues that the Holocaust is a classic event that pertains to *anamnesis*.

When analyzing collective forgetting, it is important to consider why and how memory is suppressed. A community forgets certain facts, either actively or passively, in order to protect its group identity and moral integrity. That which is uncomfortable and unsafe, which might lead to some members of the collective ceasing to positively identify with the group, is erased. A second reason is more closely connected to the mechanisms by which individual and collective memory function. The loss of memory is a result of the disappearance of the

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33 Kaźmierska, *Biography and Memory*. Kaźmierska discusses the notion of "fading out" at greater depth in her earlier text: Kaja Kaźmierska, "Wywiad narracyjny – technika i pojęcie analityczne," in: *Biografia a tożsamość narodowa*, ed. Marek Czyżewski, Andrzej Piotrowski and Alicja Rokuszewska-Pawełek (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1996), pp. 35–45.

34 Cf. Marek Ziółkowski, "Pamięć i zapominanie: trupy w szafie polskiej zbiorowej pamięci," *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, Vol. 3/4 (2001), pp. 3–22.

35 Michael F. Bernard-Donals, *Forgetful Memory: Representation and Remembrance in the Wake of the Holocaust* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009).

social frames of memory; when they are removed, memory is also lost, first at the collective level, and then at the individual. Halbwachs argued that if certain memories fail to resurface, it is not because they are too old and gradually faded, but because they were previously part of a conceptual system that no longer exists.[36] Jan Assmann makes a similar argument: when communication is interrupted or frames of memory disappear, forgetting ensues.[37] The ideas voiced by both theorists are crucial for a study such as this one, which has been conducted in places where the previously existing frames of memory have completely vanished in the course of a single generation, or at least have been very substantially modified.

Another essential question in this context is the extent to which the social process of forgetting is reversible. As several scholars have shown, biographical memory can be altered under the influence of collective memory: individuals not only forget certain facts from their own lives, but also "re-remember" those that appeared forgotten forever.[38] Can the same be said of collective memory? It appears that forgetting is a matter of a degree, and is more or less irrevocable. Aleida Assmann, using the same terms as Ricœur but giving them a completely different meaning, draws a distinction between active and passive forgetting:[39] active forgetting removes an event from memory permanently and is irreversible; passive forgetting, on the other hand, happens through lack of attention rather than active choice, and can therefore be undone. In the scheme proposed by Assmann, collective forgetting (both active and passive) are complemented by active and passive remembering. Within a society, specific institutions – schools, civil offices and museums – are involved in active remembering. Active remembering constructs a canon of memory, whereas passive remembering happens in the realm of archival memory. Assmann illustrates this co-dependence by means of the suggestive metaphor of a museum, which has a display and storage. The display is accessible at any time, and is similar to active remembering. The storage is the archival memory, which is more difficult to access, but which can potentially be moved to the display hall. Processes of passive forgetting are often, in essence, passive remembering. The memory is not lost; it is merely temporarily out of use.

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36   Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*.

37   Assmann, *Cultural Memory*, p. 23.

38   Alicja Rokuszewska-Pawełek, *Chaos i przymus. Trajektorie wojenne Polaków – analiza biograficzna* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2002).

39   Assmann, "Canon and Archive."

In the Field: Methods and Methodology

The method used in the present study essentially comprises three strands: a specific local community, memory seen through the prism of autobiography, and analysis of family memory through different generations. I decided to research social memory in small towns because I believe that the questions at the heart of this project are better answered from a lesser distance, rather than from a macro perspective; moreover, small-scale research facilitates deeper analysis. Of course, the findings of this study cannot be extrapolated to the greater whole of Polish and Ukrainian societies. Nonetheless, they do give an indirect perspective on the bigger picture by means of the typicality of the towns under consideration. Autobiography is a key word for this project because it is precisely through personal narratives that I examine how social worlds are reflected in the accounts of my interviewees.[40] Especially in the case of older respondents, it would be impossible to understand their views and memories without a holistic consideration of their lives. As Norman Denzin argues in his essay reinterpreting the autobiographical method in sociology, "human behavior must be studied and understood from the perspective of the people under consideration."[41] If subjectivity is thus taken seriously, the categories of truth and falsehood become inadequate. The concepts of authenticity and inauthenticity, or "emotional authenticity" as the well-known oral historian Alessandro Portelli put it, become more appropriate.[42]

