

4 Resettlement and Identity

Returning Home – the Last Stage of the Psychological Integration Process

It is difficult to grasp the exact moment in a migrant's narrative when they have become fully integrated into the new place of residence. The description of this process is always intense, saturated, and many-sided. But the respondents' testimonies were usually concerned with the social aspect of integration (the creation of a new community with new social bonds), rather than the psychological dimension.²⁰⁷ While the first visits to the "former homeland" acted as a coda for the first phase of integration – above all, in the material and everyday aspects – the later phase of social adaptation essentially has no temporal boundaries. Change is clearly visible at its peak, during the conflictual stage, but then gradually loses its sharpness, eventually disappearing completely from the section of the narrative about more recent times. We could see this as evidence of the successful completion of psychological integration; but at the same time, it may be possible to discern a resignation and surrender to the impossibility of changing a reality over which one has no influence, especially among older respondents. It is the former scenario that is observable in the majority of the autobiographical narratives of my respondents. Interestingly, whilst it was the first post-war visits to former homes that functioned as a closing coda, later visits after the fall of communism played a dual role. On the one hand, they allowed people to reprise a question that had ostensibly been put to one side, the question of their relationship to their former homeland; on the other hand, these visits were an opportunity to finally gain closure on this aspect of their biography. Reflected against the broader biographies of the interviewees, these trips also had a substantial effect on their narratives. Based on the type of experience, and also taking into account individuals' prior attitudes to their new and old homelands, we can distinguish several different types of narrative about these journeys as acts of returning to

207 The mutual dependence of these two levels is posited both by classical theories of inter-ethnic relations (e.g. theories of assimilation by Robert Park and Milton M. Gordon), and by numerous studies on the psychological aspects of the integration of migrants, particularly in western Europe and the USA, see: Janusz Mucha, *Stosunki etniczne we współczesnej myśli socjologicznej* (Warszawa: PWN, 2006); Paweł Boski, Maria Jarymowicz, Hanna Malewska-Peyre, eds., *Tożsamość a odmiennność kulturowa* (Warszawa: Instytut Psychologii UW, 1992).

a former home. Juxtaposed with the statements of younger people, they form a certain typology of relations between resettlement and identity.

People Make a Place a Home: “Who would I return to?”

The first type of narrative is characteristic of respondents who yearned more for the people they had left behind than for the places. When, after the fall of communism, they could finally visit their native territory without any difficulties, it turned out that their homes were gone, because the people who comprised and created that homeliness were no longer there: neighbors had departed, relatives had become estranged, and younger generations had changed their identities.

To begin with, everyone wanted [to make the journey]. I also went home, a few times, to... to L. [...] It was alright I suppose, but what was left for us there...? They are all settled there, their children are Poles now. They're not Ukrainian any more. My younger sister married a Pole, and they've become completely polonized. [...] The children, the girls, are also Polish. There's nothing that can be done about it. Let them be Poles, as long as they live in friendship and accord with Ukrainians (Z3Af).

In this testimony, the speaker's disappointment and regret at the polonization of her former homeland and its residents turns into an acceptance of the situation and a recognition of the irreversibility of the changes – both in other people and in her own self. Such statements were observed almost exclusively in interviews with Ukrainians who were resettled from Poland. Their children and grandchildren sometimes recalled traveling to Poland with their parents and/or grandparents, but stated that they did not maintain contact with their cross-border relatives. Like the oldest generation, they perceived the former homeland of their forebears through the prism of people – and since nothing connected them to those people any longer, the lost homeland had no significance for them.

Well we are bit further removed from them now. Otherwise we would correspond with them, we would call and maintain friendly relations. But I can't say that we have any real contact with them. They are proper Poles now, through and through... They don't even try to speak Ukrainian. And to be honest, those children and grandchildren of theirs... They're just not really our relatives any more, all of that is slowly disappearing (Z6Df).

A mirror image of this type of narrative can be seen in the accounts of respondents who never visited their former homes, because they believed they had no one to return to (“Who would I return to? Especially after my children were born here and went to school here. Why would I go back?” [Z32Af]). Above all, in Zhovkva it was migrants from the East, and occasionally Ukrainians resettled

from Poland, who made similar statements and never went “home;” the eastern Poles in Krzyż, in contrast, never spoke in this manner. It is clear from the above statements that these people have no “old homeland” – the only home they have is in Zhovkva, where their family lives.

