

STEREOTYPES IN THE SERVICE OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL INQUIRY: PILGRIMS FROM UKRAINE IN THE KALWARIA PACŁAWSKA SANCTUARY

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This article tackles the question of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the Roman Catholic sanctuary in Kalwaria Paławska, located very close to the Polish-Ukrainian state border. It discusses how not taking a firm stand in debates on the multi-faith history of the cult site, and excluding some pilgrimage groups from an official religious discourse constructed by the sanctuary authorities, results in a certain otherizing and exoticizing of these groups. Focusing on relations between Polish Roman Catholic pilgrims and pilgrims of various Christian faiths coming to Kalwaria Paławska from Ukraine, I analyse the role of ethnic stereotypes, prejudices, collective memory and current historical policy in anthropological interpretation. Suggesting an interpretation of fieldwork data that goes beyond the context of Polish-Ukrainian relations and, although not denying this context as a background of field research, I propose a complementary understanding of the processes observed in the field, namely as the defence of authenticity of religious experiences.

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Niniejszy artykuł dotyczy relacji polsko-ukraińskich w rzymskokatolickim sanktuarium w Kalwarii Paławskiej, położonym tuż przy granicy polsko-ukraińskiej. Pokazuję w nim, jak unikanie konkretnego stanowiska na temat wielowyznaniowej historii miejsca kultu oraz wykluczenie pewnych grup pielgrzymów z oficjalnego dyskursu religijnego konstruowanego przez władze sanktuarium skutkuje wyobcowywaniem oraz egzotyzacją tych grup. Skupiając się na relacjach między rzymskokatolickimi pielgrzymami z Polski a pielgrzymami z Ukrainy wyznającymi różne odmiany chrześcijaństwa, analizuję rolę stereotypów etnicznych, uprzedzeń, pamięci zbiorowej oraz bieżącej polityki historycznej w interpretacji antropologicznej. Sugerując interpretację danych z terenu wychodzącą ponad kontekst relacji polsko-ukraińskich, choć nie lekceważąc tego kontekstu jako tła dla prowadzonych studiów, proponuję komplementarne spojrzenie na procesy obserwowane w terenie, to jest jako na obronę autentyczności przeżyć religijnych.

Key words: pilgrimage, Roman Catholicism, collective memory, ethnic stereotypes, anthropological interpretation

INTRODUCTION

This article presents research on the perception of pilgrims from Ukraine by Polish pilgrims. All of them come to Kalwaria¹ Paławska sanctuary in south-east Poland in August to participate in the Great Fair accompanying the feast of the Assumption of Virgin Mary. This is one of many research subjects I undertook during my studies at Kalwaria Paławska, located at the margins of my own investigations, but crucial to a wider project pertaining to religious imageries in south-east Poland². This must be underlined at the very outset, because the subject of this article is very much fieldwork-driven. The situation in the field pushed me to investigate the topic described here, but, more importantly, this topic arose in the field owing to the mere presence of the Ukrainian anthropologist Iuliia Buyskykh³, who happened to trigger stereotypical judgements, strongly polarized and biased opinions on her nationality, which subsequently influenced her understanding of research material (see Buyskykh 2016a, 2016b, 2018a, 2018b). I am very aware that if I had been in the field alone, I would not have paid so much attention to the perception of pilgrims from Ukraine⁴ by Polish ones; I would have continued to focus on other aspects of pilgrimaging to Kalwaria Paławska (see Baraniecka 2008; Baraniecka-Olszewska 2016, 2018b). However, in the specific situation which I shall describe in detail further on, I decided to investigate how Polish pilgrims position themselves towards pilgrims from Ukraine visiting the sanctuary, since this particular case study also enables discussion on the performativity of religious discourses and practices in a context in which official discourse in the sanctuary ignores the presence of pilgrims coming from Ukraine in Kalwaria Paławska. Yet, although it is silent on the topic, this discourse strongly influences the perception and attitudes of Polish pilgrims towards pilgrimages from Ukraine.

¹ Kalwaria (literally: a calvary) is a type of shrine intended to resemble Jerusalem. It has sets of chapels which the faithful walked by during services, known as *ścieżki* (pathways). One of such sets is devoted to the Passion of Christ, as in Jerusalem; others usually focus on the Marian cult. There can be several sets of chapels in one *kalwaria*.

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³ I would like to thank Dr Iuliia Buyskykh for the time we spent together in Kalwaria working on the *Multisensory Religious Imageries* project, for our long discussions, for her friendship and also for the inspiration she gave me to write this article.

⁴ Iuliia Buyskykh, a Ukrainian scholar conducting research at Kalwaria Paławska, refers to these pilgrimages as “Ukrainian pilgrimages”, a term that may derive not only from adapting an emic category, but also from her methodology – investigating collective memory about the Polish-Ukrainian relations and Greek Catholic sanctuary in Kalwaria Paławska – in which prejudices and stereotypes play a significant role and thus following them in anthropological interpretation is justified. As I am proposing an alternative interpretative solution, I prefer a descriptive category, i.e. “pilgrimages from Ukraine”.

