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MATERIAL, POLITICAL AND POSTSECULAR DIMENSIONS OF POLISH CATHOLICISM. AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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NEW ISSUES, NEW PROJECTS

REVIEW

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MATERIAL, POLITICAL AND POSTSECULAR DIMENSIONS OF POLISH CATHOLICISM. INTRODUCTION

KAMILA BARANIECKA-OLSZEWSKA
MAGDALENA LUBAŃSKA

The set of works featured in this issue presents the most recent anthropological insights into Catholicism – a complex and varied phenomenon, which has proved fascinating for the researchers, as is apparent from this collection. The idea to publish the series of articles arose from the grant of the National Science Centre[1] (NCN) entitled *Multisensory Religious Imageries in Selected Catholic Shrines in South-Eastern Poland* (DEC-2013/11/B/HS3/01443). The research team included Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska, Magdalena Lubańska (Principal Investigator), Iuliia Buyskykh and Konrad Siekierski.

The scope of the research encompassed Catholic sanctuaries in south-eastern Poland, however, the insights into the materials gathered during the study exceed the focus of the grant, entering into a polemic with the most recent trends in anthropological research on Catholicism. The following set of articles is an attempt to present a part of results of the project[2], as well as to delve into a deeper reflection on religiosity in Poland. Our focus was on showing the multidimensionality of Catholicism and its many faces, especially on the fact that this denomination has not yet been sufficiently researched by anthropologists (Mayblin, Noget, Napolitano 2017, 1). We wanted to use the study of Polish Catholicism, which is incorrectly deemed homogeneous, as a starting point for outlining the directions of reflecting upon the creed and the multitude of possible approaches to interpreting it.

Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion in Poland (Pasieka, Sekerdej 2013), and as such determines the hierarchy of other religions (Pasieka 2015). Due to its preeminent role in Poland, the Catholic Church serves as an intermediary between Catholicism and other religions, making the country a unique case from the academic point of view (Casanova 1994; Luckmann 1967). At the same time this dominant

[1] A government agency, supervised by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, set up in 2011 to support basic research in Poland (https://ncn.gov.pl/o-ncn/zadania-ncn?language=en).

[2] The outcomes of the project are also presented in the special issue of *Journal of Global Catholicism* 2/2 (2018), https://crossworks.holycross.edu/jgc/.

Catholicism is not a homogeneous phenomenon, but rather has many facets and sub-groups (Niedźwiedź 2014). Although the media is dominated by the politically-active, conservative face of the Church in Poland (see Golonka-Czajkowska in this issue), there is far more to this phenomenon than just strand of the religion. Moreover, the research on Catholicism demonstrates that it includes many forms and rituals, which seep through to everyday life. In the case of Poland this includes the everyday life of both believers and non-believers, since Catholicism is the dominant source of the country's cultural and political capital. This allows us to see it as something more than just a denomination – it is also a strong culture-forming factor (Cannell 2006, 5; Robbins 2007), a basis for building identities, and a system of ethical values. All the while, Catholicism in Poland is a strongly polarised phenomenon: on the one hand it is open and liberal, on the other closed-off and supportive of nationalistic tendencies. Between these polar opposites of Catholicism exists a whole gamut of attitudes towards, opinions on, and interpretations of the role of religion in everyday life, which are a constant, but also dynamic and developing subject of academic study.

While Catholicism dominates in south-eastern Poland, the area that was the starting point for our research, it is not the only denomination present there. It interacts with other creeds and local Catholics come across members of other religions, both in peaceful coexistence and as a result of conflicts and mutual misunderstandings (see Buyskykh 2016, 2018; Buzalka 2007; Hann 1998a, 1998b; Pasieka 2015). This makes this region particularly fruitful for anthropological interpretations. Materials gathered there allow researchers to deepen the study of religiosity to include such aspects as identity, a complex history, memory, the coexistence of religions, politics, and spiritual experience, which is dependent on the entirety of the social context and not only limited to participating in religious rituals.

The desire which governed the entire grant project, and which is reflected also in the present set of articles, was to portray the uniqueness of the region itself and the role of the Catholic religion in the lives of its inhabitants. Thus, the bulk of our insight concentrates on the directness of religious experience, as well as ways of managing it and the meaning of religious forms which serve as intermediaries for experiencing the sacred (Baraniecka-Olszewska 2016a, 2016b, Lubanska 2017, 2018). In doing so, we reference the current discourse concerning pilgrimages and the special power this type of religious practice exudes (Coleman and Eade 2004; Eade and Sallnow 1991; Eade and Katić 2014; Eade and Katić 2018; Coleman 2002), the role of the clergy and sacred spaces in the creation of religious imaginaries (Csordas 1990), and the performativity of religious phenomena. Through concentrating on the forms, which mediate between and govern religious experience (Meyer 2006, 2010; Niedźwiedź 2015), we show how the material sphere and the landscape influence spiritual experiences. At the same time we reference studies on identity, memory, and stereotypes (Buyskykh 2016, 2018). Drawing upon anthropological works discussing the multi-denominational history of the region (Hann 1998a, 1998b; Buzalka 2007; Lubańska 2007; Pasieka 2015; Zowczak

2011) we show the changes caused by the recent social and political currents in Poland. The conflict over sanctuaries between different religions allows us to showcase the research on shared places of worship, a topic crucial for the anthropology of religion (Bowman 2002; Hayden 2002; Hayden and Walker 2013; Lubańska 2012).

We also want to showcase how a particular territory inspired us to broaden our insight, to try to compare our observations with that of other researches, both those working in this region and those analysing other parts of Poland. This need arises from the nature of the subject matter and in each case the study of Catholicism(s) requires the use of slightly (or even significantly) different research tools. Despite its great potential, this research topic is yet to become a proper academic subdiscipline, which would focus on the multifaceted anthropological study of Catholicism[3]. This explains the calls for creating an anthropology of Christianity which would keep balance between the inspirations leading to insights into religious phenomena within the various denominations of Christianity, and counterbalance the "protestant bias" (Asad 1993).

This bias hidden in anthropological epistemology awarded certain privileges to some particular forms of religious expression, while snubbing others. Worship as a state of trusting in God has been favoured over all other sensual and tangible forms of building a connection with God, which in turn affected the anthropological definitions of religion as such (Asad 1993; Needham 1972). As far as Polish anthropology is concerned, this bias has long been visible in the popularity of terms referencing the material aspect of religiosity – terms such as "naïve sensuality" (Czarnowski 1956, 91–91), or "non-differentation" (Tokarska-Bakir 2000). This first category suggests that entering a sensual connection with such objects as images is a sign of cognitive inferiority. The second one assumes *a priori* that the connection is created due to the nature of the perception of a religious image, in which a person does not distinguish between the *signans* and the *signatum*, thus identifying the depiction of the character with the character as such. The most recent research, however, points to the existence of aforementioned bias in anthropological theory, rather than the existence of naivety in those who express their worship in a sensual manner (Lubańska 2007; Lubańska 2014; Baraniecka-Olszewska 2017).

The realisation that the categories and terms they had been using were tainted by certain anthropological theories (Asad 1993) finally prompted anthropologists to treat more seriously both the influence of Christianity on the Christian communities they were researching and on the anthropological theory itself. Consequently, the culture-forming nature of Christianity became far more apparent[4] (Cannell 2006; Robbins 2003, 2007).

[3] Although one ought to mention Norget *et al.* 2017.

[4] To change the optics of research and emphasise the culture-forming role of Christianity, Joel Robbins and Fenella Cannell created a new research subdiscipline, namely the anthropology of Christianity. It can be further subdivided into the anthropology of the Orthodox Church, anthropology of Catholicism, etc.

It is worth noting here that similar observations about ignoring the potential influence of Christianity on the everyday life of the communities studied by anthropologists were made by the Polish anthropologist Ludwik Stomma in the early 1980s. He noticed that ethnographers researching religiosity in the Polish countryside disregarded everything that was occurring in church space. He was of the opinion that the reason for that was

> "more or less (usually less) subconscious inclinations of the ethnographers to try and separate the core from the later additions, to extract from the Christian culture of the countryside those elements which were supposedly folkloristic, therefore by definition rough and ancient Slavic" (Stomma 1986, 204).

This tendency was partially related to the roots of European ethnography as a discipline focusing on recording beliefs and practises which were disappearing. This field used to be governed by Herder's claim that the essence of a nation has been hidden in its folklore seen as idiosyncratic to the given national community (Wilson 1973). Another reason for the 'blind spot' in anthropology of Catholicism, were the attempts to minimise the importance of Christianity in the countries of the Eastern Bloc because it was deemed to be an ideological enemy of communism.

In western countries Christianity became the "repugnant other" (Harding 1991) due to slightly different reasons. The origins of this attitude may be found in the guilt stemming from the perception of Christianity as the religion imposed upon colonised communities. Generations of anthropologists, cognisant of the symbolic violence, preferred to look at this extraneous Christianity as a surface level accretion, beneath which existed hidden local beliefs, ingrained in the structures of *longue durée* (eg. Comaroff 1985). Joel Robbins called this research mannerism "continuity thinking" (Robbins 2007), which became so ingrained in anthropological research that practitioners stopped noticing how problematic it was. This attitude fails when it is used in a context in which the described community actually denounces its former beliefs and engages in the newly acquired religion with neophytic fervour (Robbins 2007).

In the case of research conducted in Catholic communities in Poland, the category of "continuity thinking" remains relevant, since certain aspects of Christianity have stayed the same in the country, for instance the messianic aspect (Zubrzycki 2006; Lubańska 2018, 117). This stems from the fact that Catholicism has over 1000 years tradition in Poland and it has been used multiple times in an ideological context as an element of a political resistance strategy against authorities imposed by outside forces.

That said, the growing popularity of charismatic movements within Polish Catholicism is a form of renouncing its typical imagery, and opening up to a new way of experiencing faith, one which is perceptive, for instance, of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts – glossolalia and prophecies – as well as "mass in the intention of healing or liberation", which incorporates the above mentioned gifts, have become a natural part of many Catholics' religiosity, despite not being part of the local habitus (Biernacka,

this issue; Lubańska 2018, 108). As a part of the growing popularity of charismatic movements, the belief in the existence of Satan has become more prevalent; this can be seen in the substantial popularity of exorcist priests in the Subcarpathian region (Lubańska 2018, Siekierski 2018b). The charismatic components of Catholicism coexist with the long lasting forms of cult surrounding religious images. The images are considered to have miraculous properties and often become the destination of pilgrimages (Baraniecka-Olszewska 2016a, 2016b). Another form of religious expression which is new in the Polish context are the so called extreme Ways of the Cross: an annual collective form that usually takes place on the Friday before Holy Week.

> "The Way is a night-long march, preceded by a Holy Mass, along a route of 30 to 100 km (most routes are 40–50 kilometres long). Participants walk in silence, alone or in small groups, but next to one another rather than together" (Siekierski 2018a, 109).

The present volume constitutes our attempt to outline the development directions of an anthropology of Catholicism. In choosing a small geographical area as our starting point, we encourage comparisons with Catholicism around the world, at the same time trying to analyse the research methods used to describe this phenomenon. Such endeavours are important, firstly because acknowledging the variety within Catholicism leads to many possible interpretation lines. Secondly, as is apparent from our experiences during this project, the beliefs of the researchers and their (non)religion influence not only their reflection upon the researched subject, but also their ability to reach interlocutors or to get access to particular materials (see Buyskykh 2016). For this reason we invited Adrianna Biernacka[5] to contribute to this volume. She described her research on a group that was completely culturally alien to her, namely the Catholic Charismatic Renewal group from Przeworsk. The author is an atheist who conducts research among people of deep faith, for whom religion, the Church, and the values propagated by it are among the most important aspects of their lives. Having noticed the significance of the difference between her own world view and the one held by the people she studied, she tried to transform it into an added value of her study by choosing to use the research methodology proposed by Martin Holbraad and Morten A. Pedersen (2017) in their conceptualisation of "the ontological turn". The authors indicate that this turn in humanities is to be the answer to exactly the issue at hand, namely: the existence of a difference between the world of the researchers and the world of their subjects. Biernacka guides her readers through her research process and the doubts arising from it, all the while showing the openings which can be created when the ontological turn is incorporated into research on modern Catholicism. At

[5] Together with Przemysław Gnyszka, Mathew Schmalz and Monika Golonka-Czajkowska, who were among the participants of the scientific workshop "Politicization, heritigization and sensualization in contemporary Catholicism", which we organized at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences on 13th November 2017.

the same time she points out the limitations of this method and the dominating force of the said difference in values held by her and the people she researched.

The problem of the distance between the beliefs of the researched people and the researcher can also be clearly seen in the article by Monika Golonka-Czajkowska. As well as the issue of religious values, it also presents the problem of political ideology. The author convincingly shows that in the social reality it is impossible to conduct research on religion *sensu stricto*, and any insights will have to include various other aspects of life. The subject of her research was the so called Smoleńsk anniversaries in Krakow, marches which are a form of manifesting one's political and religious views and involve several dozen people. Golonka-Czajkowska analyses them and shows the intersection of national and religious symbols and the way they are manipulated for political reasons, at the same time taking into consideration that these symbols belong to the religion experienced by the participants and are a part of their religious culture. Thus, she describes how religion and politics can become assigned to the same order of phenomena in the practical social context.

The relation between religion and politics is also present in the article by Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska, who notes that the existence of this intersection is overused, for instance as the dominant interpretation framework for religious phenomena in border regions. Through presenting how Polish pilgrims view pilgrims from Ukraine, who come to the sanctuary in Kalwaria Pacławska, the author recognises the possibility that it is the scholars themselves who evoke the categories of stereotypes and biases while conducting field research, and bring out problematic histories in the way they describe the related religious phenomena. In this, her goal is not to reject these categories or phenomena completely, since they provide context – both historical and current – for research in the region, but to emphasise their limitations. In her work she showcases the shortcomings of such tools in interpreting the manner in which the presence of pilgrims from Ukraine is perceived in Kalwaria Pacławska.

An alternative approach to discussing the relationship between religion and politics can be found in the paper by Mathew Schmaltz. The author uses his position as a researcher from outside of Poland – he is American – to employ anthropological interpretation in presenting his understanding of the (for him culturally alien) sanctuary on Jasna Góra, which he visited on the 11th of November 2017[6]. He notes the lavishness and dynamism of the place, as well as the very clear references to Polish history and current politics. Significantly, however, Schmaltz does not concentrate on the relationship between the Catholic Church and politics, but interprets the temple in Częstochowa in a broader context. He writes: "one of the most striking aspects of Jasna Góra was its positive celebration of Polish culture".

[6] 11th November is an anniversary of regaining independence by Poland in 1918. There are special celebrations in Jasna Góra sanctuary on this date.

The epistemological perspective of post-secular anthropology is another important interpretative path that enriches the research on Catholicism and which is, in our view, worthy of consideration. By problematising not only religiosity, but also secularity, and studying them in correlation to one another, it allows researchers to avoid certain thought patterns which emerge when these spheres are considered separately. Significantly, this epistemological approach makes it clear that secularity was wrongly perceived as an exclusively prescriptive category in the social sciences. A critical look at this category by the post-secular thinkers reveals that it is actually a "crypto-western-Christian" category, and thus in no way a neutral one (Asad 1993). Researchers associated with this school of thought see it as obvious that secularity and religiousness shape one another and cannot be studied separately. Thus, while remaining sceptical and critical towards the existing language of anthropological theory, the post-secular school of thought involves seeking out new terms which would manage to describe the areas of interaction between the religious and the (seemingly) secular orders that have been neglected in ethnographic research so far.

Two articles in this book – those by Przemysław Gnyszka and Magdalena Lubańska – attempt to use this approach to present particular materials collected in the field. Gnyszka references post-secular theory while analysing the conflict around a chapel in Przeworsk, where (perhaps surprisingly) the Church representatives have repeatedly sided with the supporters of relocating the chapel and have accepted the secular argumentation for the move. The secular council members and other lay defenders of the chapel opposed the move, by referencing the miracles taking place there. The other issue that Gnyszka discussed is the fact that the proposed new location was deemed unworthy, as it is located in a hospital basement, very close to a mortuary (Gnyszka, this volume).

Lubańska, on the other hand, references the category of "ontological penumbra" and "counterpoint" and depicts them as post-secular moments in which believers turn towards secular language to reinforce the presentation of religious meaning so that they could be experienced more deeply. The combination of these languages and sensibilities creates the context for the difficult memories about the post-war murders committed in the Dębrzyna woods near Przework, where members of local gangs robbed and murdered people who were returning from forced labour from Germany (Lubańska, this volume).

The articles collected in this volume of *Ethnologia Polona* are devoted to Polish Catholicism, but they by no means exhaust the possible research avenues into this phenomenon and it was not our goal to even attempt that. Rather, we aim to show that even reflections on a single phenomenon – in this case modern Catholicism in south-eastern Poland, a region marked by common history – can open up many other, separate avenues of academic inquiry, which ripe to be explored in the much broader comparative context of researching Catholicism in other parts of Poland. At the same

time we wanted to show that research into religion and religiosity is not limited to studying this one phenomenon exclusively, and cannot successfully be conducted in this manner in the anthropological context.

Writing over ten years ago about the condition of pilgrimage studies, Simon Coleman (2002, 363) predicted its further development, showing its continuous evolution and the fact that research is not conducted simply on pilgrimage, but through pilgrimage, thus encompassing such subjects as for instance: gender, power relationships, and mobility. Similar patterns can be seen in the studies on modern Catholicism. Increasingly often they are conducted not on Catholicism, but through Catholicism, commencing discussion on identity, memory, politics, secularity, the concept of culture, and also the methodology of ethnographic research. Thus was the aim of presenting this set of texts to our readers in this issue.

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POSTMEMORY OF KILLINGS IN THE WOODS AT DĘBRZYNA (1945–46): A POSTSECULAR ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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This article applies a methodology developed within the framework of postsecular anthropology to a case study based on field material collected in 2015–2017 in and around Przeworsk, a town in the region of Subcarpathia in south-eastern Poland. The collected material documents the current post-memory of atrocities committed in the Dębrzyna forest in 1945–46. The killings were perpetrated in a turbulent period that followed World War II, which can be described, following Zaremba, as a time of "Great Fear", or Agamben's term "state of exception". At the time, some members of the local population formed gangs to commit assaults and robberies against forced labourers returning to their homeland from Germany (or from the West generally). According to my respondents, many such assaults resulted in deaths. Homeless, socially unmoored and unprotected by law, the victims were reduced to the status of a purely biological "bare life". My article will show how the victims of those events are commemorated, and how the post-memory of those events finds its expression today. My interpretive tools are based primarily on selected postsecular theories. In this context I apply the categories of *ontological penumbra* and *counterpoint* to identify those instances where religion finds itself compelled to rely on secular diction out of a sense of powerlessness and inability to use the religious idiom for articulating problematic ideas related to suffering.

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Artykuł stanowi próbę zastosowania warsztatu wypracowanego na gruncie antropologii postsekularnej do badań nad konkretnym materiałem terenowym, zebranym w latach 2015–2017 w leżącym na Podkarpaciu Przeworsku i jego okolicach. Materiał ten dokumentuje współczesny stan postpamięci mordów, dokonywanych w lesie Dębrzyna w latach 1945–46, w warunkach powojennego zamętu, który można za Zarembą nazwać czasem Wielkiej Trwogi, lub za Agambenem „stanem wyjątkowym". Miejscowe bandy w celach rabunkowych napadały wówczas ludzi wracających z robót z Niemiec (lub w ogóle z Zachodu), co – jak twierdzą rozmówcy – kończyło się ich śmiercią. Osoby te pozbawione domów i więzi wspólnotowych, niechronione przez prawo, były sprowadzane do czystego biologicznego, „nagiego życia". W artykule pokażę, w jaki sposób ofiary tych wydarzeń są obecnie upamiętniane oraz jak wyrażana jest postpamięć o tamtych wydarzeniach. Narzędzia interpretacyjne będę czerpała przede wszystkim z wybranych teorii postsekularnych. W tym kontekście odniosę się do kategorii „ontologicznego półcienia" oraz kontrapunktu, których używam, by uchwycić momenty, gdy to co religijne odwołuje się do tego co świeckie z poczucia bezsilności wyartykułowania pewnych kłopotliwych, związanych z cierpieniem treści w religijnym idiomie.

