

## 7 Remembering the Absent: Poles and Polish Heritage in Zhovkva

I begin the analysis of memory about Poles and Polish heritage in Zhovkva with some preliminary comments in order to signal from the outset the main differences from memory about Jews. First, unlike the Jewish community, the Poles were the politically dominant group in pre-war Zhovkva and had their own titular state. Thus, the analysis considers not only memories about a social group and individual residents, but also memories about the authority ascribed to this group and the political and cultural Polishness of the town. Second, whilst the Jewish community exists in today's Zhovkva in the social imaginary only, local Poles survived the war and remained in the town, although their numbers diminished to the rank of an insignificant minority. The third point follows on directly from the second: as well as people with Polish roots, there were respondents who considered themselves to be Poles. For methodological reasons, responses of individuals from the oldest generation who unequivocally identified themselves as Polish are not considered in this chapter.

### Once upon a Time in Poland

Like in Krzyż, there was a widespread consciousness in Zhovkva that the town had once been part of a different country. Only a small minority of respondents from the youngest age group were unaware that “this used to be Poland.” Interestingly, this ignorance was not dependent on family background. Among the respondents who did not know about the town's former Polishness were people of various backgrounds, including Polish backgrounds. One of them (Z8Dm) reacted to the question of whether his grandmother had told stories of life in pre-war eastern Poland with puzzlement: “What do you mean, in Polish times? What do you mean? [This used to be Poland.] Ohhh... [Before the war.] Well I didn't know that.” As a rule, these were the same individuals who did not know that a Jewish community existed in Zhovkva before the war; it appears therefore that this absence of knowledge is a result not of prejudice or specific gaps in cultural transmission, but of those individuals' general lack of interest in the past. A major difference between the interviewees in Zhovkva and Krzyż was that the former were noticeably less well versed in concrete historical events that determined which state their town was part of. Whereas people in Krzyż clearly

pointed to the year 1945 as the moment when the town joined Poland, residents of Zhovkva – especially younger ones – frequently confused basic facts.

There was a struggle between the Poles and... as far as I know, the Germans. And they divided the land, as they had before. And this part of the land went to the Polish side, and the Poles were here. And when Ukraine became independent, then... Then they set the borders again and Zhovkva became a part of Ukraine again, not Poland. And that's it. That is why there are a lot of people with Polish roots here (Z10Df).

In comparison to the respondents in Krzyż, it is also striking that in Zhovkva, people from the middle generation were sometimes unaware that the town had belonged to Poland in the interwar period; such a state of affairs was unthinkable among the quinquagenarians and sexagenarians I spoke to in Krzyż, who had played among the rubble of German buildings in their childhood and who considered the German origins of those debris to be obvious. The explanation for this difference can be found in the modes of post-war socialization. Both Polish and Soviet propaganda used worn-out clichés to describe the former residents of these towns, such as “old enemies,” “invaders” and “occupiers.” However, in the political propaganda of socialist Poland, the key figure was that of a German who had been “justly” driven out of the inherently Polish lands thanks to the heroic victory of the Red Army in 1945, whereas the Soviet master narrative focused on more distant periods in which the Poles oppressed the Ukrainians, such as the Cossack Uprisings of the seventeenth century. Recent history, such as the Polish-Ukrainian conflicts of the early twentieth century and the post-war expulsions of the Polish population, was politically inconvenient because it contradicted the official vision of fraternal relations between the common folk of Poland and Ukraine. Periods in which the two populations were at each other's throats were therefore hushed up or marginalized.<sup>282</sup> This could be why the year 1945 was so obvious as a caesura to residents of Krzyż, whilst people in Zhovkva attached less significance to it.

Narratives about Zhovkva's former Polishness were usually non-conflictual only insofar as the speaker was simply stating that the town had previously been on Polish territory. More elaborate points were typically accompanied by arguments about the town's Ukrainian identity. This is very strongly visible in statements where speakers discussed the early history of Zhovkva, connected to

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282 Cf. Oksana Ruda, “Do dzherel mifolohizatsii ukrainsko-polskykh vidnosyn,” in: *Istorychni mify i stereotypy ta mizhnatsionalni vidnosyny v suchasni Ukraini*, ed. Leonid Zashkilniak (Lviv: Instytut Ukrainoznavstva im. Krypiakevycha NAN Ukrainy, 2009), pp. 289–333.

Poland and Poles. Respondents mentioned Żółkiewski and sometimes Sobieski, yet the statement that it was a Polish hetman who had founded the town was always qualified with the additional detail that Żółkiewski had built his settlement around a Ukrainian village.

Some people believe that Zhovkva belongs to Ukraine, that it's a purely Ukrainian town. Others will tell you that it was Prince Żółkiewski who founded the town, and that it's a Polish town. [...] As a Ukrainian, I will obviously tell you that it's our Ukrainian town [laughter]. [So it's not at all Polish...?] No, not at all. Although it has a shared history, it's like a joint venture. Yes, that's right. It's more like both [...] Other sources show that Zhovkva was founded as the village of Vynnyky, actually before Prince Żółkiewski arrived (Z27Df).

Respondents with a deeper knowledge of local history often emphasized the Ukrainian elements of the past; in the meantime, they did not so much negate the Polish historical presence as delicately skim over it, thereby making it clear that it was less important. A respondent who worked in the tourist center (Z43Dm) was sincerely disappointed that there was no monument of Żółkiewski in the town, because, he claimed, the Hetman had been Ruthenian, not Polish. Asked what she knew about the distant past in Zhovkva, another speaker (Z1Bf) raised the supposed fact that Bohdan Khmelnytsky hailed from the town, as well as the activity of the Basilians. There were also instances of respondents radically downplaying or even denying the historical role of the Polish presence – although these were a small minority of mostly older people who to this day retained a negative attitude towards Poland.<sup>283</sup>

They still look at us as if from above. [Who?] The Poles. [Here...?] Here, they want [to claim] Zhovkva. Supposedly Żółkiewski lived here. OK, maybe he did. And they named it after him, but this was the village of Vynnyky before he came. But they never stop banging on about their bloody Żółkiewski (Z13Am).

On the whole, however, the era of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was presented in a positive light, as a time of well-being in which Zhovkva flourished. Żółkiewski and Sobieski, whilst remembered unequivocally as “Polish lords,” were not evil, foreign invaders; rather, they were part of the history of Zhovkva. Perhaps the acceptance of Żółkiewski and Sobieski as “our own” is partly a result of the large separation in time, which reduces the emotionality of memory. The

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283 In her research on the attitudes of local populations to their places of residence, Maria Lewicka shows that residents overestimated the pre-war proportion of their own ethnic group in every town she studied in which the population had been largely changed (Lviv, Szczecin, Wrocław, Vilnius), see: Lewicka, *Psychologia miejsca*, p. 466.

town's historical Polishness was treated by respondents somewhat like a fairy-tale past, as something distant, unreal and exotic, and therefore completely harmless.<sup>284</sup>

Whilst the memory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was positive, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (thus, the periods in which Galician Ukrainians harbored national ambitions to rival the Polish ones) were remembered as times of occupation. The powers-that-be were “occupiers” because they were not “ours,” i.e. Ukrainian. A respondent from a mixed Polish-Ukrainian family summarized this thought very concisely: “From what people close to me say, they had it best under Austria. That was the most loyal occupation. I call everything that was foreign, not Ukrainian, occupation, if you don't mind” (Z1Bf).

How, then, is the “less loyal” period of occupation, the interwar era, remembered by residents of Zhovkva? Two themes dominated these narratives: first, pressure from the Polish authorities; and second, the oppressive nature of Polish culture and material wealth. The difficult life under Polish rule was remembered almost exclusively by interviewees who had experienced it themselves, whereas younger respondents spoke with more sentiment about the interwar years. Negative memories revolved around individual experience, such as childhood suffering or being treated unequally at school. One interviewee who was born in Zhovkva (Z30Af) recalled the hurt she felt when, as a pupil at a Polish school, she received a mediocre grade in her own language, whereas Polish classmates who did not speak any Ukrainian were awarded with top marks. She also had clear memories of being bullied by other children: “As soon as they heard someone speaking Ukrainian, they would start saying things like ‘Oh, she's grunting like a pig!’” (Z30Af).

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284 Nonetheless, despite these generally positive memories, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth never became part of a founding myth about Ukraine's place in Europe among Galician Ukrainians – neither in Soviet times, nor at any point thereafter. Whilst the Europeaness of Ukrainian (or Galician) culture was beyond dispute in intellectual debates, the Polish contribution to civilization and culture was not recognized – unlike, for example, the Austrian one. For a discussion of this issue, see: Ola Hnatiuk, *Pożegnanie z Imperium. Ukraińskie dyskusje o tożsamości* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2003); and Natalia Yakovenko, *Paralelnyi svit. Doslidzhennia z istorii uiaвлен ta idei v Ukraïni XVI–XVII st.* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2003), pp. 333–365. This is not to say that there was no interest in the Polish influences on Ukrainian culture, rather that intellectual discussions did not form a broader paradigm of thought.

