

1 *Dramatis personae*: History and Memory

Roots (up to 1939)

In order to write about identity and memory in any place, we need firstly to outline its history. I will therefore attempt to briefly sketch of the histories of the two towns, using scholarly works as well as statements of my interviewees. Before the Second World War, both Zhovkva and Krzyż were towns with very distinct identities, with their own specific dynamics that had, and continue to have, a substantial impact on the identity of the locality and its inhabitants.⁶⁰ In the case of Zhovkva it was an identity of a historically multicultural town; for Krzyż, it was an identity of a modern, energetic society that had emerged thanks to the presence of a railroad: the quintessence of nineteenth-century progress.

Zhovkva was founded (as Żółkiew) at the end of the sixteenth century by Stanisław Żółkiewski, the Field Crown Hetman (i.e. the highest-ranking military commander) of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It was designed as an ideal Renaissance-era town: Paweł Szczęśliwy [Paul the Happy], a prominent architect of Italian origin, was commissioned to design the castle complex, the town walls and the Collegiate Church of St. Lawrence, the most important buildings in Żółkiewski's vision. Żółkiew was granted town privileges in 1603, and from this time it enjoyed rapid advancement in both the economic and the cultural spheres, reaching a zenith in the second half of the seventeenth century. At this time, Żółkiew was the favorite residence of King Jan III Sobieski and his wife Marie. The Ukrainian national hero Bohdan Khmelnytsky is also connected to Żółkiew⁶¹ – according to local lore, he was born in the town or its surroundings and spent part of his childhood there. Whether or not this is true, it is beyond doubt that the Cossack hetman stationed his troops in Żółkiew twice

60 I present the histories of Krzyż and Zhovkva on the basis of scholarly histories and document publications, as well as oral and written accounts preserved in archives, and statements made by present-day citizens of both towns during the fieldwork (archival materials were found in the Oral History Archive and Eastern Archive of the History Meeting House and KARTA Centre, Warsaw; the Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw; and the Visual History Archive).

61 Bohdan Khmelnytsky (1595–1657) – Polish-Lithuanian nobleman, Hetman of the Zaporozhian Host, leader of the Cossack Uprising against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the years 1648–1654; Khmelnytsky is considered a national hero in Ukraine, a historical figure who fought for Ukrainian statehood.

during the Cossack-Polish War (1648–1657), leading to considerable damage. In the second half of the seventeenth century, a series of impressive buildings were erected, which remain the principal landmarks of the town to this day: the Roman Catholic Church of St. Lawrence, the Orthodox Church and monastery of the Basilians, the walled Renaissance synagogue, the Dominican church and monastery, and the arcaded townhouses surrounding the market square.

At this time, Żółkiew was already a multinational and multi-confessional town. Żółkiewski had founded it on the site of an old Ukrainian village called Winniki (Vynnyky), so it is hardly surprising that Orthodox (and later, Greek Catholic) Ruthenians comprised a significant part of the town's population. Roman Catholic Poles arrived together with Żółkiewski, and since the town became an important trading hub, Armenian, German and Jewish merchants soon followed. Whereas Armenians assimilated with the Polish majority relatively quickly due to the absence of a confessional barrier, the Jews remained an autonomous and closed community right up to the twentieth century. Zhovkva's synagogue is still one of Ukraine's largest buildings despite wartime damage, testifying to the significance and size of the town's historical Jewish community.

In the eighteenth century, a period of relative decline ensued, as Żółkiew was conquered and plundered by Polish, Cossack, Swedish, Saxon and Russian armies. In 1772, after the first Partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Żółkiew the town became part of the Habsburg monarchy, along with the rest of the region of present Lwów (now Lviv, which started to be named Lemberg). The Habsburg period in Żółkiew, particularly the second half of the nineteenth century, was above all a time of competing nationalisms: Polish and Ruthenian (Ukrainian).⁶² For the Ruthenian national movement this involved a conflict between opposing visions of nationhood: the so-called Muscophile branch, which held that Ruthenians were members of the Russian ethnos, and the Ukrainophile branch, which believed that they were a fully separate collective.⁶³ At the same time, the Ruthenians were keen students of Polish nationalism, although the Poles rarely took notice. An indirect consequence was that the Ukrainophile vision eventually held sway throughout Habsburg Galicia, with Żółkiew conforming to the pattern. As a result, residents of the town were active participants in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict over Galicia after the First World

62 See: Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations. Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2003).

63 On competing visions of Ukrainian-ness in nineteenth-century Galicia, see: Danuta Sosnowska, *Inna Galicja* (Warszawa: Elipsa, 2009).

War. The Great War itself did not leave substantial physical damage in Żółkiew, although the retreating Russian army burned down the already damaged castle in 1915. In November 1918, a Ukrainian administration took control of the town, and many Ukrainians joined the ranks of the Sich Riflemen and (later) the Ukrainian Galician Army – military organizations that fought for Ukrainian independence against both the Bolsheviks and Poles. Until spring 1919, Żółkiew was a field of battle between Polish and Ukrainian armies. The conflict ended in May 1919, when Poles gained control of the town.

In the inter-war period, the contestation between Polish and Ukrainian nationalisms in Żółkiew lost none of its intensity, but its form changed. Ukrainians engaged in activities that the Polish authorities allowed. Ukrainian social organizations were active, such as the most wide-spread and influential Prosvita [Enlightenment], and the associations Zoria [Star], Besida [Dialogue], Sojuz Ukrainok [the Union of Ukrainian Women] and Sokil [Falcon]; Ukrainian co-operatives also developed. The center of cultural and religious life was the monastery and church of the Basilians, as well as the Ukrainian printing house. For a time, there was also the local branch of the all-Ukrainian Scout Organization, Plast, until it was outlawed by the Polish authorities in 1930 and became an underground organization. These events coincided with the emergence in Żółkiew and its surroundings of illegal OUN groupings [*Orhanizatsia Ukrayinskykh Natsionalistiv*, or the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists], which attracted an ever-increasing number of young Ukrainians. Poles, meanwhile, found themselves in a rather comfortable situation between the wars – their nationalism had yielded a nation state, and they were the group holding the reins of power. There were, at this time, three schools in Żółkiew that taught in Polish, a Polish-language middle school, and a college for teachers run by Felician nuns. In contrast, there was only one Ukrainian school – in the district of Winniki, a part of the town that had previously been a Ukrainian village. There was also a Jewish finishing school for girls and a fully-fledged Jewish school of the Tarbut network.⁶⁴

The results of the national census of 1931 (in which there was no data about nationality, only mother tongue and religious affiliation) show that of the 18,070 people living in the towns in the Żółkiew district (i.e. the 11,000 residents of Żółkiew itself, as well as neighboring Kulików (Kulykiv) and Mosty Wielkie (Velyki Mosty)), 68.6 % regarded Polish as their mother tongue, with

64 Tarbut was a network of secular, Hebrew-language and Zionist schools in inter-war Poland and other countries of the region.

7.1 %, declaring Ukrainian and 13.8 % Yiddish. 27.3 % of respondents considered themselves to be Roman Catholics, with 37.8 % Greek Catholics and 34.4 % of the Jewish faith.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the Ukrainian historian and geographer Volodymyr Kubiiiovych, who edited the monumental *Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Studies*, estimated that in September 1939 there were 4,270 Jews, 3,500 Poles and 3,100 Ukrainians among the 11,100 residents of Żółkiew.⁶⁶ Gerszon Taffet, author of the book entitled *The Extermination of Zhovkva's Jewry*, believed there were around 4,500 Jewish residents in the town on the eve of war.⁶⁷ The question of which of these estimates is the most precise is moot, given that many individual identities certainly did not fit into these clearly delineated ethnic categories. It is difficult to draw conclusions about ethnonational identity from the census categories of mother tongue and religion, especially when it comes to, say, Polish-speaking Jews or Polish-speaking Greek Catholics.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, it can be concluded from each of the estimates that Jews formed the most numerous ethno-confessional group in Żółkiew; Poles and Ukrainians comprised roughly a third of the population each, although it can be assumed that the Ukrainians were slightly less numerous than the Poles, and certainly weaker. The more pertinent question concerns the relations between the groups.

As Yaroslav Hrytsak argues, multiculturalism did not exist in Galicia during this period in the normative sense, i.e. there was no peaceful coexistence of different cultures in one place without the domination of any single group.⁶⁹

65 "Drugi powszechny spis ludności z dn. 9.XII.1931 r. Mieszkania i gospodarstwa domowe, ludność, stosunki zawodowe. Województwo lwowskie bez miasta Lwowa," *Statystyka Polski – Główny Urząd Statystyczny*, Series C, Vol. 68 (Warszawa: 1938), pp. 32–38.

66 Andrii Turchyn, "Administratyvno-statystychnyi ohliad 1880–1979." In: *Zhovkivshchyna. Istoryko-memuarnyi zbirnyk* Vol. 2, ed. Yaroslav Kalika (Zhovkva–Lviv–Baltimore: Instytut Krypiakevycha NAN Ukrainy, 1995), p. 94.

67 Gerszon Taffet, *Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich* (Łódź: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna, 1946).

68 The census itself was not free of controversy. Already in the inter-war period, criticisms were raised against the methods of data collection, and it was argued that state authorities had intentionally inflated the number of Polish-speakers on many occasions, see: Grzegorz Siudut, "Pochodzenie wyznaniowo-narodowościowe ludności Małopolski Wschodniej i Lwowa wedle spisu ludności z 1931 r.," in: *Lwów. Miasto – społeczeństwo – kultura*, Vol. 2, ed. Henryk Żaliński and Kazimierz Karolczak (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe WSP, 1998), pp. 261–280; Piotr Trojański, "Liczba, rozmieszczenie oraz struktura wewnętrzna ludności wyznania mojżeszowego," in: *Lwów. Miasto – społeczeństwo – kultura*, Vol. 2 (1998), pp. 243–260.

69 Yaroslav Hrytsak, "Strasti po Lvovu," *Krytyka*, Vol. 7/8 (2002), pp. 2–7.

Poles, Ukrainians and Jews lived in the same town, Żółkiew, but to all intents and purposes they lived separately, with the dominant group, the Poles, setting the tone. Cultural, social and religious practices were formed in more or less closed and parallel ethnonational communities. They came into contact mostly during conflicts of collective interest. The Poles treated the Ukrainian national movement as a fabrication dreamed up by a clique of intellectuals and an act of indecency on the part of the previously docile Ruthenians. The Ukrainians, on the other hand, felt discriminated against as an ethnic minority. Both groups knew little about the Jews who co-inhabited their town and the changes that were occurring within their community, such as the development of Zionist and communist ideas. Whereas Polish-Ukrainian marriages were not rare, Jewish-Christian ones practically never occurred. The fact that there were three football teams in Żółkiew serves as a poignant illustration of the ethnonational division of communities in the town: Polish “Lubicz,” Jewish “Noria” and Ukrainian “Strila.” This national segregation that was characteristic of Galicia had significant consequences for the residents of Zhovkva during and after the Second World War.

Krzyż, like Zhovkva, was founded on the site of a much older village. In 1701, a major local landowner and the future governor [*starosta generalny*] of the province of Wielkopolska, Jan Kazimierz Sapieha, founded the village of Olędry Sapieżyńskie on the site of today’s Krzyż, based on the specific legal principles for the settlement of Olędrzy, i.e. peasants usually from Friesian or Netherlandish backgrounds and often of Mennonite faith, who were permitted to set up free villages in pre-defined regions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The first settlers in Olędry Sapieżyńskie were probably Dutch, and in time Germans and Poles joined them, although the community became Germanized relatively quickly (the treaty for the granting of land towards the construction of an Eastern Railway in 1848 contains exclusively German surnames). During the period of the Partitions of Poland (1772–1918), the German name of the village came into common use, which identified two separate parts: Drage-Lukatz and Busch-Lukatz. A major development was the decision, made in the 1840s, to construct a Prussian Eastern Railway to connect Berlin with Bromberg (Polish: Bydgoszcz) and Königsberg (now Kaliningrad, Russia).

The railway colony that sprung up around the new train station began to develop quickly and dynamically. Drage-Lukatz and Busch-Lukatz were formally unified into the district of Lukatz-Kreuz. Residential complexes were built around the station for employees of the rail company, postal workers and civil servants, and the fact of being a railway junction made Kreuz an important communications and trade hub. The fortuitous location (in addition to the railway,

the town was also near a major loading port on the River Netze (Polish: Noteć) was conducive to industrial development – Kreuz was home to a starch factory, a syrups factory and a sawmill, amongst other businesses. The construction of an Evangelical church was completed in 1882, and a few years later the first school building appeared on the grounds of the new parish. It was nonetheless the railroad that defined the atmosphere of the town; trains departed from Kreuz in five directions: Berlin, Stettin (*Szczecin*), Posen (*Poznań*), Bromberg (*Bydgoszcz*) and Deutsche Krone (*Wałcz*). For the comfort of travelers, Kreuz offered several restaurants and wine taverns, a hotel, and a cinema.