K e y w o r d s: PostSecular Anthropology, *Ontological Penumbra*, *Contaminated Landscape*, *Great Fear,* Subcarpathia

THE POSTSECULAR IDEA OF *ONTOLOGICAL PENUMBRA*

Three years ago, when I began my field research[1] of religious imaginaries in the area of Przeworsk[2] in Subcarpathia (Polish: Podkarpacie), I did not expect my research there to push my interests towards the connections between religious life and the collective trauma of post-war crime, guilt, and post-memory[3]. As soon as that research topic presented itself to me, though, I knew that I would analyse those events from the perspective of postsecular anthropology, an approach that views the religious and the secular in a dialectical fashion, as things that continually influence and constitute each other (Merz and Merz 2017, 2; Van der Veer 2014, 151)[4]. They interact with each other in the place named by Johannes and Sharon Merz an "ontological penumbra"[5] and defined as:

> a space where the self and the other, ignorance and certainty, as well as the secular and the religious, meet, overlap, and intertwine. It is a reflexive space of dialogue, encounter and engagement, which is also marked by ambiguity and plurality, as well as creativity and productivity where "the other" includes both human and nonhuman entities who, in turn, need to be recognized as our counterparts (Merz and Merz 2017, 2).

That space of ontological penumbra[6] is explored and conceptualised by postsecular anthropology, but ultimately it remains evasive and intangible, a moving and changing target that depends on many factors. I regard the term as a useful concept that addresses crucially important phenomena, such as the mystery of human existence or the way existence is experienced in different forms that are engaged in a kind of

1 Funding for this project came from the National Science Centre in Poland DEC 2013/11/B/HS3/01443.

2 Przeworsk is a town in south-eastern Poland, located between Rzeszów and Jarosław in the valley of the river Mleczka close to the Ukrainian border.

3 I define post-memory after Marianne Hirsch as a later generation's relationship with the individual, collective and cultural trauma of an earlier generation. This relates to ideas about the past which emerge in a mediated form in childhood and adolescence (cf. Hirsch 2012, 5).

4 Postsecular anthropology is implicitly focused on the areas between "revealed religion in the dogmatic sense, which compels the individual to obey the sovereign God as lord and master of all creation on the one hand – and the complete erasure of any traces of transcendence (...) which subjects the individual to the imperative and self-sufficient rules of immanence" (Agata Bielik-Robson 2013, 11. All Polish sources are quoted in my translation).

5 Obviously, the problem of being per se and the different ways of understanding it has long been part of anthropological reflection in its various epistemological strands including phenomenology, posthumanism, new animism, perspectivism and the "ontological turn". Michael Scott refers to those collectively as an "anthropology of ontology" (cf. Scott 2013). That area of inquiry goes beyond the scope of this article.

6 The postsecular idea of an "ontological penumbra" makes it possible to admit as a kind of ontological possibility what gets implied by social actors that anthropology deals with, namely the spiritual aspects of human existence, and the way those actors regard transcendence (represented by the Demiurge) as something real and actual. "Ontological penumbra" refers to physical and mental space where many entities may coexist in a "real" sense: a meeting point of, and an overlap between, the religious and the secular (cf. Merz and Merz 2017, 12).

dialogue. As such, ontological penumbra contains the experience of nature as being as such ("diverse experiences and understandings of the nature of being itself" [Scott 2013, 859]) and various expressions of that experience. This is a space that cannot be appropriated by any one party, but instead becomes constituted by different and seemingly incompatible modes. The boundaries between those modes are blurred, and no common language is available to arrive at a shared interpretation. Perhaps this kind of language can never be fully embraced as a common, shared resource, but it engenders an attitude of openness to the arguments of the other side in a way that may enrich them both with new elements[7]. In order for this to happen, anthropologists must become reconciled to the idea that we may be dealing not only with different epistemologies, but also with multiple different worlds, even if those worlds are not isolated from each other, and may influence each other in certain ways. It is not merely the case that each individual has a different language to describe the world they co-inhabit with others; in a sense individuals inhabit different worlds that may be slightly, or even completely, different from each other.[8] This means that anthropology faces the task of developing an epistemological openness to a diversity that is ontological rather than purely terminological, and needs to allow for the existence of nonhuman forms of existence and knowledge.

The concept of ontological penumbra corresponds to the epistemological modesty expressed in the Platonic idea of the cave, where only mere shadows of the forms can be glimpsed. It also dovetails with Paul's idea of viewing things "in a glass, darkly". Accordingly, my working assumption is that no complete and precise ontology can ever be articulated; all attempts to do so must remain incomplete and approximate.

Postsecular anthropology feels at home within the reaches of "ontological penumbra", and views with suspicion all existing epistemological categories (including religion and secularity). It treats fixed traditional meanings that are generally taken for granted as merely a starting point for reflection on those meanings that such terms might be suppressing or concealing, or be completely oblivious of. Those latent meanings become apparent when examined in relationship to phenomena that often seem mutually exclusive by definition, and/or when we reflect on the context of their origin, and the way their interpretations and usage change over time. At the same time we should draw attention to the fact that the language used by postsecular thinkers steers clear of any "strong" terms (such as *God*, *religion* or *secularity*), which they regard as spent forces. Instead, they frequently rely on auxiliary categories, often expressed by means

[7] This situation could be associated with Gadamer's "fusion of horizons" (*Horizontverschmelzung*) which involves "rising to a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity but also that of the other", and is only possible when we are willing to test our prejudices by confronting them with others, and possibly modifying them (Gadamer in Moran 2002, 336)

[8] A person who believes in cosmic energies and aliens lives in a different world than an agnostic, even though both can agree on certain statements, such as "everything is made of atoms or waves".

of neologisms[9] and metaphors; they realize acutely the complex nature of reality, and avoid essentialist approaches[10]. Rather than talk about "God", they prefer to talk about God's traces, such as Walther Benjamin's "dwarf" or the Derridean spectre of Levinas's ur-memory (Drzewiecka 2014, 36); they prefer the term "ontological penumbra" to ontology (Merz and Merz 2017). Thus, in postsecular approaches, "strong" ontological categories become "shadows" of their former selves.

Secularity is one such category that has become deconstructed in postsecular thought[11]. It is a paradoxical category: even though it appears to exclude all religious elements, secularity is deeply rooted in religion owing to its Western Christian pedigree. Secularity is residual in nature (because it encompasses everything that is not religious), but it is also all-encompassing (it occupies a superordinate position in the system), serving as the point of departure for analysing "religion" (Casanova 2011; Scott 2013, 867). Viewed as self-evident, the category of secularity had long been treated in prescriptive terms in social sciences. This is a mistake: we have only recently come to realise how secularity in practical terms is often entangled in the very religious discourses it tends to deconstruct as a partisan and particularist way of viewing the world (Asad 1993; Keane 1997, Needham 1972, Sahlins 1996). Postsecular anthropologists prefer to look into the genealogy of the category than to provide its definitions.

As a result, postsecular thinkers treat religious elements as a source of meanings which are relevant to the secular sphere of life and vice versa: a source that is no less important for being hidden or repressed, as is often the case. This pushes some adherents of the postsecular turn to look for religious inspirations in what may at first appear to be autonomously secular ideas and values (Asad 2003; Benjamin 1996; Bielik-Robson 2008). To use Walter Benjamin's image, those "automata" turn out upon closer inspection to be operated from within by a "dwarf" representing theology (Benjamin 1996, 413). Accordingly, anthropologists should be able to deploy theology, a branch of philosophy that had previously remained in an "awkward relationship with their discipline (Robbins 2006; Jenkins 2012, 466; Lubańska 2007; Merz and Merz 2017, 2). This should be done firstly by seeking to identify the theological sources of its terminology, and secondly by exploring those social groups where theology holds sway (Robbins 2006, 286).

[9] This often results from the fact that anthropology may lack adequate terms to describe a given phenomenon. New meanings get coined as well. My own struggles to identify adequate terms to describe Orthodox Christian religious culture in Bulgaria are a case in point (Lubańska 2014, 2016, 2017).

[10] A careful approach to concepts has characterized anthropology since James Clifford and George Marcus's publication (1986) that opened up the way to the emergence of a variety of turns within anthropological theory.

[11] Secularity became a central modern category – be it theological and philosophical, legal and political, or cultural and anthropological – for construing, codifying, understanding and experiencing the sphere treated as distinct from "religion" (cf. Casanova 2011, 54)

Having said that, I agree with Joel Robbins (2006), Mathew Engelke (2002) and Michael Lambek (2012) that the two disciplines should be kept separate, and I share Jon Bialecki's opinion that in order for such encounters to be fruitful they must be mediated by a shared research problem dictated by the area of research (Bialecki 2018, 157–158). In other words, postsecular anthropology should be prepared to factor in certain theological positions insofar as such positions might be relevant for the purposes of anthropological research.

Certainly one major task for postsecular anthropologists is to keep pushing the limits of academic imagination in order to accommodate new theories and conceptualizations of the world they study, so that those entities and phenomena which were formerly considered impossible can now be presented as real. Merz and Merz believe that this could be achieved by means of forging a kind of alliance between anthropology and theology (2017). I do not believe this solution to be universal, or even sufficient; researchers who believe this are often adherents of one particular theology which they tend to single out as the preferable partner for such alliances[12]. But no single "recipe" for an epistemology of postsecular anthropology exists, nor should one exist; more preferable is an interdisciplinary approach, and anything that helps anthropology to retain a pluralistic view of the world and represent those ontologies, epistemologies or embodiments that might get overshadowed by the dominant approaches. Where some categories have become secularised[13] to a point where their meanings have become fuzzy and diffuse, it is a good idea to reinvigorate them by using theological concepts[14]. And conversely, where such concepts become too enmeshed within a particular theology they need to be modified using inspiration from some other theology, philosophy or even natural science[15]. In other words, anthropologists should not be engaging in apologetics with regard to various theologies or philosophies. Instead, they should be engaged in efforts to revise some of their epistemological axioms (Lubańska 2013; Lubańska and Ładykowska 2013). I agree with McLennan that postsecular thought is not anti-secular, but rather intra-secular (McLennan 2010, 19), however it does not take secularity for granted, and realises the need to be open to religious influence (Habermas 2006; Taylor 2007, 20).

[12] Incidentally, I find it surprising that Mertz and Mertz (2017) make no reference to an existing current within anthropology that openly draws on a specific religion, namely Islamic anthropology, represented by the eminent anthropologist Akber Ahmed (2013).

[13] To become dogmas that became rooted too deeply in their own tradition, as it were sapping it of vitality.

[14] The idea is not to transpose them faithfully onto anthropology, but rather to adapt them in creative ways. The idea is not to inject theology into anthropology but to add an anthropological dimension to terms and concepts borrowed from theology.

[15] The post-humanist and postsecular turns share some epistemological insights, primarily an openness to exploring human and non-human relations, with non-humans being respectively defined as elements of the natural world or spiritual entities).

This realisation does away with Durkheim's sociocentrism[16] along with some of its biases, including the idea of a clear demarcation between the sacred and the profane in the social world, and distances us from the theories of religion proposed in the social sciences as having a protestant bias[17] (Asad 1993).

In this sense postsecular anthropology continuously queries the borderlines between religion and secularity in those societies that have experienced secularisation: where are those borderlines located, who put them there, and for what purpose (Asad 2003)? At the same time it recognizes that religion – or theology – have value and deserve to be nurtured in a secular world, and given room in public life[18] (Habermas 2006, 3). And, in a move that I personally find particularly interesting, postsecular anthropology takes note of any surprising juxtapositions between the religious and the secular, and explores their causes.

If we anthropologists become reconciled with the idea that the relationship between religion and secularity is a dialectical one, I believe our attention in postsecular societies should turn to a search for those places, incidents, statements or situations where social actors who identify with secularity nonetheless make use of religious language for one reason or another, and conversely, those who identify with a religious outlook choose to use secular language. In both cases the idea is to say something that will not only be fitting in the circumstances, but will also move beyond the familiar schema[19]. The aim is to achieve an expression original enough to trigger emotion in the listeners, and to rekindle the potential to experience the *misterium tremendum* and the *misterium fascinans* (Otto 1958). Such situations occur frequently in those cases where a sense of insufficiency or "wanting" is experienced along with a feeling of horror provoked by some incident or the emotions it elicits.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SUFFERING AND RESEARCH INTO SECULARITY AND RELIGION

In this article I propose a postsecular approach where the postsecular situation is defined as an instant where that which is religious draws on secular language out of a sense of helplessness stemming from an inability to articulate certain problematic

[16] This arguably found its most radical expression in Milbank, who argues that the persuasive potential of sociology in explaining religion is predicated on its latent quasi-theological character (Milbank 2006, 96).

[17] Notably, Asad deconstructed the protestant bias in the last anthropological definition of religion with universal ambitions formulated by Clifford Geertz (1993).

[18] In the institutional sphere Habermas postulates a translation of religious categories to secular ones; in public life a generally complementary process whereby believers can learn from non-believers and vice versa (2012, 122–124). At the same time Habermas sees in religion a unique capability to articulate certain socially beneficial ideas concerning moral sensitivity and solidaristic intuitions (cf. Habermas 2012).

[19] Either in a way that is more full and precise or, conversely, more vague and ambiguous.

ideas related to suffering in a specifically religious idiom – and vice versa. This move augments the power of expression and emotional impact of such statements in a way that brings to mind the contrapuntal effects of a musical fugue. Like counterpoint, it seeks to achieve the maximum expression in order to produce a sense of ecstasy in the listener. The counterpoint theme may appear to be different from the main melody, but what it does is bring it out more fully. In the context of post-modernity, with its Weberian "disenchantment", it seems to me that counterpoints and metaphors are those means of expression that furnish a meeting point for the ostensibly separate secular and religious modes. Whereas metaphorical tropes are more popular with intellectual elites, the counterpoint is more egalitarian. It occurs in different contexts, initiated by different social actors. It is tangible, a form of cultural expression that may be captured and described – a kind of the embodiment of postsecularity[20] treated as a social phenomenon.

In my understanding of this phenomenon, where meaning becomes complemented by its "counterpoint", my assumption is that believers sometimes realize that religious language fails in certain situations, and rely on secular language instead to achieve a new quality of some kind. At the same time this intuitive need to use such a "contrapuntal" expressive trope appears to stem from a desire to "re-enchant" the world, a longing that manifests itself in modern society in a variety of ways. This desire is difficult to fulfil because modern Western societies lack what Charles Taylor calls *naïveté* (Taylor 2007, 21). As a result, such re-enchantment inevitably entails an element of doubt; this ontological penumbra, and the counterpoint it leads to, combine to produce an event where the subject can finally feel comfortable.

This is why I fully agree with Talal Asad's observation that secularity and religion can be studied indirectly in anthropological terms by examining the phenomenon of people's relationship with suffering as something tangible, palpable, a thing that becomes conceptualised in different ways in secular and religious narratives, respectively (Asad 2011, 658). In support of this Asad argues that, firstly, "pain is associated with religious subjectivity and often regarded as inimical to reason" (Asad 2003, 67), and secondly that "pain in the sense of suffering [...] is thought of as a human condition that secular agency must eliminate universally" (2003, 67). At the same time secular and religious beliefs about suffering are often different. Secular narratives generally regard suffering as something that deprives people of full agency in the world, but also as the "the most immediate sign of this-world" (Asad 2003, 68), or the most powerful way to experience reality. Pain is viewed as an influence on subjects/

[20] Postsecularism is an epistemological position, whereas postsecularity denotes certain undefined and ambiguous manifestations of practices and ideas that constitute postsecularism. Whereas postsecularism belongs to the realm of ideas, postsecularity relates to phenomena. I was inspired to differentiate between those concepts by Michał Warchała's paper, delivered during a conference on *The Experience of Faith in Slavic Cultures and Literatures in the Context of Postsecular Thought*, Warsaw, 16–17 October 2017.

agency that is "external and repressive"[21] (Asad 2003, 71). Religious narratives, on the other hand, seek to find some added value in suffering; for instance, *passion* (in its etymological sense of suffering) can be viewed as a condition in which transcendence can manifest itself[22]. According to Asad, one of the aims of secularity is to gradually eliminate suffering from human life, and to replace it with pleasure (cf. 2014, 68). In my opinion, this tendency is also on the rise in modern religious practices[23]. For this reason, the secular and the religious understanding of suffering (where I view both as "ideal categories" of a sort) are so different from each other. At the level of actual social practice the two categories obviously mix, and neither can be found in a pure form. The interesting question in anthropological terms is whether a community relies on secular or perhaps religious frameworks of interpretation to name the social practices involved in a given case.

In his essay, Asad notes that we tend to think of sufferers as being passive, a conclusion that stems from the assumption that pain must be an external and objectifying force that can only be yielded to (2003, 73, 79). Asad believes we would be better off if we changed this one-sided understanding of suffering, and looked at pain as something that the experiencing subject can actively engage with and attempt to tame or bring under control (2003, 79). On the other hand, he notes that suffering is not a private experience: pain is entangled with human relationships, and must be recognised as such (2003, 81–2). This is why it is possible both to participate in another person's suffering, and to refuse to accept it as real (2008, 82). In order to communicate one's suffering we need not only a suitable language but also a public willing to listen (2003, 83). In this sense there is a social dimension to suffering, where pain creates the conditions for certain social experiences to even exist (2003, 85).

In the subsequent part of this article I will look at attitudes held by a community in Subcarpathia with regard to suffering that afflicted people in post-war Poland as

[21] Taking into account the experience of pain and suffering, as well as subjective wants and desires, Asad makes important corrections to the anthropological concept of the category of agency, which forms the centrepiece of his article.

[22] One distinctive case in point is the phenomenon of healing masses organized by charismatic movements, during which the priest may list the various body parts and diseases about to be healed by the Holy Spirit.

[23] This is a simplification. Firstly, eastern Christianity differs in accentuating Christ's transfiguration (*teleiosis*) on Mount Tabor rather than his death on the cross. Secondly, the image of God as a healer who wants human wellbeing is gaining strength in western Christianity; in this perspective, suffering caused by illness is treated as a symptom of spiritual imbalance, or interference from evil spirits. Asad likewise references the changing attitude towards suffering in western Christianity (2003, 106). In the context of postsecular reflection we might add that those changes are also symptomatic of an overlap between the secular and religious perspectives on this problem. Perhaps under the influence of certain secular ideas, Christianity foregrounds and suitably interprets the relevant aspects in the gospels which were previously underrepresented.

they lost their homes, became unmoored from social ties or government protection and lost their political status and legal personhood in a way that reduced them to bare biological life. Hannah Arendt writes in the same context about the "abstract nakedness of being human" (Arendt 1973, 299), a fate experienced by the survivors of death camps and concentration camps, or stateless individuals. In this "state of exception"[24] they frequently fell victim to assault and murder initiated by gangs convinced of their own impunity. This situation will be discussed in the second section of my article. My main interest is to examine the language and postures with which a community actively or passively implicated in those atrocities defines its attitude towards the victims' suffering. I will also seek to restore some of the individual dimension of the victims' suffering, and to discuss the painful trauma experienced by several generations in a community trapped in the post-memory of those events.

In my discussion of the problem I will be relying on Giorgio Agamben's reflections on bare life / "homo sacer"[25] as interpretive tropes for my analysis. Also relevant will be references to research focused on the Shoah since that event (as I make clear in the second part of the text) was in many ways paradigmatic for the conclusions I draw from research on atrocities committed against people returning to Poland in 1945–1946 after surviving the turmoil of a world war. Those atrocities were committed by robbers who formed gangs in the region of Przeworsk, Poland. Lastly, this text is an attempt to adapt the methodology of postsecular research to my field material.

THE POST-WAR PERIOD AND THE ZONE OF "ONTOLOGICAL PENUMBRA"

My analysis is based on ethnographic field research conducted in 2015–2017 in the villages of Grzęska and Świętoniowa located close to the forest of Dębrzyna, and in the town of Przeworsk (where I interviewed some former inhabitants of Grzęska and Świętoniowa). This source material was obtained during field expeditions, where I was recognizable as a researcher as a result of my involvement in a 2017 film documentary entitled "Nie sądzić" (*Not to Judge*) directed by Pawlina Carlucci Sforza and myself, which contains references to the atrocities committed in the Dębrzyna forest[26]. Public

[24] I borrow this category from Agamben. I provide a more detailed explanation later on in the article.

[25] See my discussion in the source material section.

[26] The documentary was an element of a research methodology based on collaborating with notable members of the local community. A collaboration between an ethnographer, artist and local figures, the film was a response to the local problems caused by unprocessed trauma. The documentary offers a postsecular metaphorical interpretation of the condition of the victims, encouraging reflection and hopefully offering a point of departure for deeper inquiries in the future. The film was also a way of reaching descendants of witnesses of the murders at Dębrzyna. I agree with psychoanalysts that repressed images have a way of "secretly swelling up" (cf. Steinlauf 2001, 12), causing a negative impact on human psyche and leaving a mark on the life of the community in question.