The Former Homeland as an Element of Identity: “It’s good that we know these things.”

The second type of narrative appears in conversations with individuals who made the journey to their old homes not out of nostalgia, but in order to achieve a harmonious conclusion to their personal biographies. Compared to others, their return trips appear as the most consciously experienced, and the most similar in function to what Kaja Kaźmierska calls a “biographical coda” that gives symbolic closure.²⁰⁸ Respondents were effectively tying up matters that, due to the necessity of post-war resettlement, had become permanently and painfully unfinished: visiting the graves of loved ones, or revisiting places where their houses had stood and where they had played as children. This group was comprised mostly of people resettled from the former eastern provinces to Krzyż, and to a lesser extent, of Ukrainians resettled to Zhovkva from Poland. Whilst it cannot be said that these people felt no yearning for their native territories, this feeling was usually a calm nostalgia that had been worked through, rather than a deep-seated and painful longing. A substantial role in this attitude is played by a conviction that their lives had been a success – these respondents did not have a feeling that resettlement had been a cause of individual failure, and so they could transform the memories of their former homes into a positive element of their identities. They often traveled back to these regions with children and grandchildren, wanting to show them their family roots, and also thereby passing on their family memory to successive generations. None of the interviewees said so directly, but it was apparent that the presence of the younger generations on these trips had been very important to them – as providers of emotional support in the moment of confrontation with their own pasts, and also means of closing a phase in their biographies.

I went there recently with my children, to the village, to the banks of the S. river and the bridge, which is still there to this day. Our house is gone, but the house of the Pole whom my sister married is still there. My brother, who was born in 1938, he’s younger than me, said: “When the war was over in 1945, I went to hide in the cellar in Aunt H. and Aunt J.’s house. Is that cellar still there, do you think?” A family lives in that house now, they

208 Kaźmierska, *Biography and Memory*.

resettled some Hutsuls into it.²⁰⁹ And he [the new owner] says: “the cellar is there, have a look, I’ll show you” (Z15Am).

It is extremely interesting and instructive to compare this statement with the speaker’s daughter’s impressions of the same journey. Her statement perfectly illustrates the process whereby individual experience, which is still alive as part of autobiographical memory, becomes transformed into family memory, which carries a significantly lighter emotional load.

We went to my father’s home territories, twice. I was surprised that it was just a few small houses, and then my father and his brother began to tell us about how “this is where we hid, and they were shooting from over there...” They even showed us the cellar where they took shelter then. It was just like in their stories, even when we went in there, my sister, my aunt, we all went in that building, and it was as if our hearts started to beat differently because we were seeing this place. [...] We went to the grave where lots of [people from] our family are buried, and dad and his brother told us that this was our family. So those memories, they really are... Objectively it’s good that they are there and it’s good that we know these things, but with time they are disappearing... (Z15Cf).

It is noteworthy that consciousness and acceptance of the process of change is observable in both statements. Both father and daughter understand that a gradual weakening of their connection to the old homeland is a natural and *de facto* positive development, because it allows them to put down roots in the new place. Another statement, by a woman from Krzyż whose family originally hailed from the eastern borderlands, brilliantly complements this intergenerational dialogue:

I am really interested in where my grandparents came from and how they lived there all those years ago. Because I, for example, if I had moved somewhere very far away, I would want to go back, to go and see who lives there now, to see what the place I lived in before looks like now (K9Df).

This interviewee had never visited the birthplace of her grandparents, and for obvious reasons, did not feel any nostalgia for it, but declared that she understood the longing of her grandparents’ generation, and that she would like to visit the territory one day. Nonetheless, she perceived any such journey in terms of an interesting possibility, rather than an undertaking that was indispensable to the maintenance of her identity.

209 The Hutsuls are an ethno-cultural group of Rusyn highlanders, one of three sub-groups alongside the Boykos and Lemkos. Since the Hutsuls have historically lived in the eastern part of the Carpathian Mountains, it is in fact unlikely that members of this group were resettled after the war to the region being discussed by this respondent (Lublin region). He may mean that Poles who were resettled after 1945 from majority-Hutsul territories inherited the house.