Kreuz also had ambitions to become a town where people lived well. In 1915 the municipality acquired a nearby lake, named Kaisersee in honor of Kaiser Wilhelm. A park and recreational area was created across five hectares of land surrounding the lake, featuring tennis courts, sports fields and a dance floor; a yacht pier, swimming pool and trampoline were also built. The picturesque landscapes and easy accessibility helped the villages surrounding Kreuz (especially Busch-Lukatz and Neu-Beelitz, which were located on the water) to become resort destinations for summer tourists.

The Kreuz district was inhabited almost exclusively by Germans – the last pre-war census counted 4,922 residents in the town and several hundred more in the surrounding villages, of which only nine individuals declared Polish nationality.⁷⁰ There were also a few Jewish families in Kreuz, who were completely assimilated. Some Germanized Polish surnames can be found in local newspapers, photographs and tombstones that have survived from the period, but these are the only traces of the historical Polish presence in today's Krzyż. Nonetheless, Kreuz always had very close contact with Poles. The closest Polish “neighbor” was the older village of Drawsko, which was originally larger than Kreuz. Before the First World War, Germans from Kreuz and Poles from Drawsko ran businesses together, served side by side in the military, and sent their children to the same schools. The gaining of independence by Poland in 1918 changed the situation dramatically. During the Wielkopolska Uprisings of 1918–1919,⁷¹ fierce battles were fought over Polish villages on the opposite bank of the Netze, and Kreuz served as a base of operations for German units fighting

70 See: Tomasz Molenda, “Zmiany ludnościowe w Krzyżu Wielkopolskim i okolicy w latach 1945–1950,” unpublished MA dissertation (Poznań, 2008), pp. 14–15.

71 The Wielkopolska Uprising was an armed insurgency by Poles in the Province of Posen in 1918 and 1919, against the German Reich and aimed at joining the lands of the former Prussian partition to the newly formed Polish state. It is one of the very few Polish national uprisings to have ended in success.

against the Polish insurgents. After 1919, the new German-Polish border ran two kilometers to the east of Kreuz, along the River Netze. The border changes had a major effect on the economic situation of the municipality of Kreuz, which lost a part of its market in the newly Polish territories; some of the rail connections were also suspended. Nonetheless, contacts with Poles from the other side of the Netze remained fairly strong. Poles from surrounding villages frequently visited the town: they came to do their shopping or to visit the hairdresser, and many people still owned land on the German side of the river, as did Germans on the Polish side.

War and Other Misfortunes (1938–1945)

The Second World War was not only experienced completely differently in Kreuz and Zhovkva; it started at very different times. In Kreuz, the outbreak of war was the culmination of political developments over several years in the 1930s: the creeping militarization and ideologization of everyday life, the obligation to join the Hitler-jugend and Bund Deutscher Mädel for children and young people, the pressure to sign up for the party and paramilitary organizations among adults. In 1938, the Jews “disappeared” from Kreuz. In the course of one night, all families of Jewish background were deported from the town, most likely to one of the concentration camps that were being constructed around Germany. Their property – houses, craft workshops, and trading premises (the local department store belonged to a Jewish merchant) – was confiscated by the state. War broke out formally in the town on September 1, 1939, when the border crossings were dismantled at the bridge over the Netze on the road leading to Drawsko. The majority of Germans perceived this event as a return to things as they should be: they saw the Polish state’s two-decade existence as a temporary nuisance. Soon afterwards, German homes in Kreuz acquired Polish forced laborers from nearby areas that had until recently been on the Polish side of the river. Poles worked in practically every German household, in trade, and above all in agriculture, where they substituted for the German men who had been mobilized for the front. They received varied treatment: some were subjected to very harsh conditions, but in other cases, Poles became something close to family members for the Germans. Kreuz also became the site of a camp for Prisoners of War (PoWs,) located next to the starch factory; American, French and Soviet prisoners were interned there.

The period up to 1944 was relatively calm for Kreuz: other than food shortages, for its residents the war started “for real” only when the German army started to lose. In 1943, people displaced from German cities bombed by the Allies

started to arrive in Kreuz. Information that the Red Army was approaching the town began to reach its residents in the autumn of 1944, alongside reports of the Soviet treatment of German civilians. The village of Glasshütte, just a few kilometers from Kreuz, was converted into a transit camp for German escapees from the East. Between December 1944 and January 1945, the majority of the town's residents fled: some of them left of their own initiative, while the authorities evacuated others in organized transports. Of those who did not manage to board the last evacuation train on January 26, 1945, many tried to escape Kreuz by foot or private transport but were killed by the Red Army, which had already arrived in the region. Kreuz was taken or "liberated" in the official language used up to 1989 – by the 5th Shock Army (part of the 1st Belarusian Front) on January 28, 1945.

For Kreuz, "liberation" meant the greatest defeat in the town's history. Kreuz had not suffered during the bombardments, and there had been no heavy fighting over the town. Like many other localities on the territories conquered by the Soviets, it was destroyed by the Red Army after its military takeover. Soviet soldiers peppered the tower of the Catholic Church with bullets, and burned down half of the buildings in the market square – the former Hitlerplatz – as well as an entire row of townhouses on the main street, just for fun. Overall, over 50 % of the town was destroyed. The fate of German residents, who, for diverse reasons, had not left, was worse than that of the buildings; they were primarily elderly people and farmers. Dozens of people were murdered and women were raped in broad daylight. The handful of German communists who had escaped from a nearby concentration camp and arrived in Kreuz to greet the Red Army as liberators were accorded the same treatment as all other Germans.

For the residents of Żółkiew, the war lasted incomparably longer and was a much more complex historical reality. The Red Army entered the town on September 21, 1939. Local communists greeted the new masters at a hastily assembled triumphal entry gate, but were accorded hardly any attention. The reorganization of all spheres of public life according to the Soviet model began immediately. Factories, craft enterprises and shops were nationalized, and agricultural land around the town was seized with a fanfare of propaganda from the gentry, the church and wealthier villagers. The schools were converted into Soviet institutions, with ten years of teaching in the Ukrainian school and eight years in Yiddish in the Jewish one. "Political work" on the residents of Zhovkva also began: dozens of party and Komsomol (political youth organization in the Soviet Union) activists arrived in order to conduct interviews, meetings and lectures with obligatory attendance for all residents; Soviet-trained teachers were also brought in for the schools.

Arrests began soon after the Soviet takeover, with deportations to Siberia starting in 1940. Historian Jan T. Gross writes about a young communist activist from Zhovkva who recounted during an interview, recorded in 1980 in Tel Aviv, that the Soviets began to study official files in the local district archives; they wanted to know each individual history.⁷² Poles who in the pre-war period had worked as civil servants, teachers, forestry workers and military settlers, as well as Poles, Jews and Ukrainians, who were simply relatively wealthy, were persecuted. The NKVD (Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del) also interrogated and arrested former members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Many people disappeared without a trace, and town residents could only assume that they had fallen victim to Soviet terror.⁷³

The zenith of the terror in Zhovkva was in June 1941, during the Soviet retreat in the face of Nazi advancement: the NKVD carried out a mass murder of the prisoners held in the castle tower.⁷⁴ According to the residents' recollections, tractors with running engines were deployed under the tower, so as to drown out the screams of the victims. On June 28, 1941, when the German forces occupied Zhovkva, more than 50 murdered bodies were found in the courtyard of the prison. The majority of the victims who could be identified were Ukrainians active in the independence movement or otherwise standing up to Soviet power. The funeral that was arranged for the victims transformed into a Ukrainian patriotic rally. In the context of the declaration of a pro-Nazi Ukrainian state by Yaroslav Stetsko in Lviv on June 30, 1941, Zhovkva also made gestures of support for the Germans. The main town gate was adorned with the slogans "Heil Hitler!" and "Long live our leader Stepan Bandera!" hanging next to each side by side. Nonetheless, the pro-German enthusiasm among Zhovkva Ukrainians was premature. The Stetsko government was promptly arrested and imprisoned, and the Germans refrained from any form of cooperation with the Ukrainian nationalists for most of the war.

72 Cf. Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad. The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 51.

73 In the 1990s, the remains of several dozen corpses were discovered in the ground under of the Basilian church; it was established that they belonged to men, women and children. Initial examinations suggested that these people died during the Soviet occupation, but these findings were never confirmed. The investigation was never finished, and the remains were buried in the town cemetery.

74 For an overview of the Soviet killings of the prisoners in June 1941, see: Oleh Romaniv and Inna Fedushchak, eds., *Zakhidnioukrainska trahediia 1941* (Lviv-New York: Naukove Tovarystvo im. Shevchenka, 2002).

Although the Polish and Ukrainian populations of Zhovkva lived under difficult conditions during the German occupation – the most acute problem was the threat of deportation for forced labor⁷⁵ – the gravest experience of occupation was reserved for the Jews.⁷⁶ In the very first days after taking over the town, the Germans set fire to the synagogue and murdered a delegation of Jews who had come out to greet them. They introduced discriminatory policies that were common to all of the occupied lands: Jews were forced to wear badges with yellow stars, they were expropriated and thrown out of their own homes, and forced to labor under oppressive conditions. In March 1942, the first mass expulsions took place, with 700 people transported to the death camp in Bełżec.⁷⁷ In November of the same year, 2,500 Jews were taken to Bełżec. The construction of a closed ghetto followed, and surviving Jews from the nearby shtetls of Kulykiv and Velyki Mosty were made to resettle there alongside those from Zhovkva. On March 15, 1943, several dozen young Jewish men from Zhovkva were sent to the Janowski concentration camp in Lviv.⁷⁸ Ten days later, the “Liquidation Operation” took place: divisions of the SS, *Schutzpolizei* and Ukrainian auxiliary police surrounded the ghetto, rounded up all of the Jews they could find on St. Dominic’s Square, and transported them in trucks to a forest approximately 3km from the town, known among inhabitants as “Borek” (literally, “the thicket.”) There, they shot the Jews and buried them in pre-dug mass graves. Those who

75 It is believed that around 400,000 people were deported from Galicia to work as forced laborers, see: David R. Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), p. 59.

76 No study exists analyzing the Holocaust in Zhovkva. The most comprehensive history of the Holocaust in Galicia remains the book by German historian Dieter Pohl: Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1997). A multi-perspectival study of the Holocaust in Ukraine is available in the edited volume: Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower, eds., *The Shoah in Ukraine. History, Testimony and Memorialization* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008).

77 I have adopted this timeline of events during the Holocaust in Zhovkva in whole from: Taffet, *Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich*.

78 The Janowski camp in Lviv was a German concentration camp located near the Lviv ghetto. To begin with (in autumn 1941) it functioned mainly as a labor camp for Jewish prisoners; later, political prisoners and Soviet POWs were also brought there. From the spring of 1942 it also functioned as a transit camp for Jews being transported to the death camp in Bełżec. It was destroyed in November 1943 after a mass murder of its prisoners. It is estimated that approximately 200,000 people were killed in total during the war at this site.

managed to survive the liquidation of the ghetto were murdered in the “Final Operation” of 6 April.

In Zhovkva, only 74 individuals of Jewish descent survived the Holocaust, out of a pre-war population of 4,500. Most of them hid in refuges in the town and surrounding areas, helped by local Christians; a few survived in labor camps, including the Janowski camp. Both Ukrainians and Poles sheltered Jews; likewise, both Ukrainians and Poles handed Jews over to the Nazis. After the liberation of the town by the Red Army on July 24, 1944, a number of Jews were murdered by local residents.

After the Soviets had re-conquered Zhovkva, only a small group of Poles remained of the town’s pre-war residents, alongside the Ukrainians, who now formed a clear majority, and the handful of Jews who had survived.⁷⁹ The German occupation had resulted in an escalation of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict that had simmered for decades previously, with local units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army [*Ukrainska Povstanska Armia*, UPA] playing an active role.⁸⁰ Poles in Zhovkva itself felt relatively secure, yet murders of Poles by the UPA were taking place in the surrounding areas in broad daylight, with support from local Ukrainian civilians; sometimes, entire villages were razed. For this reason, many Polish families had evacuated the town towards the end of the German occupation. Most of them treated their departure as a temporary journey to the west, but none returned to Zhovkva permanently.