Photo 1. Tracks in Grzęska; in the background at Dębrzyna. 25.11.2017. Author: M. Lubańska.

screenings of that documentary were held at Przeworsk[27], accompanied by debates featuring people appearing in the film, members of the audience, and representatives of local media. It was only possible for the events to be narrated in the film thanks to cooperation between the main characters appearing in the documentary and the filmmakers.

The documentary interweaves preparations taking place in the run up to a production of an Easter mystery play with narratives of the atrocities committed in the area during and after the World War II, as narrated by two of the actors appearing in the mystery play, Henryk Prochowski (playing Jesus, privately a library director in Przeworsk) and Piotr Kucab (playing Judas). The former told me about the dramatic events that took place in 1945–1946 at Dębrzyna (Photograph 1) abutting the villages of Grzęska and Świętoniowa.

At that time former camp inmates and slave labourers were returning from Nazi Germany to Poland. Most of the returnees were Polish, though some were also Ukrainian. Among them were Jews too. Many treated the town of Przeworsk as the final

[27] The first one was held on 3 September 2017 following a screening of the documentary in the cinema room of the culture centre at Przeworsk, and involved some 30 participants. A second discussion, with over a dozen participants, was held on 25 November 2017 in the municipal library at Przeworsk, also following a screening of the documentary.

train destination en route to the local villages where they had lived previously[28]. Rail connections were irregular, and the people travelled in freight cars, packed inside or sitting on roofs. Many never reached the homes. Between Rogóżno and Grzęska, some people would get pulled out of the trains near a siding built by the German occupying force, taken into the forest, and murdered.

Who were the perpetrators? What made them commit these murders? Who were the victims? How is it possible that the atrocities went on for two years but that the perpetrators were never held to account, and that the victims remain nameless? How come we still do not know the exact number of victims?

Those questions probably cannot be answered conclusively; the events at Dębrzyna have so far escaped the attention of historians and social researchers. There are only several articles in the local press[29], some written after the screening of the film documentary[30]. There is a reference to the atrocities in *Budy łańcuckie. Rys monograficzno-historyczny* (2006), a local history book by Franciszek Kiełbicki who argues that the murderers were acting in disguise, masquerading as members of Poland's wartime resistance movement known as the Home Army (Armia Krajowa, AK). More information can be found in the archives of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN)[31], indicating that an investigation into the atrocities was launched in the 1950s by the communist secret police (Urząd Bezpieczeństwa)[32], but that no charges were brought to court. The relevant files contain witness accounts from 1947 onwards (the case was closed in 1956). Names of some of the suspected murderers appear in *Obwód Przeworsk SZP-ZWZ-AK w latach 1939–44/56* (2009), a book by Teodor Gąsiorowski published by the Institute of National Remembrance.

The individuals named in that book were never brought to court, and therefore must be presumed innocent. Many fled the country and emigrated to England. Some migrated to the so-called "Recovered Territories", i.e. pre-war German provinces that became part of Poland after World War II. This is confirmed by my respondents:

> Some of the murderers left the area because they were ashamed to look people in the eye (...) Maybe in their heart of hearts they lament this (female respondents, group interview, Grzęska, September 2017).

[28] Such as Budy Łańcuckie, Gniewczyna or Gorliczyna.

[29] By Jacek Szwic (*Życie Podkarpackie* 29.10.2017), Kamil Jacek Zarański (*Życie Podkarpackie* 15.04.2015), Barbara Chmura *Kto pomoże dotrzeć do świadka mrocznych wydarzeń sprzed 70 lat?* (05.11.2016) and Janusz Motyka, *Ten las jest przesiąknięty śmiercią,* available at Nowiny24.pl (10.07.2010).

[30] Kamińska M. 2017, Wielki sukces filmu „Nie sądzić". *Supernowości 24* (21 September 2017, online edition; http://supernowosci24.pl/wieki-sukces-filmu-nie-sadzic/accessed 27.12.2017); Żak W. 2017. Film nie sądzić wywołał falę dyskusji (8 September 2017, online edition: http://www.jaroslawska.pl/artykul/14356, Film-Nie-sadzic-wywolal-fale-dyskusji (accessed 27.12.2017).

[31] In this article I rely on IPN file RZ 061/424.

[32] I reference those materials with caution, and I'm currently fact-checking the material in the file. I will generally only refer to passages independently corroborated by my respondents. I will devote more attention to this secondary material in my upcoming book.

Like my respondents, I will not be naming any names in this article. Instead, I will provide some background information and, to the extent this it possible, I will try to reconstruct some of the circumstances that made it possible for the group to have acted with impunity, and be shielded by the local community to this day.

Lying dormant until the 1990s, the memory of those events is defective, patchy and scattered[33]. Some of the information I have been given about the violent gang at Dębrzyna contains internal inconsistencies, and all of it was difficult to come by. Over seventy years after the events in question they remain shrouded in what the locals self-describe as a "conspiracy of silence"[34] so effective that the intergenerational transmission of tradition had broken down for a period of many years (interestingly, this applies to families of perpetrators and witnesses alike).

> Władysław was the only person to come clean and shake off the burden. There was also another one who talked, Józef. "But we don't know the names", she would say but that's not true, everybody knows the names. However, if the first generation told the second generation, but the second generation then didn't, those grandchildren have no idea that their grandparents were murderers. What kind of mum would tell her children, my dad, your grandad, was a local murderer?! (female respondent in her 60s, Przeworsk, September 2017)

Another important role is played by those surviving members of the second generation who eavesdropped on adult conversations as children, and vividly remember the details. When those respondents open up, their narratives contain a wealth of vivid details and evocative descriptions, even though those are (probably intentionally) decontextualised to a point where no description or social profile of the murderous gang can be reconstructed by the researcher. In those conversations the topic would quickly get changed, making it very laborious to get to the bottom of the crucial facts.

When queried about the killings, local inhabitants kept silent or ended the conversation quickly. They were unwilling to discuss those events because they related to "our folk", i.e. neighbours:

> Those gangs that assaulted people on their way back from slave labour, it was our folk that did that. Our people[35] did that in those places. People did that sort of thing to other people. We were like a cradle for those gangs (female respondent, ca. 75 years old, Grzęska, September 2017)

[33] This confirms the comment from Hirsch that "[p]ostmemory's connection to the past is thus not actually mediated by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation" (Hirsch 2012, 5).

[34] The documentary uses a device where a link is established between each of the victims at Dębrzyna and Christ's Via Dolorosa. The idea was, among others, to elicit responses about the murders from people appearing in the film. A creative medium like film made it easier for them to break from the strategy of silence socially imposed over several generations, triggered by the shame of belonging to a community tainted by murder, but also a sense of loyalty towards innocent descendants threatened by stigmatization. It was also intended to highlight the parallel between the victims and the injunction in the Gospel of Mark, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mt 25, 40).

[35] According to some respondents the gang also included men from Urzejowice, Gorliczyna and Studzian.

This reticence largely comes from respecting the feelings of the murderers' descendants who, as my respondents point out, "are not to blame", and possibly know nothing about those events:

> "If that was my grandfather, murdering people or something, how can I be held responsible for his sins?!" (female respondents, group interview, Grzęska, September 2017)

At the end of the day those descendants are neighbours, or even relatives. Talking about the murderers would ruin relationships, and amount to informing on others.

> Individuals from those gangs later married girls. A girl might have been unwilling to marry one of them but she had no choice, he'd just pump her head full of lead and that would have been the end of her (female respondent, ca. 75 years old, Grzęska)

> This is the countryside. The relationships here are all different. Everybody knows everything about everybody else. This kind of shameful acts from the past get swept under the carpet, or people keep mum about the whole thing out of kindness (female respondent, ca. 50 years old. Świętoniowa, September 2017).

Some of the locals are still concerned about potential fallout from reporting on the events. One female respondent told me she'd much rather not discuss the subject for fear of a family member[36] losing his or her job. Another respondent told me that a man who sought to publicize the problem received a threatening letter. More than seventy years after the atrocities were committed, the conspiracy of silence continues. Some members of the community have kept silent because they believe it would be wrong and stigmatising to associate the local villages with nothing but those events of long ago:

> In spite of everything I'm proud to have been born at Świętoniowa, because that chapter in our history is just one of many. Local people also kept Jews safe in hiding [during the Nazi occupation], people did things that were more or less heroic, and I don't view that film as an indictment. I'm glad people have engaged with this problem. We all need to look from the perspective of time at what we've been unable to cope with. Difficult problems are not always easy to tackle (female respondent, ca. 50 years old, Przeworsk, September 2017).

Many of my respondents claimed that the bandits had once been partisans, members of the Home Army[37] who "became degenerates" (*wynaturzyli się*) when their commander left the area to hide from the communist secret police. Some said that the men were Railroad Guards, a uniformed formation of Polish railroad police. The material from IPN (AIPN RZ 061/424) confirms the connections with the Home Army and with the railroad police. The suspects identified in those files were men aged 20 to 35, many of whom were related. My interviews also confirm that most of the bandits came from Grzęska (8–10 men), with several others from Świętoniowa. The IPN

[36] To protect the respondent's anonymity the exact nature of that family relationship is withheld.
[37] This is corroborated by witness accounts in the IPN file Rz 061/424.

investigation files contain many more names (there are some discrepancies between different depositions), including people from other villages in the area.

Some of my respondents argue the bandits could not have been partisans since a local Home Army unit had plans to deal with the gang but then had to flee the area. They took advantage of their official capacity as railroad policemen to stop trains, and to get some of the passengers off the train, ostensibly to have their papers checked. Then the passengers would be taken into the woods,[38] robbed of their belongings, and killed. The archival source material contains a deposition that confirms this account given by my respondents:

> (…) Their methods for committing robberies were barbarous, generally speaking they'd go about it like this. People were returning from Germany, preferably with freight transports because normal rules applied on passenger trains. Once they spotted somebody with suitcases or bundles, anything they could steal, they would stop that person and take them to Dębrzyna for a police investigation. They pretended to be the police and conducted a sham investigation... They would ask the victim if they were Polish or Ukrainian. If they said Polish, they would pretend to be Bandera's men [UPA], and if they said Ukrainian they pretended to be armed Polish police (source, informant "Kowal", deposition taken by Adam Typer, 29.08[39])[40].

> They didn't bury those people in graves, like we do today, they just chucked them into a ditch and covered them with branches (female respondent, group interview, Grzęska, Sept. 2017)

Some of my respondents claimed that the perpetrators had been desensitised to death and killing during World War II; most argued the reverse was true: "those who fought in the war did not turn into bandits later". My respondents also claimed that the perpetrators had already committed assaults and robberies during the war, robbing even the inhabitants of Grzęska or Świętoniowa, but that people were afraid to report them. The murders had apparently begun during the war, as I show later in my article in the story of the killing of a Jewish family in Grzęska. Most of my respondents claim that robbery was the motive for murdering people returning from Germany, though some are convinced that the killers killed for the addictive thrill of it:

> The most terrible thing is, my father told me that so I think it's true, the most terrible thing is that the people who committed those terrible murders didn't stand to gain anything from the killings. They were deluded in believing that returning slave labourers had anything of value. Most of them had maybe a spoon with them, or a chipped mug, or a plate. That was all. They had nothing. So you might say robbery wasn't the actual motive behind the killings. If you kill one guy who has almost nothing, and then another, then that's just degeneracy on the part of those people (female respondent, ca. 50 years old, Przeworsk, Sept. 2017)

[38] A forest is arguably a perfect landscape for "concealing a crime" (Małczyński 2009, 209). Similar to Bełżec, trees became "inadvertent participants" in the crime (Małczyński 2009, 209). I will explore this idea further in a separate article.

[39] Possibly a misreading: the number denoting the month is blurred in the original.

[40] AIPN Rz 061/424

> You know, they didn't wait to [mercy] kill the man, when they shot him they didn't wait for him to stop breathing, they just shot him up and left (female respondent, ca. 75 years old, Grzęska, September 2017)

Stories of the murderers' cruelty can also be found in the witness depositions contained in AIPN Rz 061/424:

> They were investigating one person, and they tied him by the neck to a spruce tree with a piece of wire which they tightened behind the tree with a stick. They strangled the man, and they bungled his burial, one of his legs was sticking out of the ground (source: "Kowal", deposition taken by Adam Typer, 29.08.1954[41]).

Some bodies were left unburied, and what burials did take place were hasty, makeshift affairs. In some of the accounts I heard stories of local inhabitants of Grzęska and Świętoniowa coming to bury bodies (sometimes at night), and finding human remains for many years afterwards:

> Murders were committed by neighbours, they killed to avoid recognition. It was gruesome. They lay by the ditch, nobody was willing to give them a burial (male respondent, ca. 65 years old, Przeworsk, Sept. 2017)

One of my female respondents, who lived by the woods in the 1960s, told me she had often seen bones lying on the forest floor as a child but assumed those were animal bones. The gruesome realisation came to her years later:

> Over time, as you get older and you get that image in front of your eyes – because I can still see those images – you realise that animals are shaped differently, the shape is different, right?! (female respondent, ca. 65 years old. Grzęska, November 2017)

When some of the local inhabitants gave burials to the abandoned bodies they did this furtively, and kept no record of the victims' identity. Some of the bodies were only covered with a thin layer of soil, and were later torn apart by animals. Some of my respondents said that the burials were sometimes handled too late, when the smell of decay in the forest made everyday life unbearable.

What I found particularly shocking in those accounts was the passivity and indifference of the inhabitants of Grzęska and Świętoniowa with regard to the victims' suffering:

> To my knowledge there were entire gangs here who kept people here and committed grisly murders. People here strung up from trees, on barbed wire. Those people spent several days in painful agony. Sometimes children who were herding cattle near the forest, as children did back then, **heard the groans of the dying people but everybody was too scared to go there**. Everybody was scared. In some cases where people were brave enough to discuss those things, organized gangs of people came at night, and I never heard of actual executions but I know they were threatened quite unambiguously (female respondent ca. 50 years old, Przeworsk, Sept. 2017).

[41] Possibly a misreading: the number denoting the month is blurred in the original.

Photo 2. Crosses commemorating the anonymous victims in the woods at Dębrzyna. 03.03.2018. Author: M. Lubańska.

This passage shows how the post-memory of the murders in the forest is inconvenient to the local community, probably because of a sense of collective guilt. It also shows that the inhabitants were aware of the murders but did nothing to stop them. The argument from the respondents is that saving a victim who knew his or her aggressors would have put the rescuer at risk; everybody in the village was afraid of the bandits. One respondent told me:

> When I asked my brother "who committed the murders at Dębrzyna?" he would say, "Why do you need to know that?! You might accidentally blab a name and get in trouble yourself." So I don't know those people's names, and I couldn't tell you either. (male respondent, 86 years old, Przeworsk, Sept. 2017).
>
> Nobody would say anything because they were fearing for their lives (female respondent in her mid-80s, Grzęska, Nov. 2017).
>
> That was never the subject of conversation (female respondent, ca. 75 years old, Grzęska, Nov. 2017).

Some historical background is required to gain a better understanding of this problem. The violent gang at Dębrzyna was not an isolated incident. In Subcarpathia,

the post-war period (until as late as 1953) meant a constant threat to life and property. As Marcin Zaremba, author of *Wielka trwoga*[42] [The Great Fear] points out, looting[43] was endemic at the time (Zaremba 2016, 25). This was particularly true for major transportation routes, affecting "people pressed into slave labour, prisoners of war and camp inmates" returning from Germany to Poland (Zaremba 2016, 162, my translation)[44]. Tomasz Bereza, an IPN historian in Rzeszów, writes that post-war acts of violence were partly the effect of moral devastation caused by the cheapening of human life in an environment where people were desensitised to death, had an easy access to firearms, and faced grinding poverty (2013, 91). Bereza notes that the problem was particularly acute "in communities located away from administrative centres and situated in the immediate vicinity of woodland areas" (Bereza 2013, 91, my translation). According to Bereza, this problem remains under-researched in the literature (Bereza 2013, 91, my translation).

This means that the atrocities at Dębrzyna took place during a period of political and logistical turmoil, insecurity and poverty; a time when the new structures of power were only just emerging[45]. Accordingly, terms "Great Fear" and, "state of exception", appear to describe that period accurately. Some of my respondents tended to relativize moral judgements about those past events. A young woman in one of the local villages insisted that anyone would be capable of similar atrocities under certain circumstances. That may be the case, however, I share the opinion of some of my respondents that although some circumstances can make moral wrongs understandable, they nonetheless cannot absolve the perpetrators of moral responsibility. This should be borne in mind as we raise difficult questions, such as, to what extent was the local community co-responsible for the murders? What's particularly interesting from the anthropological point of view is how those events are accounted for and explained within the community. Despite some differences of opinion, some of my respondents rejected a relativizing approach to morality:

> We can wonder about this, and argue that those were different times, but the nature of a time reflects the nature of the people, and not necessarily the other way around. I think you can try and explain all kinds of things, but unfortunately crime is still crime (female respondent, ca. 50 years old, Świętoniowa, Sept. 2017).

[42] Zaremba took this term after Georges Lefebvre, who had used it to explain the atmosphere of peasant riots in France just before the French Revolution of 1789 (Zaremba 2012, 15).

[43] Looting was mainly done by Soviet troops, but also by Poles. On many occasions surviving underground Polish units of the Home Army and other outfits (Bataliony Chłopskie, Narodowe Siły Zbrojne) also became looting gangs (Zaremba 2016, 211).

[44] Looting of Jewish property by those military formations is also mentioned by Joann Tokarska-Bakir in *Okrzyki pogromowe* (2012, 51).

[45] According to Zaremba, "in 1945 there was a shortage of independent figures of authority as well as local, judiciary and economic institutional authorities" (2016, 101).

In this context it appears that the Christian idea of loving one's neighbour does not apply: fear for one's own life suspends its operation. Which is perhaps why it is doubly worthwhile describing the attitudes of those people who found the inner strength to stand up against the murderous practices, and showed that resistance was possible. One of my respondents, Władysław, told me about a woman who accosted the gang to rescue a potential victim:

> Hey, you over there, where do you think you're going with that woman? If you want to kill her then you'll have to kill me as well (Władysław, ca. 90 years old, Przeworsk, March 2016).

As a kind of sombre counterbalance, another account mentioned a bandit who failed to recognize his own brother in the dark, and killed him in the woods:

> Yesterday my dad told me about a case where a man killed his own brother at Dębrzyna, they were in league with a guy, and at night they would pull people down from the [train car] roof. They took his bundle, and the next day the *sołtys* [village leader] called people from the village to bury the bodies. He took some of the farmers with him, if there are bodies lying around you need to bury them. That's when the man recognised his own brother. Buried him as well. A man killed his own brother for a bundle without knowing it... (male respondent in his mid-60s, Przeworsk, Sept. 2017).

Featuring in those narratives is the major problem of divine punishment, which serves as a touchstone to reveal religious attitudes. In those respondents' opinions the settling of accounts with the murderers ultimately lies with God, who can forgive or condemn the perpetrators:

> At first there was fear, but then those people became useful. For instance, one joined a music band and played at weddings[46]. The terrible times were over, people wanted entertainment, they wanted to get married, and a music band was useful. **I remember him playing music at weddings, he was a funny guy, just an absolute dear**! (they all knew but nobody said anything). That was the guy whose wife left him, she just went her way. He was alone for the rest of his life. And that's how he died[47], well, it made many people think that "God's mills grind slowly", the phrase just came to mind (female respondents, group interview, Grzęska, Sept. 2017).

I heard repeated stories about that man. Another female respondent told me the following:

> It happened some years ago – there was this well-groomed elderly man, quite nice actually, very gentlemanly, he lived at Świętoniowa and wore beautiful jackboots. He got killed by a train some dozen years ago. It was an accident, an ordinary accident. People were saying, he'd been part of that crowd who stopped the trains, and history had come full circle. Who are we to judge? (female respondent, ca. 50 years old, Przeworsk, Sept. 2017)

[46] My respondents were relatively more willing to discuss his case because he died childless, and was reputed to have been involved in the stopping of the trains but not in the killings.

[47] The man was killed by a train. I will discuss the idea of "divine retribution" (along with many other problems that go beyond the scope of a single article) in my upcoming book.

Importantly, some of the respondents lay the blame for the events on the forest itself, and not just on the historical circumstances that produced the "state of exception"[48]:

> There's some kind of power there, they say it's an evil power, some sort of energy power, and that evil attracts evil people (male respondent, ca. 65 years old, Przeworsk, Nov. 2017)

To my mind, the way blame for the suffering of the victims gets shifted onto the forest indicates that feelings of guilt become externalised and projected on the natural world (in this case the supposedly haunted forest).