For this reason, in the current article I shall discuss how not taking a firm stand in discussions on the multi-faith history of the cult site, as well as the exclusion of the actual presence of pilgrims from Ukraine from an official religious discourse which is constructed by the Franciscan friars in the sanctuary, result in a superficiality with which Polish Roman Catholic pilgrims perceive pilgrims from Lviv and Mostys'ka. In addition, I shall investigate how this stance arouses a certain sense of superiority among Polish Roman Catholic pilgrims who host pilgrims from Ukraine in "their" sanctuary and thus validates the dominant position of Roman Catholics over other denominations (see Pasięka 2015).

Although general considerations in this article are conducted within a framework of relations between ethnic stereotypes with local and state policy, collective memory and religious practice, I do not put much trust in such an interpretative approach; I see the potential of anthropological reflection as located in overcoming common interpretative solutions. The general premise of the current text is the conviction that religion, being present in various aspects of life, exceeds questions of faith and cult. Hence, I shall begin by describing the relations between religious discourses, local authorities, the local and state policy (including historical policy) and also collective memory on the example of pilgrimages to the sanctuary in Kalwaria Pałacowska. Later, however, I shall suggest an interpretation of fieldwork data that goes beyond the context of Polish-Ukrainian relations and, although it does not deny this context as a background of field research; it proposes a complementary understanding of processes observed in the field.

KALWARIA PAŁACOWSKA AS A PILGRIMAGE CENTRE

Both mine and Iuliia Buyskykh's fieldwork has been conducted in Kalwaria Pałacowska, which is both the name of a village and of a Franciscan sanctuary located in it. This Marian cult site lies near the Polish border with Ukraine, ca. 25 kilometres south of Przemyśl, and features a venerated miraculous image of Our Lady of Kalwaria, the Attentive Listener. The site is administered by the Franciscan order. For a number of reasons, the location of the cult site is of profound importance in the interpretation of the religious phenomena currently observed there. Above all, this is due to its contemporary proximity to the border. As Magdalena Zowczak (2011, 54) points out, researchers cannot ignore the presence of any border in their studies. The liminal location, in terms of geography but also culture and religion, affects the nature of the entire sanctuary, the services held there, as well as the relations between pilgrims, the Franciscans and the residents of nearby villages. As I will show later, it also affects the process of conducting fieldwork and anthropological interpretation of its outcomes.

These days, Kalwaria Paławska is exclusively a Roman Catholic cult site. Moreover, the region⁵ itself is inhabited mostly by Roman Catholics, though before WWII it used to be a multi-religious and multiethnic area. Now only a tourist map of the region, where Jewish cemeteries, destroyed Ukrainian villages, ex-Greek Catholic churches or German settlements are marked, attests to the former diversity of the area's population. Historically, the village was an important target of Greek Catholic pilgrimages and there were two important, if separate, cult sites there: a Greek and a Roman Catholic one. Some contemporary grassroots attempts have been made to transform the village of Kalwaria Paławska into a multi-faith cult site and to establish a small shrine in the place where a Greek Catholic Church, destroyed in 1950s, used to stand (see Buyskykh 2016a, 2018b), but the Franciscan Roman Catholic sanctuary itself cannot be entirely considered a shared cult site in the terms proposed by Robert W. Hayden (2002) or by Glenn Bowman (1993), who both, although in different ways, underlined the multi-faith character of a shared sacred space and claims of various faiths to the same religious site.

Firstly, it is difficult due to the fact that Roman Catholic liturgy is the only one present there. Members of other Christian denominations⁶ are, in general, allowed and even invited to participate in celebrations in the sanctuary, but they are obliged to follow the Roman Catholic liturgy. To some degree Agnieszka Pasięka and Kinga Sekerdey's (2013) observations on the dominance of Catholicism in Poland, as well as Pasięka's on hierarchical religious pluralism in Poland, are relevant here (Pasięka 2015). It is the Roman Catholic Church that hosts members of other denominations and frames their religious practice here; and the Franciscan sanctuary in Kalwaria Paławska as such has always been an exclusively Roman Catholic cult site, though it was visited by Greek Catholics making a pilgrimage to their shrine in Kalwaria Paławska.

Thus, secondly, the current grassroots practices aimed at reviving the Greek Catholic cult in Kalwaria Paławska concern not the Franciscan sanctuary itself, but the broader religious landscape of Kalwaria Paławska (encompassing both the village and a proposed sanctuary, see Buyskykh 2018b). Attempts to restore the Greek Catholic cult focus on the location of the former Greek Catholic church, which now is on private land. The question of reintroducing Greek Catholic liturgy to Kalwaria Paławska is

⁵ In the article I focus, above all, on the Przemyśl region in which Kalwaria Paławska is located; however, it is important to note that the cultural borderland whose population shares common historical experiences and common collective memory (although there may be several such memories competing in one area) is much broader than the Przemyśl region itself. This fact is of particular significance to the understanding cultural and social phenomena in the sanctuary, which is a local one. People come there from a radius of a hundred kilometers at the most and they belong to the community of shared historical experiences.