Those Poles who refused to leave the (“perennially”) “Ukrainian” lands were a secondary enemy for the UPA. The more important battles were being fought on other fronts. After an initial period of collaboration with the Germans, the UPA fought against both the Germans and the Soviets, enjoying the majority support

79 According to the book *Zhovkivshchyna. Istorychnyi narys*, approximately 1,700 people lived in the town as of the autumn of 1944, see: Mykola Lytvyn, ed. *Zhovkivshchyna. Istorychnyi narys*, Vol. 1 (Zhovkva–Lviv–Baltimore: Instytut Krypiakievycha NAN Ukrainy, 1994), p. 240.

80 The most comprehensive and also objective studies on this topic are the works of the Polish historian Grzegorz Motyka. E.g.: Grzegorz Motyka, *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji “Wisła.” Konflikt polsko-ukraiński 1943–1947* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2011). In Ukraine, one of the few scholars considering this theme with scholarly objectivity is Ihor Iliushyn, see e.g.: Ihor Iliushyn, *Ukraińska Povstanska Armia i Armia Kraiova. Protystoiania v Zakhidnii Ukraini (1939–1945 rr.)* (Kyiv: Vydavnychi Dim “Kyievo-Mohylianska Akademiia,” 2009). On the collaboration of local Ukrainian civilians in the murders, see: Jared McBride, “Peasants into Perpetrators: The OUN-UPA and the Ethnic Cleansing of Volhynia, 1943–1944,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 75, No. 3, (Fall 2016), pp. 630–654.

of local Ukrainians.⁸¹ After the Soviets had taken Zhovkva, the insurgents carried out a successful assassination of an NKVD major. In the autumn of 1944 the areas surrounding Zhovkva were the scene of a heated battle between Ukrainian nationalists and the Soviet military.

Brave New World (1945–1953)

Thus, the turning point for both towns was their “liberation” by the Red Army (Zhovkva in July 1944, Kreuz in January 1945). Although it was not immediately obvious to residents at the time, this moment was the beginning of a completely new chapter in their histories. Relative to the pre-war period, everything was subject to change in a short period: the states to which the towns belonged, the political and economic systems, and above all, the composition of residents. If in Zhovkva the first Soviet occupation had given a taste of radical change and the town lost its pre-war residents gradually, in waves, in Kreuz the transformation was substantially more rapid and violent.

After the Red Army had been through Kreuz, there remained in the empty, burned out town a Soviet military headquarters and a handful of traumatized Germans. Before the first Polish railway workers arrived in February 1945, tasked with reviving the rail connections and restoring the hydroelectric power station that provided the town’s electricity, a wave of lootings went through Kreuz. Residents of surrounding Polish villages, often former forced laborers who had worked in the area, emptied the town of everything of any value; household equipment, clothes, fittings for shops and workshops, even tiles from dismantled stoves. Some of these people settled in newly renamed Krzyż, occupying the best and least destroyed buildings in the town; they set up a close-knit group of former “neighbors,” who experienced the fewest difficulties in adapting to the changed circumstances and therefore had a relatively easy start to their new lives in a new place. Soon after the looters and the railwaymen, the first “pioneers” from central

81 At this time there were already some individuals among the Ukrainians who were sceptical of the UPA. If they voiced their views, however, they were likely to be killed by the insurgents as traitors. The most tragic known example of such a death was the 1943 murder of the parents of a man originally from Zhovkva, now living in Poland, with whom I conducted an interview (on condition of anonymity). His father was Ukrainian and his mother Polish (she was heavily pregnant at the time of the incident), and they were shot to death as they rode on a horse-drawn carriage during a village wedding ceremony. Their children survived because they were sitting on the floor of the carriage.

Poland arrived, i.e. settlers moving to the so-called Recovered Territories as part of the repopulation operation organized by the Polish authorities; the idea behind this move was to consolidate the Polish presence and thereby “prove” the Polishness of these formerly German lands.

The “Centrals” arrived having been tempted by promises of German houses and homesteads being available for takeover. In central regions of Poland, which had been significantly damaged during the war, the promises made by the communist authorities fell on fertile pastures, especially in rural communities that were impoverished and overpopulated; people left for “the West” in search of a new life, and just as often as a matter of sheer survival. The settlement operation was directed by the State Repatriation Office [Państwowy Urząd Repatriacyjny, PUR],⁸² which was tasked with providing assistance to Poles returning from Germany and to those resettling from the former eastern territories of the pre-war Polish Republic. Whilst the former – of whom there were only a few dozen families in Krzyż – really were returning home in a sense, the situation among “repatriates”⁸³ from the eastern territories was completely different. In theory, “repatriation” was voluntary everywhere in the former eastern lands, however in practice the Soviet authorities applied various forms of duress in an attempt to rid communist Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine of Poles. In Ukraine, an additional complication was the threat from the Ukrainian nationalist underground, or simply from Ukrainian civilians, as was the case in Volhynia. Many families chose to relocate out of fear, of the Ukrainians rather than the Soviets.

A significant number of Poles did, however, leave “voluntarily:” faced with a choice between staying in the Soviet Union or leaving for the new Polish state, they chose the latter with a heavy heart. Because Krzyż was easily accessible for

82 The State Repatriation Office [PUR] was a Polish state department founded as a result of a decree by the Polish Committee of National Liberation [Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego, PKWN] in October 1944. Its initial remit was to supervise the resettlement of Poles from the eastern territories that were ceded to the USSR as a result of the post-war settlement formalized at the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences. Later, its sphere of responsibilities was expanded to include all migration to and within the Polish state.

83 The word “repatriates” [*repatrianci*] has been common in both scholarly and everyday usage in Poland, meaning people who “returned” to Poland from the former eastern territories that were ceded to the USSR after the war. I employ it in this book in quotations throughout, to acknowledge its ideological colouring. On the problems associated with the term, see: Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, “Społeczna i indywidualna kontynuacja pamięci ojczyzn kresowych,” in: *Pamięć utraconych ojczyzn*, ed. Ewa Nowicka and Aleksandra Bilewicz (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2012), pp. 155–182.

the trains that transported migrants, the first “repatriates” arrived on May 9, 1945; this transport brought 513 people.⁸⁴ Trains most frequently brought people from the former Tarnopol, Stanisławów and Nowogródek voivodships; by the end of 1945 there were 2,433 “repatriates” living in Krzyż (a further 663 persons were classified as “resettlers” [*przesiedleńcy*], which meant that they came from the part of pre-war Poland that remained in the state borders after 1945).⁸⁵

The “repatriates” often arrived in Krzyż to discover a somewhat surprising situation: between the front shifting westwards and the arrival of the first transports from the former Polish Eastern Borderlands, several hundred Germans had arrived back in the town (sources state that 670 Germans lived in the area as of May 1945).⁸⁶ Since the main wave of Polish settlers had not yet arrived in Krzyż, many of the Germans had managed to set up home in the houses they originally owned, while others stayed with friends and acquaintances or simply started to live in unoccupied premises. All of them were of the belief that after the passing of the Red Army, the town would remain within the borders of the future German state. Their return to the by-then Polish Krzyż ended in misfortune for the majority. The Polish civilian administration and Soviet military command treated Germans as a source of free labor and drove them into conditions of slavery, and refused the men the right to immigrate to Germany. Germans were treated with disdain and – like the Poles in wartime Kreuz – they were forced to wear badges with the letter “N” [pl. *Niemiec* – a German] on their shoulder; they were stripped of their property and humiliated at every opportunity. There were still cases of rapes against German women as well as murders, although less frequently than in the weeks immediately following the arrival of the Red Army; in most cases, the perpetrators of these deeds were Soviet soldiers.

Many “repatriate” families were allocated houses or apartments that were inhabited by Germans. For weeks or even months on end, Poles who themselves had just been resettled from their own houses lived together with Germans who were waiting for a transport to the West. Relations between the two sides were varied: it happened that Poles were hostile to the Germans, but it was also possible that the two cohabiting families recognized the misfortunes suffered by the other side.

None of the population groups who were in Krzyż at this time had particularly easy lives: neither the “autochthonous” residents, nor the “Centrals,” nor the

84 Molenda, “Zmiany ludnościowe,” p. 90.

85 Molenda, “Zmiany ludnościowe,” p. 97.

86 Molenda, “Zmiany ludnościowe,” p. 65.

“repatriates.” Relations with the Red Army were particularly tense, as the military administration governed in Krzyż as over a conquered enemy territory. Whilst the majority of the Soviet military headquarters in the formerly German territories of Poland were liquidated in July 1945, they remained active in places with major railway connections for much longer, including Krzyż. Many transports from Berlin to Poland went through the station at Krzyż, as did trains to the USSR carrying war trophies obtained in Germany by Soviet soldiers. Krzyż itself was treated by the Soviets as a war trophy of sorts: equipment from the town’s factories and sawmill, destroyed in the winter of 1945, was dismantled and carried off to the East; Soviet soldiers even took apart a section of the railway. An atmosphere of war therefore remained for a long time after the formal cessation of hostilities. There was a police curfew in place, and people – especially women, and German women most of all – were afraid to be alone at home.

The situation normalized only after a Polish civilian administration took over the governance of the town. This event coincided with the end of the first phase of the creation of a new society in Polish Krzyż. In 1946 the expulsion operation against Germans was coming to an end; the last transport carrying Germans left Krzyż in October of that year. Deportation was often carried out in a violent manner: Germans were given a few hours to pack their belongings, whilst some had their meager property confiscated on their way to the station. One German family remained in Krzyż, as well as a few elderly Germans and a small number of individuals who married Poles either during or after the war. In 1947, a group of Lemkos deported from Ukraine arrived in Krzyż,⁸⁷ settling in the villages furthest away from the town itself, Kuźnica Żelichowska and Przesieki. As the first wave of settlers consolidated their presence in Krzyż, another influx of economic migrants from various regions of Poland started to arrive, looking for work in

87 Lemkos are an ethnic group that lived until 1947 on the borderland of what is now Poland, Ukraine and Slovakia. In 1947, the Polish communist government deported most of the Lemkos (ca. 140,000 civilians) living in South-east of Poland to the western and northern parts of the country. The operation was called “Vistula” and was part of the wider operation aimed at destroying the UPA in Poland. However, most historians today argue that its goal was also to assimilate the deported Lemkos and Ukrainians. For an overview of the “Vistula” Operation see: Motyka, *Od rzezi wołyńskiej*; Marek Jasiak, “Overcoming Ukrainian Resistance: The Deportation of Ukrainians within Poland in 1947,” in: *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948*, ed. Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), pp. 173–194.

the increasing stabilized town. Life thus continued to unfold, in a new town with new residents.