Sometimes, only the younger members of a family accomplished symbolic closure of the biography of a resettled person. This happened when resettlement was a trauma that not only burdened the migrants who experienced it first hand, but also affected their children and grandchildren, who felt the consequences for years to come. In such cases, the descendants of resettled persons treated their visits to the former home territory as a duty towards their parents or grandparents, who could not make the journey themselves, or sometimes as a kind of reckoning with previous wrongs or moral reparation.

My grandma lived in Sverdlovsk, Sverdlovsk in Russia, that's a long way, isn't it? I went there two years ago, not for very long... My family didn't go there because it was too far. But I went, and I felt just this nostalgia, or what would you call it... I saw everything, now I knew what it was all like. Grandma was put in prison, granddad too. Granddad was given four years, and grandma two years.²¹⁰ [...] She [grandma] didn't tell us much about it, but I later found documents in the archive (Z38Cm).

Significantly, this speaker was the only respondent from an eastern background in Zhovkva who considered a return to his grandparents' native territory to be an important deed. It appears that homelands left behind in eastern Ukraine and Russia were the least loved and pined for. This may be because a Soviet childhood in Stalinist times provided a weak basis for a myth of lost childhood innocence; alternatively/additionally, it may be because these migrants' journeys to Zhovkva were more voluntary than the resettlements of those who were deported from or to Poland.

The Lost Homeland and Crippled Identity: "A person is always attached to their homeland."

The third type of return narrative concerns trips to the former home territory that were very painful experiences. Respondents who suffered as a result of their visits had never completely come to terms with the loss of their old homes, and never really put down roots in their new places of residence. Migration was for them a debacle, above all at the level of individual identity. Even if they did adapt – sometimes very successfully – to the new geographical and cultural setting, the phase of identity assimilation was never completed. Having been torn by longing and a sense of alienation for decades, these individuals traveled back to their "homes" whenever they got a chance; they made the journey in a fit of

210 The grandparents of this speaker, ethnic Russians, were victims of the Stalinist Terror, most probably in the 1930s.

vain hope, believing that the trip would help them to gain reckoning with their yearning. In their accounts of return, embitterment and disappointment are the dominant tones; sometimes the pain of loss is even endured all over again – this time irreversibly.

I went there, I went to D., to a little church. The Ukrainians had burned down the church, there is nothing there, they just put up a cross there. The church was burned down. It's gone. And so I was in Volhynia and my God, I was looking around, I was devastated, I want to cry, I wanted to cry. [...] Where our house used to be, our farm, and also where we lived, where our Ukrainian neighbors used to live, those large manors – it's all gone without a trace. I looked for our place, where my father had his house, his barn, his stable. I looked for all of it. Maybe I would find a stone, a piece of wood. Nothing (K24Am).

Usually, these forlorn and painful trips were made alone. If children or grandchildren did accompany the older people, they later openly admitted that, even if they sympathized with their parents or grandparents, they did not share their pain. Sometimes they even found it difficult to comprehend, let alone empathize: especially among the youngest respondents, there were speakers who shrugged their shoulders and stated that they could not understand why their grandparents continued to cultivate memories of the “old homeland” that they had lost so long ago.

Granny still dwells on it, and before it was even worse. [...] She still knows those Ukrainian songs and prayers. I don't really get it, but they really care about it. [...] I ask why, why do you need it? You're Polish. I understand that you want to remember it, I mean, why not remember it, sure. But it's like... It's as if she didn't fully grasp that she's Polish and she doesn't need that now. [I want to ask her:] “Why didn't you get used to it, it's been so long” (K20Df1).

Against the background of an absence of sympathy or understanding, or even, as in the statement above, actual disapproval from loved ones, the loneliness of the resettled and deported becomes even more suffocating. An even tougher situation was perhaps encountered by those would have very much liked to undertake a return journey, but never managed to see their old homes. Even the most painful confrontation with one's former homeland could have provided a sense of some form of activity, of trying to take control of one's own life; the people who did not undertake such an attempt were consigned to futile remembrance of the past and to dwelling on their losses. The most common reasons for not making the trip included old age, bad health, and lack of financial resources; sometimes, people were afraid of the emotional and physical consequences of the encounter. A sense of lost life predominates in these testimonies, as well as

incompleteness of one's biography – these people were lacking an experience that would give closure and coherence to their lives.