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40 My basic inspiration was the biographical method, a classic school in Polish sociology that draws on the work of William Thomas and Florian Znaniecki: their *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1918). Among the more recent sociological studies that employ autobiography as a key concept, the following have particularly inspired me: Barbara Engelking, *Zagłada i pamięć. Doświadczenia Holocaustu i jego konsekwencje opisane na podstawie relacji autobiograficznych* (Warszawa: IFiS PAN, 2001); Małgorzata Melchior, *Zagłada a tożsamość. Polscy Żydzi ocaleni "na aryjskich papierach." Analiza doświadczenia biograficznego* (Warszawa: IFiS PAN, 2004); Kaja Kaźmierska, *Doświadczenia wojenne Polaków a kształtowanie tożsamości etnicznej. Analiza narracji kresowych* (Warszawa: IFiS PAN, 1999).

41 Norman Denzin, "Reinterpretacja metody biograficznej w socjologii: znaczenie a metoda w analizie biograficznej," in: *Metoda biograficzna w socjologii*, ed. Jan Włodarek and Marek Ziółkowski (Warszawa–Poznań: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990), p. 53.

42 Alessandro Portelli, "Philosophy and the Fact: Subjectivity and Narrative Form in Autobiography and Oral History," in: *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), pp. 79–90.

Moreover, memory that is constructed socially – through family, neighborhoods, and localities – is always connected to identity (both individual and group), and is thus impossible to study without reference to biography. Even if the respondent's autobiographical narrative does not supply clues as to how one can place their views in a particular interpretive frame, as often happens with younger people, delving into the history of their family – and thus into constructed biography – completely changes the situation. Research into the intergenerational transmission of memory, especially studies of Holocaust survivors,[43] shows the extent to which narratives distributed within the family can be used to understand the mechanisms of memory and forgetting.

At the fieldwork stage of this project, I treated generation as a working category – I was trying to carry out interviews with at least one member of each generation within a family, starting with the oldest. Only when I started analyzing the material did it transpire that a more nuanced division of respondents into different generations was needed. Besides respondents' age, their shared historical experiences were also essential (although they did not necessarily lead to a feeling of community), as was their participation during their childhood and youth in the same memory culture (i.e. the overall mechanisms by which perspectives on the past were formed, including family, society, and official memory).[44] Considering the enormous variety in age among my interviewees

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43 Cf. Karoline Tschuggnall and Harald Welzer, "Rewriting Memories: Family Recollections of the National Socialist Past in Germany," *Culture Psychology*, Vol. 8 (2002), pp. 130–145; Lena Inowlocki, "Grandmothers, Mothers and Daughters. Intergenerational Transmission in Displaced Families in Three Jewish Communities," *International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories*, Vol. 2 (1993), pp. 139–154; Daniel Bertaux and Paul Thompson, eds., *Between Generations. Family Models, Myths and Memories* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005); Gabriele Rosenthal, *The Holocaust in Three Generations. Families of Victims and Perpetrators of the Nazi Regime* (Opladen–Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2010).

44 Historical experience is a key concept in many studies of generation, see: Thomas C. Wolfe, "Past as Present, Myth or History? Discourses of Time and the Great Patriotic War," in: *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, ed. Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner and Claudio Fogu (Durham–London, Duke University Press, 2006), pp. 249–283; Piotr T. Kwiatkowski, "Wprowadzenie. Doświadczenie II wojny światowej w badaniach socjologicznych," in: *Między codziennością a wielką historią. Druga wojna światowa w pamięci zbiorowej społeczeństwa polskiego*, ed. Piotr T. Kwiatkowski, Lech M. Nijakowski, Barbara Szacka and Andrzej Szpociński (Warszawa: Scholar, 2010), pp. 12–54; Howard Schuman and Jacqueline Scott, "Generations and Collective Memories," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (1989), pp. 359–381.