⁶ I have not encountered members of any non-Christian religion in Kalwaria Paławska; hence I limit my interpretation to Christians.

thus the matter of a landowner, a village community which opines and comments on whatever happens on its territory, and of the Franciscans who also take part in decision-making processes pertaining to village life and, moreover, who are interested in preserving an image of the village as a Roman Catholic pilgrimage centre. Therefore, grassroots attempts reintroducing the Greek Catholic cult to Kalwaria Paławska concern more than merely bringing back its religiously diverse landscape as a village of two sanctuaries, and are not aimed at introducing the Greek Catholic rite to a Roman Catholic sanctuary. As the grassroots attempts of establishing a Greek Catholic shrine in the village have not as yet been successful (Buyskykh 2016a), the Greek Catholics come to Kalwaria Paławska to the Franciscan monastery together with their Roman Catholic companions (who markedly exceed them in number) and participate in Roman Catholic celebrations.

Thirdly, my considerations in fact concern one confession. In terms of theology, the Greek and the Roman Catholicism are one church and one religion. The liturgies differ and, on the levels of social practice and identification, both forms of Catholicism are sometimes perceived as two separate religions; but from the theological perspective and institutional level we are speaking about one religion here. That being said, things can be perceived differently by everyday practitioners of both the Greek and the Roman Catholicism.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF RESEARCH IN KALWARIA PAŁAWSKA

The history of the described region, as well as the history of Polish-Ukrainian relations as its significant part, have been the subject of numerous studies (e.g. Babiński 2010; Motyka 2011; 2016; Snyder 2016); they have been also investigated from the anthropological perspective (Buyskykh 2018a; Buzalka 2007; Hann 1996, 1998a; 1998b; Zowczak 2011) and, in fact, anthropological works referring to this region focus precisely on the issues of the borderland, Polish-Ukrainian relations, nationalisms and also the role of both Greek and Roman Catholic Churches in the related phenomena and processes. This, in my opinion, determines the way of practicing anthropology with reference to this part of Poland. I would even suggest that the local history, presented as a context of research and a background for interpretative analysis of the Polish-Ukrainian past – although interpreted in a balanced way⁷ – has become an automatic clue for understanding ethnographic data obtained from the region. Furthermore,

⁷ I would like to emphasize here that anthropologists meticulously avoid biased descriptions of the Polish-Ukrainian past and try to overcome the mechanisms of prejudice, stereotyping or nationalization, while nevertheless perceiving them as the motor of certain social and/or cultural processes.

I argue that Polish-Ukrainian relations, the difficult shared past, mutual resentments and prejudices may constitute certain restrictions for anthropological interpretation.

Although in general I agree that understanding the history of the region, and the awareness of its various, often biased interpretations, are necessary as a part of the preparation process enabling thorough fieldwork in the region, I also see an overly strong focus on the troubled past of Polish-Ukrainian relations and on their contemporary interpretations as a threat. When the past in its various representations (in historical policy, collective memory etc.) becomes the main interpretative tool, it is extremely difficult to overcome its legacy and look at field data through other lenses, especially that the field itself often suggests interpretations in terms of mutual prejudices, and especially when contemporary social and political situation leads to sustaining radical interpretations of common Polish-Ukrainian history (Babiński 2010; Motyka 2011; Zowczak 2011, 62–63). It may prove difficult to move on in one's research and to overcome mutual resentments and stereotypes as an explanatory idiom. Thus, although I perceive Polish-Ukrainian relations as an important context of my research, I do not trust them as a sufficient interpretative keys to the collected material, especially that debates about them are often evoked in the liminal situation of an encounter with the ethnographer (see Hastrup 1995, 149), and sometimes by the researcher him- or herself.

Therefore, I do not intend to recapitulate other scholars' findings regarding the history of the region in this article and I mention only those elements of Polish-Ukrainian history in the Przemyśl area, and of the collective memory born from this history, that are relevant to my argument. In the beginning of the 20th century, this region was inhabited by people of various ethnicities and faiths. In the time to which the present collective memory about the relations with other nations in the region harks back, this land was known as Galicia and was ruled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The situation changed after WWI; Poland regained its independence and Przemyśl and Lviv became a part of the Second Republic of Poland. Throughout the interwar period conflicts and tensions between Poles and Ukrainians increased and the attitude of the Polish government towards Ukrainians was quite oppressive. WWII rekindled the open military conflict between members of these two nations. In present Polish collective memory related to Polish-Ukrainian relations, which is incited by the current right-wing historical policy, one event stands out; the so-called Volhynian Massacre committed by the OUN-UPA⁸ in 1943 on Polish inhabitants of Volhynia and Eastern Galicia. In retaliation, Poles killed the Ukrainian residents of the region. The victims are counted in dozens of thousands, but there is no agreement between historians as to the exact numbers (see Ksenicz 2013; Pasięka 2016; Motyka 2016; Portnov 2012, 2016; Snyder 2016). The 1943 massacre did not affect the region

⁸ A faction of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army serving the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), involved, amongst other things, in conducting ethnic cleansings in Volhynia.

of Kalwaria Paławska directly, but killings perpetrated by the UPA, and murders of Ukrainians committed by Poles occurred there after WWII when forced resettlement of Ukrainians from the Przemyśl area began and victims were of both ethnicities. Some people still have personal memories about these events, transferred through family memory from generation to generation. Presently, this personal memory fuelled by local collective memory chimes with stereotypes created by state policy of the governing party – stereotypes of the Ukrainians' collective guilt for the Volhynian Massacre and their continuous hatred towards the Polish population (see Zowczak 2011, 50, 62).