A person is always attached to their homeland. I would have liked to have at least seen it before I die, but now I definitely won't. I can't travel far now. Maybe if my husband was from the East, he would come with me, but he's from here and he's not attracted to the idea. Our children have also become used to being here. [...] I just gather things, whatever I can, so that we have something to remember it by, so that the children know what it was like, and the grandchildren too. They are tough memories. It's difficult to forget, because I was big enough, I remember everything. If I had been younger, I would have remembered less now, and it wouldn't have been so painful. But now I go out, and I am on the streets of Ch.; quite often, I feel like I am at home, over there, in the East (K2Af).

The only respondents who felt they had lost, who continued to yearn for their old homes and never truly came to terms with their fate, were Poles resettled to Krzyż from the former eastern territories. No other groups of migrants expressed such emotions. This is strong evidence of the exceptional status of the so-called Eastern Borderlands, the lost eastern lands, in the construction of Polish identity – both on the collective and individual levels.²¹¹

No Need for Homeland: “Why would we go there?”

The fourth type of narrative is, in fact, the absence of a return narrative. One section of interviewees never went to their native territories because they never felt a need to do so. These individuals were not reluctant to travel for any specific reason; rather, they generally had no desire to undertake the journey, even if circumstances were conducive. They asked with a tone of surprise: why would we go there? After all, the past was the past, and nothing connected them to that place any more. There were not many respondents who made such arguments – only a few individuals in the entire sample. Moreover, they were all Ukrainians resettled from Poland. As a rule, they were the same people who declared that they never felt nostalgic about their former homes, and who also assessed the overall balance of gains and losses resulting from resettlement to have worked in their favor.²¹² A weak bond with the old homeland also corresponded in these instances with a lack of any real symbolic connection with the new place of residence. It follows that this disposition is rather a general absence of a particular

211 There is a vast literature on the significance of the so-called Eastern Borderlands for Polish identity and collective memory. In English, see: Robert Traba, “The Kresy as a Realm of Memory: The Long History of Persistence,” *Herito*, Vol. 8 (2012), pp. 58–91.

212 Halyna Bodnar has written about the frequent occurrence of such statements among Ukrainian resettlers, in: Bodnar, “‘Tam buło dobre.’”

sensitivity and reflexivity, or what Maria Lewicka, in her study of the relationship between people and places, describes as individual, psychological factors.²¹³

The Old Homeland in the Consciousness of the Younger Generations

In both towns, members of the younger generations were much less likely to express a desire to visit territories connected to their family history.²¹⁴ A clear majority of younger speakers in Zhovkva and a significant number of their counterparts in Krzyż stated that the idea of a journey to their parents' or grandparents' former homes had little appeal. Sometimes they declared outright that they saw no point or necessity in undertaking such a journey, because those lands had no meaning to them: "I was born here, in this house. Why would I want to go over there? It has nothing to do with me. [Do you have any sentiment for those lands, or none at all?] No, none at all" (K9Bm). Others were less categorical in their unwillingness to take the journey, even declaring that if their elders wanted to go, they would happily accompany them. But this readiness to travel often came across as a general desire to see the world, with little or no connection to the history and identity of the family. It would appear that these respondents would invest a similar amount of emotions into a willingness to go on any other tourist trip. The last sentence of the following statement captures the speaker's strong indifference to the older generation's nostalgia:

My mother wanted to take a trip, to have a look. You know, to visit, take a trip down memory lane, that sort of thing. [...] Who knows? Maybe I would go, to keep her company, to find out what it looked like, why not? [But you don't feel any bond with that place?] No, absolutely none. None at all (K26Cf).

Such declarations are important because the speaker's attitude to the potentiality of a visit gives a strong indication of how they see their "old homeland." To put it simply, for a large majority of younger people, the former family territory is at best an illusion onto which their elders still cling. Also, it is no

213 Maria Lewicka, *Psychologia miejsca* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2012).

214 For an interesting case study on the identity of Ukrainians deported to North-West of Poland within the "Vistula Operation" in 1947, see: Wangler, *Rethinking History*. This study shows much deeper attachment of the second generation to the "lost homeland" in comparison to my sample. The difference might have originated from Wangler's interviewees being much better educated and involved in the activities of deportees' associations.

coincidence that both of the above quotes came from Krzyż: the topic is totally absent in Zhovkva, where respondents were surprised to even be asked. The following statement, by a woman whose parents were both resettled from Poland, conveys this fact: “I was born in Zhovkva, I’m a pure, born-and-bred Zhovkvan” (Z6Cf).