In terms of people's attitudes towards the forest, older respondents (now in their late 70s and early 80s)[49] often mentioned the fact that they did not like the place, that it brought back unpleasant associations, and that it seemed ominous. One respondent from this age-group told me that when he was a child, parents discouraged their children from visiting the forest, saying, "Kids, never visit that forest if you want to live" (ca. 85 years old, Przeworsk). One respondent remembered a time when the forest still belonged to the aristocratic Lubomirski family, and was fenced off from the village with a high fence. That respondent felt nostalgic about the place, reminiscing about fascinating nature classes they had had there, looking at interesting plants that no longer grow in the forest.

People in their fifties tend to have mixed feelings about the forest, but positive emotions predominate. The forest was a peaceful place when they were growing up, and they were simply unaware of its dark past. There were several graves in the forest but nobody told the children who was buried in them – some assumed it was unknown soldiers. One of my female respondents told me that the forest teemed with life when she was a child, and she spent all her free time there. I heard similar accounts from other people who treated the forest primarily as a place where they could play, and "knew nothing" about the darker aspects.

Those of my respondents who did find out about the atrocities recall the experience as rather traumatic. One of the women told me that when she was a child a female neighbour who was with her had swept some leaves aside with a spade, and pointed to skulls buried underneath:

> With those leaves and sticks it didn't take a lot of digging, crunch, crunch, maybe three spades deep. I looked and saw an arm, then I saw a leg. I say, "Why are you showing this to me?" "So that you know what happened here!" (female respondents, group interview, Grzęska, Sept. 2017).

[48] I suspect that in order to understand the post-war relations in those villages it will be necessary to explore the conflicts between two different underground military formations, the Home Army and Bataliony Chłopskie. I will explore this in my upcoming book.

[49] I also met one respondent who still remembered the forest at an earlier time, when it was still owned by the aristocratic Lubomirski family. A local teacher would take her pupils to the forest to study plants. Despite having encountered a murdered victim in the forest, the respondent still felt nostalgic about the place.

In this case the intention was clearly to make the events known to the child. Out of the people who had direct contact with the remains of the victims, Władysław is particularly notable. He is a man in his 80s who has repeatedly spoken publicly about the murders committed in the forest, and went so far as to request a formal enquiry from the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN). He had learnt about the events as a teenager by accident when he found a naked, decomposing body in the forest on his way back from his student lodgings at Przeworsk. Perhaps it was that direct encounter with actual human remains that gave him a lasting impulse to testify about the human suffering that took place in the forest. Władysław is one of the few locals with a sense of a mission, and at one point he actually distributed leaflets with a newspaper clipping about the murders at Dębrzyna. He appeared in the film documentary to talk about the murders, and identified one of the locations where bodies of the victims are buried. Inhabitants of Grzęska and Świętoniowa acknowledge that his attitude is brave and unique, but not many are willing to follow his example.

The fate of the local Jewish community appears to be an interesting aspect of accounts of the murders at Dębrzyna. In the early 1940s the local Jewish community became the first group whom the Nazi authorities deemed to be "unworthy of life" (*Lebensunwertes Leben*) and they were "taken outside of the pale of humanity" (Czapliński 2017, 10, my translation).

Several times in this context I heard comparisons between "the shameful history" of Dębrzyna and the story of the killing of Jews perpetrated in the neighbouring Gniewczyna Łańcucka, as described in a book by Tadeusz Markiel and Alina Skibińska (2011). As it turns out, quite a number of my respondents were familiar with the book, and were shocked by it. Many drew parallels between the suffering of the Jews murdered at Gniewczyna and the suffering of the non-Jews murdered at Dębrzyna.

> Not far from here, at Gniewczyna, there was a case of murders committed against Jews, that secret, too, was revealed by one person on his deathbed. Years later a lad who had seen those events with his own eyes decided to come clean and reveal **the secret that weighed heavily on his heart**, how Polish guards would kill local Jews in that place, and that story came to light. But the shameful story of Świętoniowa is unknown to this day (female respondents, group interview, Grzęska, Sept. 2017).

The way my respondents see it, the fates of the murdered Jews and Poles get intertwined to a point where the murders at Dębrzyna become a sort of continuation of the deaths of Jews murdered in this region of Poland[50]. Nazi propaganda efforts to

[50] Sławomir Kapralski, who some 25 years ago was researching the memory of the Jewish population of Subcarpathia, writes that "the interviews contained, on the one hand, fantastic and almost mythological elements that could not have referred to any actual events in the past, but on the other hand our respondents steered clear of certain topics of which they must have been aware" (Kapralski 2016, 347). I have a similar reaction to my interviews about the murders at Dębrzyna. In this case the reticence cannot be put down to anti-Semitism or the specifically Polish cultural frame of reference that conditions Polish thinking about the Jews (Kapralski 2016, 347; Tokarska-Bakir 2004; Janicka 2014/2015, 169).

dehumanise Jews, a policy later implemented in heinous ways, effectively devalued all human life. I get the impression that my respondents were aware of that and I was not surprised when one respondent, a woman in her 70s, told me that gangs had been active in the area robbing and killing local Jews even before the killings at Dębrzyna began:

> Round these parts around the shambles[51], that's what we called it, there were Jews, Habram, Nukhim and Siunka. That's where they were living in hiding. He was a very rich man, Habram was, Nukhim was his son, and some children. And there were some gangs who assaulted them, because those Jews were rich, they had a lot of property on their estate. And those gangs that formed, they coveted that money. They would come to those neighbours in broad daylight, not far from where they lived, and just took whatever they needed, a cow, or maybe a pig. And one evening, or maybe it was night, when these here... Those gangs made a frightful assault against the Jews, and I don't know what happened, maybe those Jews were trying to get away but couldn't outrun them, but in any case one of those Jewish women was trying to escape with her child. She cried salt tears, begging them to spare her life. There used to be a wooden cross here, it's made of metal today, and they shot her dead next to that cross. Whether Nukhim or Habram were killed, that I don't know. But in any case this is where they killed that Jewish woman. It wasn't the army, it was our local people, from the secret police (UB)[52] (female respondents, group interview, Grzęska, Sept. 2017).

What the stories of Poles killed at Dębrzyna and Jews murdered locally have in common is that neither group enjoyed legal protection and could be killed by anyone. Their lives did not appear "sacred" to the perpetrators, and the murderers got away unpunished. Those are the precise characteristics that Agamben identifies about the *homo sacer*, an enigmatic figure in Roman law[53] denoting a person who stands apart from the community and can be killed by anyone (Agamben 1998, 47), "outside both human and divine law" (Agamben 1998, 48); in his discussion of the *homo sacer* Agamben references directly the Jews exterminated during World War II (Agamben 1998, 68). In the case under discussion here, the term *homo sacer* should be interpreted after

When discussing the Shoah, Kapralski's respondents would make references to anti-Semitic motifs, making it seem like they ran an anti-Semitic cultural code when "compelled to engage with those events" (Kapralski 2016, 352). Kapralski tries to avoid determinism in his treatment of that code, and prefers to talk about "cultural codes that become activated in certain circumstances" rather than permanent cultural dispositions (Kapralski 2016, 348). My case seems problematic because the community in question cannot fall back on a readymade cultural pattern, and has no cultural models available to salvage its own good image, say, by blaming the victims. Murders of Ukrainians in Subcarpathia can be explained away as retaliation for UPA sympathies and revanchist claims, murders of Jews may get justified by alleged collaboration with the secret police or accusations of ritual murder, but there is no way to blame Poles who were former slave labourers in Nazi Germany on their way back home. No cultural framework in this case will serve to dehumanize or otherwise antagonize the victims.

[51] The local name for a part of the village of Grzęska where a slaughterhouse was once located.

[52] Although there are reasons to believe that some members of the gangs joined the communist secret police (UB) after the war, they could not have been members at the early date referred to by my respondents.

[53] According to Kereny, the Roman figure of *homo sacer* was sacred because he was already the rightful property of the subterranean gods and hence could not be sacrificed (Agamben 2008, 103).

Fowler, who draws a parallel between the Latin concept of *sacer* and taboo. *Sacer esto* is in fact a curse; anyone accursed to become a *homo sacer* was a banned man, a (dangerous) taboo person (Fowler 1920, 17–23, cited in Agamben 1998, 51).

Jews hiding in the houses of their Christian neighbours, as well as people returning from slave labour, were all banned people. That may have been caused by the hateful dispensations of Nazi authorities, but the murderers viewed the victims anyway as people who could be legitimately robbed of life[54]. Agamben also refers to this figure, using the term "bare life". Although the philosopher uses this phrase metaphorically to refer to instances of physical maltreatment, such as stripping people naked or decapitating them (both of which took place at Dębrzyna), the underlying intuitive idea was to strip the victims of a unique identity and create a "bare life" (*vita nuda*).

Once it was used to create *vita nuda,* the forest effectively became a "contaminated landscape"[55] containing human remains which are un-commemorated and consigned to oblivion (Pollack 2014, 19). According to some of the respondents, "[t]hose things were scattered all over the forest" (female respondent, ca. 70 years old, Sept. 2017). The trees growing in the area, "eco-witnesses" of the killings[56] (Domańska[57] 2017, 49; Smykowski 2017, 74) containing organic remains of the victims, are also their first "living monuments"[58] (Małczyński 2009, 213).

At Dębrzyna there are no individual graves[59], and no names appear on the memorial. Human post-memory only retains nameless murder victims – abandoned bare lives – and jumbled up human bones under a thin layer of moss and topsoil. The memory of their lives remains forever unfixed. With very few exceptions, my respondents did

[54] Because he exists outside of penal codes or sacrificial laws, the *homo sacer* "presents the originary figure of life taken into the sovereign ban and preserves the memory of the originary exclusion through which the political dimension was first constituted" (Agamben 1998, 53).

[55] *Kontaminierte Landschaften* – I borrow this term from Martin Pollack, who uses it to describe landscapes that witnessed mass murder perpetrated in secret, away from human dwellings, where efforts were made to obscure all traces of the crime (cf. Pollack 2014, 15). When I presented an early version of this article as a paper at a conference on The Experience of Faith in Slavic Cultures and Literatures in the Context of Postsecular Thought" (17.10.2017) Katarzyna Jarzyńska brought it to my attention that other researchers had already adapted the term in the Polish humanities (Smykowski 2017; Sendyka 2017, 87).

[56] Some of my respondents felt the same way. "People used to say, and they still say, that if Dębrzyna could speak, it would have quite a story to tell. Even today there's plenty of graves there if you know where to look" (Sept. 2017).

[57] I am grateful to Prof. Ewa Domańska for her inspiring consultation and for alerting me to literature on the memory of the Shoah in local communities.

[58] As of 2017, parts of the forest where the murders had been committed are being cleared. This inevitably produces association with a fresh murder, or at least desecration of the remains permanently embedded in some of the felled trees. The trees should be treated as human remains – "a posthumous continuation of transformed organic matter" (Domańska 2017, 42). I plan to include an exploration of the community aspects (Małczyński 2017,18) in a future article provided that adequate source material can be collected.

[59] There are several graves in supposed burial locations but those are all anonymous.

not share specific details relating to the victims; no details, let alone actual names or surnames, are available to break the anonymity. Only scraps of memory survive, such as the account of a murdered couple who were medical doctors, or a young man whose girlfriend lived at Leżajsk and did not get off the train with him:

> My husband told me that a married couple died at Dębrzyna, they were both doctors, my husband said it was B. who took them to the forest (...) God settled his accounts with him, and he got killed by a train (ca. 86 years old, Grzęska, Sept. 2017)
>
> I know this from my mum, there were people coming back from slave labour in Germany, and they got off here. One lad had met a girl when they were both in Germany. He got off the train here, and she travelled on to Leżajsk. They agreed to meet somewhere. He didn't show up so she came to him. She went home, and then she came back here, she went to his house and asked his mum if he was around. But his mum said he'd never come back. She says, "But he did!", and told her he'd got off that train. She says, "When was that??" And she says – I had this dream – she had a dream where he appeared in a dream to his mum, and told her "Mom, my own brother has killed me" (female respondents, group interview, Grzęska, Sept. 2017).

According to my respondents this need not have been a reference to an actual biological brother, but rather to a person the victim knew well. This account appears to be similar to the story of fratricide, mentioned earlier. The killers remained protected until their death, and the whole community maintained a peaceful relationship with them. As they put it, "what else was there to be done?". There was a paradoxical symmetry between the conspiracies of silence that surrounded the victims and the perpetrators, respectively. However, at this point we should revisit the question whether or not that silence was only a matter of fear for one's own safety when faced by criminals "with respect to whom all men are potentially *homines sacri*" (Agamben 1998, 53)? And also: were those perpetrators somehow connected to the new structures of communist power?

In order to get to the bottom of the convoluted structures of that post-memory as revealed in fragmentary narratives we need to bear in mind that the secret of Dębrzyna had been kept so closely that the younger generations (people under the age of 40) did not find out about the events until about a dozen years ago, when the murder victims were commemorated by a memorial erected at Dębrzyna on the initiative of Father Józef Nowak, the local priest at the time. Father Nowak recalls how, out for a walk in the forest of Dębrzyna, he found a tree with an old metal plaque bearing the words "To those murdered at Dębrzyna, 1945–46", and later noticed white crosses painted on some of the trees, and an unnamed grave with a cross[60]. None of my respondents were able to say who had put the plaque on the tree. One of my female respondents claimed that the white crosses got painted because "somebody had a guilty conscience". Father Nowak told me this:

[60] Several other unidentified graves with crosses are situated in another location in the forest, closer to Budy Łańcuckie.

Photo 3. Memorial in the woods at Dębrzyna. 25.11.2017. Author: M. Lubańska.

> As I was walking in that forest something kept reminding me that those people should be commemorated. I wasn't thinking of the criminals because God's judgement was upon them. And it was not my intention to remind people of them, but to commemorate those innocent people who died a cruel death (Sept. 2017).

It took about ten years to bring this plan to fruition in 2004:

> This had been weighing down on me, and it was a weight off my chest when that memorial was erected, and the Holy Mass began. A weight off my heart. (Father Nowak, Sept. 2017)

With the help of his parishioners the priest erected a double cross in the forest: a cross of Christ with a second cross that had people bound together by a thorny bush; in addition there was the memorial: a boulder bearing the words "Man [is wolf] to man[61]. To the murder victims at Dębrzyna in 1945–46. Eternal rest grant to them,

[61] Unknowingly, the priest selected a quotation that became the subject of Georgio Agamben's postsecular reflection on the *homo sacer*. According to Agamben, that Hobbesian motto, *Man is wolf to man*, refers to "a zone of indistinction between the human and the animal, a werewolf, a man who is transformed into a wolf and a wolf who is transformed into a man – in other words, a bandit, a *homo sacer.* (...)

O God". The priest says the quotation from John Hobbes is intentionally incomplete because it felt more poignant that way. Some of my respondents misremember the inscription as saying, "Man to man…"[62]

Tellingly, in order to express the depth of depravity that turned a forest into a "contaminated landscape", a Catholic priest used a quotation from a secular author. As he explained, he was unable to find better words to describe the situation that unfolded in 1945–1946 at the forest of Dębrzyna in a way that would reflect the current needs of the local community. The counterpoint that emerges from the combination of religious prayer and philosophical reflection on the "state of exception" that prevailed at the time adds poignancy to the memorial, and turns it into a postsecular object. The memorial itself and the related religious rituals both lend themselves to being interpreted in terms of the concept of "ontological penumbra", where religious and secular motifs often overlap in surprising ways in an effort to express phenomena that evade customary epistemological classifications. The need to commemorate the location by introducing new conduits of memory – a cross, a memorial, a small stone altar – stems from the moral insight that a "contaminated landscape" should not be allowed to remain mute[63]. Hence the desire to turn those places into places of memory by erecting memorials to the victims who had been robbed of their lives.

In Father Nowak's experience the forest had an uncertain status given the local attitudes, especially among the oldest generation, who were unsure whether it was better to commemorate the place, or to consign it to oblivion. Knowing about the secret in that particular landscape, the clergyman was willing to confront the problem of human helplessness in the face of evil, and to save the forgotten victims from oblivion. Although it was not possible to lift the victims out of their anonymity, the priest involved the local communities in an annual rite of commemoration, celebrating mass for the victims and the perpetrators. Has that initiative actually made a difference? The early reactions were varied. Some of the locals feared that the memorial would commemorate the perpetrators, others were unwilling to rake up the past – nonetheless, the first commemorative mass drew a large crowd. For the past 13 years people from the local villages, presumably including relatives of victims and perpetrators, have been gathering here for a sort of pilgrimage. To add solemnity to those celebrations,

And this lupization of man and humanization of the wolf is at every moment possible in the *dissolutio civitatis* inaugurated by the state of exception" (Agamben 1998, 64). In this reading, the motto relates to "the Hobbesian state of nature" in which it is an "exception and ... threshold" that constitutes law and turns a neighbour into a bare life and a *homo sacer*".

[62] Similar to the motto of *Medaliony* (1946), a well-known book of short stories by Zofia Nałkowska inspired by Nazi atrocities – *Ludzie ludziom zgotowali ten los*, or "People dealt this fate to people".

[63] Nonetheless the commemorative candles occasionally lit by the locals and the white crosses painted on the trees turn this contaminated landscape into a pale shadow of a place of memory, though one effaced and obscured to a point where it becomes unreadable to a chance passer-by.

the commemorative mass is these days celebrated by several priests from local villages where the victims may have lived. This way, the memory of the murders at Dębrzyna has been brought back to life to some degree, and has been passed on to the next generation. At the same time, many of the old strategies of silence have been respected.

CONCLUSIONS

Those noteworthy achievements notwithstanding, Dębrzyna continues to be a place of non-memory, where the past "cannot be negated totally (due to the emotional impact of dead bodies or to ethical motivations), but neither can it become incorporated into local history for reasons that fail to be articulated" (Sendyka 2017, 88, my translation). The memorial offers no information about the identity of the victims or the perpetrators. In this it reflects the attitudes of the local community towards the events at Dębrzyna, leaving out all those things that fail to conform to the local community's patriotic and Christian self-image. I agree with Roma Sendyka that the formation of places of non-memory is motivated by an effort to "put a stop to potential significations and images" (2017, 88), and I believe that this particular instance is an example of this social phenomena. This is indirectly confirmed by my respondents, who tackle the problem of their "inconvenient" past. This said, the way they talk about the victims indicates a telling paradox. A religious outlook on pain and suffering dominates in the area of Przeworsk. Human bodies are viewed as places continually threatened by interference from evil powers (leading to disease, evil thoughts, nervous breakdowns), but also susceptible to healing by divine grace, the Holy Spirit (charismatic healing masses are very popular in the area, celebrated by popular figures such as Fr. Józef Witko or Fr. Marian Rajchel, an exorcist). Nonetheless, the language used to discuss the victims is secular and reifying. Instead of words like *victims*, *martyrs*, *neighbours* or even *doctors from Lviv,* a language of residuals and material remains is used, and people refer to *bones*, *skulls*, *remains*, *bodies*, and *shin bones*: things that to an untrained eye are almost indistinguishable from animal body parts.

The secularity of the language used to discuss the murder victims at Dębrzyna creates an impression of indifference; there was no God or man at that historical juncture who seemed to care about those people. How else can we explain the fact that the victims are not remembered in any way, even as anonymous individuals? Was the silence about the discoveries of dead bodies intended to thwart potential search parties or criminal investigations? Was it a failure of human solidarity in the face of fear and lawlessness? Why did the local inhabitants, who were religious, not choose to apply the ready-made Christian matrix that gives meaning to blameless suffering (in secular terms: pointless suffering) by analogy with Christ's suffering? The question that begs to be asked is: why do my respondents treat the victims' remains as secular bodies

with no distinguishing qualities? The memorial refers to them as "those murdered" – today they are even less than the "bare lives" they had turned into before their death. Nameless and fused with the natural world, they are mere shadows of *la vita nuda*, "things ... scattered all over the forest", in the words of one respondent. This means that silence becomes permissible: nameless and with no place in human memory, the victims become part of the natural world.