Barely a few years after WWII the region was inhabited mostly by Polish Roman Catholics. The Germans had left, the Jews had been killed off, and Ukrainians had been forcibly resettled to USSR (1944–1946) and later during the so-called Operation Vistula (1947–1950). Within the Operation Vistula they were resettled from their homes in south-eastern Poland mostly to the lands gained by Poland after WWII, that is, the northern and western part of the current country. Some, a very small number, began to return to the region after 1956, but only after the fall of Communism did the situation change to a significant degree (see Hann 1998a, 848–849). Some of the displaced people returned to their place of origin, and have also returned to Przemyśl more recently, as part of the huge wave of Ukrainian migration that has arrived in Poland. Collectively, they constitute a significant Ukrainian minority there (see Hann 1998a, 861). Moreover, the Greek Catholic Church is again operating legally; this appears to be of crucial importance to Polish-Ukrainian relations in the region (see Buzalka 2007; Hann 1996, 1998a, 1998b).

As noted by Juraj Buzalka, churches – both the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Catholic Church – have played a huge role in creating the memory concerning a common Polish-Ukrainian past in the area of Przemyśl; they also interfere in the relations between the Polish majority and the Ukrainian minority (2007). In a similar vein Chris Hann described the local Polish-Ukrainian relations in the context of post-Socialist transformations (1998a, 842–843).

Nowadays, talking about Ukraine or the Ukrainians with the inhabitants of Kalwaria Paławska and the neighbouring villages, or with Polish pilgrims coming to the sanctuary from towns in the area, often means moving within a framework of a particular stereotype born in this very region. According to it, a “Ukrainian” usually means a person from western Ukraine or from the area, a Greek Catholic mythically related to the people involved in the conflicts with Poles in the past, including the perpetrators of the Volhynian Massacre. This stereotype prevails in discussions even though the Ukrainian minority in Przemyśl is currently diversified and the Ukrainians with whom the residents of Kalwaria Paławska or the pilgrims coming there have personal interactions are of various faiths and come from various parts of Ukraine or Poland. Moreover, although it is not entirely correct to identify Greek Catholics exclusively with people of Ukrainian descent, this identification is quite widespread in

the region (see Hann 1998b, 237–239). And, as it transpires from field data, the Roman Catholic Church plays a role in sustaining these stereotypes, even though in Kalwaria Paławska it does so passively rather than actively, by means of excluding the past of the whole region, or of Polish-Ukrainian relations, from the sanctuary discourse. The same stereotype is to some degree, though not intentionally, sustained by anthropologists who, when taking up the subject of the image of the Ukrainians, agree to move within a framework of this stereotype and accept it as an explanation of ongoing cultural and social processes. Even criticism towards this stereotype during interactions in the field might, in fact, result in using it as a key to anthropological interpretation.

THE PRESENT CONTEXT FOR RESEARCH IN KALWARIA PAŁAWSKA

At first, my research in Kalwaria Paławska embraced neither Polish-Ukrainian relations, nor the presence of pilgrimages from Ukraine at Kalwaria. I was supposed to conduct fieldwork on Polish Roman Catholic pilgrimages, focusing on strategies of managing religious experiences in the sanctuary. Furthermore, it was not my first course of research at this cult site. I conducted fieldwork in Kalwaria Paławska for the first time in 2007; hence I already knew that the Franciscans at the sanctuary were particularly cautious when speaking about conflicts between Roman and Greek Catholics in Przemyśl and about the history of the village of Kalwaria Paławska as a multi-religious place. Interactions between the Poles and the Ukrainians, and between the Greek and the Roman Catholic Churches, are a somewhat sensitive subject; yet during the research in 2007 I learnt about the destroyed Greek Catholic church⁹ in Kalwaria Paławska and was informed by various residents of the village that Kalwaria had been an important cult site for Greek Catholics. I also met pilgrims from Ukraine there.

At that time my respondents, coming from both Kalwaria Paławska and other villages in the region, described their own relations with the Ukrainians – mostly ones concerning trade, since before the Schengen zone was extended to the Polish-Ukrainian border, smuggling goods, both ways, was a common way of making a living in this area (see Hann 1996, 1998a; Zowczak 2011). The locals were travelling to Ukraine and back very often, regretting, in fact, that there was no border crossing closer to Kalwaria Paławska than Medyka (ca. 30 km). During that course of research I did not observe any hostility towards the Ukrainians, either Roman or Greek Catholics, coming to the shrine for the Great Fair; neither did I notice any ambiguity regarding their status in the sanctuary. However, this was not my main topic of interest; I also did not thoroughly investigate their presence at the cult site. Within my fieldwork as

⁹ The church was demolished in the 1950s by communist authorities.

it was at that time, mutual Polish-Ukrainian stereotypes and prejudices remained only a part of the historical context of the place I was studying.