There was a small number of interviewees in Krzyż whose attitudes to family history, and therefore their own identities, were more complex. These people spoke of an indirect bond with the regions from which their parents came, and said that family roots were important to them. Again, only people whose families were resettled from the pre-war eastern provinces made such statements; moreover, in cases where only one parent came from the eastern borderlands, the home territory of the other parent (e.g. in the case of the speaker cited below – Wielkopolska) had no such significance. This shows the enormous role played by forced migration in the creation of an intergenerational myth of lost homeland. It is also extremely significant that this was a large-scale, collective trajectory: the loss of these territories was felt not just by individuals, but also by a greater collective.

The Eastern Borderlands are close to me for a variety of reasons. I collect stories, you know, about hunting and different aspects of life connected to the region, I’ve heard lots of different things, very interesting things. I’ll always have a sentiment, for sure, because I am a part of it. It’s inside me somewhere, maybe even more than it seems. [...] When, one day, my mother’s generation will be gone, I’ll be thinking about the Borderlands, but not in a way that I’ll want, say, to go there (K43Cm).

The speaker’s bond with the former eastern regions²¹⁵ is founded on a feeling of symbolic linkage with the cultural heritage of that place; it is neither a personal connection nor a desire for restitution. It is nostalgia, but not yearning. All of the respondents in Krzyż who stated that the pre-war eastern lands retained significance for them displayed an attitude of this kind. It is pertinent that whilst the above speaker was sentimental about the region, he had no intention of going there, and was not making any claims on the territory – it was not, after all, his home. There were only two interviewees of the younger generations in the entire

215 It is interesting to note that younger people use the term Eastern Borderlands much more frequently than the oldest respondents. This is an indication of how the broader, national community of memory about this formerly Polish territory is constructed, for the second generation and onwards, in mediatized discourse and not only through family transmission of memory. A similar observation has been made in: Głowacka-Grajper, “Społeczna i indywidualna kontynuacja pamięci.”

sample who declared that they felt a stronger connection to the native land of their parents than to the place in which they themselves were born. Interestingly, one was from Zhovkva and the other from Krzyż.

Oh God, she [my mother] used to say: “We were still young then,” she would say that it wasn’t her decision, it was her father’s. You know, if someone told her now that she could go, that there was nothing holding her here, Granny would go. And S. [the speaker’s son] and I would also link up our hands and go to Poland. We probably wouldn’t even bother to pack our bags (Z16Bf).

My father taught me that this is not our land, that our family home is over there, in the East. [And do the Eastern Borderlands mean something to you now?] Well definitely, just like to everyone. You know, it’s a bit like... Now there are no barriers, I mean at the border, but I know for sure and I feel that my roots are over there, because that’s what my father told me. That no matter what happened, we would know that we were not in our own place here (K8Bm).

Both statements are exceptional in comparison to other interviewees of the same generation, and are better explained by individual biographical factors than broader social conditions. Both individuals spent their entire adult lives away from Krzyż and Zhovkva, only returning there after early retirement. They both felt alienated from their surroundings after their return, and were disappointed in the towns where they had grown up: both Krzyż and Zhovkva had changed substantially in the intermittent decades. The speaker from Zhovkva, who was from a mixed Russian-Ukrainian family, was additionally uneasy with locals whom she considered “chauvinistic” nationalists. In these circumstances, the construction of a personal myth of a lost homeland comes across as an individual mechanism of rebuilding one’s own identity, rather than a consequence of social phenomena.

A final interesting phenomenon concerning the relationship between migration and identity building among the younger generations is that respondents reflected on their sense of rootedness despite the lack of a macro-historical or family continuity. For a significant group of Krzyż residents, the fact that their family did not originate from the town that they themselves considered their own was an issue they reflected on in some detail. They did not perceive this fact as a barrier to their own sense of being at home; rather, it was an additional element of what connected them to Krzyż. Their statements often featured a gradual development of a bond between the town and its new residents. They observed an intensification of this bond from generation to generation, with further descendants treating the fact of being at home in Krzyż as something obvious and taken for granted.