Besides details of childhood unpleasanties and humiliations, interviewees also spoke of difficulties experienced by adults: for example, trouble finding work, or discrimination faced by people involved in Ukrainian cultural and political life. Some also added with bitterness that it may be normal for a nation state to favor its “own,” but the Polish case went too far in its drive to assimilate minorities. Interestingly, practically no one from the younger generation spoke of the suffering of Ukrainians under the Polish yoke, and only one person who had migrated from the East did so. This interviewee, who came from a Polish family in the Zhytomyr region (central Ukraine), and who resettled to work in Zhovkva in the 1950s and married a local Pole, gave an extensive and very critical account of the “Polish ways:”

I asked, for example, my mother-in-law: “When this was part of Poland, you lived better than now, didn’t you? If it was better, why did you have such an impoverished house and why did so many of you live in it?” [...] “Because there was no work. Life was tough.” And I told her: “So, now [in Soviet times] there is work for everyone, and you are still not happy.” [...] And now look at what we have: my mother’s brother’s kids have finished university, my mother has her own house, even though her brother spent 15 years in Vorkuta [i.e. in a labor camp]. He brought money from Vorkuta and built a very nice house (Z10Af).

I have outlined previously the reasons why migrants from the East did not discuss the wartime too willingly with neighbors who had roots in Galicia. In relation to their memories of life in interwar Poland, however, there may be another explanation available: perhaps the locals did not want to complain about life in bourgeois Poland because in doing so, they would put the Soviet regime in a favorable light – something they were reluctant to do in the company of the Easterners.

Another recurrent theme in the interviews was the idea of Poland as a cultured, civilized and relatively powerful country, to which speakers willingly returned in their thoughts and feelings. This attitude was expressed almost exclusively by younger respondents with local family roots. The most prominent idea they voiced was that their families lived better in Polish times than under the Soviet regime.

They had their own field, they worked, they had their own bread, you understand? My family had plenty of land, we weren’t poor. Then all of that was taken away from us, just like that. What is there to remember? We had a lot of land, a big house, and then all those horrors. I don’t even know how we survived all that, I just don’t know (Z32Cf).

Even when such views did appear fleetingly in the account of older respondents, they were quickly drowned out by the predominant memory of injury at the

hands of the Poles. The only wholly positive image of Poland among the oldest generation, a sentimental and even mythological picture of the interwar years, was articulated by a woman from a mixed Polish-Ukrainian family:

In Polish times this was a fabulous town. [...] The cafés were wonderful, such amazing cafés. [...] Here on the corner there was a wonderful shop – I always used to go there and buy a *kajzerka* bun [this word pronounced in Polish] with ham. How perfectly evenly they sliced the ham! Everything was so fresh, it smelled so good, I can't even tell you... People say we have culture now. What kind of culture do we have... [with irritation]? My father, in Polish times, if someone came through the door of our house, would immediately say: “Marusen'ka – to my mum – give me my *marynarka* [jacket]!” He would never sit at the table in a jumper with a shirt sticking out, like people do nowadays. [...] I only have the most beautiful memories from those times. You know, if this was still Poland, we would have a villa on the high street by now. We would be rich and powerful, and not old nobodies like we are now, thanks to Soviet rule. I'm sorry to get so emotional, but you know... These are memories from my childhood, from my youth, memories of all that was good in my life (Z1Af).

Like the younger woman cited above, this speaker remembers interwar Poland as a time and place in which her family were well off, and even – according to her own words – as the best days of her life. In her account, Poland of the 1920s and 1930s is elevated to the rank of a lost childhood realm, an ideal time, when even the slicing of ham was superior to today. There is a striking resemblance to how Poles from the East in Krzyż spoke of their lost homelands; the key similarity is the sense of having lost an opportunity to enjoy a more comfortable life.<sup>285</sup> This respondent's family belonged to the intelligentsia that was relatively wealthy and had a high social status before the war. The wartime troubles and post-war transformations hit her family hard, and as a child she must have been particularly sensitive to the changes in status.

Younger respondents struck a somewhat similar tone on occasion, although with a lesser emotional input. These accounts were not related to personal experiences or family history, but rather to general ideas about interwar Poland having been a better country for a range of reasons.

There was a lady who lived near us, she owned this huge house with a garden, right next to the printing house. She lived her whole life, her whole life, in Zhovkva – I'm not sure what happened to her children, maybe they went somewhere else. She was always so clean you know, like a real Polish lady, well presented, well-dressed, all neat and tidy.

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285 Kaja Kaźmierska discusses a similar trope of memory among people recalling the places of their childhood, see: Kaźmierska, *Doświadczenia wojenne Polaków*.

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When kids would go into her garden in summer, to pick apples or whatever, she never even complained. They could just come and take what they wanted (Z37Cf).

The status of Polishness in this statement is very clear: the Polish lady was a relic of a past that had disappeared long ago, and her passing was a sign of a certain chapter in the town's history coming to a close. The next part of this chapter discusses the end of this shared period of history.

## Times of Threat

The Polish presence in Zhovkva began to disappear in September 1939. If we accept that this month brought two significant events to the pre-war Polish provinces, the second of which was the direct consequence of the first – the Soviet invasion and the loss of Polish statehood – it can be clearly stated that today's residents of Zhovkva remember only the former. The fall of the Polish state was, in their eyes, nothing more than the exchange of one foreign power for another; this is probably why it has no place of its own in local memory. The minority who did speak of this event were – once again – respondents of the oldest generation who were natives of Zhovkva or who settled there from villages in the vicinity; for younger interviewees, 1939 did not comprise a caesura of any kind. One of the few statements that touched upon the collapse of the Polish state went as follows: “when the Polish war broke out, it was the landlords [*pany*] who escaped to Poland, not the [ordinary] Poles” (Z34Af). Two things stand out in this sentence. First, the defensive campaign of 1939 is labeled as “Polish,” which immediately sets it off as “not ours” – the struggle against the Nazi invasion was carried out in defense of the Polish state, not in the Ukrainian interest and without Ukrainian support (although in reality many Ukrainian soldiers fought in the 1939 campaign). Second, a side effect of the invasion was the flight of local Polish landowners – the *pany* – who are distinctly separated from the ordinary Poles who remained in the area and continued to share their fate with the Ukrainian population. There was no emotion or judgement in this statement – because no one among the Galician Ukrainians mourned the loss of the Polish state.

The Polish-Ukrainian conflicts during the war, meanwhile, had a much more marked presence in the testimonies from Zhovkva. Like the persecutions from the interwar period, these were remembered most of all by respondents from the oldest generation who were born in Zhovkva or the vicinity. Many of these speakers were convinced that, although it was the Poles who suffered more in these confrontations, it was ultimately their own fault because they had provoked the Ukrainians with their brutal treatment before the war:

It all started after... After those pacifications.<sup>286</sup> I mean, it's my opinion, and the opinion of many historians, that every action is followed by a reaction. With the Polish state there was a time when, instead of showing its Europeanness, it started to carry out polonization. Forced polonization. Well, there are two sides to a coin, and every action is met with a reaction. State terror always provokes a response in the form of terrorism (Z42Cf).

There were also opinions voiced that the victims of Ukrainian violence did not include Poles who had done no harm to Ukrainians, but only those who genuinely “deserved it” through their actions in the interwar period; one respondent said of a Polish acquaintance from that time: “There was a guy called R., for instance, he was a nice, gentle Pole, no one touched him” (Z6Am). Another argument aimed at diminishing the guilt of the Ukrainians was the claim that the Soviets were at fault for the outbreak of conflict – they had donned UPA uniforms and murdered Poles so that the Poles would carry out revenge operations against the Ukrainian nationalists. One woman, who had witnessed such a murder, made this argument with great passion:

The Poles are always saying that we started to murder them, and that they started to kill Ukrainians in Poland in response. [...] But it wasn't Ukrainian partisans that murdered Poles, it was the *Moskals*, the Russian partisans, they went about massacring Poles, even at Christmas, in order to stir up hatred, here, over there across the border; I mean there wasn't a border here, it was all Galicia. They [killed] Poles, so that they would kill Ukrainians (Z29Af).

Such arguments are united by a desire to rid Ukrainians of the reputation of “killers” [*rezuny*,] which the respondents believed the Poles held them to be. The strategies of argumentation took various forms. The first woman believed that the Poles had started the conflict before the war; the wartime events were a response to pacification operations, and so the guilt lay with the Poles. A related justification was that the killing of Poles was a simple tit for tat at the individual level – people who had done no harm to Ukrainians in the interwar period had no reason to fear, in this speaker's view. The last interviewee deflected the guilt onto the Soviets, who were interested in stoking up conflict between Poles and Ukrainians. It is worth noting that none of these speakers attempted to completely absolve the Ukrainian militias of any responsibility or to undermine the fact that

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286 The speaker has in mind the pacification of Ukrainian villages in eastern Galicia that was carried out by the Polish state in 1930, in response to acts of sabotage by the Ukrainian Military Organization. The pacification operations were conducted on the principle of collective responsibility, and they featured arrests, destruction of property, and physical violence.

they had carried out mass murders against the Polish population; rather, they attempted to justify and rationalize this history. Likewise, none of these speakers denied that Poles had been the main victims of this conflict in Galicia.

The following statement is somewhat similar in style, and represents certainly the most common view (both among the sample of interviewees, and in Ukraine generally)<sup>287</sup> of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict:

Poles and Ukrainians lived side by side – and we lived well together. Then, during the war, the shenanigans started, someone was deliberately provoking it. Ukrainians started to shoot Poles, and Poles shot Ukrainians, and lots of people got killed. Later most of the Poles left, because it wasn't quite like the Jewish pogroms, but still, lots of people died. Basically, everyone was killing each other. [...] Such foolishness, but it happened on purpose, it was political. To turn people against each other (Z31Am).