When I raised those points during a public discussion that followed a screening of the film documentary in the municipal library at Przeworsk, one woman objected, pointing as a counterargument to the commemorative masses celebrated every year in the forest. But it seems to me, and some of my respondents appeared to agree[64], that those masses paradoxically offer a pretext to some members of the local community to refuse to engage with the problem at a deeper level. The masses are regarded in this case as a religious act that provides closure to the problem of the murders, effectively removing the need to discuss or think about the problem in either secular or religious terms. By complying with the Christian duty to offer prayers for the dead, the local community can (legitimately in this case) self-identify as Christian. This is confirmed by the fact that Father Nowak informed me in February 2018 that both himself and the local chapter of Akcja Katolicka in the parish of Świętoniowa had reached the decision to no longer talk to me about Dębrzyna for fear of publicising the murders. Just like the Polish nation cannot be held responsible for those individuals who murdered Jews, they argued, the local community should not be blamed for the activities of a gang of murderers. Quoting a Polish Renaissance poet, Jan Kochanowski, the priest asked me "not to worry the mind too much" about those events (*więcej tym głowy nie psować*). This is a clear demonstration of the way his narrative changed over time. Perhaps this is connected to the controversial new law that came into effect in Poland shortly before our conversation, threatening legal consequences for unfounded accusations of Polish complicity in Nazi crimes; in any case he drew a comparison between the situation of the inhabitants of Świętoniowa and Grzęska on the one hand, and the situation of the Polish nation facing accusations of anti-Semitism on the other.

Importantly, Asad's insight applies in this case: secularity and religion can only be studied indirectly by looking at things like people's attitudes towards pain and suffering; this way we can grasp certain complications in the way local communities cope (or fail to cope) with collective trauma, where the responsibility of the perpetrators continues to weigh heavily on the conscience of passive witnesses[65], and the problem

[64] This sentiment was independently voiced by several people.

[65] Of course this might arguably be considered an oxymoron: perhaps we should use instead Janicka's concept of "an initiated participant observer" (Janicka 2014/2015, 160) because inhabitants of Grzęska and Świętoniowa were aware that the forest was a crime scene and accepted the fact. As a result they can hardly be viewed as *bystanders* (Hilberg 2007), or people who accidentally found themselves in the vicinity of a crime scene, and may or may not have been eye witnesses (Gross 2014, 885). *Bystanders*

of responsibility for the silence remains unsolved. At the same time I agree with Joanna Tokarska-Bakir's insightful observation, which dovetails with my postsecular analysis of this material:

> Silence is an active process. The essence of silence lies in omission and concealment. Concealment is a strange operation that must be performed on oneself or on God, who is treated like a fool who can be tricked or talked round to take a different position. We worry about our image abroad [as a nationality], and fail to consider the condition of our soul. In a Christian country, how is it possible that people say "We'll muddle through somehow, those were difficult times..."[66]

When confronted with the religion of most respondents, this silence becomes telling. It appears paradoxical that people whose religion fundamentally involves continual contemplation on the innocent victimhood of Jesus fail to find parallels between the events in the past and the Christian paradigms of undeserved suffering – or perhaps they find them but choose to remain silent. This lends weight to those individuals who find themselves in the minority, yet who feel the obligation to be guardians of memory, seeking to learn more about the murders, and above all to reclaim the dignity and humanity of the victims.

It is probably relevant that those people either enjoyed a very strong position in the local community (like Władysław), or conversely find themselves on the fringes of the community, with less involvement in, and more independence from, the other inhabitants. Most of those people have moved from Grzęska or Świętoniowa to the town of Przeworsk. Some of them are religious, others are non-believers. Standing apart from the local community, they feel an obligation to preserve the memory of the murders; in a way they want to save the victims from oblivion[67]. Can we treat them as members of that select group St. Paul calls "the remnant", which Agamben has written so much about? Is that group likely to grow further? For now, I will leave this question open, and will address it in my future research.

Translated from Polish by Piotr Szymczak

in this case were the children who accidentally stumbled upon the dead bodies, like Władysław Łania as a young boy. Upon his discovery he became an initiated participant observer like most of the other inhabitants (I am assuming some individuals may have remained in the dark), and finally became a *witness*. What compelled people to remain as "initiated participant observers" was fear. "Everybody feared those thugs", said Łania. Another respondent told me that adults would tell children, "Kids, you'd better stay away from that place if you want to live" (M, ca. 90 years old, Nov. 2017). Dębrzyna was also a forbidden topic of conversation.

[66] Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, http://magazynkontakt.pl/stworzyc-sobie-zyda.html, access 09.03.2018.

[67] This is a crypto-reference to Agamben who writes about the relationship between memory and salvation in *The Time That Remains* (2005).

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WHERE SHOULD THE "ONTOLOGICAL TURN" TURN? METHODOLOGICAL DILEMMAS IN THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL COMMUNITY

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In my research conducted in the community of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Przeworsk, I was searching for a way to understand what the use of charismatic gifts (e.g. speaking in tongues and prophecising) meant to my interlocutors. Inspiration for the study was drawn from the methodological framework of the 'ontological turn', defined by Martin Holbraad and Morten Axel Pedersen. The present article illustrates how the methodological perspective influenced the research – what it allowed me to see and what it hindered. The conclusion presents the possible routes of evolution for the ontological turn that would make it possible to overcome the mentioned problems.

* * *

Podczas badań przeprowadzonych we wspólnocie Odnowy w Duchu Świętym w Przeworsku, starałam się zrozumieć, jak moi rozmówcy i rozmówczynie rozumieli posługę darem charyzmatycznym. Inspiracją metodologiczną dla moich badań była perspektywa zwrotu ontologicznego (zwłaszcza w rozumieniu Martina Holbraada i Mortena Axela Pedersena). Niniejszy artykuł pokazuje, jak to podejście metodologiczne wpłynęło na moje badania – co pozwoliło mi dostrzec, a co utrudniło. W podsumowaniu staram się przedstawić, w jaki sposób zwrot ontologiczny mógłby się rozwijać, aby przezwyciężyć wcześniej zasygnalizowane problemy.

K e y w o r d s: Ontological turn, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, anthropology of Christianity, spiritual gift

The "ontological turn" is a new rapidly developing trend in anthropology. Its main postulates include conducting conceptual experiments which would allow us to re-evaluate the categories we use as anthropologists. The methodology drew my interest, since my research brought me in contact with terms such as "gift", "opening up", "healing" and "prophecy" – terms which I often felt I understood very differently than my interlocutors did. At the beginning of the study, my core interest lay in investigating how the members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal acquire skills such as praying in tongues, prophesising or translating tongues. Initially, I attempted to describe this process in the categories outlined by scholars specialising in religious socialisation

(mainly drawing from the works of Thomas Csordas and Tanya Luhrmann). The major problem was, however, that in some contexts my interlocutors expressly denied that their abilities could be the result of learning. Instead, they described the process invoking the category of "opening up" to a spiritual gift. In their narratives the term was strictly related to a specific notion of human actions – they perceived themselves as a "channel" for divine activity in the world.

This prompted me to consider the methodology of the ontological turn as the possible means to understanding the terminology employed by my interlocutors. The perspective appeared appropriate as it allowed for the portrayal of these categories as equally deserving of respect and attention as the ones I was using as an anthropologist. In addition, at that time the ontological turn still had a relatively small presence in Polish anthropology[1], which allowed me to hope that I could present the Catholic Charismatic Renewal from a new and insightful perspective. In this paper I show how the ontological turn enabled me to deepen my understanding of what it means to act with God's will.

However, having concluded my field research, I began to wonder to what extent my goals had been reached. What did the ontological turn framework allow me to do, and what did it hinder? Conversations with other scholars (mainly anthropologists, psychologists and philosophers), as well as renewed contact with my interlocutors helped me confront the shortcomings of the approach I had adopted. The present article aims to recount these observations, demonstrating how the methodology of the ontological turn worked in the context of my research and what problems arose from following this approach. I do not presume to be able to offer a comprehensive evaluation of the methodological framework, but only to show its results for a specific research project, assuming that in a different context the issues identified might not be of much importance. When evaluating the ontological turn, I considered the following issues:

1. To what extent does the methodology allow me to subjectively get closer to the interlocutors?
2. What new theoretical problems can I see through the lens of the methodology?
3. How does the methodology situate anthropology among other disciplines and how does it enhance interdisciplinary collaboration?

The choice of these criteria was driven by my belief that the aim of anthropology is to try to understand people's lives in an open and reflexive way. I drew inspiration from Tim Ingold's (2017, 22) definition of anthropology as a "generous, open-ended, comparative, and yet critical inquiry into the conditions and possibilities of human life in the one world we all inhabit". Moreover, anthropology does not exist in a vacuum

[1] Related topics have appeared in, for example, the works of Kacper Świerk (2013), Tomasz Rakowski (2017), and Irena Teleżyńska (unpublished). Currently, research in the framework of the ontological turn is also being conducted by Anna Przytomska.

– to be heard and to have impact, we need to collaborate with other scholars. Therefore, I have also analysed what framework for the interdisciplinary discussion is set by the ontological turn.

The final section of the article presents a number of possible courses which the development of the ontological turn could take; ones that could, in my opinion, contribute to overcoming its flaws and fulfilling the above-mentioned criteria.

THE ONTOLOGICAL TURN

In the last two decades, the popularity of the term "ontology" in anthropology has increased; it has appeared in science and technology studies (Latour 2011), has been used to describe suggested methods of overturning dualisms such as nature and culture (Ingold 2003, Descola 2013), and been employed in the context of the methodological framework stemming from the works of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1998, 2011, 2013), Martin Holbraad (2009, 2010, 2012) and Morten Axel Pedersen (2011, 2012, 2017; De Castro, Holbraad, Pedersen 2014; Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). The meaning of "ontology", however, differs in each of these cases, and is not always in accord with classical philosophical definitions. Due to its spatial constraints, this article focuses on the ontological turn as understood by Holbraad and Pedersen, who delineated their proposal over three publications: *Thinking Through Things: Theorising Artefacts Ethnographically* (Henare, Holbraad, Wastell 2007), *Truth in Motion: The Recursive Anthropology of Cuban Divination* (Holbraad 2012), and *The Ontological Turn: An Anthropological Exposition* (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). In cases when the arguments presented in the above-mentioned works were at variance, I have described the methodology in accordance with the newer publication.

Holbraad and Pedersen (2017) define the ontological turn as a trend radicalising three tendencies present in anthropology, namely: reflexivity, conceptualization, and experimentation. Radical **reflexivity** is associated with the premise of "taking people seriously" and drawing attention to the ontological assumptions made by the researcher. This means that instead of explaining the seemingly absurd beliefs held by one's interlocutors with cognitive errors (i.e. epistemological differences), one should focus on specifying how the researcher would have to change his or her views in order for the interlocutors' statements to make sense. Approached from this perspective, every anthropological study would force scholars to ask questions regarding their own fundamental views, for instance about the meaning of relations, thought or truth. Holbraad and Pedersen emphasise that this kind of ethnography (the so-called ontography) could therefore influence our understanding of such basic concepts as culture, thing, or comparison. Thus, the methodology becomes radically reflexive in that experience gained during field research transforms anthropological activity itself.

The ontological turn also proposes to radicalise **conceptualization**. The authors of the framework claim that many works written as a result of the postmodern critique in anthropology gave focused on how people DO NOT think. Scholars aimed at showing that anthropologists were ethnocentric in assuming that their interlocutors shared their understanding of such categories as kinship, nature and culture, or time. Holbraad and Pedersen suggest that to make such accusations is to stop halfway. In their view, anthropologists who face the problem of a different understanding of a given category ought to demonstrate how it should be conceptualised in order to portray how the studied people think. If an ethnologist notices that the anthropological concept of kinship does not match the studied reality, he or she should address the question of what kinship, family, relation, etc. ought to be in order to describe a match interlocutors' reality. This result in anthropology producing new categories and terms that could change the researchers' mental outlook, as well as provide alternative concepts to other academic fields. Thus, the authors of the ontological turn attempt to transform the negative critique of western-centric notions (typical for postmodernism) into the positive creation of new categories.

The third postulate of the proponents of the ontological turn is to radicalise the anthropological tendency to experiment. This manifests in the fact that ethnologists try to present themselves differently during field research, as well as in conceptual experiments and the constant questions: "what if we thought of x as ...? How would that change my understanding of the studied community?" Thus, experimenting with terms becomes an essential tool for conceptualisation, which enhances anthropological reflexivity.

Contrary to what some critics say, understood in the above-explained manner, the ontological turn in itself does not presume any given ontology (Laidlaw 2012; Pedersen 2012). It constitutes a possible methodological framework, guidelines for transforming the experience of alterity, which arises during field studies if people do and say things the scholar deems incomprehensible, into a theoretical reflection. As Holbraad and Pedersen repeatedly stress in their most recent publication, the ontological turn "asks ontological questions without taking ontology as an answer" (2017, 13). Thus, for them ontology does not carry a descriptive ("how things really *are*") or normative meaning ("how things *should be*"), but a possibilistic one ("how things *could be*", "how we *could* think of a given thing").

Since the application of the ontological turn methodology is best explained using a specific example, I shall recapitulate the argument presented by Holbraad in his monograph *Truth in Motion* (2012). The experience he identifies as fundamental for the development of anthropology is that of encountering alterity. Holbraad himself experienced it during his research in Cuba, when he realised that the followers of the cult of Ifá deemed the words of the oracle as indubitable, invariably true. He could not comprehend how statements regarding the state of affairs – such as e.g. "The fridge in

your house is broken!" – could be considered indubitable. One could imagine that, at times, some fact or another would undermine such an opinion. Holbraad's consternation stemmed from the fact that, at least initially, he was trying to make sense of the situation perceiving "the truth" as an adequate representation of reality. In European philosophy, such a definition is usually referred to as the correspondence theory of truth (see: Russell 1995). Applying it to describe his interlocutors' statements, Holbraad would be forced to conclude that they are absurd. To avoid such a judgment, he decided to analyse the possible changes in the concept of truth that would render his respondents' statements rational. Thus, he introduced the idea of an "inventive definition" (see: Wagner 2003, 59–72) to define a speech-act that inaugurates a new meaning by combining two or more previously unrelated meanings[2] (Holbraad 2012, 220). In Holbraad's view, in prophesising about their clients, the *babalawos* were, in fact, creating such a definition. For instance, by saying: "you are prone to impotence", they linked impotence, the notion of "being prone", and person to whom the divination pertained into a new whole (Holbraad 2012, 218–224). Such a definition could not be considered false, because it did not attempt to present the formerly used category, but rather redefined the person, performatively determining who he or she became.

Holbraad then made the recursive move to apply the concept stemming from his fieldwork to anthropology itself. He noticed that the truths we provide as anthropologists could also have the nature of inventive definitions. We employ our own network of terms, and thus are unable to present an adequate representation of the categories used by the studied community. Anthropologists' statements regarding the concepts used by their interlocutors to describe the world can only be true as inventive definitions. We can use the terms known to us to create a new concept which would bring us closer to understanding a given category, but would not be equivalent to it.

In *Truth in Motion* Holbraad presents studies within the framework of the ontological turn as processes consisting of several steps. The first involves describing the studied community or phenomenon as accurately as possible. The anthropologist should then determine whether this description contains any contradictions – instances in which the behaviour of the analysed people seems irrational or even absurd. At the next stage one must identify the categories which are the source of the contradictions, that is the ontological assumptions that result in the experience of alterity. The anthropologist may then start to experiment, trying to redefine these categories so that they would not cause inconsistencies in anthropological description. He or she then creates inventive definitions, formulating new terms and meanings that will fit the analysed material. The final test is confronting these new categories with the ethnographic material again

[2] The very definition of an inventive definition provides an excellent example of the concept. In this case the definition combines the notions of "speech-act," "inauguration," "novelty," and "meaning," to inaugurate a new meaning.

– if they eliminate contradictions from the initial description, they are adequate. In *The Ontological Turn: An Anthropological Exposition* (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017), the authors did not define the stages in this process so precisely; most likely due to the fact that the criterion of logical consistency is rather problematic[3]. The process of conducting ontographic research is nevertheless described in similar ways as before, starting from the experience of otherness in the field and consisting of experiments with ontological assumptions adopted by the researcher in order to develop new concepts which could bring change to anthropology.

The above-described framework of the ontological turn seemed particularly appealing in the context of my research, since it problematised the experience of alterity, which I also encountered. I was trying to become acquainted with the world of the members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, myself being deeply rooted in the scientistic and atheistic worldview. The ontological turn seemed to offer a perspective that would allow me to come closer to understanding the categories used by my interlocutors. What is more, Holbraad and Pedersen's works had the appealing quality of directly answering questions bordering on the philosophy of science, which arose due to the post-modern crisis in anthropology and pertained e.g. to the status of knowledge spread by anthropologists, the manner of formulating theses and possibility of inferring from them. The authors of the ontological turn postulated regarding anthropology as a discipline in constant motion, incessantly creating new concepts and proposing alternative routes of thinking. Ideas developed by anthropologists within such a framework could inspire research in different academic disciplines. They could even be used in the criticism of other scholars' assumptions, by demonstrating that different approaches are possible.

CHARISMATIC GIFTS

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is a movement within the Catholic Church. Its members accept the existence of charismatic gifts and the experience of Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Kokott 2011). In Poland the movement is referred to as Renewal in the Holy Spirit (see Siekierski 2018, 135).

[3] It is too narrow, since people often seem to hold contradictory beliefs. An anthropological framework describing such contradictions should therefore accept them, presenting them as understandable and rational – but make no attempt at making the statements of the study subjects more consistent. The criterion of logical consistency is also too wide, because it does not guarantee that the definitions put forward by anthropologists will be in any way translatable into how the studied subjects understand the given categories. One can imagine formulating several different definitions which would work the same in terms of satisfiability as Holbraad's idea of truth as an inventive definition. The final reservation is rather self-explanatory – the choice of logical consistency as a criterion seems as arbitrary, as it is Western-centric.

The community associated with the parish where my research was conducted comprised seventy-two individuals, around one-third of whom took active part in community life. The majority of the members were women (ca. 80 %), which is typical for church communities in Poland (Kuźma 2008, 205–223). Most members were between 35 and 60 years of age. The group was led by a democratically chosen lay leader and a "spiritual guide", i.e. the priest responsible for the community. The meetings were conducted on a weekly basis and usually entailed spontaneous prayer, adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, reading the Bible and individual meditation, as well as singing religious songs. At least once a month community activities also included a mass, meetings of smaller groups or diaconal gatherings. The aforementioned smaller groups consisted of five to nine individuals and a facilitator to moderate the discussion. The aim of the meetings was to discuss a previously chosen topic (e.g. "my resolutions for the Lent"). Diaconies were teams of people chosen to perform a given task (e.g. praying for priests, organising music for celebratory events, etc.).

My interlocutors use the term "gift' in a very broad context. To present it in more detail, I shall provide a more specific description of the four charismata which seemed particularly relevant for the community in question. A person who had a gift was said to be "serving with" it, which is why I also decided to adopt this phrase. It demonstrates that the person endowed with a spiritual gift was, in a sense, serving the community. Although definitions found in theological texts do not present the terms of a "spiritual gift" and a "charism" as synonymous (Falvo 1995, 61–63; Pawlak 1999, 79–84; Przybył 2012), the majority of my interlocutors used them interchangeably. I therefore adopt this perspective in my description of the ethnographic material.

For the majority, the first charisma to be received was **the gift of praying in tongues** (also called glossolalia). In this form of prayer the faithful were producing a string of incomprehensible syllables (at times resembling the babbling of an infant, at other times similar to some unknown language) and gave praise to God in such a manner. The community shared the belief that the incomprehensible sounds were in fact words in a foreign language, living or dead. The person praying in tongues was, however, unable to understand them. The phenomenon of glossolalia appeared at almost all meetings of the Renewal; the people praying aloud together created a symphony pleasant to the ear. Members of the community often used this form of adoration individually, at home or even at work. Some emphasised that the glossolalia is the lowest of all gifts, since it only benefits the one individual while being incomprehensible to others.

At the meetings of the Renewal which I attended the communal prayer in tongues or the appeal to the Holy Spirit were followed by silence. It was a time to "listen in" to what God wanted to communicate. On several occasions someone would then speak up, and his or her words were regarded as **a prophecy** (cf. Csordas 2002, 15). The term was used in a slightly different meaning than in common colloquial language, since my interlocutors agreed that such a prophecy did not necessarily pertain to the

future. These could simply be statements reaffirming them of God's protection or guidelines for personal spiritual development. The prophesising individuals described the experience as a strong compulsion to say something, and a discomfort that passed the moment the message was conveyed:

> "I feel as if I am about to explode, or if not, then burst into tears or just clench all over, and burn, this will just burn me if I don't get it out" (woman, ca. 35 years old).

Some prophecies were delivered in tongues, and sounded the same as glossolalia, but appeared during the "listening in" phase. These instances required the use of a complementary gift referred to as **the interpreting of tongues**. One person would speak in tongues, while another explained the perceived meaning of the message. It was assumed that the interpretation should be delivered in the first person singular, providing a direct transmission of God's words. The Renewal members who utilised this charisma described their experience as having words appear suddenly in a blank mind. Some experienced the sensation visually, with the words appearing in writing, e.g. in a golden thread.