If the first post-war years were tough for the residents of Krzyż, in Zhovkva they were truly hellish. The Soviets declared the draft to be compulsory in Galicia in the autumn of 1944, and 700,000 men from the region were called up to the Red Army.⁸⁸ After the conquest of Zhovkva, the Soviet authorities set about re-introducing Soviet ways in all spheres of life. In addition to a return to the political and economic mechanisms that were in place in the years 1939–1941, this entailed dealing with ideological enemies. The first to be identified and arrested were real or suspected Nazi collaborators: members of the Ukrainian auxiliary police and *Volksdeutsche*. One of the *Volksdeutsche* detained by the Soviets had hidden 17 Jews during the German occupation; such cases show that some of the arrests were unjustified according to the Soviets' own criteria.⁸⁹ Shocked by the way things were developing, almost all of the Jewish survivors (of which there were only a handful in the town itself) and the majority of Poles left for Poland before the end of the official "repatriation" period ended, i.e. by 1947. In their place – sometimes in the most literal sense of occupying their homes – came Ukrainians deported from southwestern Poland in the years 1944–1946. Some of them, especially in the latter stages of the population transfers, arrived in Zhovkva directly, usually with little property to their name; the majority, however, came through eastern Ukraine, where the Soviet authorities had initially sent all transports. Due to prevailing conditions of famine and forced membership in collective farms, Ukrainians deserted their designated new places of residence en masse, escaping to the western part of the country with the intention of returning home. When they reached Galicia, it transpired that the border with Poland was already closed. Thus, many resettlers remained in the border regions, including Zhovkva region. Because of their status as illegal fugitives from

88 Cf. Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine*, p. 59.

89 This story is recounted in the memoir of one of the Jews saved by the person in question. The author was a teenage girl at the time. The original diary (written in Polish) is held in the Holocaust Memorial Museum, and it was published in 2017 by the Polish Centre for Holocaust Research of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences: Clara Kramer, *Tyleśmy już przeszli. Dziennik pisany w bunkrze (Żółkiew 1942–1944)* (Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą, 2017). A video testimony by Klara Schwarz (now Clara Kramer) is available in the archive of the Shoah Foundation Institute under catalogue number 37123.

collective farms, these resettlers could not rely on any state financial support, and were socially marginalized for a long time.⁹⁰

A second group that gradually filled the gaps left by the Jews and Poles was the stratum of teachers, librarians, skilled workers and party functionaries chosen to head village councils and collective farms. This group of new arrivals was not great in number, but it was very specific in its composition: most of these people were born or at least grew up in the Soviet Union, they had been educated in the Soviet mould, but they also often had personal experience of Stalinist Terror or the *Holodomor* (i.e. the Great Famine of 1932–1933 in Soviet Ukraine), events that were incomparably harsher than the experiences of Galicians during the short Soviet occupation of 1939–1941. Moreover the demographic structure of the region was altered by the fact that Soviet military units were permanently stationed in Zhovkva and the neighboring village of Volia Vysots'ka, tasked with guarding the western border of the USSR. Not many of these servicemen had moved to Zhovkva voluntarily; the majority had been sent to Galicia as part of Soviet modernization policy in the newly acquired territories. Many of these soldiers had been afraid to go to western Ukraine, with its reputation as a hotbed of ethnic nationalism. Officially, this modernization project was designed to facilitate economic advancement and industrialization, but in practice the Soviet authorities wanted to ensure control over this unruly territory with the help of people loyal to the system.⁹¹

The task of the “Easterners” [Ukr. *skhidniaky*] – as they were called in Zhovkva and as I will call them in this book for ease of reference – was to engage the local population in the building of communism. Their efforts were met with fierce

90 The transfer of Ukrainians from Poland to the Ukrainian SSR (1944–1946) has recently been studied in some detail by Ukrainian historians, such as Volodymyr Kitsak, Tamara Hontar, Stepan Makarchuk and others. Nonetheless, research on the social adaptation of resettlers and the effects of deportation on their identity are still scarce. One of the few available studies is by Halyna Bodnar, who uses an oral history approach, see: Halyna Bodnar, “‘Tam bulo dobre i tut ye nepokhano zhyty:’ osoblyvosti istorychnoi pamiaty ukraintziv, pereselenykh iz Polshchi,” in: *Ukraina-Polshcha: istorychna spadshchyna i suspilna svidomist*, Vol 2: *Deportatsii 1944–1951* (Lviv: Instytut Ukrainoznavstva im. Krypiakovycha, 2007), pp. 20–36; Subtelny, “Expulsion, Resettlement, Civil Strife.”

91 On the social and political effects of the Soviet modernization project in Ukraine, see e.g. Martin Åberg, “Paradox of Change: Soviet Modernization and Ethno-Linguistic Differentiation in Lviv, 1945–1989,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 24: *Lviv. A City in the Crosscurrents of Cultures*, ed. John Czaplicka (2002), pp. 285–302; Yaroslav Bilinsky, *The Second Soviet Republic: The Ukraine after World War II* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1964); Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*.

resistance from the Ukrainian nationalist underground. A bloody and attritional battle was fought in Zhovkva and surroundings until the beginning of the 1950s between the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Soviet government; the local population was frequently drawn into this conflict, sometimes against its will. The Ukrainian partisans, who were mostly active in the villages, attacked Red Army units, the Soviet police and the NKVD; they executed Soviet civil servants and other representatives of power. They also killed settlers from the East, whom they saw as agents sent by the authorities: victims included teachers, collective farm directors, and workers. Their deaths were supposed to frighten off new settlers and to show them that they were not welcome. The best-known UPA operation was the shooting of Ilia Dovhanyk, a communist from the Zhovkva region, whom the Soviets turned into a “martyr of the revolution.”⁹²

The terror conducted by the UPA also affected locals – individuals who, for various reasons, supported the new regime or simply had no means of resisting it. In 1947, the UPA hanged two collective farm workers in Zhovkva. In 1948 they burned down an entire collective farm that had been established in the town. The following year, in the nearby village of Mokrotyn, they shot dead a seventy-year-old man whose son was working with the Soviet police, and in the neighboring village of Nova Skvariava, they hanged a woman suspected of working with the security services. Sentences passed by the UPA on “traitors to the Ukrainian cause” resulted in fear becoming widespread among civilians, no less so than the fear they felt at the equivalent actions of the NKVD. The most violent action by the UPA was the burning of the village club in Vynnyky, a suburb of Zhovkva, where the Soviet authorities showed propaganda films. Several children were killed in the fire.

The Soviets replied to terror with terror. Insurgent units were hunted down to the last man, and hideouts destroyed. Those who were captured alive were tortured for information, sentenced to long terms of hard labor, and sent to the camps.⁹³ It was common practice to display the mutilated bodies of captured and killed combatants in front of the Zhovkva prison: the families would then be able

92 It is not exactly clear who killed Dovhanyk. Communists claim to this day that it was the UPA, while a clear majority of my interviewees (including people who were critical of the UPA) were of the opinion that the Soviets themselves had shot their own comrade: in order to gain a highly ranked martyr for their cause, and to blacken the reputation of the UPA.

93 Ukrainians deported from Zhovkva during this period started to return after the death of Stalin in 1953; the final amnesty for political prisoners of this category was granted in 1965, the twentieth anniversary of the end of the year, see: Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War. The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 233.

to identify the bodies (and made to suffer the consequences of their kinship), and town residents would be deterred from taking up resistance. Relatives were sent to Siberia together with captured fighters; sometimes, if they managed to escape before deportation, they would all flee to the forest, reinforcing the partisan detachments in turn; the cycle of resistance and repression thus continued.⁹⁴ The Soviet authorities also punished people who provided assistance to the UPA, which was a fairly significant portion of the population. Often, the charge of “helping the insurgents” served as a mere pretext for expelling people whom the Soviets considered suspicious, i.e. Kulaks.⁹⁵ The Soviets’ struggle against the UPA and the deportation of “enemies of the people” continued in the Zhovkva region until the mid-1950s, when state policy was made less brutal in the aftermath of Stalin’s death. That is also when the first rehabilitated Gulag prisoners and expellees started to return – if, of course, they had survived. During the Soviet Thaw, laws concerning registration and settlement in towns were relaxed, and a wave of economic migrants arrived in Zhovkva from surrounding villages.

Neither in Krzyż nor in Zhovkva was the construction of a “brave new world” an easy task. This was in part because the new, post-war residents of both towns had arrived with their own specific experiential baggage, which could not help but affect their adaptation to a new place: their attitudes to the people who had lived there previously, as well as to the material culture they found and the new socio-political order. Interestingly, the majority of these residents can be understood through the prism of their collective biographies – although, of course, the sum total of individual stories does not fit into any kind of overall scheme. Both towns in the post-war period had groups of “voluntary returnees:” Poles from the eastern provinces in the case of Krzyż and Ukrainians from Poland in Zhovkva. Old “neighbors” were also present in both towns: in Krzyż, locals from the other side of the border at the River Noteć, and in Zhovkva, economic migrants from the Galician villages and smaller towns. Finally, both towns were

94 One of the most thorough studies of Soviet deportations from western Ukrainian in the years 1944–1953 is the book by Tamara Vronska: *Upokorennia strakhom: simeine zaruchnystvo u karalnii praktytsi radianskoi vlady (1917–1953)* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2013).

95 The Soviet authorities used a wider definition of the “Kulak” in Western Ukraine after the war than they did in other Soviet republics. Here, a Kulak was not just a person who owned more than 10ha of land, but anyone who was opposed to collectivization, was against the Soviet order as such, or was recognized by the Soviets as a nationalist, see: Marples, *Stanilism in Ukraine*.

the destinations of “pioneers” traveling to the Wild West: eastern Ukrainians in Zhovkva and Poles from central regions in Krzyż. All of these groups had to come to terms with their new lives, and with the post-war culture of (non-) remembrance.

The Post-war Culture of (Non-)Remembrance (1953–1989/1991)

In the new Zhovkva and Krzyż the authorities were faced with a difficult task: they had to legitimize the presence of the new residents in the town, which of course was a component of the wider problem of justifying the Polishness of the “Recovered Territories” and the Ukrainianness of formerly Polish Galicia. In both towns, the task was connected to the targeted, top-down construction of memory.

Zhovkva was replete with material traces of the past, and it was difficult to completely marginalize the town’s history. The authorities therefore approached it selectively. In general, Soviet-Ukrainian version of the heroic canon included only these figures from the pre-1939 period, who did not challenge the idea of the Ukrainian-Russian unity.⁹⁶ The early history was framed in terms of the development of Ukrainian culture, especially folk culture, whilst the Polish presence in the region was treated as a centuries-long foreign occupation. Events that could confirm the town’s Ukrainian roots were especially emphasized, for example the supposed birth and upbringing of Bohdan Khmelnytsky in the locality. Polish-Ukrainian relations were rendered as a class war: the Polish lord [*pan*] and the Jesuit had oppressed the Ukrainian peasant and worker. The Soviet ideologists treated the historical presence of other ethnic groups as an ethnographic supplement bearing witness to the tolerance of the historical (and also, indirectly, the present-day) population of Zhovkva. In relation to the inter-war period, the activities of the communist underground were given primacy (although, in reality, they were marginal compared to the OUN): this narrative was designed to “prove” the long-term striving of the residents of Zhovkva and Galicia to be “united” with Soviet Ukraine and the “fraternal” Russian nation.⁹⁷ The year 1939 was represented as the crowning moment of success of these efforts: the town

96 See: Zbigniew Wojnowski, *The Near Abroad: Socialist Eastern Europe and Soviet Patriotism in Ukraine, 1956–1985* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2017), pp. 165–168.

97 On post-war Soviet memory policy in the area, see: Serhy Yekelchuk, *Stalin’s Empire of Memory. Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto-Buffalo-London: Toronto University Press, 2004); Iulia Kysla, “Konstruivaniia

had thrown off the shackles of bourgeois Polish rule and joyfully embarked on the construction of a socially just community in union with their kin from Soviet Ukraine. However, this lustrous process had been stopped in its tracks by the German invasion.

The Second World War, known as the Great Patriotic War in the USSR, became the dominant historical myth both in Zhovkva and throughout the Soviet Union, where efforts to construct a coherent pan-Soviet identity and memory before 1941 had been unsuccessful. The situation changed after the victory in 1945, an event that pushed even the October Revolution into the shadows.⁹⁸ The construction of a foundation myth entailed the universalization and selective deployment of narratives that fit the ideological mould. These included the heroic resistance of the civilian population, and the liberation of Zhovkva by the Red Army. In turn, UPA insurgents and all other supporters of the Ukrainian independence movement were made into unequivocal villains, as “Ukrainian-German bourgeois nationalists” who collaborated with the Nazis and used bandit methods to fight against Soviet power. People deported to Germany for forced labor were also condemned as collaborators.⁹⁹ Besides a binary division into heroes and villains, the official memory of Zhovkva was also characterized by its silences. The centuries-long presence of Poles was eradicated from the history of the town, along with their influence in forming its spiritual and material culture; their role was limited to that of occupants oppressing the autochthonous Ukrainian population. Their disappearance from the post-war town was also shrouded in mystery. The wartime years were cleansed of any accounts of the repressions that were carried out against various groups of residents during the first Soviet occupation, such as the murder of prisoners in June 1941 and the deportations to Siberia that carried on into the post-war period.

The most significant forgotten tragedy was, however, the Holocaust. In a town where nearly half the pre-war population was Jewish, the authorities simply pretended that these people had never existed. After the end of the war, not a single memorial plaque was placed to commemorate the Zhovkva Jews. The destroyed

ukrainskoi istorychnoi pamiati w URSR vprodovzh stalinskoho periodu (1930-ti–1950-ti rr.)” *Mizhkulturnyi dialog*, Vol. 1: *Identychnist* (2009), pp. 221–244.