Whereas the previously cited respondents aimed to justify the murder of Poles, this statement contains a significant change of emphasis: here, there is no question of Ukrainian nationalists having carried out a planned operation to kill Poles *en masse*; rather the conflict was fratricidal and provoked by external forces. Seen through such a lens, the issues of guilt and responsibility vanish entirely, and only common injury remains. If such statements by older respondents can be read as a reflection of their own wartime experience, assessments of wartime events by younger people often evolved in the direction of an increasing blurring of the question of responsibility; murders of Poles were thrown into the mixer with all the other tragedies of the war, as terrible events that are so distant that it is now difficult to pass judgement on who killed whom and why.

Were there conflicts at some point, long ago? Yes, there were. So were we at war, or were there conflicts, how am I supposed to know? My grandmother used to tell me that during the war, Poles killed Ukrainians and Ukrainians killed Poles, they would shoot at each other, yes. But that is all in the past now (Z19Cf).

Meanwhile, an opposing opinion posited that it was the Ukrainians, rather than the Poles, who were the main victims of the fratricidal conflict. Interestingly, respondents who remembered events in this way – mostly older respondents – employed concrete examples in their accounts, unlike the speakers cited above. Yet more interesting is the way in which these examples were used. Among the various stories of Polish terror, the recurring theme of the Polish village of Stanslyivka (Pl. Stanisłówka) near Zhovkva is exemplary. This village served for

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287 For the results of the recent all-Ukraine opinion poll, see: <http://hvylyya.net/analytics/politics/kak-ukraintsyi-smotryat-na-otnosheniya-mezhdu-ukrainoy-i-polshey.html>, last accessed 28.12.2018.

some time during the war as a base for a large division of the Polish Home Army. In 1944, during a period when the Polish underground soldiers were absent from the village, nationalists attacked Stanyslivka. Several dozen residents were killed, and most of the buildings and farming equipment were incinerated. After the attack, most of the local Poles escaped to Zhovkva.<sup>288</sup> Nonetheless, in the interviews, Stanyslivka appeared primarily as a site of Ukrainian suffering, whilst the village's later fate was mentioned only in passing, or not at all. One respondent spoke of neighbors from her native village that had been murdered by the Home Army in the vicinity of Stanyslivka: "They were killed in the forest and buried in the forest. What did people do about this? Nothing. But that was the politics of that time" (Z19Af). Two other interviewees made statements in a similar tone:

The Poles who were in the towns, they were afraid to go into the countryside. They stayed in their towns. *True, but there were the ones who stayed in the villages. The worst were around Stanyslivka, in the villages there. The whole of Stanyslivka...* It was completely burned down! *If a Ukrainian went in there, that was it, he wouldn't get out of there alive. They didn't tolerate it, didn't let us in, terrible things happened there...* The partisans... *They burned it all down...* It was the partisans who burned it down. *Ukrainians had no right to even set one foot in there. Yes, they were pretty cruel around there too. It was blood for blood, an eye for an eye. And then they [Poles from Stanyslivka] escaped to the town in droves (Z6Am/Z27Bm).*

In both interviews, the incinerated Polish village features primarily as a source of threat for the Ukrainians.<sup>289</sup> The first respondent did not mention at all that the village had been destroyed, and in the dialogue between two residents, the exchange of views effectively sanctions this deed and transforms its moral status – practically into a necessary act of self-defense. Thanks to such rhetorical devices, the mass murder of a group of Poles becomes lost in a haze of other

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288 Information concerning the Stanyslivka events is taken from: Szczepan Siekiera, Henryk Komański and Krzysztof Bulzacki, *Ludobójstwo dokonane przez nacjonalistów ukraińskich na Polakach w województwie lwowskim 1939–1947* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Stowarzyszenie Upamiętnienia Ofiar Zbrodni Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów, 2006). I accept and understand that the source is potentially biased towards the Polish point of view; however, unfortunately I could not find any information on Stanyslivka in Ukrainian works of history.

289 In her study of cities that experienced war and then population exchange, Maria Lewicka notes that residents generally only remember the hurt suffered by members of their own national group, completely passing over the atrocities carried out against other groups, see: Lewicka, *Psychologia miejsca*, p. 503.

details. The only interviewee who did speak of Stanyslivka primarily as a Polish village burned down by Ukrainians was a man who had resettled in Zhovkva from Poland – thus, not a local who could have genuinely remembered the event. Nonetheless, even he claimed that the impetus for the massacre was violence from the Polish side:

There was a terrible massacre here, including in Zhovkva. People here used to say that the Poles killed this or that person, that they carried out murders. And the Ukrainians also carried out terrible killings of Poles after the war. Not far from here [...] there was a village called Stanyslivka. There were about 20–30 Polish families who remained there. Ukrainians surrounded this village and they burned everyone alive – everyone! A few managed to escape, naked and barefoot. It was spring, or so they say. That was that! This village, you know, it also used to dish it out to the Ukrainians who lived there. The Poles killed more than half of the Ukrainians. It was a mass mutual massacre (Z15Am).

It is just a small step from deflecting the guilt onto the Poles and claiming the Ukrainians as the main victims to arguing that there was no brutal conflict or genocide of the Poles. It is worth pausing for a moment to consider statements made by educated people who cultivated an interest in history, and who, furthermore, had a favorable view of Poles and Poland; their conviction that there was no conflict is especially striking. One woman from a mixed Polish-Ukrainian family stated briefly that: “I don’t know anything about any ethnic conflict between the Poles and the Ukrainians... I just don’t know anything about that” (Z1Bf). Another respondent was equally convinced that there had never been a Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Zhovkva: “Even during the war in Zhovkva, not a single Pole was killed” (Z40Bm), and attempted to outline the broader context of a historical tradition of peaceful coexistence between ethnicities in the town (including tolerance and multiculturalism during the interwar period).

For both of these interviewees, personal biography explains why they remember Polish-Ukrainian relations in this way. The first speaker came from a mixed Polish-Ukrainian family in which the Polish component of identity was deliberately suppressed from the wartime onwards, in order to protect the children from possible persecution. At the same time, a hero myth of the Ukrainian nationalist underground was cultivated, as the Ukrainian side of the family had been actively involved in this movement. In this context, the partial “unblocking” of family memory in the 1990s and the re-emergence of the fact of having Polish roots would naturally lead one to believe that no conflict could have taken place. The second speaker, a museum employee, was deeply convinced of the integrity of the town’s history and its cultural heritage. It appears

that he was unable to admit a historical conflict between ethnicities because this would directly contradict his prized vision of Zhovkva as an ideal multicultural town – in the same way that a bloody Polish-Ukrainian conflict would have destroyed the newly discovered family memory of Polish-Ukrainian coexistence for the first interviewee.

Harsh condemnations of Ukrainian violence were heard very rarely in the interviews. One respondent with Polish roots from Zhytomyr region [Central Ukraine] (Z10Af) complained to me after the tape recorder had been turned off that her grandson considered the UPA to have been heroes, even though they had been nothing more than common criminals who were responsible for the destruction of many Polish villages. Another person who made no effort to justify the Ukrainian side in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict was an elderly woman originally from a village near Zhovkva. It is possible that she said the things she said because the interview was carried out by a fellow Ukrainian; significantly, this speaker was genuinely afraid that her views could still expose her to trouble.

You understand, after the war there was... that fighting. I still remember, you know, how can I miss this out? The fact that there were two or three Polish families [in the speaker's native village]. One of our distant cousins married a Pole, and it was during this fighting, you know, the OUN-UPA, they were against them, against them... They burned... I remember, my father woke up and he said: "there's a fire." I mean, they wanted the Poles to... [goes quiet] [Leave?] Leave, yes. You don't need to record this, no, it's not necessary, but it's what happened (Z23Af).

The question is unavoidable: why was it almost exclusively older residents who remembered the Polish-Ukrainian conflict? Or in other words, why did only autobiographical memories of that period remain, but no social memory? The majority of the youngest cohort of respondents simply had no idea that there had been any trouble between Poles and Ukrainians in Zhovkva during wartime. In the middle generations, a vague consciousness of "some difficulties" was predominant, with a prevailing narrative of fratricidal conflict in which both sides suffered equally. It was only interviewees who harbored nostalgic sentiments towards the USSR who mentioned that the Ukrainian nationalist underground had planned an operation to clear Galicia of Poles – and they normally did so in passing, whilst condemning the UPA for their anti-Soviet activity. The massacre of Poles was, for these people, an additional argument against the UPA, not a fact with its own independent standing in their appraisal of the past.

Two issues contain the key to understanding this non-memory: people's direct experiences of the conflict, and the social memory of post-war and contemporary times. As Aleida Assmann writes (citing Freud), that which is never properly

noticed can neither be committed to memory nor properly forgotten.<sup>290</sup> Assmann cites the case of the Holocaust in Germany as an example of such an “unnoticed” event, and the tragedy of the Poles in Galicia can be understood in similar terms. Ukrainians who lived in towns might well have never personally encountered any hostilities. Others did not notice because they did not want to, for various reasons – fear, shame, being blinded by emotion, or a desire for their own national heroes to remain unscathed.<sup>291</sup> The settlers who came from elsewhere did not hear about the killings of Poles from locals for obvious reasons; nor did they hear from Poles who remained in the area, as they lived in fear and concealed their nationality. Furthermore, it was in the interests of the Soviet authorities to blacken the reputation of the UPA, but not necessarily by remembering the Polish presence in Galicia. In Soviet historiography the Polish-Ukrainian conflict could only have a social dimension: Poles were described using clichéd terms such as “Polish lords [*pany*]” or “invaders,” whilst inconvenient themes were omitted from discussion. At the same time, informal, local memories in Galicia spread the notion that Poles had murdered Ukrainians in wartime and collaborated with the Nazis, while Ukrainians had only killed Poles in revenge.<sup>292</sup> The unnoticed massacre could not be narrated to children and grandchildren – and even if it had been noticed, it was hardly a topic suitable for recollection during family gatherings.