The majority perceived the utilisation of gifts, especially that of prophecy and interpreting tongues as stressful, since they could never be sure if the words they were speaking were indeed messages from the Holy Spirit and not figments of their own imagination. This mindset may be illustrated with the following statement: "when the prophecy ends, you are drenched in sweat, and, like, shaky. And you can't be sure that you said anything important, sometimes you don't even remember what it was you said" (woman, ca. 55 years old).

The community did have certain techniques of "discernment", or determining the origin of a given thought or word. Although not always presented in this context, at times **discernment** was regarded as a kind of gift. Ideas and words of divine origin could be recognised by the following criteria:

1. They were concordant with the Bible and the teachings of the Catholic Church; several persons told me that "a charisma never comes before the hierarchy of the Church" (woman, ca. 20 years old);
2. They ought to bring joy and serenity both to the individual conveying the message and the community (it was therefore advised not to dwell on the prophecy for too long after one has delivered it);
3. After receiving a long prophecy or interpretation, community members shared their feelings regarding the message; the fact that it moved many people was regarded as confirmation of its supernatural provenance;
4. Another element facilitating the process of discernment was the repetitive nature of messages; e.g. if a similar motif appeared in several prophecies,
5. At times more than one individual felt the compulsion to interpret a prophecy in tongues; ultimately the task was performed by only one of them, but the

other could then confirm that he or she wanted to speak the same words (or very similar ones);

6. There was a member of the community tasked with noting down or recording longer prophecies and interpretations, so that they could be re-accessed after a time to see what impact they had on the group.

The above-mentioned gifts were the ones most frequently discussed within the community. The term "gift" was also employed in reference to other predispositions. My interlocutors spoke for instance of the gift of intercessory prayer, love, joy, motherhood, and understanding the Holy Scripture.

HOW TO LEARN TO SERVE WITH A GIFT?

Starting my research, I was fascinated by how my interlocutors received the ability to serve with a charismatic gift. Works by Tanya Luhrmann (2012a, 2012b) and Thomas Csordas (2002) proved very inspiring; both these authors describe similar processes as examples of "learning" religious practices. Csordas (2002) analysed the phenomenon of acquiring knowledge in charismatic communities. Referring to the theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a philosopher of perception, Csordas adopted the view that cognition is embodied, and applied it to anthropology. According to this theory, cognition does not occur only on the abstract level, but is mediated by the body – its structure, current condition, and capabilities. Csordas theorised that actions regarded as spontaneous, such as glossolalia, slaying in the Spirit, or possession, may appear owing to a "socially informed body". Despite the subjective feeling of having no control over their own behaviour, people taking part in such practices have corporeal knowledge on how such acts should look and what one should be experiencing at the time.

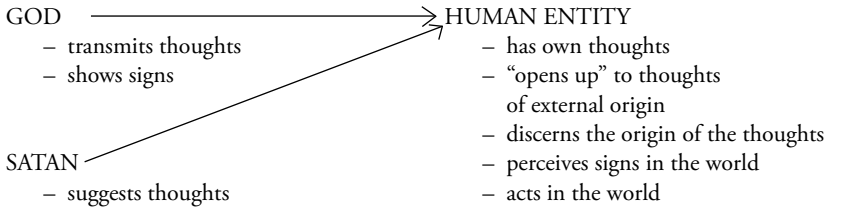
Tanya Luhrmann (2012b), in turn, focused on explaining how the members of the neo-charismatic Vineyard Church gain the ability to hear the voice of God. In doing so, she referred to the concept of the "theory of mind", a term used in cognitive psychology to define the ability to assign mental states to other people, which a person acquires at a certain stage of their development. A child usually starts explaining other people's behaviours by them having their own desires and beliefs around the age of four (Moskowitz 2009, 433–434). In Luhrmann's perspective, the theory of mind is a specific socio-cultural concept of the nature of the human mind. In her view, the members of the Vineyard Church were learning a new concept, in which the mind is accessible not only to its owner, but also to supernatural forces. Together with other scholars, Luhrmann was working towards creating a typology of cultural concepts of mind (Luhrmann 2011).

As my knowledge about the Catholic Charismatic Renewal community in Przeworsk grew, I began to notice that although the above-presented approaches did deepen

my understanding of charismatic religiosity, they were not entirely suitable for describing the research situation in which I found myself. Luhrmann and Csordas were referring to the category of "learning"[4], which in the context of my research proved particularly problematic. When I asked my interlocutors whether they learn to use charismatic gifts, many responded that this was absolutely not the case. The process of acquiring charismata was most often described as an "opening up" to a spiritual gift. Naturally, I could deem it an emic category, which in anthropological terminology may be presented as religious socialisation. I would then attempt to describe practices employed by the members of the Charismatic Renewal in order to acquire the gifts, and then present them as instrumental in learning a "theory of mind" or embodying a specific approach. It appeared, however, that I would show more respect towards my interlocutors, if I made an attempt to understand what they meant by "opening up" (using the methodology of the ontological turn) and subsequently juxtaposed this category with the concepts presented by other researchers studying charismatic communities. Moreover, such an approached would prove more insightful, since "openness" has rarely been the subject of thorough anthropological analysis[5].

"OPENING UP" AND THE CONCEPT OF A HUMAN ENTITY

Interestingly, in my interlocutors' statements the attitude of "openness" was connected to a specific concept of the human entity and action. It manifests itself, among other things, in the choice of activities ascribed to God (e.g. transmitting thoughts) or to human beings ("opening up", discernment). This results in a particular model of generating action which may be presented as follows:



[4] In the present work I focused on describing the theory presented by Csordas and Luhrmann, yet the acquisition of skills in charismatic communities has been described in terms of "learning" by other scholars as well. The earliest such work includes William Samarin's study on glossolalia (1979). As far as modern anthropologists are concerned, this approach is represented e.g. by Matt Tomlinson (2012), as well as Arnaud Halloy and Vlad Naumescu (Halloy and Naumescu 2012). Note should also be taken of the works written by Tanya Luhrmann in cooperation with psychologists (Luhrmann, Nusbaum and Thisted 2010).

[5] The few authors that did touch on this subject include Barnes (2016).

God grants a human entity a certain potential to act, but for it to be fulfilled, people need to "open up" to it. At times they also need to discern whether the potential is truly God-given, as it may also originate from the persons themselves or from Satan. The persons subsequently begin to transform the potential into a specific action, which also requires adopting the attitude of "openness", since they need to cast off the fear that a given action (e.g. prophesising) will be regarded as silly or out of place.

The members of the Renewal community accepted the stages of this process, if to a varying degree. In some situations discernment and "opening up" did not seem to play any significant role – the signal from God was perceived as direct, not mediated by human will. Experiences described in such terms were usually associated with strong emotions, as in the following statement:

> "Have you ever played the Sims? (...) Well, you get this, you control a sim... a sims, yeah? Yeah, and I was at a mass once, asking for someone to be healed I think, and it went on, and so forth, and you had to kneel in front of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Later the priest got down to walk around among the people with the Sacrament. (...) And he walked by me. Then I got up and went after him (...), I went up the stairs, onto the choir. (...) And I felt like someone was controlling me, that's what I'm saying, yeah? (...) Well, it was such an experience that even now I don't know what happened. I tell you, it was like someone was controlling you with a mouse. The whole church is kneeling and you are following the priest, yeah?" (man; 25 y.o.)

Situations which could be regarded as coincidences were also presented as non-mediated. In such cases the happy and unexpected occurrences were usually interpreted as divine control over human beings:

> "After those retreat days and the baptism in the Holy Spirit I was really pumped up and was thinking: (...) How do I serve Our Lord Jesus? I would so love to serve somehow! And I remember that my mom broke (...) her toe (...) and I took her to the A&E. Suddenly a woman just dropped onto my car! It wasn't moving. She fell from this slope. (...) So I try to talk to this woman, because, well, I don't know who she is, yeah? And she just gets into my car and says »Ma'am, child, you're a godsend, I have been praying all day that someone would take me to the station!« In Przeworsk the station is quite far away, right? »Please take me there!« And I'm thinking, fine, okay, I can do it, yeah? (...) So when she had already jumped into the car, I just meekly drove her to the station and all the way there she just kept on talking about how much she had prayed to the Holy Spirit and asked the Lord Jesus to give her some Guardian Angel to drive her! (laughs) (...) At that moment I felt that, well, now I am an instrument. As a driver, but still" (woman, ca. 55 y.o.).

In most situations, however, the role of human beings was presented as equally important as that of the Divine. Believers needed to turn to God and "open up" to His signals in order to be able to act according to His will. They tried to "discern" the origin of the thoughts in their minds and the occurrences in the world around them, so as to decide what steps they should take. This attitude was particularly important in the case of gifts such as prophesising or interpreting of tongues, but also before making certain life decisions:

People reaching hands to God during an Evening of Worship
Source: http://www.chrystus-krol.przeworsk.pl, access: 30.09.2018

> "We are the ones with free will and we should be the ones choosing. We have thousands of thoughts, but which ones are good? (...) Very often it is through signs [that we know God's will]. When I am wondering, when I don't know, then God sends a person to me who will, through... who will touch on a topic and in a way confirm that I am to do this thing, yes. Well, sometimes you face difficult choices, yes, decisions, like for example to build a house. I had this wish in me. (...) But I was thinking, fine, but this was in me all the time and I didn't know if it was mine, or if God wants to bless us in this. And I still don't know. One never knows for sure. But I simply went to intercessory prayer, all the while asking: Lord, is this Yours or mine? Is this truly... do You want to give us Your blessing for constructing this house? I beseech You, put people in my path that would confirm that it is so". (woman, ca. 55 y.o.)

Serving with charismata was related in a similar manner. The "opening up" to the gift was presented as a human act, but the responsibility for the message conveyed while performing a charismatic service lay with God. The role of human beings was to ceaselessly address God, deepening their "openness". One of my interlocutors described it thusly:

> "I invented this simile once, I did not know how to grasp it that the person with a gift is simply a funnel through which God pours a stream of blessings, and they are not able to take it all in, an through this funnel blessings pour onto others. Through various gifts, opportunities of a given per-

> son, their temperament and so on. What has always appealed to me is that even if the blessings pour over, something stays in this funnel, a fraction, some droplets are there! So this person who allows this – something always stays with them! (woman, ca. 35 y.o.)

Within this framework, a human being is the "channel" through which God acts in the world. The believer does not have much influence on what is relayed through this "channel", but may decide whether to open it or not[6]. This finds confirmation in accounts of the experience of utilising gifts. Members of the Renewal stated that in these moments they felt as if "a wave of heat washed over them", "electricity shot through them" or "light appeared in their minds". Such experiences were treated as confirming the presence of the Holy Spirit within a person's body.

Interestingly, in Polish context such understanding of human being extends beyond communities of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit. As Lubańska (2018) and Siekierski (2018) have shown, Polish mainstream religiosity becomes more and more influenced by charismatic sensibility.

ACTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD'S WILL

The model of human action described above appeared an interesting alternative to how behaviour is described on an everyday basis. As noted by Jack Hunter (2010), anthropologists frequently disregard the realness of the experience of communicating with supernatural forces, deeming them a part of the social reality and evading the question whether such experiences may stem from causes not rooted in psychology. However, in engaging in such practices, scholars assume which part of ethnography can be presented as physical facts, and which as social facts. With this observation as the starting point, I would like to compare manners in which acting in accordance with God's will is described in the anthropology of charismatic religiosity and analyse the underlying notions of such presentation. As an example of such a description, I have chosen Simon Coleman's *The Globalization of Charismatic Christianity* (2000), which is a contemporary anthropological study with a worldwide reputation. Therefore, some observations about assumptions regarding the nature of action in this monograph, may be symptomatic also to other ethnographies of charismatic communities.

In *The Globalization of Charismatic Christianity*, Simon Coleman describes how the members of the World of Life community in Uppsala embodied the words of the Bible, so as to receive guidance for their actions. Coleman divided the methods for embodiment into narrative emplacement, dramatisation, internalisation and externalisation (Coleman 2000, 117–142). **Narrative emplacement** consisted of describing oneself and the community through references to biblical events, characters and ideals.

[6] Some interlocutors did, however, mention that a given person's experiences may influence e.g. the wording of the prophecy. They have no impact on the meaning of the message conveyed.

Coleman exemplified this with statements of religious leaders emphasising the existence of a global community of believers that had to fulfil a mission of evangelisation. **Dramatisation** was understood as enacting roles ascribed to the saints. In their everyday life, believers followed certain "scripts" borrowed from religious texts. **Internalisation** consisted in materialising the words of sermons and lectures – members of the community treated these words as something tangible, which could be received during mass through extending one's hands or consumed while reading the Bible. The final type of practice – **externalisation** – was expressed through the performative use of the words which had previously been internalised. Coleman presents the example of an interlocutor who had been in a car accident and consequently had mobility problems. At some point she started to entreat her body, saying: "In the name of Jesus, you are healed!" which caused her to recover.

The practices of dramatisation, internalisation and externalisation are reflected in the model of activity presented in the context of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Przeworsk. It must, however, be noted, that in this case the practices were much less textual in nature. Rather, my interlocutors drew their strength to do mundane tasks from the Bible and the sermons they heard, as well as from listening for the voice of God. Thus, they dramatised their life by enacting the roles known from these sources. However, these were not always easily connectible with any specific character. A good example comes from a female interlocutor, who heard the divine voice during a prayer of adoration. It said: "Go and cook this poor man [her husband] some beans in tomato sauce" (woman, ca. 55 y.o.). One can, naturally, detect certain models of behaviour in the above-presented story, yet such cases do broaden the concept of dramatisation outlined by Coleman.

The same holds true in the case of internalisation. During their meetings the members of the community would extend their hands towards the altar. However, my interlocutors did not interpret this gesture as absorbing only words, but also energy or light. Moreover, they saw it as a symbol of their "openness", the readiness to listen for God. This demonstrates that the anthropological category of internalisation and the emic "opening up" are strictly related (though not synonymous).

In the context of my research, externalisation could be understood as acting in accordance with the previously adopted attitude of "openness". The most vivid examples of such behaviour came from situations in which a person saw themselves as controlled directly by God (as in the above-cited statement referring to the Sims).

It is apparent that Coleman's framework allows a certain classification of the actions undertaken by the members of the Renewal. His analysis was, however, lacking in insight on what it really means to "act in accordance with God's will", a postulate indirectly suggested by Hunter. As an unreligious person, I found the concept of such activities incomprehensible and inconsistent with what I understood as "action". I therefore tried to uncover the roots for the individualistic and secular notion of this concept.

The philosophy of action defines the key components of this notion as intentionality and agency associated with a given subject (Stout 2005, 1–15). Such a vision is at variance with the model of action stemming from the statements made by the members of the Renewal – since in this case the subject is not singular, both the intent and the causality is shared. This conclusion prompted me to turn to the concept of collective action. It is an action undertaken by several subjects, such as a walking together, or participating in a game. Philosophers of action have been debating how to define the difference between two individuals doing something together and two other ones who are simply performing the same activity without the sense of acting collectively. Margaret Gilbert (2010) distinguished three possible approaches to this issue.

The first of these approaches is based on the assumption that collective action stems from the personal intentions of the agents. Each of them acts in the belief that "I intend for us to be doing something together". John Searle (1990) and Wilfrid Sellars (1963), in turn, postulated the existence of a specific kin of intentions aimed at "we". In this framework, agents acting collectively hold a specific kind of belief that "we intend to do something together".

Gilbert (2010) rejects both of the above-mentioned approaches, stating that they disregard the fact that people acting collectively may require certain behaviours from one another. For instance, if two people decide to go for a walk together, one has the right to hurry the other if they slow down or stop. Thus, the philosopher offers a third solution, based on the concept of a joint commitment. In her view, collective action is not only a matter of intention, but also of a certain binding decision. The joint commitment to act is therefore the set of the agents' commitments to act in a given way. A person who fails to perform the action to which they had committed may consequently be reproved by the other actors.

It may be noted that in describing the Word of Life community, Coleman decided to emphasise the actions of its members, and not those performed by God. The practices of dramatisation, internalisation and externalisation are presented from the perspective of a human subject and the words used by this individual. Thus, Coleman's approach is rooted in the classical concept of action as performed by an independent subject with intention and agency.

In my estimation, in order to reach a fuller understanding of the experience of my interlocutors, and perhaps some charismatic movements as such, one ought to accept the possibility of a different perspective which relies on a transformed concept of collective action. The common feature of philosophical approaches to collective action is the fact that they strive to explain how is it possible that individual, autonomous subjects are able to conduct actions together. Cited philosophers took for granted that agents are separate beings that have such mental states as intentions, commitments or wishes. However, as I have shown above, the concept of human entity is radically different in the case of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In my interlocutors

statements there was not tension between having one's own mind and free will and being an instrument in God's hands. They assumed that two separate beings – namely God and a human – through "openness" (which is a sort of intention) are able to form a sort of collective being that acts in the world.

The concept of action – and therefore also of agent – that arouses from this analysis is both individual and relational. It saves individualistic notions of free will and personal attitudes but also allows to postulate such relational objects as collective thoughts, intentions and actions.

WHAT COULD THE ONTOLOGICAL TURN "OPEN UP" TO?

The above reasoning was the result of applying the framework of the ontological turn to my research situation. At the beginning of my research I focused on how members of the Renewal community learn to serve with a spiritual gift. When I had discovered that my interlocutors themselves prefer to describe the process of acquiring charismata by using the category of "opening up", I decided to employ the methodology of the ontological turn to understand better what "openness" meant to my interlocutors. I identified that this category rests on specific notions of human entity and action and I tried to depict them as faithfully as I could. However, there still remains the question of how people acquire the ability to use spiritual gifts if they did not have this skill prior to becoming a member of the Renewal community and did not think of themselves in terms of "openness".

My bachelor's dissertation (Biernacka 2017) focused on activities such as adoration prayer, intercessory prayer and visualisation practices during retreat days. In my estimation these activities can be regarded as helping my interlocutors to think of themselves in terms of the relational model of action. In the present article I will focus only on one example of such practises: a dance of worship. The dance began to be included in the formula of Evenings of Worship as my research was drawing to a close. The Evenings of Worship were open services of prayer organised by the Renewal community once every two months. During the one that I attended several people demonstrated the dance accompanied by lively songs of religious nature and encouraged others to join in. The song was repeated a number of times, creating numerous opportunities for the congregation to dance. Although initially the idea of partaking in such activities seemed ridiculous, after a time I decided to participate. This state of hesitation reminded me of a statement the priest responsible for the Renewal community made about glossolalia:

> "It is like, you know, if a person has everything figured rationally, neatly and sensibly, then such a prayer suddenly seems weird, nonsensical, incomprehensible, how can it be?" (man, ca. 60 y.o.)

A photograph depicting the dance of worship.
Source: http://www.chrystus-krol.przeworsk.pl, access: 15.12.2016

Commencing a prayer in tongues a person forces oneself to perform a new, seemingly irrational action. The similarity between these two experiences – glossolalia and the dance of worship – allowed me to see the analogy between overcoming one's embarrassment in the case of dance and the process of "opening up". When I spoke to the members of the community after the Evening of Worship, they admitted to similar feelings regarding the dance. It appeared to me, therefore, that the dance may be perceived as an embodiment of the attitude of "openness". However, as I identified the dance as a moment arousing a strong feeling of alterity, I started to consider how postulates of the ontological turn could be applied in this case. Therefore, I tried to figure out what ontological assumptions underlied my experience of alterity. Although Holbraad and Pedersen do not offer a precise definition of ontological assumptions, but at one point mention that these are similar to concepts (2017, 35). I identified such assumptions as "movement is an exposure" but, nevertheless, deepening them did not seem compelling. Instead of taking me closer to the physical experience of the process of spiritual gift acquisition, this method transferred the analysis to a conceptual level.

In my estimation, in the case of the dance of worship physical movement (and not "movement" as a concept) plays similar role as the category of "opening up" in

the previous analysis. Dancing allows to understand better how acquiring the attitude of "openness" works – just like the concept of "opening up" supported me in the investigation of the notion of action. Relations between concepts are outlined in the below table:

Old concept I used at the beginning of the research	**New concept that allowed me to understand better my interlocutors**
learning	"opening up"
individual, autonomous subject	subject as a "funnel" for God's will
collaborative actions based on individual agency and intentionality	collaborative actions based on collective agency and intentionality
ontological assumptions	physical movement

The aforementioned situation can be seen in a broader context, which would allow to notice that the notion of ontological assumptions is generally problematic when used to describe processual phenomenons. I will try to depict this problem basing on one of Holbraad and Pedersen's work (2017, 312–361) .