98 Cf. Vladyslav Hrynevych, “Mit viiny ta viina mitiv,” *Krytyka*, Vol. 5, No.91, (2005), pp. 2–8. The construction of a new Soviet identity was under way already during the war, as shown in: Karel Berkhoff, *Motherland in Danger* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

99 On the fate of Ukrainians who returned to the USSR from the West, see: Dyczok, *The Grand Alliance*.

synagogue was sealed off and served as a storage house for the entire post-war period, first for salt and later for various industrial products. The Jewish cemetery, which had been partially destroyed by the Germans (headstones had been used to pave the road to Lviv), was converted into a market place in the 1960s, and all traces of the space's original function had been removed. Schools did not teach about the local Jews, guidebooks did not mention them, and popular scientific works on the history of Zhovkva omitted them entirely. This silence was in tune with a broader Soviet policy, under which Jews were at most commemorated as "Soviet civilians murdered by the Nazis." A separate category of Jewish victims of the Holocaust could not be admitted, as such a move would reduce the significance of Soviet victims of the war, which would threaten the myth of the USSR as both the main victor of the war and the principal victim.¹⁰⁰ The Holocaust did feature in Soviet historiography, but only as a historical event fully removed from Soviet wartime reality: its symbols were the camps in Auschwitz and Majdanek, both in Poland and both liberated by the Red Army. Eastern European Jews, including those of Zhovkva, were thus robbed of their memory.¹⁰¹

The official version of history was reflected in public space. Whilst Jewish victimhood was erased, it was far from the only form of forgetting. Plaques and crosses commemorating the people murdered by the NKVD in the town prison in 1941 were removed from the cemetery and market square. Polish monuments to Jan Sobieski and Stanisław Żółkiewski, as well as many other traces of pre-war Polish culture and religious symbols (such as the figure of Mary in front of the castle) were dismantled. A giant statue of Lenin replaced Sobieski's statue. Soon, other Soviet monuments and symbols of memory were erected: for example, the town cemetery was furnished with a special area for Red Army soldiers who died

100 Cf. Anataolii Podolskyi, "Ukraiinske suspilstvo i pamiat pro holokost: sproba analizu deiakykh aspektiv," *Holokost i suchasnist. Studii w Ukreini i sviti*, Vol. 1, No. 5, (2009), pp. 47–59; John-Paul Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine," in: *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. Joanna Michlic and John-Paul Himka (Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), pp. 627–661; Tarik Cyril Amar, "A Disturbed Silence. Discourse on the Holocaust in the Soviet West as an Anti-Site of Memory," in: *The Holocaust in the East. Local perpetrators and Soviet Responses*, ed. Michael David-Fox, Peter Holquist and Alexander M. Martin (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014), pp. 158–184.

101 Cf. Timothy Snyder, "Holocaust: The Ignored Reality," *The New York Review of Books* 56, No. 12 (16 July 2009), <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2009/07/16/holocaust-the-ignored-reality/>, last accessed 15.02.2019.

whilst liberating Zhovkva. The central site for Soviet ceremonies of all kinds, of which Victory Day (9 May) had pride of place, was the so-called Eternal Flame: an expressive sculptural composition representing a soldier dying for the Fatherland, placed opposite the eighteenth-century wooden church of the Holy Trinity.

The town's new elites and local authorities acted as guardians of the official version of events. New arrivals from eastern Ukraine led the line: Party members, civil servants, teachers and the so-called technical intelligentsia. They took up residence in the best houses and apartments (which had usually belonged to murdered Jews or deported Poles and Ukrainians), occupied positions of power, and set the tone for community life. With their privileged positions came responsibilities as protectors of the new order: during religious holidays, teachers from the East would ensure that children did not attend church, and Komsomol activists had to prove that they were making progress in "political work" with the local population. The residents of Zhovkva's barracks, in which more than 10,000 soldiers and officers were stationed at any time, were assigned a special role as guardians. Many of the officers had arrived with their families, and a Russian-language school had been established for the children. The Komsomol and the organization of Pioneers (i.e. scouts) facilitated the indoctrination of the young generation, but the school played the most important role, often inciting conflicts between generations in its efforts to create a new Soviet citizen.

Official memory was thus sustained by state authorities: the Party, the Komsomol, the school, places of work, as well as the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, which after the forced "union" of the Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches in 1946 had become the only legal religious institution in Zhovkva, taking over the building of the Basilian church. As everywhere in western Ukraine, local memories of the war were formed in two distinct streams: official memory on the one hand, and private, family-based memories that were not always voiced and were difficult to situate, but nonetheless created alternative heroes and anti-heroes. An important role in the preservation of this alternative memory in Zhovkva was played by the underground Greek Catholic Church, which continued to operate until Perestroika. The last Roman Catholic Church in Zhovkva was closed shortly after the war, after the last priest had left the town, following in the footsteps of his Polish parishioners.

As a symbolic sealing of the new face of Zhovkva, the town's name was changed in 1952. It was renamed Nesterov in honor of a Russian pilot who had crash-landed and died in Volia Vysotska, a village near Zhovkva, while executing a complicated maneuver during the First World War.

Whilst the past was handled selectively in Zhovkva, in Krzyż it was fully discarded. The town had become Polish, thereby returning to its “roots,” and the task facing its residents was the construction of socialism in the “Recovered Territories.” Remembering the German past was not a component of this project, and in any case, the official narrative had it that the German presence in the region’s history was only a thin layer superimposed on a Slavic base. If the past was evoked, both in Krzyż and in the wider region, it was the very distant time of the Piast dynasty,¹⁰² which could be called Polish with few complications. The typical temporal axis drawn by a state ideologist for the “Recovered Territories” in this period would have had a large gap in the middle: the Piast era in the distant, murky middle ages; then nothing for a long six centuries; then triumphant liberation by the Red Army and return to the Polish womb.¹⁰³ This middle hiatus was given some color by patches of autochthonous Polish folk culture and struggles for cultural autonomy – primarily in Upper Silesia, Warmia and Masuria. The town of Krzyż, however, did not quite fit into this scheme. Finding a Piast-era past in a town founded as a German railway settlement in the middle of the nineteenth century was not easy. The surrounding villages, which had been founded by Dutch and German Protestants, were equally bad candidates as evidence of the region’s age-old Polishness. For this reason, the authorities in Krzyż concentrated not on the risky business of “proving” the town’s Polishness, but on broadly screening out the memory of the German past.

The operation of “de-Germanization” (also sometimes known as “re-Polonization”) was carried out in Krzyż in accordance with patterns that were applied to the entire stretch of the “Recovered Territories.”¹⁰⁴ There were

102 The Piast dynasty ruled in Poland in the Middle Ages, from the mid-ninth century until 1370. In the early period of their rule, the borders of the Polish state coincided in many ways with the Poland that emerged after 1945, including a large part of Silesia and Pomerania (i.e. the lands that post-war Poland gained from Germany). In communist propaganda (as well as in Polish political thought of the interwar period) the fact that these “Recovered Territories” had been part of the Piast kingdom was the principal justification of their “perennial” Polishness.

103 On the construction of memory by local authorities in this region, see: Zenon Romanow, “Pamięć historyczna mieszkańców Ziemi Zachodnich i Północnych w latach 1945–89 na przykładzie Pomorza Zachodniego,” in: *Ziemia Odzyskana 1945–2005. 60 lat w granicach państwa polskiego*, ed. Andrzej Sakson (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 2006), pp. 201–218.

104 Cf. Bernadetta Nitschke, “Repolonizacja czy polonizacja? Polityka władz polskich wobec byłych kresów wschodnich III Rzeszy,” in: *Polacy–Niemcy–Pogranicze*, ed. Grzegorz Wyder and Tomasz Nodzyński (Zielona Góra: Oficyna Wyd. Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, 2006), pp. 275–290. Beata Halicka has also recently published an

two planes to this process: the human and the material. The re-Polonization of the urban and rural landscape consisted in the removal of German-language inscriptions from public spaces and the Polish renaming of places. German monuments and memorials were also removed, especially those commemorating Wehrmacht soldiers who had died in the First World War and historical figures whom the Poles would associate with anti-Polish activities during the Partition period. In Krzyż itself, two monuments to Wehrmacht servicemen were destroyed. “The fight against Germanness” also involved the reconstruction or refurbishment of buildings whose appearance was considered typically German: red-brick houses and timber-framed buildings were thus plastered over, “Polish-style” wooden porches were added to houses, and neo-Gothic reliefs were removed.

The two churches in Krzyż were stylistically converted: the Roman Catholic one had its choir seating and chancel repositioned, and all the furnishings changed; the Protestant church was completely revamped (e.g. the balconies typical of Evangelical churches were dismantled, and the cockerel-shaped wind vane, considered German in style, was removed),¹⁰⁵ and then it was re-consecrated as Catholic. Churches in the neighboring villages met similar fates: Lubcz, Kuźnica Żelichowska and Huta Szklana. The eighteenth-century church in Huta Szklana (Glasshütte before the war), a valuable example of wattle and daub architecture, was so thoroughly transformed by the villagers, new arrivals from the East, that it was completely unrecognizable from the original. A lot of these alterations were made spontaneously, without prior planning. The Polish settlers had no

excellent work on the cultural and social changes of this period in the “Recovered Territories:” Beata Halicka, *Polski Dziki Zachód. Przymusowe migracje i kulturowe oswajanie Nadodrza 1945–1948* (Kraków: Universitas, 2015). The Polonization of the “Recovered Territories” is also analyzed in: Hugo Service, *Germans to Poles. Communism, Nationalism and Ethnic Cleansing after the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Another example of the work studying cultural polonization of the German city is: Gregor Thum, *Uprooted: How Breslau Became Wrocław during the Century of Expulsion* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011).

105 Andrzej Brenzc examines examples of similar activities in other towns of this region, in his: “Oswajanie niemieckiego dziedzictwa kulturowego. Z badań etnologicznych na Środkowym Nadodrzu,” in: *Wokół niemieckiego dziedzictwa kulturowego na Ziemiach Północnych i Zachodnich*, ed. Zbigniew Mazur (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 1997), pp. 191–216. On the Polonization of Silesia, see: Andriy Demshuk, “Reinscribing Schlesien as Śląsk: Memory and Mythology in a Postwar German-Polish Borderland,” *History and Memory*, Vol. 24, No. 1, (2012), pp. 47–53.

attachment to the German heritage sites; instead, they wanted their places of worship to resemble the churches they had left behind in the East. Sometimes the “familiarization” of a given building or site turned out to be impossible; sources from this period attest, for example, to “repatriates” from the East wandering from one German village to another because the houses they found seemed to them excessively “lordly and rich.”¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, settlers succeeded in making the cultural space look more like “home” by placing wayside crosses and shrines. The areas surrounding Krzyż were dotted with several such artifacts; one of them, on the road leading into the village of Lubcz Mały, funded by one of my interviewees, bore the inscription “Mother of God, bless us on this recovered Polish land.”

De-Germanization sometimes bordered on absurdity. The authorities went on the hunt for German inscriptions on towels, ashtrays and tiles; a precedent was set by the punishment in 1947 of the Voivodeship office in Olsztyn for retaining the words “frei” and “besetzt” (“free”/“occupied”) on their lavatory doors.¹⁰⁷ That these efforts were largely unsuccessful – and that residents were guided often by practical common sense rather than ideology – is shown by the fact that many households in Krzyż use German items to this day. Such practices were often pragmatic in nature: it was, after all, difficult to dispose of German kitchenware if you had none of your own.

It was not only space that was Polonized; people were, too. One of the steps of the “re-Polonization operation” was the forced alteration of the spelling of names deemed too German. Very often – also in Krzyż – this affected people who had nothing to do with German culture or identity. If it was not only the name that was in doubt, but the individual personally, then that individual could be sent to “Polonization classes.”¹⁰⁸ In areas with a relatively large number of so-called native residents, educational summer camps and regular classes were organized; in Krzyż, Polish language lessons for autochthonous residents took place in the House of Culture.

All of these activities were, needless to say, backed up by propaganda. Like in Galicia, the new post-war authorities in the “Recovered Territories” created

106 Cf. Zbigniew Czarnuch, “Oswajanie krajobrazu. Polscy osadnicy w dorzeczu dolnej Warty,” in: *Wokół niemieckiego dziedzictwa kulturowego na Ziemiach Północnych i Zachodnich*, ed. Zbigniew Mazur (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 1997), pp. 169–190.

107 Cf. Nitschke, “Repolonizacja czy polonizacja?”

108 This process begun after the formal end of the verification operation, after which only people who could prove their Polish ethnicity were permitted to stay.

a pantheon of heroes and villains.¹⁰⁹ The heroes included, above all, the Red Army (and the Polish People's Army), which had "liberated" the eastern territories of the Third Reich. Soldiers killed during the war were usually buried in town cemeteries, or simply in the center of the village or town; these hastily arranged tombstones were often the first non-German memorials in the locality. This was the case in Krzyż: Polish and Soviet soldiers were buried in the middle of the market square, and a plaque commemorating their deeds was placed on the former German memorial stone honoring Wehrmacht soldiers active in the First World War. Later, the graves were transferred to the communal cemetery, but the plaque that was added in the 1960s mentions only Polish soldiers.¹¹⁰ The monument functioned for some time as a "Freedom Memorial,"¹¹¹ but it was later dismantled (the middle of the market square was incorporated into a section of the freeway).