I returned to Kalwaria Pałacowska in July 2015. It was a very short stay, intended to arrange further research. In fact, I was in Przemyśl to conduct an interview with an organizer of a historical reenactment of the Volhynian Massacre, which had been presented in 2013 in the nearby town of Radymno¹⁰, thus I was somewhat sensitive to Polish-Ukrainian antagonisms at that moment. After the interview, I went to Kalwaria Pałacowska. When I got out of the car, in a car park next to the sanctuary, I spotted a memorial stone erected to commemorate Polish victims of OUN-UPA in the region in years 1939–1948¹¹. That stone had not been there in 2007. I sighed, thinking that even Kalwaria Pałacowska was not free from the tendency toward an ill-balanced commemoration of Polish victims of OUN-UPA, but I did not suspect that during my subsequent research I would have to answer the question as to the degree in which stereotypes about the Ukrainians, and the collective memory about the Volhynian Massacre, influence the relations within a community of pilgrims coming to Kalwaria Pałacowska. In my recollections, perhaps contradictory to the monument at which I was looking, this had been a peaceful, open place, distanced from the global or even national politics and historical debates. The other question is, however, to what degree had I, as a researcher, invited this topic to guide my subsequent studies.

I began my research in August 2015 during the Great Fair of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (see Baraniecka 2008; Baraniecka-Olszewska 2016). On the very first day, even before I went to the sanctuary, I met Iuliia Buyskykh, who told me about her difficulties in the field, which derived from her nationality and local stereotypes concerning the Ukrainians. It turned out that the dominant theme of her research were stereotypes about the Ukrainians, and the radical, biased collective memory about the Volhynian Massacre, as promoted by right-wing historical policy (Buyskykh 2018b). At first, I too thought that these issues generally dominated the perception of the Ukrainians in the sanctuary. The ubiquity and intensity of historical interpretations which, among others, present the Ukrainians in a negative light is a relatively new phenomenon in Poland; it used to be present earlier (c.f. Hann 1998a, 1998b; Buzalka 2007), but for the last decade they and their outcome, e.g. the newly-erected monuments, are distinctly visible in the public sphere and are widely discussed in the media (Bogumił 2016; Ksenicz 2013; Portnov 2012, 2016; see also Zowczak 2011). In this case, collective memory about the Polish-Ukrainian relations is strongly related to state politics and historical policy supported by the right-wing Law and Justice

¹⁰ See Baraniecka-Olszewska 2018a; Pasięka 2016.

¹¹ Although such meticulousness may be perceived as heartless, chronologically the first victim mentioned at the monument is from 1944, thus after the climax of the Volhynian massacre. This does not change the fact, however, that local collective memory binds victims from the region with murders conducted in 1943.

party¹² (Ksenicz 2013), but, more importantly, it comes from both the political and the geographical centre of Poland. Additionally, as one of respondents told me some time ago, the (geographical) centre does not understand the border regions and the centre's ideas are often not applicable there (see Zowczak 2011, 60). In addition, the historical policy emphasizing the Ukrainians' collective guilt for the Volhynian Massacre is definitely formed in the centre, by political elites; but in the borderland it falls onto a special and sensitive ground.

Influenced by my knowledge about the right-wing historical policy in Poland and also by Iuliia Buyskykh's experiences, at the beginning of my research in Kalwaria Paławska I began to investigate how my Polish respondents – pilgrims coming to the sanctuary – perceive pilgrims coming from Ukraine and to what degree historical policy, local collective memory, and stereotypes guide their perception. It quickly appeared that both me and them, together, we fell into a trap set by the history of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the region, which restricts the process of overcoming prejudices and stereotypes; we may have also been led astray by the technique of ethnographic fieldwork. It is easy to be satisfied with explaining social and cultural processes or relations in terms of mutual Polish-Ukrainian antagonisms, since they are dramatic, they work on emotions, and they seem to be truly important to the people we investigated exactly because of their emotional engagement in describing their attitude towards the Ukrainians. However, the question which needs to be asked in these circumstances is to what extent our, the researchers', readiness to describe social reality as a result of mythicized conflict confirms stereotypes and prolongs their life. Nevertheless, anthropologists are not the only ones who welcome prejudices into their discourse; the Franciscans who administer the sanctuary do it as well, although in a very particular and relatively unintentional way.

In 2007 I perceived Kalwaria Paławska as an apolitical asylum. I appreciated the Franciscans' consistently non-political attitude, their avoidance of political discourse, and the fact that they kept the official religious teaching and preaching at a distance from ongoing political debates. Other famous Catholic cult sites in Poland, e.g. Jasna Góra in Częstochowa or Licheń, have openly entered political discourses, quite often supporting the right-wing ideology, playing host to Law and Justice politicians, or celebrating Holy Masses in their intention. In comparison to these institutions, the Kalwaria Paławska sanctuary seemed a place far removed from politics and one that encouraged religious contemplation. However, it turned out that I had had a deeply idealistic vision of the sanctuary, since avoiding political and historical topics can also result in fanning political debates, and not taking a firm attitude towards stereotypes or ethnic tensions can have unanticipated results which, in essence, serve to confirm and validate stereotypes.

¹² The right-wing Law and Justice [Prawo i Sprawiedliwość] is currently the governing party in Poland.