(who were born between 1914 and 1992) I decided to sort them into four generations (codified in respondents' identity ciphers as A, B, C and D, respectively). The first (born before 1936) was the "Witness Generation:" the biographical memory of these individuals covers the entirety, or at least a large part of the Second World War, and often the pre-war period as well. War and its consequences were formative experiences for them. They underwent resettlement and experienced the building of a new post-war society as fully conscious adults or teens.

The second generation (born between 1936 and 1954) was the "Generation of Living Memory:"[45] their memories were formed in the period immediately following the war, above all through direct transmission. These individuals experienced the war and resettlement as children (and often were unable to distinguish what they remembered themselves from what they were told by older people), or were born in the early post-war years and grew up hearing stories about the war and were formed in social conditions directly affected by it.[46] The third, "Thaw Generation" (born 1955–1975) was made up of people born during the Thaw period, with a significant temporal distance from the end of the war; their memories were fully codified, formed by family memories crystallized by a specific time lag, and also especially by the official memory of the Polish People's Republic and the USSR. The last generation, the "Grandchildren's Generation" (born 1976–1992), were respondents whose socialization occurred in part or in whole after the fall of communism. Because of their young age, they have limited access to memories of personal experiences of the war.

Because I was interested above all in the memories of "ordinary" people, i.e. vernacular memory, the decision to carry out personal interviews and (partially participant) observation was an obvious one. As Mirosława Grabowska argues, the interview is the only possible research tool in situations where the questions

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45 Polish sociologist Nina Assorodobraj's idea of "living history" provided the inspiration for this concept, see: Nina Assorodobraj, "'Żywa historia.' Świadomość historyczna: symptomy i propozycje badawcze," *Studia Socjologiczne*, Vol. 2, No. 9 (1963), pp. 4–28.

46 Dorothee Wierling identifies a "war children generation," corresponding rather well with my generation B: she describes them as people whose childhood happened during the war; who grew up without their fathers, who had been conscripted to the army; and who were too young to get involved in any political activities before 1945, see: Dorothee Wierling, "Generations as Narrative Communities. Some Private Sources of Public Memory in Postwar Germany," in: *Histories of the Aftermath. The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller (New York-Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), pp. 102–120.

being posed are complex or can be understood by scholar and subject in different ways.[47] In such situations, this subjective understanding becomes the object of inquiry – and there is no method other than conversation by which to access it. I employed two types of interviews: narrative (autobiographical, oral history) interviews with older individuals (generation A and older interviewees from B) and thematic interviews with elements of biographical questioning with younger respondents (younger people from the generation B, as well as C and D). In sociology, narrative interviews can be both a research method and a method of analysis: for me, they were primarily a tool for gathering empirical material.[48] The essence of this technique is that the narrative reflects personal experiences: the interviewee tells his/her story, creating his/her own narrative, and only after s/he has finished does the interviewer pose additional questions.

   In practice, ideal narrative interviews happen rarely: often, the respondent does not have the narrative competence to construct their story (and this is not necessarily related to their level of education). The researcher's prompts notwithstanding, respondents insist on concrete questions or start to relate their most important life experiences right away (in the case of older interviewees, this is most often the war), omitting their childhood.[49] In such situations, I was compelled to pose questions that were in any case asked in every interview, not least because I was interested in respondents' views on themes and events that were not necessarily directly related to their life experience. Additionally, interviews with older respondents almost always had a therapeutic dimension. Many people were telling their stories about painful experiences for the first time, and all of them found it difficult to articulate their wartime memories. Such conversations necessitated a particular empathy towards the respondents, and sensitivity to

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47 Mirosława Grabowska, "Wywiad w badaniu zjawisk 'trudnych.' Przypadek polskiej religijności," in: *Poza granicami socjologii ankietowej*, ed. Antoni Sułek, Kazimierz Nowak and Anna Wyka (Warszawa: UW, IS, PTS, 1989), pp. 141–166.