Another set of heroes, who had no statues dedicated to them but were equally lionized by propaganda, were the migrant "pioneers;" this group was also much closer to the average Pole in Krzyż than wartime soldiers. Socialist propaganda portrayed these resettlers as competent and brave individuals who, spurred by patriotism, arrived in the "Recovered Territories" to help these "perennially Polish" regions to flourish; despite hardships, they had dedicated themselves to People's Poland.¹¹² The archetypal "pioneer" was a native of central Poland

109 On the formation of the heroic canon for educational purposes, see: Marta Brodala, "Propaganda dla najmłodszych w latach 1948–1956. Instrument stalinowskiego wychowania," in: *Przebudować człowieka. Komunistyczne wysiłki zmiany mentalności*, ed. Marta Brodala, Anna Lisiecka and Tadeusz Ruzikowski (Warszawa: Trio, 2001), pp. 123–179. More broadly on the communist-era politics of memory surrounding the Second World War, see: Bartosz Korzeniowski, "World War II in the Politics of Memory of the Polish People's Republic 1944–1970," in: *World War II and Two Occupations. Dilemmas of Polish Memory*, ed. Anna Wolff-Powęska and Piotr Forecki (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 61–80.

110 The remains of the Soviet soldiers were exhumed and transferred to the military cemetery in nearby Piła (the regional capital in the years 1975–1998).

111 "Freedom Memorial" is the caption found on a postcard of Krzyż produced in 1948 by a company called J. Grablis (one of a series); the image is a low-quality reprint of a pre-war German postcard. In all of the landscapes depicted in the series, elements have been visibly retouched: all German inscriptions have been removed from signs, street names, etc., and replaced with Polish-language toponyms.

112 Cf. Maria Tomczak, "Obraz osadników w prasie i publicystyce polskiej," in: *Ziemia Odzyskane 1945–2005. 60 lat w granicach państwa polskiego*, ed. Andrzej Sakson (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 2006), pp. 45–58.

and a worker or peasant, who was devoted to the socialist project. If he (in the symbolic paradigm, he was usually male) had arrived from the pre-war eastern regions, his official image included no indication of why he had to leave those territories.¹¹³ The pioneer was therefore the ideal man of work, with no sentimental attachment to the family home left behind in the East, and no difficulty in adapting to the new conditions.

The primary villain of post-war propaganda was the German revisionist. For obvious reasons, there was no need to stoke the flames of anti-German sentiment in Poland after the war, but in the “Recovered Territories” the authorities made additional efforts to create a threat of German revanchism. The irrational fear of Germans that they manufactured through propaganda, education and popular culture had a specific and clear function: the pioneer would be grateful to his socialist homeland for the opportunity to resettle in the newly acquired territories, but would also link the safety of his new home and existence to unconditional support for the Polish regime, which was fighting the external enemy on his behalf.

This situation changed somewhat in the 1970s, after the Polish People’s Republic and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) had established diplomatic relations. From this time, the official discourse in Poland operated with two images of Germany: a positive one for the GDR, which had previously been duped by its leaders but was now back on the righteous road to socialism; and a negative one for the revisionist-capitalist Federal Republic, which was constantly laying claim to Wrocław, Gdańsk and Szczecin.¹¹⁴ Besides a modification in the official narrative, the transformation of Polish-German relations entailed another important change for the residents of Krzyż: the border with the GDR was opened, and former residents of Kreuz were able to travel to the now-Polish town. This was an unprecedented phenomenon, which sets Krzyż apart from Zhovkva. In the 1970s, visits by East Germans were a common phenomenon in Krzyż, and led to intensive contact at the individual level between residents past and present.

113 This observation applies to the early post-war years. In later decades, the censorship of biographies of people from the former eastern borderlands abated considerably; an iconic example is the classic film *All Friends Here* [*Sami swoi*, 1967, dir. by Sylwester Chęciński], which tells the story of two feuding families, both resettled in the “Recovered Territories” from eastern regions after the war.

114 Cf. Andrzej Sakson, “Niemcy w świadomości społecznej Polaków,” in: *Polacy wobec Niemców. Z dziejów kultury politycznej Polski 1945–1989*, ed. Anna Wolff-Powęska (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 1993), pp. 408–429.

The individual opening up of contacts did not, however, lead to any substantial change in the official memory policy concerning the region's German past. It was still forbidden to memorialize the German period of the "Recovered Territories." In Krzyż, both the German origins of the town and the fate of the Germans who had lived there before the war were suppressed. The experiences of settlers from the East were also subject to erasure: it was possible to discuss in private their wartime experiences (including the period of Soviet occupation) and the territories they had left behind; but in public, it was impossible.

The inculcation of a unitary vision of the past was above all the task of schooling, as was the case in Zhovkva. The new Polish school in Krzyż could not measure up to the Russian one in terms of the scale of its indoctrination, but its education model was still radically different to pre-war norms.¹¹⁵ It was officially secular, and its aim was to produce citizens devoted to the socialist state who would not be overly curious about the past. Unlike the school in Zhovkva, however, the success of these objectives depended to a significant extent on the ideological convictions of individual teachers; the teachers, meanwhile, had a range of legally operating allies if their aims were relatively seditious. The most important was, without doubt, the Catholic Church, which – in addition to its religious function – was in Krzyż the largest and most prominent social structure other than the state. It was, of its very nature, interested in the cultivation of an alternative form of memory. The most valuable religious artifact in the local parish church was a heraldic flag transported from Drohobycz, a formerly Polish town in Galicia transferred to Ukraine after the war. After the practical liquidation of the scouts' movement in Stalinist times,¹¹⁶ the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association (*Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego*, ZHP) became a major pillar in local efforts to educate youth independently of the state's ideological missives; especially at the local level, the organization maintained a substantial level of autonomy.

The state was, of course, not only concerned with the opinions of the youth, although it did direct the majority of its efforts towards this segment of the population. Adults were also the target of propaganda: in workplaces, through special

115 Cf. Krzysztof Kosiński, *O nową mentalność. Życie codzienne w szkołach 1945–56* (Warszawa: Trio, 2002).

116 From the very beginning of communist rule, the authorities made numerous efforts to influence the activities of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association and to co-opt its power structures. Thus, in 1950 it was merged with the Union of Polish Youth (i.e. the equivalent of the Soviet Komsomol). The Polish Scouting and Guiding Association was reactivated as a separate organization during the Thaw of 1956.

meetings (e.g. to encourage people to join collective farms or co-operatives),¹¹⁷ and in the obligatory celebration of state holidays such as Labor Day (1 May), Victory Day (9 May), and Independence Day (22 July).¹¹⁸ Nonetheless, the ideological pressure in socialist Krzyż paled in comparison to Soviet Nesterov (Zhovkva).

After the Fall of Communism: New Beginnings? (1989/1991-present)

The fall of state socialism meant, in both Krzyż and Zhovkva, a radical political and economic transformation, the opening of borders – a very significant fact for borderland towns – and the return of hitherto suppressed memories. The taboo on previously hushed up experiences of individuals and groups was lifted almost overnight, and people could publicly question the dominant versions of history. Unlike in previous decades, the situations in Krzyż and Zhovkva developed in completely different ways.

Up to 2009 the events in Krzyż can be described under the overarching theme of “public silence.” In the first two post-socialist decades, only two memorials were installed in the town. The first was in 1995, in the market square – a busy space crisscrossed by trucks and other vehicles on weekdays, a venue for processions and public events on holidays. A boulder was placed in front of the

117 Collective farms [Państwowe Gospodarstwo Rolne, PGR] were created in Poland from 1949 on the Soviet model. In the present-day administrative region of Krzyż, one PGR was formed: in a village somewhat distant from the town itself called Żelichowo (at the time located in the administrative district of Kuźnica Żelichowska); its residents were mostly repatriates from Ukraine. The agricultural co-operative was in operation for a short time only in Huta Szklana. The post-war collectivization of agriculture in Poland has been discussed in a rich body of scholarly literature; see: Tomasz Skonieczny, *Postawy chłopów wobec koncepcji i poczynań PPR (PZPR) w początkowej fazie kolektywizacji polskiego rolnictwa (1948–1949)* (Słupsk: Akademia Pomorska w Słupsku, 2009); Antoni Kura, *Aparat bezpieczeństwa i wymiar sprawiedliwości wobec kolektywizacji wsi polskiej 1948–1956* (Warszawa: IPN, 2006); and numerous other studies that focus on specific regions.

118 The National Day of the Rebirth of Poland [Narodowe Święto Odrodzenia Polski] was celebrated on 22 July during communist times, on the anniversary of the declaration of the manifesto of the Soviet-sponsored Polish Committee of National Liberation [Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego, PKWN] in 1944. Since 1989, Independence Day has been celebrated on 11 November, the anniversary of the declaration of Polish independence in 1918.

town hall, on the initiative of the town council, with a plaque bearing the inscription “On the 50th anniversary of the Return of the Krzyż Lands to Poland” (at the time, two history teachers of the elder generation were members of the council; the idea was theirs). In 2005, in a small park in front of the secondary school, a similar, smaller rock memorial was installed in honor of Pope John Paul II. Not a single memorial was placed to commemorate the Poles who had been transported from the East, nor to the Germans who had been deported from Krzyż; no commemorative sign whatsoever mentioned the town’s German past. Indeed, traces of the German past were physically removed: in 2008, a major portion of the derelict German cemetery was razed to the ground. This cemetery had bordered with the (new post-war) Polish one, separated by a wall, and had become completely covered by a forest that grew over it. The area was annexed to the Polish cemetery, and is used to this day as a burial site.

Moreover, in the years 1989–2016 only one street name was changed – the main thoroughfare previously named after the Polish Stalinist leader Bolesław Bierut (1892–1956) was dedicated to the Polish Armed Forces (*ulica Wojska Polskiego*). Nonetheless there remained streets in Krzyż named after communists such as Julian Marchlewski and Karol Świerczewski; these were given more “neutral” names only in the nationwide decommunization wave of 2017.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile, Polish national history remained the dominant memory paradigm. The biggest public celebration in the town is Constitution Day, 3 May, perhaps because the celebrations coincide with a religious holiday, a national fest of the Virgin Mary (during which processions take place from church to church). In 2008, as usual, the main ceremony took place in front of the monument in the market square. The guard of honor by the memorial rock was conducted by four schoolboys dressed in the military uniform of the Wielkopolska Insurgents,¹²⁰

119 Julian Marchlewski (1866–1925): activist of the workers’ movement, communist, opponent of the independence of the interwar Polish republic; in 1920, on the recommendation of Lenin, was appointed the head of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Poland in Białystok. Karol Świerczewski (*nom de guerre* “Walter;” 1897–1947): Polish serviceman, general of the Red Army and the Polish Armed Forces, member of the Polish Workers’ Party; was killed fighting against the UPA in the Bieszczady mountains. Marchlewski Street became Western Street (*ulica Zachodnia*); Świerczewski Street was renamed after Józef Wybicki (1747–1822), a Polish writer and politician, and the author of the words of the Polish national anthem. The residents of the town proposed the new names.

120 For the Wielkopolska Uprising, see: footnote 71 in Chapter 1: “*Dramatis personae*: History and Memory.”

and the culmination of the event was the collective singing of the patriotic song *Rota* [*The Oath*], an early twentieth century piece composed in protest against Prussian rule. At the same time, the speech delivered by the chairman of the town council was largely devoid of any references to the past – he spoke of development opportunities within the European Union and the prospects for cooperation with Germany.