PILGRIMS FROM UKRAINE IN KALWARIA PAĆŁAWSKA

I perceive this article as, to some degree, complementary to Julia Buyskykh's work (2016a, 2018a, 2018b) on Kalwaria Paćławska and it was also our idea to share the field – that is, to conduct complementary studies. Therefore I focused on Polish Roman Catholic pilgrims, while she investigated pilgrimages from Ukraine coming to Kalwaria Paćławska and also researched collective memory about the shared Polish-Ukrainian past in the Przemyśl region. As I met her very often at the sanctuary, pilgrims from the group I investigated³³ came to recognize her and “her groups” – pilgrimages from Ukraine – who in these circumstances became the topic of our conversations. Thanks to them, I realized that, in the context of pilgrimages to Kalwaria Paćławska, it is definitely not sufficient to describe the perception of the “Ukrainians” coming to the sanctuary only in terms of local stereotypes about the Ukrainians in general, even though the stereotype is present in creating a general image of these pilgrimages.

There are two groups of pilgrims from the territory of Ukraine who have come to Kalwaria Paćławska for the Great Fair of the Assumption of Virgin Mary from Lviv and Mostys'ka since the 1990s (for a detailed description, see Buyskykh 2016a; 2018b). They are invited to the sanctuary by the Franciscan friars. The Franciscans organize the accommodation for pilgrims; at first it was in the monastery's attic, last year it was a huge tent behind the monastery, and the standard of an overnight stay was not luxurious. Pilgrims are offered a hot meal once a day and tea in the morning and in the afternoon (Buyskykh 2018b). Although those pilgrims stay in simple conditions, the fact that they are invited and given accommodation by the Franciscans causes some envy among Polish pilgrims.

The Franciscans themselves avoid mentioning pilgrimages from Ukraine in the official sanctuary discourse. Usually they just welcome all the pilgrims, including those from Ukraine, during the evening Holy Mass. This is the only moment when they openly refer to their presence in Kalwaria Paćławska. Although the friars' practices – playing host to the pilgrims, arranging accommodation and at least one meal for them – indicate that pilgrimages from Ukraine are somehow special, since other pilgrim groups do not have such privileges and have to pay for their accommodation and meals; they do not, however, comment on it. They also do not explain who takes part in these peregrinations and why. Moreover, they also do not comment upon the stereotypical perception of pilgrims from Ukraine.

It is worth explaining here how these groups are perceived and why a pilgrimage guided by e.g. a Polish Franciscan monk working in Ukraine, one which consists mostly of Roman Catholics, some Greek Catholics and few Orthodox Church

³³ I focused mostly on a group from a village ca. 70 km from Kalwaria Paćławska. To keep my respondents anonymous, I called this village Nikopol in my articles.

believers and includes people both of Ukrainian and Polish descent, is identified by Polish pilgrims coming to a Roman Catholic sanctuary in the borderlands as “other”, not truly Roman Catholic, and not fully belonging to the place. This is where local stereotypes and certain prejudices come into play. The fact that the Franciscans do not offer other pilgrims any discursive framework to interpret the presence of pilgrims from Ukraine in Kalwaria Paławska produces an ambiguous attitude towards the pilgrims from Ukraine.

Moreover, if any information about these groups appears in the sanctuary discourse, it refers to “Ukrainian pilgrimages” and their “Ukrainianness” is thus emphasized, although this term might be misleading, since some members of these groups are Poles. Stressing “Ukrainianness” in the image of these pilgrimages may also add to their perception through the local stereotype of Ukrainians and consequently frame the identification of all members of these groups as Ukrainians. With no other sources about pilgrimages from Ukraine coming to the sanctuary being available, Polish pilgrims to whom I talked include them in their own grassroots discourse by identifying them according to the stereotype of Ukrainians from the Przemyśl region, i.e., as “others” at a Roman Catholic cult site.

These circumstances influence the character of the relations between Polish pilgrims and those coming from Ukraine. In this situation, both the Franciscans and the Polish Roman Catholic pilgrims act as hosts at the cult site. This kind of relationship also strongly otherizes pilgrims from Lviv and Mostys’ka, as they are perceived as guests who were invited and allowed to stay and benefit from a place which was not theirs. The hosts, although polite and generous, also control and limit the agency of their guests. Importantly, a relationship of this kind is accepted by at least some pilgrims from Ukraine who feel like guests at Kalwaria Paławska and thus try to follow the rules; they do not negotiate more freedom in the performance of ritual gestures for themselves (see Buyskykh 2018b).

Ya no basta con rezar (Enough Praying)

The title of this sub-section comes from a 1972 Chilean drama directed by Aldo Francia. It tells the history of a young priest who takes a post in a marginalized city community which experiences increasing poverty. The community rebels against the governmental policy of President Eduardo Frei Montalva. At first the priest is obedient to the Catholic Church hierarchy and stays outside the conflict, trying to convince people to react to state policy in a more balanced manner; in the last scene of the movie he marches at the front of a demonstration and throws a stone at a policeman. The message of this film can offer a possible interpretative clue for the situation in Kalwaria Paławska, since, paradoxically, the continuous and consequent avoidance of comment-

ing upon historical policy and the related social situation in the Przemyśl region may result in, among others things, reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices acquired elsewhere, outside Kalwaria Paławska, though sometimes also within the Catholic Church.