48 Cf. Kaźmierska, "Wywiad narracyjny."

49 This type of autobiographical narrative is observed fairly frequently among respondents who were born before the war, see: Ewa Nowicka, "Wojna jako element opowieści biograficznej greckich repatriantów z Polski," in: *Pamięć zbiorowa jako czynnik integracji i źródło konfliktów*, ed. Andrzej Szpociński (Warszawa: Scholar, 2009), pp. 73–124. On the problems involved in soliciting a "good" autobiographical narrative, see: Gabriele Rosenthal, "Rekonstrukcja historii życia. Wybrane zasady generowania opowieści w wywiadach biograficzno-narracyjnych," in: *Metoda biograficzna w socjologii,* ed. Jan Włodarek and Marek Ziółkowski (Warszawa–Poznań: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990), pp. 97–112.

their needs.[50] Interviews with younger people were more rigidly structured and were conducted according to previously prepared interview blueprints (which differed somewhat in the two localities).

Research in Zhovkva was carried out in 2008–2010, while fieldwork in Krzyż was carried out between 2009 and 2011. During my stays in both towns, besides conducting interviews, I tried to observe local commemorative practices: I attended ceremonies connected to important historical events (e.g. in Ukraine, Victory Day on 9 May and Independence Day on 23 August, and in Poland, Constitution Day on 3 May and Independence Day on 11 November); I also visited cemeteries and other sites of memory, museum exhibitions (in Zhovkva) and commemorative displays in schools (in Krzyż). In both places, I favored non-probability-sampling (purposive sampling).[51] I recruited my first interviewees on the principle that they had to have lived in the town before the late 1940s: it was crucial that their experience encompassed the momentous period of the resettlements, the change of statehood, and the building of a new society. The first interviewees suggested contacts to other people, and I thus followed this classic "snowball" method of gathering interviewees, trying to collect respondents whilst maintaining proportionality of the different groups of residents who created the new Krzyż and Zhovkva after 1945. When I deviated from this principle on a few occasions and spoke to people who settled in the town after 1950, I did so because of the exceptionality of their experience or because of the difficulty of reaching individuals who fit my criterion. I carried out interviews until a point of saturation was achieved; or in other words, until I was convinced that further respondents would not bring any new contents to the already accumulated material.[52]

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50 Questions surrounding the therapeutic dimension of interviews and of the accompanying difficulties, have been discussed in a large corpus of literature, see: Juliet Corbin and Janice M. Morse, "The unstructured Interactive Interview: Issues of Reciprocity and Risks when Dealing with Sensitive Topics," *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 9, No. 3, (2003), pp. 335–354.

51 On purposive sample and methods of achieving point of saturation in the sample, see: Daniel Bertaux, "From the Life-History Approach to the Transformation of Sociological Practice," in: *Biography and Society*, ed. Daniel Bertaux (London–Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1981), pp. 19–28.

52 Daniel Bertaux calls this type of obtained representativeness – in opposition to statistical representativeness that appears at the morphological level (superficial description) – representativeness at the sociological level (in socio-cultural relations), see: Bertaux, "From the Life-History Approach."

Conducting fieldwork in both towns, I used interviews that I myself had carried out and, to a lesser extent, those recorded by others. In Krzyż this was connected to the simultaneous progress of the Karta Centre's documentation project; in Zhovkva, the Geschichtswerkstatt Europa was conducting a project financed by the EVZ Foundation. This multi-pronged amassment of empirical material made the body of available sources very large. In Krzyż, over 100 interviews were recorded; in Zhovkva, there were more than 90 (in both towns, nearly half of the conversations were with people born before the war). My initial plan was to collect about 15 interviews for each generation in both towns, or about 60 for each town, as well as supplementary expert interviews (with individuals who were important for the transmission of memory in the local community: representatives of the local authorities, teachers, culture professionals, etc.). However, gathering interviews with members of all the generations in a family turned out to be a difficult task. In many situations, a promising start with the eldest representative did not lead to further interviews with descendants: respondents did not have children or grandchildren, or the younger generations lived outside Zhovkva or Krzyż, or I simply had difficulties in establishing contact with them. On some occasions, the younger members refused to answer questions; older individuals also sometimes declined to participate. The final selection of material was the product of compromises: sometimes, I kept a conversation for my sample even if it had no generational continuation, or I kept a fairly average interview with an older person because his/her children or grandchildren gave an enlightening response. In the end, 82 interviews from Krzyż were kept for the sample (7 full generational sets/families, 17 partial sets, and 8 expert interviews) and 75 from Zhovkva (7 full generational sets/families, 13 partial ones, and 10 expert interviews).