Thus, whereas one would expect a process of “reimmersion” into history in the aftermath of systemic transformation, the first two decades were characterized by the opposite process: on the one hand, an absence of public interest in the formerly censored elements of the past (including both Poles’ “own” history, understood as the experiences of specific groups of people, and the ethnically “other” past of the Germans who had lived there previously); on the other hand, the ideology of the fallen regime was conserved to a great extent, with the monument to the “Polishness” of Krzyż in the town square the exemplary expression of this mnemonic continuity. The historical vision of the town’s present-day authorities is also on display in the “History” section of the municipality’s official website¹²¹ as well as the historical sketches published in the town’s regular information bulletins. The website text gives a detailed outline of the foundation and development of the town as a railway junction, but without mentioning even one word about it being a German settlement called Kreuz (Ostbahn), rather than Krzyż Wielkopolski; the year 1945 is described euphemistically as “a difficult time,” and the Red Army’s conquest of Kreuz in 1945 is referred to as a “liberation.” Neither the deportation of German residents nor the reasons for the emergence of a Polish town are mentioned. A similar history is presented in a 2010 special issue of the town council’s information bulletin, *Wieści gminne*, published to mark the 300th anniversary of the founding of the village of Huta Szklana; the years of war are summarized in a single sentence, “a new division of Europe ensues in 1945, and Huta Szklana, alongside the other lands of western Poland, is joined to its ancient homeland.”¹²²

Nonetheless, an analysis of unofficial, informal initiatives in Krzyż shows a somewhat different picture. Towards the end of the 1990s, a small brochure on the history of the village of Łokacz Mały (before 1945 Busch-Lukatz) appeared, thanks to the efforts of a local history enthusiast. Here, the German past is not emphasized, but it is not openly negated: the history of the settlements before

121 <http://www.krzyz.pl/historia-1.html>, last accessed 19.12.2018.

122 *Huta Szklana. Jubileuszowy biuletyn z okazji 300-lecia istnienia wsi* (Krzyż: Urząd Miejski w Krzyżu, August 2010), p. 4.

1945 is presented without reference to ethnonational categories, as the story of the Olędrzy, the lord Sapieha who founded the village, and the railwaymen who develop the station and town as a whole. A substantial portion of the book is devoted to the individual biographies of the oldest residents of Łokacz, describing their experiences before arriving in Krzyż and in the first years after resettlement. In 2005, on the initiative of the same individual in conjunction with a local cycling club, and in cooperation with the local forestry authority and the town council, a cycle path named in honor of Hans Paasche was opened on the outskirts of the Drawa National Park just north of Krzyż. Hans Paasche was the owner of a now-vanished manor called Waldfrieden, located a few dozen kilometers to the north of Kreuz (the place's post-war Polish name is Zacisze). He was a locally renowned pacifist who, in 1920, was shot dead by German soldiers stationed in Wiesenthal (now Przesieki). Alongside the construction of the bike path, the organizers of this initiative distributed information leaflets about Hans Paasche in the material promoting the new route. The cycle path is used, for example, for regular outings by the local scouts' association, which also pays close attention to the story of Paasche; they even use pre-war German maps of the area to plan their trips, and set assignments involving searching for traces of German monuments and buildings. Besides such initiatives with a social benefit, there are individuals and interest groups who collect local German artifacts: postage stamps, newspapers, decorations and other everyday items (porcelain, cutlery, bottles, hangers, etc.). Moreover, in Huta Szklana, the owners of an organic farm have revived local German methods of dairy production, selling cheeses made using old German recipes; the most popular is called "Kreuzer," and pictures of pre-war dairies in Glasshütte are on display on the shop walls. All of these activities combine to reveal a cultural tendency that aims to (re)discover the area's German heritage, though of course on a small scale relative to the official Polonocentrism. The best-known example in Poland of an organization promoting the complex heritage of the "Recovered Territories" is the "Borussia" cultural association in Olsztyn.¹²³

Another important part of the new mnemonic landscape in Krzyż are the activities of the KARTA Centre, a non-governmental institution that documents and publicizes history, in the years 2008–2012; in turn, the reception of these efforts in the town shows that KARTA effectively responded to the needs of residents. Before the research project of which this book is a product had been

123 On "Borussia" and similar initiatives, see: Robert Traba, *Kraina tysiąca granic. Szkice o historii i pamięci* (Olsztyn: Borussia, 2003).

conceived, I was part of a pilot project that collected oral testimonies among the oldest residents of Krzyż. A follow-up project involved, *inter alia*, educational activities: we carried out workshops for secondary school students, organized a meeting for residents to present some of the gathered testimonies, and published a brochure entitled *From Kreuz to Krzyż: Polish and German residents of Krzyż in the Twentieth Century* [*Od Kreuz do Krzyża: losy polskich i niemieckich mieszkańców Krzyża w XX wieku.*] A website was also launched, where it was possible to access fragments of oral history interviews, as well as archival photographs.¹²⁴ For a short time, therefore, I was not only an observer, but also a practitioner of local memory in Krzyż. The response to the activities of KARTA easily exceeded our expectations. The project presentation in the town cultural center attracted enough people to fill the hall, including the mayor, the chairman of the town council and the heads of all the schools. Through the municipal library, over 100 copies of the brochure *From Kreuz to Krzyż* were distributed to local residents. At its peak, the website was visited by several dozen people a day, most of them from Krzyż itself.

It would be possible to diagnose of the state of commemoration in Krzyż as “public forgetting, private fascination,” if it were not for events that took place in 2009 and 2010. In 2009, burials began to take place in the part of the municipal cemetery that had been converted from the old German graveyard. As graves were dug, the remains of people buried in the same spots before the war were found. A scandal broke out in Krzyż: residents objected to laying their loved ones to rest in plots where other corpses already lay. The matter was brought to the town authorities, and a heated discussion broke out on the pages of the local newspaper *Tygodnik Notecki*. Many people only then discovered that the cemetery had been expanded on the site of the pre-war German burial ground. Public pressure led the authorities to conduct reburials, in consultation with the Protestant Church based in Poznań, and a modest memorial to the Germans formerly buried there was erected in spring 2010. A black granite plaque bears the bilingual dedication. It stated in Polish: *Pamięci zmarłych tej ziemi* [*In Memory of the Dead of this Land*]; in German: *Ruhe sanft in eurer Gruft* [*Rest in Peace in your Graves*]. A similar memorial inscription was put up on the wall of the cemetery chapel. At roughly the same time, the town council of Krzyż instigated the publication of an album of old postcards from Kreuz. The 85-page book is entitled *Krzyż Wielkopolski: A History Written in Postcards* [*Krzyż Wielkopolski: historia*

124 The website stopped working due to the technical problems of its administrator, the KARTA Centre, in 2017.

pocztówką pisana], and features more than one hundred German images of the town and surroundings. The subtitles to the images provide information about the postcards, always featuring the old German name of the building or place next to the present-day Polish one. However, the book's introduction somewhat dampens the impression of an opening up to the past on the part of local officialdom. A text that could have been written in communist times tells readers that: "in 1772 – during the first Partition of Poland – these lands were conquered by the Prussians, but the area remained largely inhabited by Poles, who were mostly farmers;" "[in the interwar period] Krzyż unfortunately did not return to Polish territory;" "the town was liberated after intense fighting on January 27, 1945."¹²⁵ For someone with no knowledge of the region's history, it may be difficult to understand why the pictures on these postcards have German text at all.

Meanwhile, Polish-German contacts flourished in Krzyż at several levels. At the beginning of the 1990s, Germans who had previously lived in Kreuz started to travel to the town, the second such wave in recent decades. This time, it was people from former West Germany who came, i.e. those who had been previously labeled by communist-era propaganda as threatening revisionists. In the new political situation, the Polish residents of Krzyż perceived these tourists differently to the East Germans who had visited 20–30 years previously. The Germans also had different preconceptions of Poland and Poles, and behaved differently to their compatriots from the GDR; in many cases, their self-confidence led the locals to feel threatened. Fear of the Germans reached a zenith during the campaigning period before the European Union membership referendum in 2003, when conservative and populist parties stirred anxiety in western regions of Poland by arguing that Germans would try and reclaim pre-war homes and plots of land by legal means. However, campaigning ended, Poland joined the EU, and no Germans arrived. As time passed, their visits became increasingly rare; at present, the majority of Germans who travel through the region are ordinary tourists with no sentimental attachment to the area. Many agrotourism companies cater to Germans, with promotional material printed primarily in German. Partnerships are also developing at the level of educational and cultural institutions. The secondary school in Krzyż has for several years arranged exchanges through the EU's "Comenius" program, and the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association organized a joint scouting camp for young Poles from Krzyż and scouts from Germany in 2007. Informal contacts have also played

125 Bronisław Sudnik, ed., *Krzyż Wielkopolski – historia pocztówką pisana* (Piła: Wydawnictwo Media, 2010), p. 7.

a role. Krzyż is located just 100 km from the border, with good transport links to Germany, and many families in the 1990s subsisted by means of (more or less legal) cross-border trade. Many residents of Krzyż also work, whether permanently or seasonally, in Germany.

At first glance, the situation in Zhovkva after 1991 looks to have been the exact opposite. Whereas the post-transformation years were fairly calm in Krzyż, Zhovkva was mired in conflicts over the meaning of the past. In order to understand these disputes, it is necessary to consider nationwide debates about the past in Ukraine.¹²⁶ The official vision of the country's history had begun to change during Perestroika, and radical alterations were introduced after Ukraine gained independence in 1991. The Soviet memory narrative was gradually discredited, although not without difficulty, and a new, national history gained primacy. A new state requires new heroes, and in addition to the Cossacks and the leaders of medieval Kievan Rus', the UPA was elevated to the status of collective hero. Meanwhile, a dominant tendency in Ukrainian historiography promoted a victimhood narrative, whereby Russia and the Soviet Union had oppressed the Ukrainian people for centuries. However, the new paradigm was not accepted by all Ukrainians, the biggest controversies arising in the eastern regions of the country, where the UPA was seen as a criminal organization that collaborated with the Nazis, and the Red Army remembered as genuine liberators. Nevertheless, the proponents of UPA mythology made significant gains, succeeding in instating their version of events into school textbooks.¹²⁷ Disputes about the UPA are ongoing – many observers argue that this problem divides Ukrainian society more than any other. Debates also cause divisions within the nationalist camp, which struggles to come to terms with issues such as the massacres of Poles in Volhynia (1943–44) or collaboration with the Nazis (both

126 This is such a large topic that there is neither room for detailed analysis here, nor are there many scholarly works that consider it in its totality. Older publications remain the best complex analyses, see: David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains. Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, New York 2008); Tomasz Stryjek, *Jakiej przeszłości potrzebuje przyszłość? Interpretacje dziejów narodowych w historiografii i debacie publicznej na Ukrainie 1991–2004* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, Rytm, 2007). One of the most recent overviews is: Georgiy Kasianov, "History, Politics and Memory (Ukraine 1990s–2000s)," in: *Memory and Change in Europe. Eastern Perspectives*, ed. Małgorzata Pakier and Joanna Wawrzyniak (New York–Oxford: Berhahn Books, 2016), pp. 193–211.

127 Many analyses of Ukrainian histories have been published. See works by scholars including Viktoria Sereda, Nancy Popson and Leonid Zashkilniak.

military collaboration by the SS Galizien division and civilian participation in the auxiliary police, including collaboration in the Holocaust).¹²⁸ The controversy of the theme also affects pragmatic questions: it was only in 2015, as part of the decommunization laws passed that year, that the UPA's soldiers were officially recognized as "fighters for Ukrainian independence," thus gaining a status alongside Red Army veterans and a range of benefits and privileges that, often, meant a substantial economic benefit for the individuals concerned.¹²⁹ It should also be noted that, for all the dominance of nationalist memory in Ukraine, there are many different narratives that coexist, even in the western regions; these are often mutually contradictory. The Soviet commemorative canon was not completely dismantled, as can be seen in statues that are still standing in Galician towns and in the fact that in Galicia – unlike in, say, Estonia – there were no acts of vandalism after 1991 against Soviet-era monuments; usually only Lenin monuments were toppled in isolated cases.¹³⁰ This changed after the Euromaidan

128 For an example of the discussions thereof, see a volume published in 2010 that compiles topical essays written by various opinion-makers: Tarik C. Amar, Ihor Balynskiy and Yaroslav Hrytsak, eds., *Strasti za Banderoiu* (Kyiv: Hrani-T, 2010). An interesting analysis of the memories of members of the SS Galizien division and the politics of memory in Ukraine is: Olesya Khromeychuk, *"Undetermined" Ukrainians. Post-War Narratives of the Waffen SS "Galicia" Division* (Oxford–Bern–Berlin–Bruxelles–Frankfurt am Main–New York, New York–Wien: Peter Lang, 2013). Also see: Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, "Debating, obfuscating and disciplining the Holocaust: post-Soviet historical discourses on the OUN–UPA and other nationalist movements," *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 42, (2012), pp. 199–241.