The authors of the ontological turn conducted an analysis of conversion and transcendence in Christian tradition – examples of the lack of continuity, a broken relation. This appears to be similar topic to the process of acquiring the attitude of "openness", which requires adoption of a new conceptual framework. Holbraad and Pedersen's approach based on Strathern's writings (2004) about relations. Her definitions were than transformed in order to outline a concept of transformation not based on negation. As a result, although the authors of the ontological turn started with an issue linked with a process and transitionality, they concluded their examination by presenting a specific, established term.

In my estimation, this problem may also stem from one assumption which is fundamental to the ontological turn and, as it transpires, pertains to ontological assumptions. Ontological assumptions are a methodological construct, not an ontological one[7]. As a concept, they are to help researchers reach a deeper understanding of their relations with the studied group. At the same time, one does not need to assume that such entities as ontological assumptions do indeed exist in the minds of one's interlocutors.

Instructing anthropologists to conduct their research thinking in terms of the ontological assumptions which they are adopt implies a rather individualistic and

[7] Absurd as this statement may seem, it stems from the fact that Holbraad and Pedersen first started to employ the notion of ontological assumptions, and only later decided that they did not want to propose any ontology. Updating their methodology could perhaps have spared them numerous misunderstandings, but the task now is difficult given the fact that it is already in widespread use.

Cartesian image of cognition, even in heuristics. In this model, the anthropologist becomes a subject possessing certain mental constructs, through which they acquire knowledge about the world and other people. For this reason, Holbraad and Pedersen claim that transforming one's own ontological assumptions only provides us with the information on how the world *could* look like and how we *could* perceive it, and not on how it truly *is*.

When I tried to overcome this rather unsatisfying conclusion, I became inspired by the relational concept of action derived from the narratives of Renewal's members. What if the concept of action was applied to anthropological activity itself? It is a relational framework, in which, in order to work together, two subjects mutually commit to being "open", ready to receive the thoughts originating from the other agent. Such a relation may result in a spiritual gift, which does not fully belong to the person serving with it. It seems that ontological assumptions may be regarded in a similar manner. As noted by Holbraad and Pedersen, the discrepancy between assumptions and a studied reality leads to feelings of alterity. One could go a step further and consider whether it is even possible to hold any ontological assumptions without a clear context. It would perhaps be helpful to think of ontological assumptions as emerging from a confrontation with the world that surrounds us, such as a spiritual gift arises as a result of a relation.

POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ONTOLOGICAL TURN

I would like to conclude by presenting a number of possible paths of development which the ontological turn could take. One frequently voiced shortcoming of the framework (noted e.g. by Bessire and Bond 2014; Graeber 2015; Heywood 2017; Salmond 2014) consists in the fact that it moves away from the people it is supposed to study. Despite references to Eduardo Viveiros de Castro's postulates to "take people seriously" (2011) and "permanently decolonise thought" (2013), anthropology as defined by Holbraad and Pedersen ultimately aims not at acquiring knowledge about people, but developing new concepts and meanings. What is more, the authors of the framework do admit that the concepts they establish (e.g. the concept of truth as an inventive definition) do not necessarily correspond to their interlocutors' understanding of these categories. Such correspondence is not deemed necessary since, according to Holbraad (2009, 2012), at this state of conducting research we do not rely on the concept of truth as an accurate representation, so the depiction cannot be precise. This conclusion depends also on the individualistic understanding of ontological assumptions that was marked above. Within the framework of the ontological turn, field research may become simply a source of inspiration to create new concepts.

As David Graeber (2015, 35) observed:

> "Engaging in such thought experiments does not really open us to unsettling possibilities. Or, anyway, not the kind of unsettling possibilities that are likely to get anyone fired from their jobs".

Graeber also noted that the creators of the ontological turn do not use in their works terms such as "serf, slave, caste, race, class, patriarchy, war, army, prison, police, government, poverty, hunger, inequality" (2015, 32), which may seem alarming in the case of a framework that expressly refers to the discourse of decolonisation. According to Casper Bruun Jensen (2017) Graeber's criticism is not valid, because the ontological turn aims to transcend the limited set of categories developed in the world of western academia, which would contribute to decolonisation on the conceptual level (cf. Holbraad *et al.* 2014). In my own estimation, this reply does not fully invalidate Graeber's reservations. It may be observed that at least some parts of the current public debate refers to issues anthropologists face directly and people with whom they interact personally. Thus, we would like to be able to take a stand and offer certain solutions e.g. in the context of the discussion on refugees. This does not mean that we are to stop developing our conceptual apparatus.

Furthermore, conceptual decolonisation does not necessarily have to be a model of political independence assumed by the people with whom we conduct our research[8]. One of the members of the Renewal community in Przeworsk read my bachelor's thesis and shared her impressions of it. She said that although, in her opinion, my description of the category of "opening up" was accurate, she found the work "rather cold" and "philosophical". She stated that a person who learned about the existence of the Renewal from my work would not understand the "value of human faith", and "would not experience what we feel every day". She saw more benefit in a work that would present how the Renewal changed people's lives and described their everyday experience of faith. Does this mean that, as an anthropologist, I ought to respond to this need and conduct my research accordingly? It seems that although I should not disregard the suggestion, I can still see the value of thought experiments which may advance anthropological theory. It would, however, be unfair to present them as justified with the will to work for the benefit of the "conceptually colonised" interlocutors.

In the conclusion to *The Ontological Turn: An Anthropological Exposition* (2017), Holbraad and Pedersen tried to predict the further development of their framework. As mentioned above, one of their ideas involved moving beyond the concept of relation stemming from Marilyn Strathern's (2004) writings, employed in works following the framework of the ontological turn. The two authors therefore adopt the strategy of using ontography to analyse and transform the basic concepts in which the turn is rooted (such as movement, transformation, criticism); in doing so they often stray far

[8] Ironically, Holbraad presented a very similar argument in his polemic with research on agency (2012).

away from their own fieldwork. As suggested earlier, one possible solution to this problem is to change one's attitude towards ontological assumptions as such, and instead see them as relational, stemming from a given context and interactions. Another path (which does not exclude the former) would be to use the methodology of the ontological turn to study phenomena deemed controversial, politicised, or related to oppression. This could facilitate the emergence of a method to combine the openness to new conceptual categories with engagement and offer something to the people who help establish these categories.

It may also be argued that the ontological turn does not facilitate any cooperation between anthropology and other disciplines. If I understand the creators of the framework correctly, they believe that ontography allows anthropologist to develop concepts which could later be used in other fields of academic study or question assumptions regarded as obvious in these fields. This statement seems to overestimate the interest experts in other disciplines may take in concepts developed in anthropology. Having studied cognitive science, I have often participated in psychological conferences, and presented papers on the cognitive aspects of my ethnographic research, which contained references to the framework of the ontological turn[9]. Despite seeing the potential for using Holbraad and Pedersen's methodology in fields such as experimental philosophy or the phenomenology of religious experience, I find it hard to believe that such cooperation could consist in the conceptual network being dictated by the anthropologist. Other academic fields are not always willing to abandon their existing theories entirely, and often do not accept criticism based in ethnography as valid. This is due to dissimilarities in the models of explanation adopted in different disciplines – understanding the meanings people ascribe to their experiences is significant in anthropology, (cf. Barnes 2016), whereas, for example, cognitive psychology is more interested in an external analysis of cognitive processes.

Although Holbraad himself was sceptical towards cognitive anthropology (Holbraad 2010, 182; Holbraad 2012, 30–32), interdisciplinary research seems to be another possible direction for the successful development of the ontological turn. Cognitive issues play a vital role in Pedersen's works (Pedersen 2011; Pedersen 2017; Henare, Holbraad and Wastell 2007, 141–166), yet he was not directly involved in research conducted in cooperation with specialists in other academic fields. I believe that such a confrontation could be very fruitful in terms of theory and associated with feelings of alterity no lesser than in the case of ethnography itself.

[9] "Glosolalia – między antropologią a psycholingwistyką" ["Glossolalia – between anthropology and psycholinguistics"], delivered at Interdyscyplinarna Konferencja Badań nad Językiem 20.05.2017; "Teoria umysłu – od kognitywistyki do antropologii" ["The theory of mind – from cognitive science to anthropology"], delivered at Zderzenia Poznawcze, 20–12.05.2017; "Teorie poznania, o których nie wiecie, bo robicie złą naukę" ["Theories of Cognition you do not know, because you are doing the wrong science"], delivered at VI Konferencja Perypatetyczna, 27–29.10.2017.

I would like to conclude with the statement that, despite the problems I encountered while conducting research within the framework of the ontological turn, I still see the benefits of this methodology. The greatest lesson I learnt from reading Holbraad and Pedersen's works is the belief that regardless of the nature of the theoretical problem we are facing – be it the tension between agency and oppression, between naturalisation and constructivism, or anything else – it may be resolved through ethnography. The authors of the ontological turn encourage scholars to recognise these tensions in their research and identify the assumptions on which they are based. The people we meet in the field may help us discover these assumptions and construct an alternative network of concepts. It is this perception of anthropological theory, as a practical activity rooted in action and relations, that I consider the true value of the ontological turn.

Translated by Julita Mastalerz

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BETWEEN THE 'RELIGIOUS' AND THE 'SECULAR' ATTITUDE. THE CONFLICT OVER THE RELOCATION OF THE CATHOLIC CHAPEL IN THE REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN PRZEWORSK

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This article analyses the conflict over changing the location of the Catholic chapel in the Regional Hospital in Przeworsk. I conducted in-depth anthropological interviews with people declaring a variety of views on the relocation of the chapel, analysed official documents and materials published in the local press, and reflected on my own observations and experiences in order to define the reasons for the conflict. What measures were taken to prevent the relocation of the chapel and why were these steps chosen? What was the logic behind the specific narratives created by those involved in the dispute and what do they tell us about how these respondents perceive the function of the place of cult within the space of the hospital? To answer these questions I drew upon publications from the field of social anthropology and sociology of religion pertaining to the issues of secularisation, secularity and secularism. Transcending the "traditional" views on secularity and religiosity as separate, nonreducible spheres or "binary opposites", the choice of literature permits a more careful consideration of the motivation of the actors, their diverse attitude towards the local and Church authorities, and their perception of hospital space and the chapel itself, without disregarding the context of the local politics and history.

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Niniejszy artykuł jest analizą konfliktu, dotyczącego zmiany lokalizacji katolickiej kaplicy w Szpitalu Rejonowym w Przeworsku. Przeprowadzając pogłębione wywiady etnograficzne z osobami wyrażającymi różny stosunek do idei przeniesienia kaplicy, analizując dokumenty urzędowe i materiały zawarte w lokalnej prasie, a także poddając refleksji własne obserwacje i doświadczenia, staram się udzielić odpowiedzi na pytania: jakie były przyczyny sporu? Jakie i dlaczego właśnie takie działania podjęto w celu zapobieżenia relokacji kaplicy? Co stoi za specyficznymi narracjami zaangażowanych w spór osób i co one mówią nam o postrzeganiu przez badanych kwestii funkcjonowania miejsca kultu w przestrzeni szpitala? W udzieleniu odpowiedzi na te pytania pomaga mi literatura z zakresu antropologii społecznej i socjologii religii, dotycząca zagadnień sekularyzacji, świeckości i sekularyzmu. Przekraczając obecne w „tradycyjnych" ujęciach postrzeganie świeckości i religijności jako odrębnych, nieredukowalnych sfer, „binarnych opozycji", pozwala mi ona na głębszą refleksję dotyczącą motywacji aktorów, ich zróżnicowanego stosunku do władz kościelnych i samorządowych oraz sposobów postrzegania przez nich przestrzeni szpitala, jak i samej kaplicy, nie abstrahując jednocześnie od lokalnego, polityczno-historycznego kontekstu.

K e y w o r d s: secularity, religiosity, Catholicism, hospital, chapel, conflict

This article describes and analyses the narratives and practices of individuals connected with the chapel of the Our Lady of Sorrows in the Regional Hospital in Przeworsk in the context of the chapel's controversial relocation in 2015, however I concentrate mostly on my interlocutors' opinions and declarations about the relocation. I studied the case between August 2015 and October 2016 as a project for the ethnographic seminar entitled *Miracles, Pilgrim Practices and Embodied Religiosity in the Catholic Communities of the Rzeszów Region,* supervised by dr. Magdalena Lubańska from the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Warsaw.

The analysis focuses on the aspects of the narrative and practices related to the conflict which I considered key. These are: (1) the spatial location of the chapel and the hospital area in general; (2) the negotiated categories of the "good of the patients" and "outsiders" in the hospital; (3) the connections which my interlocutors made between the chapel, the church and the related individuals, and the history of Przeworsk and Poland. This allows me to answer the following research questions: What were the reasons behind the conflict? What measures were taken to prevent the relocation of the chapel and why? What is the logic behind the specific narratives constructed by the people involved and what do these narratives reveal about my interlocutors' perception of the functioning of the place of cult within the space of a public hospital? The stances displayed by the persons involved in the conflict will be analysed using the categories of "religiosity" and "secularity". These terms, connected with the theory of secularisation, are presented in light of approaches currently dominant in social sciences; I demonstrate ambiguous nature of the terms, the blurring of the lines between them, as well as their dependency on the context. Such an approach facilitates a deeper investigation of the motivations of specific individuals and groups engaged in the dispute, without limiting them to the rigid framework of "ideal types".

Attitudes of individuals connected with the chapel's relocation could be described from other perspectives, for example: division between rational and irrational discourses. However, discourse of 'religious' and 'secular' and the process of secularization was part of *emic* way of seeing this conflict and demarcating its' active actors. For my interlocutors (those against the relocation) relocation was part of wider and complex phenomenon of undermining the role of Catholic Church. I believe, that this approach allowed me to grasp better my interlocutors' ways of thinking and acting in the conflict.

THE STUDIED AREA

Przeworsk is the capital of a county in the Subcarpathian Voivodeship, located 60 km away from the eastern border of Poland and 120 km away from the southern one. The town has ca. 16 thousand inhabitants. The Roman Catholic parishes of

Przeworsk (the city has none of other denominations) remain under the jurisdiction of the Przemyśl Archdiocese. These are: the parish of Christ the King, the parish of St. Barbara (managed by monks of the Bernardine Order), the parish of the Holy Ghost (administered by the Order of the Holy Sepulchre), as well as its chapels of ease: the chapel of Our Lady of the Snow used by the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, and the chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows in the Regional Hospital, named after dr. Henryk Jankowski. It is the latter that constituted the focal point of my research.

The history of the existing hospital can be traced to 1944, when an aid station was established in Przeworsk. It was managed by doctor Jankowski, who later became the patron of the present institution. The aid centre was transformed into a municipal hospital, which then grew to include six wards located in several buildings scattered throughout the city (Kunysz 1974). The existing hospital building, which brought all the wards under one roof, was built from 1976–1982 (Pelc 2016).

The hospital is only 2 km away from the city centre (the grounds on which it stands used to belong to the parish of the Holy Ghost). It stands in close vicinity to residential districts, including two blocks of flats constructed at the same time as the hospital. These buildings, nearest to the hospital, were initially used as social housing for the hospital staff but are now inhabited by different people, often with no professional connection to the hospital.

The location of the institution and the adjacent residential areas makes them seem somewhat secluded from the city proper. Many inhabitants found it inconveniently located for everyday activities, such as reaching commercial services or temples. At the same time, however, the remoteness of the hospital grounds and the small size of the residential areas had an impact on relations between its inhabitants. Almost all the residents know each other and are well-informed regarding their neighbours, which often proved very useful to me in acquiring new interlocutors and valuable data.

The hospital chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows was consecrated on 18th October 1983[1]. Its establishment was instigated by the prelate Adam Ablewicz, who was the parson of the parish of the Holy Ghost and the first official chaplain of the hospital. Initially the chapel was located on the first floor of the building, among administrative rooms. After a time, however, the hospital's administration was moved to a different wing and its place was taken by the Rehabilitation Ward. The chapel remained in its original location until 2015, when the decision was taken to move it, much to the displeasure of some local inhabitants, hospital staff and patients. Currently the chapel is situated on the lowest hospital floor, near spaces such as the conference room, the nurses' changing rooms, storerooms, laboratories and the mortuary.

[1] http://www.bazylika.przeworsk.pl/?page_id=180, access: 12.11.2016

RESEARCH METHODS AND INTERLOCUTORS

My field research in Przeworsk was conducted between August 2015 and October 2016, i.e. after the relocation of the chapel. This fact had considerable significance from the methodological point of view, since it made it possible for me to avoid siding with any faction of this conflict and allowed me to access official documents, a task which would have been undoubtedly more challenging if the research had been conducted when the dispute was at its most heated. This being said, it also prevented me from observing the events surrounding the relocation at first hand, as they unfolded.

The field material I acquired during the course of my study comes mostly from in-depth anthropological interviews, my own observations and experiences related to the functioning of the hospital chapel (both services held there and its 'everyday existence'), reports on the conflict published in the local press and online (found mostly on the internet sites of the periodicals "Super Nowości", "Gazeta Jarosławska", "Życie Podkarpackie", and "Fronda", as well as the website of Radio Maryja; some of these materials included quotes from interlocutors). I also had access to official correspondence, kindly provided to me by my respondents.

The people I talked to in my research all had a connection to the hospital chapel. The largest group comprised the inhabitants of the residential areas near the hospital; these were mostly persons of ca. 50–65 years of age, who used the chapel for a variety of reasons, were involved in its functioning in many different ways and – a fact of considerable importance – displayed diverse attitudes towards the relocation of the chapel and the entire dispute over it. Another important group of interlocutors were priests – three hospital chaplains – two of whom were in office at the time of my research (a new chaplain was appointed in September 2016). The third had used to work there many years previously. I also spoke to two city councillors who relayed the measures they had taken to prevent the chapel from being relocated (one of them served as my "doorman" and my main interlocutor), to nurses working at the Przeworsk hospital, and to the director of the institution. My aim was to offer as broad a presentation of the studied issue as possible and to give a detailed insight into the different attitudes towards the relocation of the hospital chapel.

ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES

I describe the studied case using the categories of secularity and religiosity; the same terms are also employed in the analysis of the manner in which my interlocutors constructed their narratives. In social sciences these categories have primarily been connected with the theory of secularisation. I would like to emphasise that my percep-

tion of secularity and religiosity is not that of a binary opposition as with the *sacrum* and the *profanum*. Within the framework of my analysis, I regard these categories as stemming from different manners of perceiving and experiencing. These manners are reflected in the stories different individuals told me about the chapel and the activities related to its relocation. They are revealed, for instance, by my respondents' opinions on the location of the chapel and its aesthetics (see later sections).

The dichotomy of *sacrum/profanum*, originating from the period when religious studies became the fighting ground for Enlightenment and Romantic ideologies, "is connected with the drive towards the revaluation of the autonomy of religion" (Staszczak 1987, 323). Such a dichotomous perception of the religious and the secular sphere was consolidated in the public eye after Emil Durkheim isolated the category of *profanum*, i.e. that which is everyday and not sacred, the polar opposite of the *sacrum*, i.e. that which is separate and forbidden, as well as the sphere of beliefs and practices (Staszczak 1987). According to Durkheim, contact between religious and secular sphere is not possible in practice "unless the profane loses its specific features and becomes sacred to some extent. The two genera cannot be brought together and still maintain their separate natures" (Durkheim 2001,39). The two spheres are therefore qualitatively different.

Such a dichotomous perception of reality may, in my view, be connected with the so-called classical theory of secularisation, which stems from the works of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. This theory associated western modernity with the decline of traditional forms of religiosity (Cannell 2010, 86–87). Within this framework, secularisation is both a symptom of modernity and its effect; it belongs to the historical process of modernisation.

Crucial elements of the theory of secularisation include the thesis of the privatisation of religion. It stipulates that social forms of religion have been supplanted with individual religiosity. This issue proves to be of paramount importance in the context of the dispute under analysis here – the conflict unfolded on several planes: in the contact between the inhabitants of the city and the people with some connection to the hospital, in relations between local government institutions and the local Church, in the discussion presented in regional and national media. The above-mentioned theory of the privatisation of religious expression is general in nature and constitutes an element of sociological analysis in the macro scale. Thus, I do not aim to prove or disprove it on the basis of the analysed case. The theory did, however, inspire me to reflect upon the differences in the justifications for the existence of the chapel in a public hospital, as well as the linguistic differences that polarised the manners in which my interlocutors spoke about the conflict, for instance in the media.