For the youngest generation who grew up in independent Ukraine, school education also played a role in their non-memory of Polish victims. The metanarrative of Ukrainian national identity, which is founded on the myth of a heroic underground resistance, contains no room for consideration of the victims of the UPA (whether Polish or Ukrainian); despite the absence of a nationwide consensus on the UPA, this is the narrative that has dominated since 1991 in school textbooks and curricula. As the Lviv-based historian Leonid Zashkilnyak has argued,

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290 Assmann, “Fünf Strategien.” Social psychology provides the basis for an interesting reflection on this issue. As Martin A. Conway writes, facts that do not fit with the prevailing structures of autobiographical memory may not be recorded; in other words, we do not commit to memory that which we find inconvenient, or we remember it differently because the principal function of autobiographical memory is to maintain the coherence of the self, see: Martin A. Conway, “Autobiographical knowledge and autobiographical memories,” in: *Remembering our past. Studies in autobiographical memory*, ed. David Rubin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 67–93.

291 Jacek Nowak has written about Ukrainians not remembering the killing of Poles in neighboring villages, see: Jacek Nowak, *Spoleczne reguly pamietania. Antropologia pamieci zbiorowej* (Kraków: Nomos, 2011), p. 238.

292 Ruda, “Do dzherel.”

the image of past Polish-Ukrainian relations in Ukrainian textbooks may have become more faithful to the truth, but troublesome issues are nonetheless glossed over, especially those that cast the Ukrainians in a bad light; at the same time, double standards are rife when it comes to the portrayal of others (e.g. Operation Vistula is depicted as an event organized by the Poles, whereas the deportations of the Polish population are blamed on the Soviets).<sup>293</sup> Ukrainian historian Andrii Portnov bitterly notes that a 2011 Ukrainian history textbook makes no mention of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict (Portnov writes about the ethnic cleansing in Volhynia, but his remarks *de facto* concern the entirety of the wartime Polish-Ukrainian conflict).<sup>294</sup> The previous textbook reduced the mass murders of Poles to a tragedy “of the civilian population on both sides of the conflict.”

The Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance perceives the wartime fate of Poles in a similar way. In a documentary film recommended by this institution, entitled *A Chronical of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army 1941–1954* [*Khronika Ukrainiskoi Povstanskoï Armii 1941–1954*], two and a half minutes are dedicated to the role of the UPA in the orchestration of the purge of Poles in Volhynia, while the commentary of the narrator (set against a picture of a burning village) states: “The situation in the region was made more difficult by the conflict between Poles and Ukrainians. [...] The provocative policy [of the Germans] was the reason for the bloody conflict which spread throughout Volhynia and Eastern Galicia. Tens of thousands of innocent people died on both sides.”<sup>295</sup> Based on this narrative, it is difficult to understand why these tens of thousands of people died. At the same time, independent institutions that work towards Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation tend to choose the path of compromise, rather than open discussion (which is painful and initially antagonizing) on the question of responsibility.<sup>296</sup> Given this overall situation, it would be asking too much

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293 Leonid Zashkilniak, “Istoriia ‘svoia’ i istoriia ‘chuzha,’” *Krytyka*, Vol. 9/10(143/144) (2009), pp. 24–26.

294 Andrii Portnov, “Ukraińska (nie)pamięć o Wołyniu 1943,” [http://www.pk.org.pl/publikacje/pojednanie\\_przez\\_trudna\\_pamiec\\_wolyn1943.pdf](http://www.pk.org.pl/publikacje/pojednanie_przez_trudna_pamiec_wolyn1943.pdf), last accessed 15.08.2018.

295 “Khronika Ukrainiskoi Povstanskoï Armii 1941–1954”, video, part one: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1bX6em5PRs>, part two: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxGbJ-RyuTU>, last accessed 28.12.2018.

296 One example of such activity is a project conducted by the Brama Grodzka and Panorama Kultur foundations in Lublin and the Lesya Ukrainka Eastern European National University in Lutsk. The project aims to commemorate the “righteous” – Ukrainians who rescued Poles and Poles who rescued Ukrainians during the Second World War. The results of the project are available in an online publication: <http://>

to expect the residents of Zhovkva – especially the youngest ones – to remember the Polish victims of the UPA.<sup>297</sup>

## Emigration, Expulsion, Marginalization

Although the Polish-Ukrainian conflict did not exist in the consciousnesses of most respondents, those same people usually spoke at length about the post-war expulsions of the Poles. This fact can be explained by a simple generalization: most of these speakers believed that the Poles had left the town voluntarily. There was a prevalent conviction that the Poles simply did not want to live in the Soviet Union because they did not see it as their homeland. In the words of one interviewee, who came to Zhovkva from eastern Ukraine (Z11Af): “[The Poles] left by themselves. [...] They left freely, there was no violence of any kind. If you wanted to, you left. Most of them went to Poland. [...] They didn’t want to live under the Soviet state.”

Both older and younger respondents cited a desire to “return” as a reason for the departure of the Poles. Interestingly, many of them used propaganda clichés such as “return to the motherland” to describe the events of that era:

The Poles just went back, because, as I far as I understand, there were a lot of them at that time... There was an opportunity because the Germans had left Poland, so there was that land, and they went back there. You know, even the house where my grandparents and their parents live, that was a Polish house. They also went back (Z15Df).

The ubiquity of such statements in accounts of the departure of the Poles shows, especially for the second and third generations, the strength of communist propaganda. It also demonstrates how easy it can be to turn a group of domestic Others, who had lived in the same territory for centuries, into foreigners and exogenous invaders who had settled there through some error of history.

The Poles were resettled in Poland, and the Ukrainians came here. Poles with Poles, Ukrainians with Ukrainians. Sure, there was a bit of that... Some stayed, they also didn’t

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[www.pk.org.pl/publikacje/pojednanie\\_przez\\_trudna\\_pamiec\\_wolyn1943.pdf](http://www.pk.org.pl/publikacje/pojednanie_przez_trudna_pamiec_wolyn1943.pdf), last accessed 28.12.2018.

297 For an overview of Ukrainian public debates and memory politics around the ethnic cleansing in Volhynia (also presenting a wider picture of Polish-Ukrainian relations) in the period slightly before my interviews were conducted, see: Georgii Kasianov, “The Burden of the Past. The Ukrainian-Polish Conflict of 1943–44 in Contemporary Public, Academic and Political Debates in Ukraine and Poland,” *Innovations: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, Vol. 3–4 (2006), pp. 247–259.

want to go to Poland. It wasn't forced. [...] But if you're a Pole, go to Poland – and live your life there (Z13Am).

The impersonal and emotionally cold tone with which the above statement was made was fairly typical of the way in which people in Zhovkva talked about the town's population exchanges. This process was treated without greater consideration as something that had simply taken place. Such statements did not contain any sentiment that the Poles had suffered as a result of resettlement; the phrase "Poles with Poles, Ukrainians with Ukrainians" is more reminiscent of the sorting of vegetables than of people. Among the older respondents there were also several individuals who believed that the Poles had actually benefitted, rather than suffered, as a result of Poland having gained the "Recovered Territories" in exchange for Galicia: "Well, the Poles aren't complaining, they got those German lands, and ours too, and so their Poland is a little richer now. [...] It all worked out well for them" (Z3Af).

Claims concerning the supposed benefits of resettlement were frequently accompanied by comments, usually expressed with bitterness, that the Poles had left because they no longer wanted to live with the Ukrainians: "They didn't want to live with Ukrainians, oh no. They wanted to go to Poland, to their own place" (Z16Af). However, it was only older respondents who gave such explanations – perhaps a reflection of their own negative experiences of living side by side with Poles in Zhovkva or a previous place of residence (in cases of Ukrainians resettled from Poland). Sometimes, their argument included an element of belittling the scale of resettlement; interviewees said that Poles had certainly been expelled, but that there had not been very many in the first place and so it was not possible to talk of any mass operation. Such memories were, in a sense, a continuation of earlier disputes about the nature of local identity; accounts of the post-war expulsions were imbued with a sense that Poles had never been in the majority in the town, and so there was no reason to make a fuss about their disappearance.

There were only two interviewees who clearly stated that the Poles had left because they were simply afraid of the Ukrainians, and that coexistence had become impossible in the light of the brutal conflict. It is worth noting that one of these two speakers was one of the few interviewees who gave a full account of the burned village of Stanyshivka; he was not selective in his courage to speak of difficult legacies.

[Why didn't the Poles want to stay in Zhovkva?] Well, you know, those were difficult times when they suffered terrible killings. [Here, in Zhovkva?] Sure, why not? When we arrived here, there were already very few Poles. But the killings were big. Big. We were told that they burned someone here, killed another there, then a third... (Z15Am).

If we compare the ways in which people in Zhovkva spoke of the expulsion of the Poles with statements about the expulsion of the Germans in Krzyż, there is a striking difference in the nature and intensity of emotions. Whereas the present-day residents of Krzyż recognized the suffering and loss experienced by the Germans, respondents in Zhovkva were much more matter-of-fact about the resettlement of the Poles: they spoke of population exchanges and “going back” to Poland. Only rarely did speakers – mostly educated individuals from the younger generation – expressed awareness that the Poles had lost their homeland (often also losing their loved ones) and experienced great suffering.