129 Former president Viktor Yushchenko made attempts to change this situation during his tenure (2005–2010); in 2005, he invited UPA veterans and former Red Army soldiers to a joint ceremony commemorating the end of the Second World War, whilst one of his last acts in 2010 was the granting of the title of "Hero of Ukraine" to Stepan Bandera. In April 2010, a Donetsk court overturned this decision. Radical changes were only introduced after the overthrow of the presidency of Viktor Yanukovych and the Euromaidan. For consistent analysis of the Yushchenko's politics of memory, see: Per Anders Rudling, "Memories of 'Holodomor' and National Socialism in Ukrainian Political Culture," in: *Rekonstruktion des Nationalmythos? Frankreich, Deutschland und die Ukraine im Vergleich*, ed. Yves Bizeul (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress, 2013), pp. 227–258. On the decommunization laws, see: John-Paul Himka, *Legislating Historical Truth: Ukraine's Laws of 9 April 2015*, https://www.academia.edu/12056628/Legislating_Historical_Truth_Ukraines_Laws_of_9_April_2015, last accessed 15.02.2019.

130 Cf. Andriy Portnow, "'Wielka Wojna Ojczyźniana' w polityce pamięci Białorusi, Mołdawii i Ukrainy," *Res Publica Nowa*, Vol. 7 (2009), pp. 24–35.

revolution of 2014, when Soviet monuments were dismantled en masse across Ukraine.¹³¹

How does Zhovkva fit into this national context? After 1991, the official representation of the town's past was completely changed: the "Soviet" interpretation that had dominated until then was rendered "incorrect," and a national memory took its place. The mnemonic paradigm shift can be seen above all in the symbolic furnishing of public space: Zhovkva became a symbolic domain¹³² in which nationally minded Ukrainians, for whom the OUN and UPA were model patriots, gained supremacy. From the beginning of the 1990s, several new monuments were erected. The most prominent are the monument-shrine to the victims of the NKVD massacre in 1941, placed in front of the town hall, the statue of the OUN leader Yevhen Konovalets (on the spot where the monument to Piotr Nesterov had previously stood), and the monument to the victims of the Great Famine of 1932–1933. Graves of the Sich Riflemen were renovated in the town cemetery, and commemorative plaques were installed to those victims of Stalinist Terror in Zhovkva whose bodies were never found and to the human remains discovered in the crypt of the Basilian church.

Besides the three memorials connected to the Holocaust (to which I shall return below), only three of the new monuments do not have an anti-Soviet thrust: the statue of Mary in front of the castle, the "family monument" (which features as woman and man leaning over a child) and the monument to soldiers who died in Afghanistan, which appeared in 2000. All of the memorials were installed with the active participation of local residents, some on their initiative. Zhovkva's community engagement is also visible in a range of other projects: in 1990 the Svitlo kultury [Light of Culture] association, which restored old buildings in Zhovkva, was founded; then, a community museum was opened (although it closed after a few years); and in 2007 the local Tourist Information Centre was established. The naming of streets was revised in many instances: streets dedicated to communists such as Kirov and Dovhanyk disappeared, alongside those commemorating Russian authors and artists, such as Lermontov and Pushkin. They were replaced by streets named after the Warriors of the UPA, Stepan Bandera,

131 Cf. Tadeusz Olszański, *Wielka dekomunizacja. Ukraińska polityka historyczna czasu wojny* (Warszawa: Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich, 2017).

132 Lech M. Nijakowski developed the concept of the symbolic domain – understood as a space in which a given group realizes its historical policy – in his book *Domeny symboliczne*.

Yevhen Konovalts, the Sich Riflemen, Oleksa Hasyn (UPA commander in the “Western” district), and other nationalists.

The fall of state socialism also enabled a religious revival, which had important consequences for the culture of remembrance in Zhovkva. Greek Catholics in the town had started to demand that the Orthodox Church return the Basilian church to them in the late 1980s. A heated dispute broke out between the faithful and clergy of the two confessions, with exchanges not only confined to words: for example, Greek Catholics chained themselves to the church door, and an Orthodox priest attempted to sneak out some of the relics of a saint. Eventually the Basilians returned to the church and monastery, and the Orthodox hierarchy commissioned a new, enormous temple on the edge of the town on the road to Lviv. Alongside the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate in Zhovkva, there is also a small church of the autocephalous branch of the Orthodox faith,¹³³ located in the former chapel of the Felician convent next to St. Lazar’s Hospital, while Greek Catholic services are conducted in three other churches. The Basilians have great cultural authority in Zhovkva, being associated with patriotic virtues. They symbolize the pre-war tradition of Ukrainian culture and the post-war resistance to the imposition of communism. They therefore act as patrons to many local events that commemorate the past. However, relations with the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate remain strained, although this has been true of all of the confessions in Zhovkva – none of them retains friendly relations with the Moscow branch.

Social divisions in Zhovkva quickly spread to the linguistic, national and political spheres, although the boundaries between them were often difficult to identify.¹³⁴ On one side of the barricades were nationally-minded Ukrainians who supported the Ukrainian cultural and linguistic rebirth as well as a nationalist approach to memory; on the other side were ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians who preferred Soviet models of identity and culture to the Ukrainian national ones. The former accused the latter of disloyalty to the Ukrainian state; the latter reciprocated with charges of national chauvinism. Language was the issue that caused particularly heated clashes: the first group argued that the Russian-speakers were purposefully demonstrating a lack of

133 At the time of the writing of this book, three separate branches of the Orthodox Church operated in Ukraine: the Moscow Patriarchate, the Kyiv Patriarchate, and the Autocephalous Church.

134 On the linguistic divisions in Ukraine at this time, see: Lada Bilaniuk, *Contested Tongues: Language Politics and Cultural Correction in Ukraine* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2005).

respect for Ukrainian; the second group countered by accusing the Ukrainian-speaking majority of denying them their right to use their minority language in public. Open conflicts sometimes broke out – partly facilitated by the closure of the military garrison in Zhovkva.

The Roman Catholic Church was reopened in Zhovkva shortly after the fall of communism; Polish conservation officers have continually refurbished it with financial backing from the Polish state. The Roman Catholic congregation is small in number, and mass is celebrated once a week. Most of the faithful here are Ukrainians, with a relatively low number of ethnic Poles. Services are held partly in Polish and partly in Ukrainian. Despite the existence of a Polish community in Zhovkva, no commemorative plaque to the Poles who lived in the town has appeared since 1991: neither to those who contributed to the culture of the town historically, nor to the victims of Soviet repressions or UPA atrocities. The only Polish memorial is a cross in the town cemetery commemorating Polish soldiers who died in war against the Soviets in 1920; it was placed in the interwar period and renovated after 1991 on the initiative of the Polish community. The local museum, situated in the castle, presents the town's history through the prism of its architecture – the castle, churches of different Christian denominations, synagogue and other building reveal different layers of the past. Characteristically for western Ukraine (and also for western Poland), the texts in the display avoid any reference to the ethnicity of the people who designed and built these artifacts. Stories about Ukrainian heroes: Bohdan Khmelnytsky (born in Zhovkva) and Ivan Mazepa (who visited the town) are the principal additions to the architectural descriptions. Meanwhile, a temporary exhibition from 2010 departed from this nationalizing paradigm. It presented several dozen photographic portraits of historical residents of Zhovkva (most of them Ukrainians and Poles), based on a collection of glass plates made by the town's last Polish photographer, Emil Domański. The exhibition attracted a great deal of interest from the local population, especially those whose families had roots in the locality; according to the curator, museum visitors spent a long time studying the photographs and looking for their relatives and acquaintances. Another of the museum's initiatives is highly reminiscent of the book of old postcards published in Krzyż: in 2010, a calendar featuring Polish images of Zhovkva townscapes was issued, with bilingual inscriptions in Polish and Ukrainian. However, similarly to the case of the Krzyż album, the publication contains no information as to why the Poles and Jews who created much of the material culture featured in the images are no longer present in the town.

Finally, memory about the town's Jews is also largely absent. In theory, in contrast to the (non-)commemoration of the Poles, we cannot say that there have

been no public memory projects in Zhovkva whatsoever. In the early 1990s, a symbolic grave in memory of the Jews who died here during the liquidation of the Zhovkva ghetto (1943) was placed in the town cemetery. The inscription reads:

Here are buried the remains of Jewish residents of Zhovkva, the victims of the genocide carried out by Nazi Germany, shot to death during the liquidation of the ghetto on 25 March 1943. Your integrity, rectitude and virtue remain in our hearts. In eternal memory. We ask for prayers. From the residents of Zhovkva.

Nonetheless, although the plaque purported to be “from the residents of Zhovkva,” in reality it was the result of individual efforts by the town’s last living Holocaust survivor. The second Holocaust memorial in the locality was also created independently of the town authorities, with funding from former residents of Zhovkva now living in Israel. Situated approximately 2km outside the town at a site of wartime mass executions, the large memorial was erected towards the end of the 1990s and bears the bilingual (Ukrainian-Yiddish) inscription: “In Blessed Memory of the 3,500 Victims of the Zhovkva Ghetto. 25.03.1943” in Ukrainian; and “In Blessed Memory of the 3,500 Victims of the Zhovkva Ghetto. May their Souls be United by the Bonds of Life” in Yiddish. When the monument was unveiled, numerous members of the Jewish diaspora, as well as representatives of the local authorities and Zhovkva residents attended the ceremony. At present, after the death of the town’s last Holocaust survivor in 1999, the memorial stands neglected and has been vandalized several times: for example, the decorative bronze elements were removed by thieves. The Zhovkva synagogue is in no better state. After the fall of communism, restoration works were started (the building is owned by the state), but only after 2001, thanks to the support of the World Monuments Fund’s Jewish Heritage Programme, the synagogue received a new copper roof. The restoration is still in progress in 2018. A site of Jewish memory that was until very recently completely removed from the symbolic space of Zhovkva is the *ohel* (ornate burial house) of Aleksander Sender Schor, local rabbi and Talmudist (died 1737), built by his descendants on the former site of the Jewish cemetery, which now functions as a marketplace. The building is closed with a padlock. A piece of paper hung in the window tells readers, in Hebrew only, that the key is kept in a house nearby.

Thus, whilst there is no shortage of memorials representing diverse memories and narratives in Zhovkva, their prominence and state of repair are very different. Newly erected monuments to heroes of the Ukrainian underground stand alongside memorials to murdered Jews and religious sites of memory. With the exception of the Lenin statue that was pulled down before the official collapse of the USSR, all but one (the Nesterov statue) of the Soviet monuments

are still standing: the figure of the soldier-liberator and the designated segment for Red Army soldiers in the municipal cemetery, and the monument to the heroes of the “Great Patriotic War.” Flowers are occasionally laid at the feet of these memorials (especially on Victory Day, 9 May), but in general it is difficult to conclude that anyone is maintaining them regularly: the graves are overgrown and the monuments neglected.

Like in Krzyż, the opening of borders gave Zhovkva opportunities to increase contacts with Poland. Many Poles traveling to see Lviv visit the town, and in high season at least one coach full of Polish tourists stops by daily. Information material sold in the Tourist Centre is printed primarily in Polish and Ukrainian, and local guides are mostly conversant in Polish. Zhovkva is also visited by actual former residents and their descendants, although less frequently than Krzyż. Jewish tour groups also visit the town and leave a lasting impression in the memories of locals due to the characteristic religious clothing worn by some; however, in the course of my visits I did not come across any such groups. There are, however, no Polish-Ukrainian cooperation projects aimed at the wider population. Zhovkva has an official twin town in Poland, museums run joint projects, but there are no school exchanges or contacts between local NGOs. Economic networks are significantly more developed. Zhovkva being just 30km from the Polish border, many residents trade with Poland, not necessarily legally. Many Ukrainians in Zhovkva – as well as almost all of the Poles – work in Poland, on either a permanent or a seasonal basis.

Zhovkva had its origin name restored in 1992.¹³⁵

135 After the publication of the Polish version of this book, the state of commemoration in Zhovkva changed somewhat. In 2013, a group of local activists took part in a project financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the American Jewish Committee, and carried out by the Ukrainian Centre for Holocaust Studies in Kyiv: “Preserving and Memorializing the Holocaust Mass Graves of Eastern Europe.” Two books about the history of Zhovkva’s Jewry, aimed at a wider audience, were published as a result of this project. Moreover, in 2017 a memorial plaque was unveiled on the site of the former Jewish cemetery, now a marketplace. Three information boards about the castle, synagogue and Basilian church were produced, as well as a fourth one about the Holocaust in Zhovkva. There is no space here for a detailed analysis of these new forms of memory, but the very fact of their emergence is significant, as is the fact that teachers and young people from Zhovkva schools took part in their creation.