In both towns, fieldwork had its own specificity. In Krzyż, progress was influenced by the fact that I myself come from there. In some situations, my connection to the town made work easier; in others, it was a limiting factor. Gathering materials and observing social life was certainly made simpler by my familiarity with local conditions. In this small community, I knew without any additional effort which employees in culture or administration had a real influence on local memory policy, which teachers conducted an extracurricular course on regional history, and who collected German memorabilia. Similarly, respondents were often better disposed towards being interviewed by me, because they already knew me or members of my family. This factor of being an insider, however, did come with a price, and in other situations was a hindrance. For instance, it happened that during interviews, respondents treated certain questions only

briefly or omitted them altogether, judging them to be obvious; they assumed there was no need to talk about them if I knew about them already.[53]

Carrying out research in Zhovkva was much more complicated. Difficulties arose above all from being in a foreign country: from the outset, the fact that my interviewees and I (usually) came from different cultures and linguistic environments created barriers.[54] Another problematic issue was the fact that I, as a Pole, was conducting fieldwork in Galicia – as a result of the difficult history of Polish-Ukrainian relations in this region, my background often affected the relationship between my respondents and myself. Above all, I received frequent refusals – roughly one in five interview requests was turned down, mostly by older individuals who had been resettled from Poland or had lived in Zhovkva since before the war; they had no desire to tell someone from Poland about their painful experiences from the past, which were perpetrated by Poles. A second group who fairly frequently declined interview requests were Ukrainians and Russians who had originally come from the East; this was most likely due to a general suspicion of foreigners, as well as a fear of recounting experiences from the war and immediate post-war years, for a variety of reasons.[55] A number of individuals who I knew to have been active "builders of the new system"

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53 On the limitations of being an "insider researcher," see: Marta Kurkowska-Budzan, *Antykomunistyczne podziemie zbrojne na Białostocczyźnie. Analiza współczesnej symbolizacji przeszłości* (Kraków: Tow. Wydawnicze "Historia Iagellonica," 2009), p. 98; Jennifer Platt, "On Interviewing One's Peers," *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1981), pp. 75–91; Maxine Baca Zinn, "Insider Field Research in Minority Communities," in: *Contemporary Field Research: Perspectives and Formulations*, ed. Robert M. Emerson (Long Grove: Waveland Pr Inc., 2001), pp. 159–166.

54 On conducting fieldwork in a country other than one's own, and the possible modifying effects of the researcher's nationality on biographical narratives, see: Gabriele Rosenthal and Dan Bar-On, "A biographical case study of a victimizer's daughter," *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1992), pp. 105–127; Anna Wylegała, "Badacz z Polski na Ukrainie: problemy metodologiczne," *Przegląd Socjologii Jakościowej*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2013), pp. 140–151.

55 One of my interviewees (born in central Ukraine) told me that she considered for a long time whether to agree to the interview, because she had been afraid of coming into contact with foreigners since the time of the war, when she was deported to Germany as a forced labourer. Her reluctance to voice her experiences from those times was not groundless. After the war had ended, thousands of Soviet forced labourers in Germany who returned to their homes were deported to the camps in Siberia. Those who avoided this fate were afraid to talk about their wartime histories for the rest their lives. See: Marta Dyczok, *The Grand Alliance and Ukrainian Refugees* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Gelinada Grinchenko, "The Ostarbeiter of Nazi Germany in Soviet