My mother always said, all her life, that [the pre-war eastern provinces] was where she grew up. That is how I see Krzyż. My mother didn't really understand that for a long time. But this is where I grew up, where I became an adult. This land is what I know, it's normal to me. Everything that has happened to me in life was connected to Krzyż. Even if I left for somewhere else, I always came back here, to this Krzyż (K43Cm).

Importantly, such reflections feature only in interviews with people from Krzyż. When respondents in Zhovkva were asked questions in a similar vein, they normally responded with surprise: why would they not feel at home in Zhovkva? What significance did it have that their parents weren't born here? Clearly, this reaction is a consequence of the specific status of resettlement in both family and broader collective memory – it had a weak presence, if any at all. Moreover, communist-era propaganda had a different function in Krzyż, preserving a sense of temporariness, whilst in Zhovkva it had an opposite effect. On the one hand, this sense of assuredness gave residents of Zhovkva a certain *carte blanche* in the construction of a bond with their place of residence, releasing them from apparently unnecessary burdens. On the other hand, it is possible that these identity formulations are somewhat superficial, with their complete absence of doubt; perhaps, this taken-for-grantedness is too simple, and some form of reckoning still awaits.

Gains and Losses – Who Came Through Migration Successfully?

Studying the identities of resettled people naturally leads to asking to what extent those people have become integrated into the new community; in other words, whether or not their migration was a success. The last stretch of the narrative interview took the form of a weighing up of the personal gains and losses that resulted from the fact of migration, the outcomes of which could be seen as a personal assessment of the speaker's level of integration. Some of these gains and losses pertained to the emotional costs of resettlement and the challenges associated with building a new identity in the new place of residence. Other parts of the evaluation concerned the economic, social and political aspects of migration.

The observations presented in this and the previous two chapters yield a temptation to make some overall generalizations. It appears that the most important factor affecting the success of a person's migration – other than individual circumstances specific to the situation of the interviewee – is the group of migrants to which they belong. Looking at the objective variables that could facilitate or obstruct the adaptation process, it is clear that there were huge differences from the very outset in terms of resettlers' chances of reconstructing

their identities and regaining a similar social and economic position to that which they had previously occupied. Factors that were conducive to successful integration in Krzyż and Zhovkva include: the voluntariness of migration; a high degree of physical and cultural similarity between the old and new home town; a confidence and certainty that the resettlement was long-term; the presence of locals who were born in the town; and the possibility of contributing to social life in the new place of residence. Factors that correlate negatively with social integration include: migration as a large collective, leading to a shared loss of a former homeland; social and economic marginalization associated with the fact of being a migrant; and the degree of oppressiveness of the non-democratic system.²¹⁶

Some of these factors played a role in only one of the towns, whereas others were important in both towns and for all residents, but to varying degrees. Both communities were located in non-democratic countries after the war, but the tangible level of threat from state repression was incomparably higher in Zhovkva. Krzyż was relatively privileged, because despite the totalitarian nature of the political system, residents had a genuine influence on the organization of local social life, strengthening the emerging social bonds. At the same time, the integration of new residents in Zhovkva was made comparatively easier by the presence of locals, who – at least in theory – could act as “guides” for the new arrivals. A similar role was played in Krzyż by “neighbors from the other side of the river,” but ultimately their presence had a minor significance for the integration of settlers. The final variable that had an effect in just one town was the fact that in Krzyż, many migrants – those from the East – had lost their homeland together, as a collective. Migrants in Zhovkva were at least spared this difficulty.

People who arrived from the shortest distances were the ones who faced the fewest challenges: that is, migrants from nearby Polish or Ukrainian villages. Their resettlement was voluntary, and they had not fundamentally changed their physical and cultural environment; and even if they were not certain that they would stay in the long run, their potential return journey home was much simpler than for others in a similar position. Moreover, as “nearly locals,” they did not have to deal with the threat of migrant marginalization or the trauma of losing their homes. The second most likely to have a successful migration were the Soviet pioneers in Zhovkva and settlers who arrived in Krzyż from Polish

216 My list of factors that facilitate integration among migrants partially overlaps with the variables proposed by Zdzisław Mach in his book *Niechciane miasta*.