They were kicked out, really. [...] And I don't think that this was the right thing to do. You know, there was this and that, sure... Casimir III [the Great] took over Galicia, Ukrainian land, that is true, yes. But on the other hand, entire generations [of Poles] grew up here during the course of all those years. You can't just say it never happened, that this wasn't their homeland. Take, say, the Turks or Tatars – they came here from outside, stirred up trouble, and left. It was different with the Poles (Z39Cf).

The comparison here between Poles and “Turks or Tatars” is important, emphasizing that the Poles should not be treated as outsiders after so many centuries of coexistence; they were, for this speaker, people with roots in Galicia, just like the local Ukrainians. Such opinions were very rarely expressed in the interviews conducted in Zhovkva. Expressions of regret at the departure of the Poles were equally rare – of the many interviewees who had been to school with Poles before the war, worked alongside them, and shared many aspects of daily life, only one person said that it was a shame that they were now gone.

Then they brought our people [Ukrainians] here from Poland, even that W., she came from Poland. The people from this house, they were [expelled.] And they were such nice people, the Poles. Great girls, just like us, we went to school together (Z35Af).

Why is it that memories of Poles in Zhovkva, which were fairly abundant in relation to other aspects of the historical Polish presence, were so lacking in empathy, especially when compared to the compassion that the eastern Poles in Krzyż continued to feel for the deported Germans? The most important factor affecting the earlier biographical experiences of the oldest interviewees was the difficult state of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the interwar period, followed by their dramatic worsening in the course of the war. Whereas the Poles who arrived in Krzyż from the pre-war eastern provinces had never had any negative experiences of German civilians, the Ukrainians in Zhovkva (and those resettled from Poland) had accumulated bad memories both of Polish government and of Polish neighbors. Whereas the Germans had been one of the warring sides, the occupiers (and so it was possible to symbolically divide the

occupation authorities from the “ordinary Germans,”) from the Ukrainian point of view, Poles remained part of a neighborly conflict, one that was therefore much more painful.<sup>298</sup> Furthermore, for Ukrainians resettled from Poland, the Poles also represented the people who had deprived them of their homes. All of these factors made Poles an inconvenient group for memory in Zhovkva: they reminded one of bygone troubles, including of past injuries or an unsettled conscience. Given this context, their disappearance could be a cause for relief or an object of indifference, but not a source of regret.

Another significant issue is that most Poles left Zhovkva at the beginning of the repatriations, shortly after the end of the war; most new settlers in Zhovkva from the East and those resettled from Poland, meanwhile, arrived the following year, once the largest wave of Polish “repatriation” had already departed. Thus, the newly arrived residents did not usually witness the expulsion of the Poles, and there were very few instances of people who had just lost of their home cohabiting with people who were about to meet the same fate – an occurrence that made a strong impression on Polish settlers from the East in Krzyż. Ukrainians resettled from Poland did describe their impressions of moving into a Polish house and having regular contact with Poles who were preparing to leave; no one, however, told a story about living with a Polish family or celebrating holidays together.

And while my father was here on his own, they [the Polish former owners of the building] were still here for two more weeks. They were given decent conditions, they were put onto a train and they left for Polish territory. [...] [And that Polish family didn't treat your father in any untoward way?] No, they were fine. My father told me, he went to see them a few times, because he was living over at H.'s place, and he would check if they were still there, and they would always receive him with something at the table. But they were already packed and ready to go (Z15Am).

This fragment suggests that contacts between Polish and Ukrainian resettlers were superficial, and that the two groups essentially passed each other by. Both in Krzyż and in Zhovkva, resettlers usually crossed paths with former residents at the point where they took over the houses of those who were leaving. Whilst the eastern Poles in Krzyż perceived a certain commonality between their own experiences and those of the Germans, the resettlers in Zhovkva appear to have

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298 This conflict had a deeply internalized class dimension – although the objective differences in economic status between the Polish and Ukrainian populations of Galicia were in fact often minimal, many Ukrainians still thought in class-based categories of “Polish lords” and “Ukrainian peasants.”

treated their encounters with Poles in a more pragmatic manner, as little more than an opportunity to secure a roof over their heads. Importantly, moreover, narratives about the expulsion of the Poles appeared very rarely in interviews with the younger generations – this seems to have been an insignificant event that was not considered worthy of preservation in family memory. The few who did mention it did so in the context of their family's obtaining of a Polish house. Strikingly, the majority of younger respondents – irrespective of their family backgrounds – were indifferent to the origins of their own homes, whether those homes were formerly Jewish or formerly Polish; most simply knew nothing about the past of the building they lived in. Perhaps this history was considered so insignificant that the grandparents never mentioned it; another possible reason is that for the Ukrainians resettled from Poland, the architecture in Zhovkva was essentially similar to that which they had left behind in Tomaszów or Lubaczów, so they gave it little thought – in contradistinction to the cultural shock that the eastern Poles experienced when they were transplanted into the urban fabric of Krzyż.

The Poles disappeared from view after the war, becoming socially invisible as a group. On the occasions when interviewees mentioned Poles in Soviet Zhovkva, they talked about specific individuals, never an entire community. There were no stereotypical constructions of the kind that were common for the interwar period, such as “those nasty Poles” or “we lived well with the Poles;” on the contrary, some people claimed that the nationality of their neighbors or co-workers was of no consequence. Settlers from the East were especially likely to deny that nationality played any role. Undoubtedly, the Poles' invisibility in memory is a consequence not only of their physical disappearance from Zhovkva, but also of the social marginalization of those who remained in the town. Whilst the Soviet authorities acted to remove all traces of Polish culture, the remaining Poles were afraid to demonstrate – or even publicly admit – their identity:

[When you came here, were there many Poles left?] Do you think they admitted that they were Poles? Unlikely! Maybe there were two or three people who I knew were Poles, because they spoke Polish. [...] Here, people hid the fact that they were Poles (Z10Af).

The process of assimilation also affected the decimated Polish population, partly in conjunction with the fear of revealing one's Polish identity and with the social ostracizing that Poles experienced on many levels. Interestingly, it was better-educated respondents from the younger generations who noticed this assimilation most often, perhaps because they were more sensitive to the changes in identity that were taking place before their eyes. As one interviewee put it:

If there was anything like that in the family, it was hidden far away and you couldn't tell anyone, because God forbid, if you played with someone and they went home and said something. Then your parents might be paid a visit, for a talk, and then who knows what kind of corrective education they might get told to do... (Z37Cf).

The situation of the Poles in post-war Zhovkva can be easily summarized: those who didn't die, left; those who didn't leave were forgotten. Only the systemic change of the 1990s changed the status of the Polish community – both in the new socio-political reality of independent Ukraine and in the consciousnesses of the residents of Zhovkva.

### **“Now it is OK”**

After Ukraine gained independence, Zhovkva's Poles, like other groups that had been directly or indirectly persecuted, figuratively emerged from the underground: they regained a church, created an association, and started traveling to Poland and receiving guests from across the border. Nonetheless, the Polish presence in Zhovkva appears as a kind of phantom. Non-Polish respondents stated with complete assertiveness that there was a Polish community in the town today, pointing to the large, working Roman Catholic Church as evidence; however, they hesitated when I asked about specific individuals, say, neighbors or colleagues from work or school. The oldest interviewees named people their own age, many of whom, it turned out, had already passed away. Younger people cautioned that they couldn't be sure whether the Poles in Zhovkva were “proper” Poles. Many observed that it was not only Poles who attended the “Polish” church, and they were often unsure where these Poles could have come from in the first place – perhaps some had migrated from Poland? It was striking that questions about Poles in Zhovkva today were often answered with an immediate claim that there were no conflicts at the local level, although the questions never implied such an issue: “You can see it is calmer today, than, say, in Soviet times... [...] I would say that here in Zhovkva there is no problem between Ukrainians and Poles; here it is like in any other town” (Z15Df).

The first (and sometimes only) thing with which the Polish community in Zhovkva was associated was the collegiate church. Poles were perceived as a church-going group that cultivated Roman Catholic religious traditions. This distinctiveness was generally considered in positive terms; it was even the subject of a certain local pride. Zhovkva was deemed to gain a distinct character from its small but “ethnographically” colorful minority, making it more interesting for people from outside. All of the respondents without exception emphasized the harmonious coexistence of the Roman and Greek Catholic churches

in Zhovkva, citing examples of the two congregations paying mutual visits on holidays or the friendships between the two sets of clergy; often, this relationship was cast in contradiction to the tense relations with the Moscow patriarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church:

We [Ukrainians] go there [to the Roman Catholic church] on Christmas Eve, we sing, we do everything. There is friendship, also between the priests... To begin with, everything was in Polish, so not many people went – because everything was in Polish. Later they started doing everything half in Ukrainian, half in Polish. [...] Lots of people go to the [Roman] Catholic church, pure Ukrainians. So the Poles are completely... People here like them, we think well of them (Z5Cm).

Interviewees were also positively inclined towards the charitable and cultural activities of the Roman Catholic Church. These were mostly associated with the Polish nuns who cared for children in Zhovkva, including non-Roman-Catholics. Residents of Zhovkva spoke of these activities approvingly, although at times – especially among the older respondents – there was a hint of surprise and envy, laced with a mild suspicion: did these activities not have a hidden motive of polonizing the Ukrainian children?