also refused to grant interviews – here, it was probably an anxiety about their connections to the previous regime, rather than anything to do with my nationality, that played a key role. One respondent, a former serviceman and functionary of the security services originally from central Ukraine, explained his refusal to be interviewed by stating that he had not lived in Zhovkva during the war, had no knowledge of Polish-Ukrainian relations at that time, and never had any conflicts with Poles. The logic of this explanation speaks volumes about how I might have been perceived: despite my efforts to convince people that I was not only researching Polish-Ukrainian conflicts, some residents of Zhovkva assumed *a priori* that, as a Pole, I could only be interested in this topic. Another, more fundamental issue was that my nationality could have prompted respondents to modify their narratives, more or less consciously.[56]

A few words of explanation are needed on how the collected materials were used. Because of the methodological foundations of the analysis, I decided to directly quote my interviewees, to give them a voice, as often as possible. All names are anonymized, not because of a desire to de-individualize them, but in order to protect their privacy. Working with materials gathered in such small communities, the simple method of substituting names with initials would have been insufficient.[57] Thus, respondents are assigned identity ciphers, and their short biographies are given at the end of the book, ordered according to generational sets (i.e. families), for easy reference between quotes in the text and the speaker's biographical context.[58] Anonymization was carried out with a broad scope: not only are interviewees' names hidden, but the names of people they are talking about have also been removed (in exceptional cases where names are supplied, justification is provided in the text); biographical details that would make it easy

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and Post-Soviet Ukrainian Historical Memory," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* (September–December 2012), pp. 401–426.

56   This is a question that can only be discussed in relation to specific interviews and their historical contexts. For this reason, I develop it in later sections of the book, see: e.g. footnote 313 in Chapter 8: "Between Heroes and Traitors: the UPA and the Soviets in Zhovkva."

57   On the limitations of mechanical anonymization in research on "sensitive" issues, see: Ralph Larossa, Linda A. Bennett and Richard J. Gelles, "Ethical Dilemmas in Qualitative Family Research," *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (1981), pp. 303–313.

58   Z or K indicates Zhovkva or Krzyż, respectively; number – the number of the generational set/family; the capital letter is the generation, and f/m – the person's gender. Z1Af is thus a female interviewee in Zhovkva from the oldest generation, and Z1Bf is her daughter.

to identify individuals have also been held back. However, local toponyms from the areas surrounding Krzyż and Zhovkva have not been anonymized, as to do so would be to lose a substantial amount of local expressivity in the study. The biographical notes contain information about respondents' professional and/or social activities only in cases where such details are directly related to their views (e.g. museum director or school headmaster). In order to protect the anonymity of interviewees, I did on several occasions (in cases where I was analyzing issues that were particularly delicate and potentially conflictual for the community) have to refrain from directly quoting an individual, instead paraphrasing their response in general terms (and omitting their identity cipher).

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The qualitative interview, and especially the biographical interview, is by nature not just a process of extracting information, but also an interpretive and interactive event.[59] In my fieldwork, this event always entailed an act of trust giving. This is why the preservation of the integrity of the interviews and of the anonymity of the interviewees was so important to me. For the same reason, working on the text of this book was more than a scholarly challenge: because of the themes involved, it was also a constant imbrication in other people's traumas, losses and disinheritances. Maintaining an emotional distance from such matters turned out to be impossible and, in the context of the methodological foundations of the work, inappropriate. Also, because the inscription "Zubov" is still visible on my house, I glimpse at it every time I walk through the door. I still do not know who lived here before 1945. For this reason, the book that resulted is not only a scholarly analysis; it is also – for me, above all – a record of a personal journey towards understanding a certain reality and a particular set of people, who are close to me for a range of reasons. I hope that this intimacy is not a weakness, but a strength.

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59 Piotr Filipkowski, "Historia mówiona i wojna," in: *Wojna. Doświadczenie i zapis – nowe źródła, problemy, metody badawcze*, ed. Sławomir Buryła and Paweł Rodak (Kraków: Universitas, 2006), p. 15.