I suggest that the faithful absorb religious contents and knowledge from many sources – during religious education at school, in their parishes, in the course of pilgrimages to cult sites, from the Catholic as well as general media. Some of these contents cannot be separated from other aspects of human lives, e.g. collective memory, heritage or politics. Religion penetrates, but also spans worldviews of the faithful and is present in social life, not only in Church or religious services as such (see Lubańska, this volume). Thus, when the Franciscans resident in the sanctuary do not opine on Polish-Ukrainian relations or historical policies that refer to them, the faithful still bring ideas and ideologies with them. The same happens when the friars do not include pilgrims from Ukraine in the official sanctuary discourse. I do not contend that opinions expressed by religious authorities – e.g. the Franciscans in Kalwaria – would automatically be accepted and acknowledged by the believers. In the anthropology of religion there is already a major debate about competing discourses (Eade and Sallnow 1991) and also competing sacred places (Niedźwiedź 2014) and shared, multi-denominational sacred spaces (Bowman 1993; Hayden 2002; Lubańska 2016). This debate has demonstrated how various contents, practices and discourses are negotiated, rejected or acknowledged within relations with religious institutions. The reflection on agency of the faithful in absorbing institutionalised religious messages notwithstanding, there is also an ongoing discussion on how religious knowledge is introduced to, or imposed on, the faithful by religious elites and how the faithful acquire it and in consequence operate within particular religious imageries (Csordas 1990, 14). As I mentioned earlier, religion in social practice is, however, strongly related to, and interwoven with collective memory, stereotypes, and political ideologies; therefore religious imageries exceed purely religious contents. In Kalwaria Paławska these policies, which interfere with religion, are very much about the Roman Catholic character of the cult site (see Buyskykh 2016a; 2018b).

Importantly, I do not wish here to incite the Franciscans to rebel against the right-wing policy or derive stereotypes about other nationalities from it; I would just like to point out that not taking a political stand in certain circumstances can be perceived as doing just that. The old Polish dictum that silence means agreement (or fear) seems to apply to this particular case as well. Silence about current political issues can be – and, in fact, is – interpreted by Polish pilgrims as representing a favourable attitude towards present historical policy, but also as supportive of the image of the village of Kalwaria Paławska as an exclusively Roman Catholic cult site. Moreover, as I have mentioned above, acknowledgment of religious contents preached by priests is negotiated by the faithful and often contested as well. If, therefore the Franciscans expressed their opinion on the matter in question, it would not mean that the faithful would

accept it; it would create room for debate, however. Discussion is difficult when no opinion is expressed, since, as I have demonstrated, when a practice is undertaken without any comment, it results in a lack of control over the grassroots discourse on pilgrimages from Ukraine.

In their seminal work on pilgrimages, John Eade and Michael Sallnow (1991, 15) describe sacred centres as empty vessels into which believers pour their hopes, prayers and wishes. Although their conceptualisation of a cult site is rather metaphorical and, moreover, concerns the religious aspects of the believers' practices, I see it as inspirational in interpreting the situation at Kalwaria Paławska. Polish pilgrims coming to Kalwaria Paławska perceive that pilgrimages from Ukraine are distinct from other groups, but are not sure how to interpret this perception, i.e., where to place these pilgrims in their own image of the sanctuary. The absence of references to groups from Ukraine in the official religious discourse in the sanctuary causes a gap to emerge. This gap has a particular performative potential to fill itself; it elicits interpretations that could close it. It seems that the first such interpretations to appear are stereotypes that may explain who the pilgrims from Ukraine actually are. The Franciscans decide not to guide the sanctuary's visitors nor to suggest to them what contents should be poured into this vessel in reference to current policies, collective memory etc. Therefore, as I mentioned above, the faithful pour into it what they have learned elsewhere. Although learned contents may not apply to the situation in Kalwaria Paławska and to particular pilgrimages from Ukraine that visit the sanctuary, it results in certain otherizing and exoticizing of pilgrims from Ukraine. I have heard from a few Polish pilgrims that pilgrims from Ukraine are not Roman Catholics but Greek Catholics. When I asked them why they thought so, they replied that most of the Ukrainians – which indicates that they assume that people coming from Ukraine are exclusively Ukrainians – interested in this region are Greek Catholics. When I tried to explore this subject further, some respondents told me that there were plenty of Greek Catholic churches in the area and they are there for the Ukrainians. It is obvious from this exchange that there exists a stereotype of a Ukrainian Greek Catholic which suggests that pilgrims from Lviv and Mostys'ka should be identified as Greek Catholics, despite the fact that the majority of them are Roman Catholics. The power of stereotypes in explaining who the pilgrims from Lviv and Mostys'ka are is thus often limited to saying, "Oh, they're Ukrainians, you know, they come here every year praying in their way"¹⁴ and sometimes to certain reluctance to establish personal relations with pilgrims from Ukraine, along the lines of "why should we ask them anything, they're Ukrainians". But what makes the Ukrainians "others" in the sanctuary is exactly the fact that they pray "their way". Drawing on this assumption, I think that collective

¹⁴ This and the following quotations come from my field notes; I have not conducted registered interviews with pilgrims with whom I participated in the Great Fair.

memory and some deeply embedded prejudices do not affect the entire perception of pilgrims from Ukraine. In this case, stereotypes only enable the establishing of a cognitive basis for locating pilgrims from Ukraine in the sanctuary's landscape; they may constitute a certain background for the identification of pilgrimage groups from Lviv and Mostys'ka, but they are not a sufficient tool either to wholly depict the image of the Ukrainians coming to Kalwaria in the eyes of Polish pilgrims, or to serve as a sole anthropological interpretation.