The Poles now, after the war, they've done lots of work here. There are three nuns here [...] They speak excellent Ukrainian, but they teach Polish history, all the kings, do you understand what I am getting at? They keep the discipline, they give food and other things – and all the families are satisfied, and it's clear that the children have got the hang of all that (Z29Af).

Despite these incompletely verbalized anxieties, today's relations between Ukrainians and Poles were seen by interviewees as very good, both at the local level between the town's communities, and also in terms of relations with tourists visiting from Poland. This is seen very clearly in the following statements by two siblings, both middle-aged, who were from a family of resettlers; interestingly, both underlined that *now* – in the era of independent Ukraine – Poles no longer faced any threats.

The Poles now are fine, sure! No one has anything bad to say to them. Once we [Ukrainians] started going over there [to Poland], my God, there are such contacts with them over there! The young people have great relations – guests visit, they load up cars full of meat... [Do you mean direct contact?] Yes, loads! They come here for every opening and town festival and what have you, lots of Poles. They drink, they talk, no hatred from anyone, and the young people are completely at ease with them – they are friends. They've won us over completely. People think well of them, everything is forgiven, let's get on with our lives! And, well, it is their town after all. We built it, the Poles traded, it's their town... [When they come, do they say that it is their town?] They used to, a lot, but not any more. [Not any more?] They used to say: it's our town, our

town [said in Polish: *To nasze miasto, nasze miasto*]. But now, after everything. [...] I didn't think it could ever be so calm, they don't dig up the past, they just walk around... (Z5Cm).

Don't you think that people get violent and murder straight away around here. Everyone lives in harmony. We have bandits, and you have bandits. But people say such silly things (sister of Z5Cm).

Thus, the interviewees were convinced that there was no longer any conflict, and that business and social ties were flourishing among the youth. It would appear that the Poles have irreversibly lost their traditional status as the important Other in the eyes of the Galician Ukrainians – and the younger the respondents, the more ingrained this new status becomes. Whilst before the Second World War, as well as in the first post-war years, Ukrainians in Galicia defined their national and cultural identity in opposition to the Poles, the Poles have now become less significant – including both the few who remained in Zhovkva and the ones who left the town.<sup>299</sup> As Yaroslav Hrytsak argues, this diminishment in the hierarchy of animosity is a result both of the Poles' physical absence, and of the fact that they have lost their previous socio-political status.<sup>300</sup> Absent and/or harmless, the Poles no longer matter in Galicia; their place as the significant Other has been taken by the Russians/Soviets.

I did nonetheless expect to hear of the symbolic importance of the Poles in response to questions about present-day Polish tourists in Zhovkva. However, these visitors were generally received with a polite indifference, and they clearly conjured no ghosts of the past. The majority of residents related to the tourists with empathy and understanding; the town has links to Polish history, and so it is natural that Poles visit it.

[How are Poles received in Zhovkva today?] Well, I think [that] Poles come to Zhovkva very often on the whole. Firstly, it's close, secondly, Żółkiewski, a Pole, founded Zhovkva, so many Poles come here to see the town. Even my mother often does guided tours. So in my opinion there is no big deal in the Poles visiting (Z10Df).

Resettlers from the oldest generation often perceived an obvious analogy: the Poles visit Zhovkva in the same way that they visited their own places of birth in Poland after 1991. Such statements usually took the form of simply “giving permission” to the Polish tourists to visit, such as in the case of this woman,

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299 Interestingly, in the Polish national imaginary – according to Ireneusz Krzemiński – the role of the principal Other is played by the Jews, despite their absence, see: Krzemiński, *Antysemityzm w Polsce i na Ukrainie*.

300 Hrytsak, “Historical Memory.”

who when asked whether Poles come to Zhovkva, said: “Why shouldn’t they? They come here, both tourists and those Poles [former residents]. [...] At the beginning everyone wanted to travel. I also went to see my home” (Z3Af). More extensive reflections were articulated less frequently. The following speaker, for instance, went from describing his own experiences of visiting his native land to commenting on the Polish visitors in Zhovkva:

It’s the same here. The historical heritage has been preserved and the people who used to live here, the Poles, who worked here, who built and refurbished the houses, they are happy that it is still there. They feel something special here. [...] When they come here, and many of them do, they say: “we used to live here and work here.” It’s not even the parents, but the children and grandchildren (Z15Am).

To the question of whether the Polish tour groups cluttering the streets of Zhovkva were an annoyance, interviewees rushed to vehemently deny such a claim; some were even offended that anyone could suspect the community of such a lack of hospitality. Many people did not understand the context of my question – they asked in complete seriousness why anyone would have anything against the Poles. When I explained that people in Krzyż were often anxious about the Germans returning, they were genuinely surprised. Many speakers joked that only a fool would bite off the hand that fed them – in other words, the Polish tourists were perceived above all as sources of income: [How do people receive these tour groups?] “Fine. Firstly, the good thing is that the shops receive them very well [laughter]. It’s very good for the shops. Because you Poles lap up everything – vodka, cigarettes, sweets” (Z20Cm). One possible reason why some respondents did not understand why people might be negatively disposed towards the Polish tourists is that they were unaware of the motivations that drive some Poles to visit Zhovkva. Asked why so many Poles traveled to the town, one resident claimed to have no idea. She perceived the Polish visitors positively, with no reference to the historical context: “It’s great that they have the opportunity to come here and visit the town, I would also like it if someone took me on a tour to Poland and showed me round, why not? People are wealthier, they can afford it, so why shouldn’t they come?” (Z17Cf).

Negative opinions about Poles were expressed very rarely indeed, and usually in a mediated form – i.e. speakers claimed that there were some other people who did not like the Poles. They pointed unequivocally to “nationalists,” or in other words, to the section of Zhovkva society that they deemed to be right-wing and/or radically anti-Russian or anti-communist.

[Did people receive the Poles well?] Yes, even... You know who doesn’t receive them well? The nationalists, you know... [whispering]. They don’t treat the Poles well, they

have some issues with the Russians and with... [the Poles]. I'm not even sure why, what they are trying to say with their attitudes, what they are actually thinking inside? I asked a colleague once, I said: "What have they done to you?" And she said [scornfully]: "Ha, the Polish army was on bicycles!"<sup>301</sup> (Z16Bf).

Although I spoke to many "nationalists," none of the people whom one could label as such expressed any dissatisfaction with the Polish groups visiting Zhovkva. Perhaps the outcome would have been different if I, the interviewer, were not a Pole; however, no such opinions were expressed in interviews conducted by my Ukrainian collaborators. The only statement that contained any dissatisfaction with the number of Polish tourists was made by a man of the oldest generation, who had arrived in Zhovkva from a Galician village, and showed his dislike of Poles at several other points in the interview. When asked to clarify his views, however, even he retracted his previous comments, turned them into a joke, and claimed he had no real enmity against the Poles. The tone of his statement was mildly deprecating and ironic, but not hostile. Interestingly, his account was in a way a mirror image of the question that had been asked. The speaker commented not on his attitude towards Poles or other people, but about the attitude of Poles to Ukrainians:

Poles don't like Ukrainians, no they don't! I see, for example, how they come here, and it is almost like we are all friends, we are good and kind, but I can see perfectly well that that is not what they are thinking. [...] [And you said that Polish tourist groups come here, and that they... That it is visible that they don't really like Ukrainians. How can you tell? Do they behave badly in some way?] No, why would they, Poles are intelligent people, you can't say that they would... But a Pole can always say "this is all ours" [laughter] (Z20Am).

Whilst the interviews contained no clear expressions of dislike for Poles or their visits to Zhovkva, for some speakers their relations with Poles did have some difficult moments. This is true above all of situations in which the post-colonial dimension of Polish-Ukrainian relations made itself known. In such situations, the Poles appeared as a group belonging to a higher civilizational, cultural and material level, whilst the Ukrainians in contrast acted as a subordinate group (today – economically, in the past – both economically and politically). Sometimes this context emerged accidentally, without any intention on other side, such as in a story about Polish tourists giving out sweets to Ukrainian

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301 This is a reference to the Ukrainian minority's negative attitude towards the Polish army during the defensive war of 1939 (the Polish military was less well equipped than the German Wehrmacht).

children. The Poles here appeared as visitors from another, better world, and they unconsciously played the role of “wealthy relatives.” They had no intention of displaying their superiority over the children of Zhovkva, but the respondent perceived the incident as a humiliation, and it was clear from the tone of her voice that she considered this story as the tip of an iceberg – rather than being an isolated incident, it symbolized an entire gamut of problematic relations between Ukrainians and Poles.

Personally I didn't enjoy looking at that at all, seeing our children, from here, from Zhovkva, running up to those buses and trying to speak Polish, managing a couple of words... I don't remember what exactly they were saying, but you know... But they aren't beggars, they're not poor (Z41Df).

Stronger negative emotions were aroused in situations where Poles intentionally positioned themselves as representatives of a superior group – culturally, civilizationally and economically. Their haughty behavior was understably met with anger and distaste. It did happen that such behavior was reported in Zhovkva; the most illustrative incident, however, was said to have taken place during an encounter with Poles in Poland.

I have some very good friends in Poland. I've visited them, we get on very well, and they have been here many times. [...] They treated me like family, saying “if someone visits a brother, they should be received well;” everything was great. But then once some relative from the mother's side comes to visit the parents, and she starts questioning me about why I am there and then tells me off because of all those Ukrainians who sell cigarettes. Now you can see how upset I was... First, you don't know me, but I definitely do not sell cigarettes, and I am a guest in your house, and I've welcomed your children into my house, and everything was great. Why would you say such things to me? You know, I'm also not thrilled that Ukrainians go and trade like that, but I know that some of them have no choice. But there's nothing I can do about it. So don't judge the entire nation from them (Z39Cf).