regions that remained inside the state's borders after 1945. Whilst the Soviet pioneers did travel to western Ukraine under duress (usually, they had been assigned to work there), they did not usually perceive migration from Russia or eastern Ukraine as a form of repression, as they could count on a privileged social position at the point of arrival. They treated the possible temporariness of their stay in Zhovkva as a natural component of their lives as Soviet citizens, not as a threat. They were also the only group for whom the difference of the new cultural environment was more a benefit than a drawback. Their integration was, however, made difficult by the negative disposition of other Zhovkva residents towards them. For migrants from central Poland, adaptation to life in Krzyż was facilitated by the fact that they had chosen to move there; even if there was an element of economic duress, they had migrated in order to improve their own living conditions, not to escape starvation. Their former homelands were distant, but not irrevocably lost to another state. The difference between their old and new places of residence was larger than for the “neighbors,” but incomparably smaller than for the Poles from the pre-war eastern provinces. Their social position upon arriving in Krzyż was generally high, and other residents tended to treat them well.

The groups that undoubtedly had the hardest experience were the Polish and Ukrainian “repatriates.” Whilst the majority of Ukrainians resettled from Poland did not lose a part of their ideological homeland,²¹⁷ they were encumbered with the ordeal of deportation, and their social and economic status in the new place of residence remained low.²¹⁸ Moreover, others were negatively disposed towards them, and their feeling that the new situation would only be temporary – and the hope that they would return home – acted as barriers to adaptation. The only positive influence on their integration was the fact that Zhovkva differed little

217 For a definition of an “ideological homeland” (as opposed to the private one), see: Stanisław Ossowski, “Analiza socjologiczna pojęcia ojczyzna,” in: *Dziela*, Vol. III (Warszawa: PWN, 1967), pp. 201–226.

218 It appears that the symbolic inclusion of so-called *Zakerzonnia* (i.e. Trans-Curzonnia, or the now-Polish regions that previously had significant Ukrainian populations) into the Ukrainian ideological homeland, and especially the construction of a Ukrainian myth of “lost homelands,” happened much later than in Poland, where the myth of Eastern Borderlands became very powerful very quickly. Andrew Wilson argues that these processes took place after 1991, when new national myths were being formed, see: Andrew Wilson, “National history and national identity in Ukraine and Belarus,” in: *Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands*, ed. Graham Smith, Vivien Law, Andrew Wilson, Annette Bohr and Edward Allworth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 23–47.

from their previous home territory. The eastern Poles had it even worse: in addition to the burden of forced migration, the sense of impermanence, the threat of marginalization in the new place, and the prejudices of other residents, they had to come to terms with major differences between the cultural landscape of Krzyż and their former homes, as well as – and perhaps above all – the trauma of irreversibly losing lands that they considered a part of their ideological homeland (and not just their private native realm).

The narrative biographies of the oldest residents of Krzyż and Zhovkva confirm this model of a relationship between a speaker's level of integration and the starting conditions of their resettlement. Integration – which at the level of the individual means, above all, a maintained coherence of personal identity – was easiest for the local “neighbors” and was relatively untroubled for migrants from western and central regions of Poland. It also posed few problems for easterners in Zhovkva, although in this case the level of social (rather than individual) integration can be somewhat questioned, given that this group was and remains ghettoized. Polish and Ukrainian “repatriates” experienced the most serious difficulties, although it would appear that the former faced greater problems in their individual rather than social integration, and *vice versa* for the latter group. In many cases, the deciding factor that tilted the personal evaluation of migration was a subjective assessment of whether or not the respondent had advanced socially, irrespective of their migrant group or even sometimes going against the grain of the rest of their group. A good example is provided by a dialogue between a Ukrainian married couple who were resettled to Zhovkva from Poland, in which the wife explained to the husband that the economic benefits had made their resettlement a success – despite the fact that the majority of migrants from a similar background saw their life in Zhovkva as materially poorer than before.