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS:
A DEFENCE OF THE SENSATIONAL FORM

Drawing loosely on Birgit Meyer's category of sensational forms, I would like to point out what can we lose by interpreting the perception of pilgrims from Lviv and Mostys'ka by Polish pilgrims in Kalwaria Paławska solely through the lens of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the Przemyśl region. My observation is that the problem concerns not those pilgrims' ethnicity, but their religious distinctiveness as attributed to them by Polish Roman Catholic pilgrims.

In her studies on religious experiences, Meyer introduced the term "sensational forms" (2006, 2011). These are material and non-material forms which mediate and organize the process of experiencing the sacred (2006, 9) within "particular religious regimes" (Meyer 2011, 29). Sensational forms are also "media that mediate, and thus produce, the transcendental and make it sense-able" (Meyer 2006, 14). One of such most influential and complex sensational forms in Kalwaria Paławska is the sanctuary itself; to a great degree it dominates other sensational forms as it embraces them all. As such it not only objectifies the influence of the divine power, but also produces its manifestations (Meyer 2006, 15–16). The faithful (both from Poland and from Ukraine) sometimes come to Kalwaria Paławska with truly important matters – to ask for health, marriage, pregnancy, or grace for their family members. The special sanctity they perceive the sanctuary to have given them hope that their prayers would be heard. Polish pilgrims from the Nikopol group also strive to operate within the religious imagery of a Calvary: they participate in particular rites and observe ritual gestures prescribed for particular celebrations (Baraniecka-Olszewska 2016). In this way they create and confirm the role of a sanctuary as an extremely powerful sensational form.

The pilgrims believe that performing ritual gestures or praying in a particular manner gives them a chance of being heard by God and the Virgin Mary, but also makes their pilgrimage a valuable, authentic experience, because, as they say, "here in Kalwaria, you see, there are certain customs, just here, in Kalwaria. You walk on your knees backwards in Gradusy (Stairs) Chapel or you pass the Ciemnica (Cellar)

Chapel on your knees praying *Któryś za nas cierpiał rany*¹⁵. And you have to do this to be, you see, absolved or to have your prayers heard, or just to, you see, to participate well, you have to follow it all”¹⁶. Pilgrims from Ukraine whom Polish pilgrims meet during services in the sanctuary or in the church do not necessarily follow the same ritual gestures; moreover, they sometimes perform their own ones within the sanctuary (Buyskykh 2016a, 52–53). These differences have been noticed by my respondents and often perceived by them as representing a wrongly performed ritual rite; and a failure in performing a ritual may bring significant consequences (Howe 2000; Schieffelin 1996).

Here I come back to the already mentioned response that pilgrims from Ukraine “pray in their way”. Some of the pilgrims from Nikopol perceived this as annoying. They stated that any pilgrim coming to Kalwaria Pałacowska should follow the local rite, since this was the way of participating in the Great Fair. This attitude concerned not only pilgrims from Ukraine. I too, as a person who participated in pilgrimages rarely and only because of her profession, have been instructed how should I behave during the pilgrimage. Pilgrims were also very active in rebuking themselves and children during the pilgrimage and services to behave properly and follow all rites, since otherwise the participation would not be full and absolution might not be granted. I believe that the ideal of pilgrimage which the pilgrims from Nikopol struggle for is extended to embrace all groups coming to Kalwaria Pałacowska, pilgrims from Ukraine as well, and everyone is expected to strive for this ideal. Pilgrims from Ukraine, however, escape this ideal, they “pray in their way” and thus do not contribute to the creation of Kalwaria Pałacowska as a powerful sensational form. Their gestures and behaviors, judged as not fitting the sanctuary’s religious imagery, disturbed the religious experiences of some of my respondents and to some degree annoyed them, as they perceived them as “other”, as not right in this particular place.

In my opinion, this is where the reason of otherizing pilgrims from Ukraine lies – in not recognizing their ritual gestures and their prayers as adequate for the sanctuary. Despite the fact that some of them were of Polish descent and the majority was Roman Catholic, they were identified as others, since they operated within different religious imagery, one not recognized as authentic and valid by pilgrims from Nikopol. And, in their opinion, not following the proper rite could disturb God’s intervention in the lives of the people and also influence the character of the sanctuary which is perceived as the most powerful and thus a dominant space for the operation of divine power.

¹⁵ Literally: “Thou who suffered for us”. In English this prayer is “Through Jesus’ passion to the home of the Heavenly Father”.

¹⁶ This is a quotation from my field notes; I noted how one of the pilgrims, a woman in her sixties, instructed me how to engage and truly participate in the pilgrimage.

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