This fragment clearly shows the mechanism by which the speaker rejects collective responsibility and collective judgement. The humiliation caused by a feeling a sudden solidarity with fellow Ukrainians mixes with a desire to draw a boundary to separate them from herself. Nonetheless, the negative emotions are directly above all at the Polish woman, and negative Polish-Ukrainian stereotypes become activated.

## Material and Symbolic Heritage

For most residents of Zhovkva, especially the younger ones, Poland and the Poles were associated above all with contemporary times – if any talk of problems

arose, it concerned the present-day economic and political situation, rather than the past. Perhaps this was a consequence of the fact that – unlike people in Krzyż – in Zhovkva, even the first generation of resettlers did not fear that Poles might return to claim their old homes, even when those former owners came to visit.

[How did those Poles treat you when they came to visit?] Fine, fine. They were even pleased. And dad made lunch for them. They were here, yes, for about three days. They looked around at everything. [...] [And you weren't afraid that the Poles would want to take their house back? Since they came to see... their own home.] I'm not sure about that... This house was given to us by the town council after all. It's legally ours (Z12Bf).

Most statements, by both older and younger respondents, contained a clear conviction that the decisions of the authorities from over six decades ago to remove the Poles from Zhovkva were irreversible. The eastern Poles in Krzyż felt no such security, living “with packed bags” for many years and receiving the returning Germans with suspicion and fear. How may I explain this difference? On the one hand, the differences in the political regimes of Krzyż and Zhovkva shed some light on this problem. Whilst for the residents of socialist Krzyż, life was difficult in Stalinist times and afterwards, the communist regime in Zhovkva was undoubtedly more repressive and totalitarian in nature; its activities were not to be undermined by ordinary individuals. The phrase “this house was given to us by the town council after all,” spoken with a degree of incredulity, shows that it was essentially unthinkable to the resettlers that anyone – here, the long-expelled Poles – could question the *status quo*. Another factor is the content of post-war propaganda. Whilst the new residents of Zhovkva were told repeatedly that there had never really been any Poles in Galicia (and that the ones who had lived there had left voluntarily), the resettlers in Krzyż were kept alert to the threat of the evil Germans. The Soviet regime had the more effective means of keeping the new communities in check. Paradoxically, the present-day visits of Poles who had previously lived in Zhovkva worked to deepen people's (especially younger residents') conviction that the material and political *status quo* had been settled once and for all. The guests appeared to interviewees to be completely rooted in their new homes in Poland, and for this reason, they were deemed unlikely to advance any claims of any kind:

A Polish woman came here once. “It's nothing,” she said. “It's nothing, we have a place to live over there.” That was it. [She used to live here?] Yes, that's right. She came to visit. It was fine. She said: “we have everything we need over there, everything.” So you see, we've been here for 64 years now, not a year or two! (Z4Af).

Respondents' reactions to visits from the former owners were calm, with no trace of insecurity; rather, they showed understanding, a certain empathy, and sometimes a degree of surprise that someone would want to travel so far just to see the house in which a grandparent had been born. At the same time – unlike in Krzyż – no one spoke of maintaining close, warm relations with the Poles who had previously lived in Zhovkva; there were no repeat visits, no holiday greeting cards were exchanged, and no parcels were sent. If any contact did take place, it was usually superficial and a one-time affair. This could be a result of memories of past conflicts, conflicts that were much more intense than on the Polish-German axis, continuing to reverberate in contemporary relations. Another possible reason is that the majority of residents in Zhovkva did not see any common ground between their own post-war experiences of resettlement and those of the Poles.

Because of the belief in the irrefutability of the decisions taken by the Soviet authorities, conversations with residents of Zhovkva never featured any discussion of reparations being potentially demanded by the Polish side. Only one person commented on this topic – a lawyer by education who clearly perceived my question to be a “professional” matter and therefore felt obliged to answer in some detail.

It wasn't their fault and they didn't know whose houses they were moving into. [...] In my opinion such matters should not be subject to claims, because it would create a complete precedent. Then everywhere all over the world, if people started giving everything back to everyone else, say, Germany was also half in one country and half in another, just like Poland, for example. People would start digging in archives – it would be complete chaos (Z15Df).

Other, shorter responses on this subject were similar in tone: that there was no point in digging up personal matters after so many years, especially in regions affected by the post-war border shifts; and furthermore, that older people lacked the strength to get involved in such things, whilst the younger people were simply indifferent.

Did this feeling of legal and political security also entail a sense of symbolic security, i.e. an assuredness not only that one's house could not be repossessed, but also that there were no cultural or moral grounds on which to even make a claim? Have Zhovkva's post-war residents incorporated the town's Polish heritage into their own culture – do they consider it their own? The interviews showed that the Polish heritage could be roughly divided into two categories: the church, and everything else. For the vast majority of interviewees, the Roman Catholic Church in Zhovkva remained “the Polish church.” They associated its history – its

former renown, the post-war neglect, and the current renovation – with the history of the Polish community in Zhovkva; the restoration work was linked in the present day to Poles from Poland. This does not mean they were indifferent: religious residents of Zhovkva perceived the church as a sacred building, and were negatively disposed towards its decline. The blame for the building's ruination is put firmly at the door of the Soviets – as with the synagogue, although in this case the condemnation was much stronger. The dichotomy between “Polish culture” and “Soviet barbarism” appears again in this context, and as a result, the church becomes less foreign; it is “ours” because it is “not Soviet,” and it was destroyed by the Soviets in the same manner as “our” Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches.

Do you know what they did there? They turned it into a grain store! And now the priest is here, since a couple of years ago, when there was that announcement that the Catholic church would be re-opened, and then it was opened. They took everything out then, the priest took care of it... Poland helped a lot. Those Poles are very good people. Did they ever do anything bad to us? What is there to talk about? (Z34Af).

Respondents treated the Polish state's involvement in the renovation of the Roman Catholic Church as something natural and positive. Some commented critically on the Ukrainian state's inactivity in this regard, but such criticisms were usually general indictments of the dysfunctional Ukrainian state, rather than a specific claim that it should not neglect the Polish church.

The Polish church – yes it was the Poles who came here and refurbished it themselves, after Ukraine became independent. [...] Our government did nothing towards this, nothing. And in the same way, the Jews come here, it was Jews who gave money for the renovation of that synagogue (Z35Af).

It was also considered natural for abandoned Polish churches to be transferred to other religious communities in need of a building, although most speakers felt it necessary to justify this opinion – they pointed to the buildings' bad state of repair or the absence of a Catholic congregation that would use the premises: “They surely took it [the church] with the agreement of the Poles. It's not as if... It's not as if they commandeered it” (Z1Af).

Importantly, respondents emphasized not the destruction of architectural heritage, but the fact that sacral space would go to waste; in the absence of the Roman Catholics, it could still serve other religious groups. The exclusion to this trend was a very emotional and critical statement by a museum employee, who trained as an art historian. Whilst she did not disagree in principle with the transfer of Roman Catholic churches to the Greek Catholic and Orthodox communities, she was incensed by the way in which their refurbishment was being carried out. Her response was characterized not only by the indignation of a

professional, but also a protest against the destruction of the common heritage of Zhovkva. Commenting on the renovation of a former Dominican church, which included the painting over of some valuable frescoes, she said:

What is happening here now, that's not refurbishment. That is devastation in my view. [...] It's not ignorance, it's sheer human stupidity, it's just a waste. [...] Why would they restore some old paintings if they might not even suit the Greek Catholic church of today? (Z42Cf).

The rest of the architectural heritage is treated very differently – the castle, town gates, and old town houses: these buildings are not considered foreign because for most residents, Polishness is directly associated with Roman Catholicism; since the buildings are not religious in nature, they are not “marked” as culturally Polish. Interestingly, the opposite is true in Krzyż: the town houses in the center are still considered to be (post-)German – especially by the oldest generation – whilst both churches were completely polonized from the very beginning. Only a few interviewees revealed a belief that the historical space of Zhovkva was created primarily by Poles, mostly individuals with a deeper interest in history, who were prone to reflect on their own identity. These speakers were convinced that it was thanks to the historical presence of the Poles that the town took on its current appearance, which Ukrainians today can continue to enjoy – “It's thanks to Poland that we have so many buildings. So many architectural relics, and that's thanks to Poland” (Z11Dm).

Very few people considered the Polish material and cultural heritage to be an integral part of Ukrainian culture, understood in a civic or political sense as the sum total of traditions of the different ethnic groups that have lived in the present-day and historical territory of Ukraine.<sup>302</sup> For these individuals, the local Polish heritage was of course valuable: they argued that it enriches today's Zhovkva whilst posing no threat to the ethnic identities of today's Ukrainian residents.

I'm talking about the maintenance of cultural heritage. This is very important, very important. Because we Ukrainians are not only “pure” Ukrainians; our history is everything that came before in this territory – the Poles, the Jews, they all assimilated here. All of this is assimilated in our present-day consciousness. And we have no right to say

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302 This tendency is not only true for Zhovkva. In Galicia more broadly, Polish heritage remains a difficult issue for intellectuals, see: Eleonora Narvselius, “Tragic Past, Agreeable Heritage: Post-Soviet Intellectual Discussions on the Polish Legacy in Western Ukraine,” *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, Vol. 2401 (2015), pp. 1–75.

that we are only “pure” Ukrainians, because the Poles lived here and still live here; that is us, everyone who lived here before – the Jews, the Poles. It was all passed down to us somehow, like a smell, the way the wind carries a smell, all of that was carried into our consciousness, it is what we are made of (Z40Bm).