It wasn't right, it was no good. They should have made a commission of some sort, seeing as... they had driven people out, just to... *Oh shut your mouth, it was good in some ways that people were separated. Some lived poorly, others were rich. Those who lived in poverty came here, they went to work, and they had a job. They had food on their plate, and everything they needed. And if we had stayed over there, in Poland, what would have happened? You'd have your land, you'd have got married, and what? Kids and all that – what would you have lived on?* (Z18Am/Z18Af)

Younger respondents, who did not experience resettlement themselves, sometimes reproduced the evaluations made by the oldest interviewees. In the second and third generations, this topic was raised principally by people who believed their families had lost out as a result of migration. Usually, these speakers came from families that had been most socially and economically marginalized in the

new place of residence; they had genuinely felt the effects of this marginalization, especially in their childhood. Sometimes their assessment of resettlement was only a constative statement of how unfavorable circumstances were, but at other times it took the form of accusations leveled against the older members of the family, with little basis in reality (“When Granny was alive, we asked her so many times: ‘why did you go to Ukraine? Why didn’t you stay in Poland?’” [Z15Cf]).

So the whole family stayed in Zhovkva. And we’re still here, unfortunately. [Why “unfortunately”?] Oh, who knows... Well... to a certain extent the atmosphere of the provinces is specific. Lviv was our home. [...] Different issues came up, including housing issues. Having your own house is having your own house. [...] You keep a certain sentiment. [...] And the fact that it was ours. What’s your own is your own (Z41Bf).

An individual sense of social regress could also determine that someone whose family belonged to a group that was theoretically at an advantage could see migration as a negative experience. The parents of the man cited below, for example, moved to Krzyż from Poznań; he did not view resettlement in Krzyż as an act of regression, but he did feel that his family would have benefitted more from staying in the regional capital of Wielkopolska.

It seems to me that they even regretted it a bit, coming here [to Krzyż], because even years later, after all, it has to be said, it’s a different level of life, right? Krzyż, and Poznań. My father’s colleagues were normal bakers, my father was a chef, and these normal bakers, every one of them built themselves a nice house, in those nice [areas] around Poznań. Such pretty houses. We went to visit them a few times, but here? We had nothing, that’s the truth (K10Bm).

Evaluations carried out by the youngest interviewees were usually neither positive nor negative (and in the entire sample, there were many more such statements in Krzyż than in Zhovkva). Even people from families that suffered the most after migrating were so well settled in the new place that they felt no desire or need to regret the move their grandparents made, or to remember old wrongs. An important circumstance that explains the attitude of these youngest speakers is that in both towns, they were the first generation that did not feel the consequences of the post-war divisions or suffer the effects of marginalization resulting from migration. They were the first since their grandparents’ generation to have similar opportunities for a decent start in life to anyone else of their age cohort. Sometimes their statements contained a somewhat arrogant and self-absorbed conviction that, with the benefit of hindsight, they were in a better position to evaluate the experience of resettlement than their own grandparents – they apparently believed to be more rational and objective than

the older generation. In reality, it appears that these speakers saw the experience of migration as not that bad.

Would they have had it better or worse? If they had stayed there, I don't think they would have had it better than here, because of the pressure of Ukrainian society. I think there would have been a lot of pressure and as Poles they wouldn't have had a good life. They always wanted a free Ukraine, and the relations [between Poles and Ukrainians] were not always that great. [...] I think that every person is best off where he is among his own kind. That's why they are happy here, because they built their own house, their own family. [...] I think they have had a good life here (K9Df).

The distribution of positive and negative factors affecting resettlement among different groups also explains why migration itself occupies such divergent places in the narrative autobiographies. Forced resettlers, the Polish and Ukrainian “repatriates,” spoke at most length about the journey itself and the effects of the move. Theirs are the principal voices in the sections of this book that focus on longing, the sense of impermanence, and an inability or unwillingness to adapt to the new place of residence. Essentially, all of the dimensions of social integration made greater demands on these settlers than on all the other migrants. Only once we grasp this key difference between the starting positions of voluntary migrants and deported persons can we see what a monumental achievement it was for these individuals to maintain any wholeness of their personal identity – and how easy it would have been to admit defeat. Migrants from the “intermediate” groups – easterners in Zhovkva and new arrivals from central and western Poland in Krzyż – dedicated the largest part of their narratives to post-war insecurity and the problems of adapting to new social and political conditions. Because their social positions in the new town were privileged or at least moderately advantageous, the challenges upon their personal identities were less substantial. The local migrants, the “neighbors,” are the least prominent group in the sections of this book devoted to migration and social integration – because they suffered minimal losses as a result of their change in environment. The privilege of these two groups is shown by the fact their voices become most audible when the analysis turns to ways in which the influx of new arrivals made their lives and social relationships more difficult.