Importantly, exclusively people who were professionally involved in architecture, the arts, and cultural activities, or who were otherwise closely connected to Polish culture made such statements. Again, it is possible to see the parallels with local identity in Krzyż – there, likewise, the town’s German past, its architecture and material inheritance were important primarily to those individuals who were personally involved in the study of the pre-war history of the town.

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Memory of the Poles in Zhovkva is strongly differentiated, above all between generations, but also between the backgrounds of individual respondents and their families. For older people born in the town or its vicinity and for those who were resettled from Poland, this memory was dominated by past injuries – with pre-war disagreements and wartime conflicts at the forefront. Migrants from the East knew little about the Polish presence in Zhovkva – as was the case with the Jewish presence. The lack of mutual trust between different kinds of migrants and locals in the post-war period blocked the creation of a local memory. If the Easterners had anything to say about the Poles, they were most likely to talk about their departure (because at least some of them had been witnesses to the deportation operations), but not about Polish-Ukrainian conflicts from the wartime.

A similar state of affairs held true among interviewees of the middle generation: they spoke mostly in generalities, with a naïve conviction that the post-war “repatriation” had been voluntary. Only very rarely did people give vague accounts of the interwar period – and as a rule, these were people from local families; with few exceptions, these accounts gave no inkling that relations had been conflictual. Memory was undoubtedly thinnest among the youngest generation – many respondents of this category did not even know that Zhovkva had previously been under Polish rule. This particular ahistorical thinking of the younger groups was often equally forgetful of the Poles and the Jews. Interestingly, young people made no distinctions in their non-remembrance, being equally ignorant of both wartime conflicts and Polish persecutions of the interwar period; in other words, Ukrainian victims and perpetrators were on a level setting. I have analyzed some of the reasons why Zhovkva families maintained no memory of the wartime Polish-Ukrainian conflicts mentioned above. Why, however, did they not discuss the era of Polish-Ukrainian coexistence in Zhovkva, a time when Poles were the “bad guys” in mutual relations, i.e. the interwar period and

the Polish persecutions against the Ukrainian movement for national self-determination? It would appear that in relation to memory of the Poles, both in the post-war period and after Ukrainian independence, the “interests” of the local community and state memory policy converged. The fact that a significant Polish community had existed in Galicia in the past, one that was culturally and politically dominant, was of little value both to the propagandists of the Ukrainian SSR and to the architects of the official memory narrative in independent Ukraine. Meanwhile, family memory (unlike the autobiographical memory of the oldest respondents) was reluctant to preserve any recollection of interwar persecutions, because that would raise difficult questions about what had later happened to those oppressors.

Besides silence in people’s homes, (non-)memory of the Poles has also been created by official narratives. The changes that affected state memory production after 1991 were significant, yet Poles continue to be portrayed mainly as a side in a conflict, with much less attention paid to Polish-Ukrainian cultural ties and social coexistence.<sup>303</sup> Meanwhile, as Natalia Yakovenko has rightly noted, stereotypes about one’s own nation and neighboring societies, including ideas of Self/Other and Friend/Enemy, are formed above all at school age, through popular literature and cinema, and primarily through history education.<sup>304</sup> One can hardly expect that the youngest generation of residents of Zhovkva – who have been presented in school with a panoramic vision of Poland and Ukraine as mutually hostile and absolutely distinct cultural entities – would have a vivid interest in the history of the town’s Polish community. This situation is made more problematic by the fact that, in the new version of the town’s history promoted at the local level since 1991, the Poles are not completely absent, but they only appear when it is convenient and safe. A glimpse at the display of the town museum or local guidebooks, albums and tourist maps shows that figures such as Żółkiewski and Sobieski have become part of the town’s past, but no social or political actors from the nineteenth century have made the cut. After the times of these sixteenth and seventeenth century luminaries, the town’s Polish history seems to enter a phase of mysterious silence, until at last, like *deus ex machina*, there appear a series of well-kept and refurbished Polish churches. The calendars

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303 See: Zashkilniak, “Istoriia svoia,” pp. 24–26; Viktoria Sereda, “Vplyv polskykh ta ukraiinskykh pidruchnykiv z istorii na formuvannia polsko-ukraiinskykh etnichnykh stereotypiv.” *Visnyk Lvivskoho universytetu. Serii istorychna*, Vol. 35–36 (2000), pp. 387–397.

304 Yakovenko, *Paralelnyi svit*, pp. 366–382.

with images of interwar Polish postcards issued by the town museum contain no information about why there are no more Poles in Zhovkva.<sup>305</sup>

Today, people in Zhovkva associate Poles with the contemporary Polish state – Poland is a wealthy neighbor and a model of successful transformation, and as an additional factor in its positive image, the Poles offered significant support to Ukraine during the Orange Revolution of 2004. Outside the oldest generation, there are very few historical associations or stereotypes – and Zhovkva is far from an isolated case in western Ukraine.<sup>306</sup> This diagnosis is supported by recent research conducted among history students in Lviv; most of them had positive associations of Poles and Poland, because those associations were from the present day.<sup>307</sup> One of my respondents, a poet and translator and someone with close connections to Polish culture, made a similar comment:

There are some people who really don't like the Poles, and there are other people for whom the Poles are... well, how would I put it, they are a civilizational ideal. A very important factor here is the economic factor, by which I mean that Poland today is associated much less with ideology. It's a question of standard of living. Some things happen just because people go to Poland to earn money, and they bring back from Poland a picture of what it's like to live well, [...] and that begins to have an effect (Z1Cf).

Poland and Poles, in other words, signify a European standard for people in Zhovkva, in terms of both economics and culture; it is no surprise that they arouse positive associations, especially among younger people with pro-Western and pro-European sympathies. The attitude towards Poles in Zhovkva today could be described as a role model relationship, but it is questionable whether this situation has any longer-term stability. This image of a role model has its roots in the incompleteness and superficiality of collective memory, including

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305 There is a clear parallel with local history materials published by the town council in Krzyż, including a similar book of German postcards that contains no hint as to what happened to the town's German population.

306 Yaroslav Hrytsak has written about the vanishing of past stereotypes in the Polish-Ukrainian borderlands, see: Jarosław Hrycak, "Stereotypy o stereotypach: pogranicze ukraińsko-polskie i problemy jego prezentacji," in: *Akulturacyja/asymilacyja na pograniczach kulturowych Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w XIX i XX w.*, Vol. 1: *Stereotypy i pamięć*, ed. Robert Traba (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2009), pp. 53–77.

307 Olena Arkusha, "Polskyi i rosiiskyi chynnyky u formuvanii suchasnoi natsionalnoi svidomosti halatskykh ukraintiv: istorychnyi dosvid i suchasni paraleli," in: *Istorychni mify i stereotypy ta mizhnatsionalni vidnosyny v suchasni Ukraini*, ed. Leonid Zashkilniak (Lviv: Instytut Ukrainoznavstva im. Krypiakevycha NAN Ukrainy, 2009), pp. 144–209.

the sweeping under the carpet of practically all of the difficult questions related to the past. It is easy to declare warm sentiments towards someone whom one only sees in a good light; it is also easy to remember an Other who has vanished from a territory, together with the entire baggage of difficult legacies connected to its historical presence there. Memory of the Poles in Zhovkva is selective in a dangerous way. It is easy to imagine that, once the generation of witnesses who remember Poles as part of their own biographies has passed away, young residents of Zhovkva might irreversibly lose all awareness of this part of the town's history, because the memories of the elders were not passed down. After such a blockage in the transmission of memory, it is only a small step to further forgetting and the instrumental mythologization of the memories that remain. I would argue that in the context of Polish-Ukrainian relations, the precarious situation of memory threatens to be explosive: at some point it could transpire that the people of Zhovkva – Ukrainians, Russians and even Poles – are unable to understand what Poles from Poland are talking about when they begin conversations on their shared history and future reconciliation.<sup>308</sup>

Of course, forgetting is also a part of remembering – as Aleida Assmann argues, the inseparability of memory and forgetting at the individual and collective levels creates the cultural memory of any given group.<sup>309</sup> According to Assmann, forgetting can be active – in which case the element of memory is lost forever – or it can be passive, a result of a lack of attention rather than an intentional act of erasure, and then the forgotten thing can be restored to memory; Assmann uses the metaphors of a museum display and its storage (active and passive memory, the canon and archive). I believe that memory of the Poles in Zhovkva is not yet lost – it is still possible to reach into the memory storage and transfer it to one of the exhibition rooms, even if not the main hall. The painful, antagonistic memory of the Polish presence does still filter through the layers of forgetting, for example when respondents unreflectingly note that “*now* there are no problems with the Poles.” Its further destiny depends above all on whether the new generation recognizes it as a potentially important part of its identity.

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308 The extremely negative reaction to the film *Wołyń* (dir. by Wojciech Smarzowski, 2016) and the general worsening of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the context of mutual settling of historical accounts in 2017 and later, show that this moment has already arrived at a pan-Ukrainian level. For a short overview of the discussion that followed in Ukraine, see: Wojciech Konończuk, “Ukraińcy patrzą na ‘Wołyń,’” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Vol. 47 (2016), pp. 44–45.

309 Assmann, “Canon and Archive.”