The works of Jürgen Habermas proved particularly inspiring in this respect. In his famous acceptance speech for the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, published

under the title *Faith and Knowledge*, the German philosopher refers to the concept of a "post-secular society", i.e. one which has to adjust itself "to the continued existence of religious communities within a continually secularized society". In Habermas's view, post-secularity refers to changes in people's consciousness which stem from processes such as intensified migration, the coverage of global conflicts presented as religious, etc. (Habermas 2008a). Such a society rejects the perception of secularisation as a "zero-sum game between, on the one hand, the productive powers of science and technology harnessed by capitalism and, on the other, the tenacious powers of religion and the church". A conflict presented in such a way is a war that may only end in one side being annihilated by the other (Habermas 2001, 3). As Habermas observes:

> "After all, the liberal state has so far imposed only upon the believers among its citizens the requirement that they split their identity into public and private versions. That is, they must translate their religious convictions into a secular language before their arguments have the prospect of being accepted by a majority. Today's Catholics and Protestants do this when they argue for the legal rights of fertilized ova outside the mother's body, thus attempting (perhaps prematurely) to translate the "in the image of God" character of the human creature into the secular language of constitutional law.
>
> But the search for reasons that aspire to general acceptance need not lead to an unfair exclusion of religion from public life, and secular society, for its part, need not cut itself off from the important resources of spiritual explanations, if only the secular side were to retain a feeling for the articulative power of religious discourse. The boundaries between secular and religious reasons are, after all, tenuous." (Habermas 2001, 4–5).

The idea that religious beliefs need to be translated into secular ones pertains to the functioning of the citizens of liberal democracies within the public sphere constituted by the "collective reason". Following this type of reason, consensus in communicative actions is reached:

> "through concord on general issues, through rational arguments, and not through compromises between the interests of the parties involved; since upon engaging in communication aimed at cooperation and agreement, we set interests aside and focus solely on achieving mindful cooperation based on specified principles and values" (Buksiński 2011, 27).

The my analysis in this paper refers to Habermas's concept of translating and juxtaposes it with the material obtained in the course of the field research. I am, however, of the opinion that this notion is not fully applicable to the language used to describe the conflict over the chapel – a language which has appeared in the public sphere as well. Analysing Habermas's theory of the public sphere, Tadeusz Buksiński (2011, 33) notes that his image of communication within the public sphere leaves no room for conflicts of interests, which do, in fact, occur. Since such a conflict indubitably exists in the case under analysis, I assume the mentioned translations to be a kind of strategy employed to broaden the scope of the arguments' impact.

The concepts of secularisation and religion play a key role in the above-mentioned approaches. However, much less scientific care is given to the issue of secularity, which proves important in the context of the present analysis. As José Casanova observes,

> "the secular has become a central modern category – theological-philosophical, legal-political, and cultural-anthropological – to construct, codify, grasp and experience a realm of reality differentiated from the 'religious'" (Casanova 2011, 54).

Casanova considers it possible to phenomenologically explore different types of "secularities", which may be experienced, institutionalised and codified in various ways, depending on the context. One may also study the related transformations of "religiosity" or "spirituality". As far as social studies are concerned, much has been said about religiosity, yet the "task of developing a reflexive anthropology and sociology of the secular is only now beginning" (Casanova 2011, 54).

Another crucial element of the contemporary study of secularism involves rejecting the perception of this term as forming continuity with "religiosity". In his book *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor offers a critical view the approaches linking secularity with the departure from religion, labelling them as "subtraction theories" (Taylor 2007, 22). In his own estimation, secularism may be understood in three ways: (1) as the disappearance from the structures of the state and various social spheres; (2) as the disappearance of religiosity as such; (3) as a mindset for understanding the world, the conditions in which modern people acknowledge faith (Taylor 2007, 2–3).

In the field of anthropology, the issue of secularity has mainly been discussed by Talal Asad. According to Fenella Cannell (2010, 90): Asad "has defined much of the recent anthropological discussion of the secular". In his *Formations of the Secular. Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (2003) Asad posed the question of the connection between secularity (understood as an epistemic category) with secularism as a political doctrine and pondered on whether these categories could be anthropologically studied (Asad 2003, 1).

Similarly to Taylor and Casanova, Asad does not perceive "secularity" as a part of a continuum linked with "religiosity". It is neither a stage in the development of societies, in which religion would precede secularism, nor an abrupt departure from religiosity. Rather, Asad sees the secular as "a concept that brings together certain behaviors, knowledges, and sensibilities in modern life" (Asad 2003, 25). In his view, "secularity" defined in such a way precedes the political doctrine of secularism, meaning that "over time a variety of concepts, practices and sensibilities have come together to form 'the secular'" (Asad 2003, 16). Once again, secularity is not the binary opposition to religiosity, but a collection of dispositions, which ought to be studied as a separate category (that, naturally, remains in a reciprocal relation). In *Formations of the Secular*, Asad analyses the evolution of concepts such as a myth, agency, suffering, as well as the notions of human rights, minority and nationalism. He investigates how the changes

in the historical processes related to these concepts influenced the development of the notions of secularism and secularity. He employs such a method

> "(...) because the secular is so much a part of our modern life, it is not easy to grasp it directly. I think it is best pursued through its shadows, as it were" (Asad 2003, 16).[2]

Throughout the present study, the terms "secular" and "religious" are used in relation to the narratives and actions related to the relocation of the chapel. My aim is to demonstrate that, despite their seemingly contradictory nature, these categories are not binary opposites or a pair of concepts in which "the secular" would be equivalent to "non-religious" or "anti-religious". The benchmark by which I assign specific narratives to given categories is their relation to the doctrine of secularism. Following Casanova, I define secularism as a kind of ideology, or a collection thereof, constituting the public sphere of a modern state, which seeks to eliminate religion or treats it as non-rational discourse (Casanova 2011, 66–67).

PROTEST

The initiative to resist the relocation of the chapel was started by two city councillors, who had known of the plan to move the place of worship since February 2015, having learnt of it from local residents and hospital staff. The councillors' efforts focused on two spheres: on the institutional level and on mobilising the local community. They appealed to the mayor of Przeworsk and to the county head (*starosta*) and sent official letters to the management of the hospital requesting that the situation be clarified – in response they were assured that the new site for the chapel would be fully appropriate. The councillors also contacted members of the clergy – the parson of the parish of the Holy Ghost and the Metropolitan of Przemyśl, archbishop Józef Michalik. My interlocutors were very disappointed with the attitude of the priests to whom they appealed. The local parson sided with the hospital management, whereas the archbishop – having declared that the councillors' concern for the fate of the chapel was greatly appreciated – promised to send an envoy to investigate the matter. However, he did so only far too

[2] In the first chapter of the book quoted above Asad attempts to define the course of research in the anthropology of secularity. He writes:
"An anthropology of secularism should thus start with a curiosity about the doctrine and practice of secularism regardless of where they have originated, and it would ask: How do attitudes to the human body (to pain, physical damage, decay and death, to physical integrity, bodily growth, and sexual enjoyment) differ in various forms of life? What structures of the senses – hearing, seeing, touching – do these attitudes depend on? In what ways does the law define and regulate practices and doctrines on the grounds that they are 'truly human'? What discursive spaces does this work of definition and regulation open up for grammars of 'the secular' and 'the religious'? How do all these sensibilities, attitudes, assumptions and behaviors come together to support or undermine the doctrine of secularism?" (Asad 2003, 17).

late, when the future of the chapel had already been decided. In order to mobilise the Przeworsk community, the councillors made statements in the local press which was reporting on the dispute; they also spoke privately to the inhabitants of the city (some of whom also became my interlocutors). One of the councillors even left leaflets on the staircases of the blocks of flats neighbouring the hospital, informing the residents that the chapel would be moved to, as he himself admitted, "unbefitting" conditions. Another person of authority involved in the dispute was the sculptor who had made the interior decoration of the chapel. Having been informed of the ongoing conflict, she wrote an official letter to the hospital management, protesting against the change which would "nullify her entire artistic concept and damages elements of the decoration".

The majority of my interlocutors were people with no official functions, and who did not actively participate in the conflict. Our conversations revealed diverse attitudes towards the activists' initiatives, which had ultimately ended in failure. These ranged from a kind of aversion (one of my respondents described the councillors' actions as "bigotry") to full support. A notable exception comes from my interview with a female inhabitant of the residential area near the hospital, who on a daily basis helped the chaplain prepare religious services. She had chosen to voice her displeasure during the mass of consecration celebrated in the new chapel.

> "The protest was like this, before the holy mass, when the bishop, Adam Szal is his name I think, and the parson came, then before the mass I sang *There was no room for you*[3]. But the parson priest just came up to me then and, well... so that I would stop singing, yes?" (woman, ca. 55 years old).

A PLACE HALLOWED BY PRAYER

The narratives opposing the relocation of the chapel were based primarily on the valuation of the hospital space, i.e. on the relocation of the chapel from the first floor to the level beneath ground floor. Most of my interlocutors, not only those who were against the relocation, referred to the new site as "a basement". Many of them considered the very fact of placing the chapel below ground level as unacceptable:

> "Because you don't move a place hallowed by prayer, you don't move it to basements, because right now the chapel is in the basement. Is this a fitting place? I think not. Because the Most Blessed Sacrament, like a king, deserves a place that is befitting. The king is not receiving in basements. And it is so according to me" (the Vice Chair of the City Council, 63 years old).

> "And that they have moved it – there were different voices in protest that it was being moved down. That it shouldn't be so, that it should be the other way round, the chapel should be elevated to some dignity, that it should be in reverse, from the basements up, not to the basements!" (woman, ca. 60 years old)

[3] *There was no room for you* is a religious song referring to the story recounted in the Gospel of Luke, in which the Holy Family could not find lodgings in any inn in Bethlehem.

It should be noted that the very term "basement" has never been used by the director of the hospital or other people who saw nothing wrong in relocating the chapel. It was an element of the narrative constructed by the "defenders of the chapel" (as they sometimes dubbed themselves) as well as by people who displayed an ambivalent attitude towards the issue. The term always carried a rather negative meaning – my interlocutors described the location of the chapel (using the word "basement") through negative associations.

One of the dominant issues discussed when the old chapel was compared with the new was light. The dimness of the chapel invoked the general association with a "basement" to which the chapel had supposedly been "pushed down".

> "By the way, for Easter, on Good Friday you could easily make the dark tomb down there. All it takes is to turn the light off... So, I feel there like in a tomb all the time" (woman, ca. 60 years old).

As mentioned above, this assessment was not shared by all of my interlocutors. One woman made the following statement about the chapel:

> "It is very nice inside, the only thing is that it's dark, (...), but you just turn the lights and it's alright" (woman, ca. 50 years old).

This discrepancy may be regarded as proof that the perception of the chapel and the manner of its description depended on the interlocutors' attitude towards the central event of the chapel's relocation and the related dispute. Some of my respondents shared a negative opinion on various elements of the new place of worship by comparing them to the old chapel – if they had opposed the relocation itself, they had a negative view of the new site. Individuals who saw the necessity for the chapel's relocation, in turn, perceived some aspects, such as the lack of natural light, as a difficulty or inconvenience that is not impossible to overcome.

Another important objection to the new location of the chapel was the resentment related to its proximity to the mortuary. My interlocutors assessed the state of affairs as "unpleasant". Using one of our conversations, the chaplain noted that the proximity evoked the association that the chapel was only used for the last rites. Sometime after the relocation of the chapel, the hospital management decided to move the mortuary as well. The proximity to that space amplified the negative associations evoked by the location "in the basement". This may be one of the reasons why the management avoided that term. Phrases such as "level minus one" and "lower ground floor" were used instead (e.g. in the notice in the hospital informing of the chapel's relocation). Narratives constructed by persons who saw the need to move the chapel (the director, some of the staff and, significantly, also the parson priest) did not mention the relation between the chapel's location and the need to ensure "befitting conditions" for worship. The relocation was discussed mostly in terms of functionality, convenience or safety, and most of all the need for modernising the hospital, whereas the presence of the chapel and the chaplain was mentioned in the context of the treatment of patients:

> "Well, it had been a problem before, when the chapel was located inside a ward, for sanitary and epidemiological reasons, among other things, it had to be moved, so now there already are patient rooms where it used to be. It was a lot of trouble, I mean some of the locals, for the sake of convenience, treat this as their district church, the chapel that is. At the moment the location is, well... The patients do not seem to mind" (the director of the hospital, 64 years old).

The above-cited examples illustrate the juxtaposition of incongruent categories. Two main narratives can be distinguished and labelled as the secular (e.g. the statements of the hospital director and the parson) and the religious ("the defenders of the chapel"). The differences between these two manners of discussing the chapel consist mainly in the choice of the points of reference – the "defenders" described the entire process from the perspective of a "hallowed site" which had been moved, whereas the individuals following the secular argumentation presented it from the perspective of the patients or the function of the hospital – i.e. providing treatment. As the director put it, faith does help in the process of recovery, yet it is only supplementary. The two approaches have far-reaching consequences, as they categorise the manners of perceiving the chapel and the hospital space as a whole.

It must, however, be remembered that the secular and the religious are interwoven in the sphere of narration. The boundary between them is fluid, because – as emphasised above – secularity is not a residual category describing "the absence of religion". The delimination of the categories refers to (as noted by Asad) to their relation to the political doctrine of secularism.

The reciprocal relation of these categories is apparent e.g. in the letter from the hospital director to the sculptor who designed the interior of the chapel. One of the paragraphs contains a rather macabre description of a hypothetical evacuation of the hospital in a scenario in which the chapel would still be located in the Rehabilitation Ward. It contains a reference to the concept of sin:

> "And what if there's a fire? Who will take it upon their conscience, all these people trampled in panic, blistered and burned to death? (...) Should we patiently wait until disaster strikes? Is this not the grave sin of negligence?" (doc. 1).

The arguments used by the other party, in turn, included numerous allusions to the economic aspect of running the hospital – the relocation of the chapel was presented as an indication of mismanagement on the director's part, a waste of money:

> "The chapel existed, there was no need to build one. And now they had to renovate... (...) apparently it cost more than thirty thousand. And the nurses are saying: 'well, sir, we got no raises'" (the Vice Chair of the City Council, 63 years old).

I believe that the intermingling of standards may be regarded as a specific kind of "translating" religious arguments to the secular and vice versa. Jürgen Habermas stressed the need for religious persons to accept that on the state's institutional level of functioning "only secular reasons count" (Habermas 2008b, 131). This type of translation

from religious language into a secular one is therefore necessary in order for religious individuals to be able to partake in public debates on the same terms as non-religious ones. In Habermas's view, however, religious modes of expression should be allowed on the level of informal public sphere (e.g. in media discourse).

It may be argued that, in a situation of conflict, the above-presented examples of translation (as well as, for instance, the practice of mentioning the chapel in the context of the history of the city) were means to a slightly different end: they aimed at broadening the scope of impact of the given narrative standard in order to achieve victory in the dispute. It should also be noted that the phenomenon of translation was reciprocal, if only to a very small degree (the statement of the hospital director referring to "the grave sin of negligence"). This observation highlights the fact that Habermas's postulate as to the coexistence of people with different religious views within the society is not universal. It pertains to communities in which the secular view constitutes the majority; the situation is different if a community is composed mostly of religious persons, who nevertheless differ in their individual views.

José Casanova wrote that the Western European, dualistic, perception of reality in terms of the religious/the secular has spread throughout the globe. This poses a significant question that has been hotly debated in almost every corner of the world: how, where and by whom should the boundaries between the secular and the religious be defined? (Casanova 2011, 63) There exist many forms of secularisation and many versions of the so-called fundamentalist movements, which are a response to processes of secularisation. This being said, the mentioned movements are not only reactional, but to some extent creative as well, since they attempt to redefine these boundaries anew (Casanova 2011, 63).

In my estimation, the label of a "fundamentalist movement" does not fit well in the context of the "defenders of the chapel", even though the conflict itself does reflect the process described by Casanova perfectly, albeit on a much smaller scale. The behaviour of the protesters, the specific categories they employed "in defence of the chapel", were therefore a response to the secular attitude displayed by the director, the Starosta and also the parson (who, in a way, "washed his hands of the matter" and clearly named the director the manager of the hospital, legitimising the relocation of the chapel as justifiable). They reacted to perceiving the chapel through the lens of its location as a part of the hospital, i.e. a place which should primarily serve the patients and facilitate their treatment, as well as to the use of specific language referring to economic management. The relocation of the chapel was also presented as a stage in the hospital's modernisation, a move towards providing the best possible conditions for the patients – enlarging the wards, creating more space. The very phrase "defending the chapel" may testify to the fact that the movement was a reaction to decisions rooted in a very different line of thinking. My interlocutors offered an interesting observation regarding the religious attitude (i.e. emphasising the sacred nature of the

place and the need to place it in a befitting space) of those opposing the relocation of the chapel. In their narratives they frequently compared moving the chapel to "the basement" to the process of "eliminating" religion, linking the director's actions with a kind of a long-term objective. Interestingly, the same interlocutors emphasised the high status of religion and the unwavering faith of the people in the region (i.e. Subcarpathia). Actions which some of my respondents regarded as anti-religious were therefore perceived as external, "non-Subcarpathian".

THE GOOD OF THE PATIENTS

"The good of the patients" was one of the most common arguments appearing in the material from my field research. For both sides of the dispute, it was inseparably linked with the location of the chapel. Both proponents and opponents of the move named the benefit of the patients as *the* issue they cared about – yet they differed greatly in their ideas on how to ensure it.

The director of the hospital made frequent references to the presence of "outsiders" in the hospital, by which he mainly meant the inhabitants of the blocks in the vicinity. The official letter written to the mayor of Przeworsk reads:

> "The masses and celebratory services held in the chapel are attended (...) also by the local residents from the blocks of flats near the hospital, which makes it impossible to keep the sanitary regimen at the Rehabilitation Ward and disturbs the peace of its patients" (doc.2).

The notice put up at the parish church also included the information about outsiders coming to the chapel and the fact that their presence could pose "a danger to the patients". Thus, according to the director of the hospital and the parson priest "the good of the patients" consisted in raising the degree of their isolation from the "outsiders" entering the hospital to attend mass. The defenders of the chapel saw the arguments regarding the threat posed by "the outsiders" and references to matters of sanitation and epidemiology as excuses used by the director; in their view the threat was exaggerated.

In his book *The Birth of the Clinic*, Michel Foucault analyses the historical circumstances of the evolution o medical discourse, aiming to define "the conditions of medical experience in modern times (Foucault 2003, xxvii). One of the elements in the development of the modern discourse about illness which Foucault identifies as significant is "tertiary spatialisation", meaning "all the gestures by which, in a given society, disease is circumscribed, medically invested, isolated, divided up into closed, privileged regions or distributed throughout cure centres" (Foucault 2003,17). The idea of a hospital as such a space has, as Foucault demonstrates, been born in the discussion whether it would not be better to leave disease in the social surroundings focused on family.

All of my interlocutors emphasised the essential need of having a chapel inside a hospital. The conflict revolved more around the question of the chapel's intended

users. Who and was allowed to utilise it and why? – was in just for patients and hospital staff, or for all the faithful? Thus, some of my interlocutors questioned the idea of a hospital as a place of isolation, but did so for a very specific reason, i.e. the existence of a chapel within hospital grounds. The place of worship was what legitimised (at least for the interlocutors in question) the presence of "outsiders" in hospital space. The chapel created a kind of a breach in that space – some respondents stressed the fact that attending church service in a hospital ward was, in a way "awkward" (I have experienced this "awkwardness" myself while participating in a service of the Stations of the Cross around the hospital) – yet the existence of the chapel meant that they did not feel "out of place" when coming to the Rehabilitation Ward. This may be seen as one of the more important reason why these people rejected the director's and parson's narrative regarding the "isolating" spatialisation of the hospital. This example highlights one of the most prominent differences leading to the conflict over the chapel, a discrepancy evident both on the level of discourse an practice.

THE CHAPEL LIKE THE GDAŃSK SHIPYARD

One last aspect of the narrative which merits a mention is the reference to the foundation of the chapel in the Przeworsk hospital and placing its beginnings in a broader historical context, i.e. the history of the city, the history of Poland, the times of communist rule and martial law. This significant topic was taken up by the actors involved in the dispute, but also by individuals who played no active role in the conflict.

As mentioned above, the hospital in Przeworsk was built in 1976–1982. The final years of its construction, and its opening coincided with the period of martial law, a detail often noted by my interlocutors. They considered it meaningful, since this group of interlocutors saw that period in history as particularly difficult for the Church. In reality, however, it was the time when the Catholic Church in Poland was granted the largest number of permissions to build temples and chapels, due to the changes in the law instituted shortly before the introduction of the martial law. It was also related to the Church's tendency to cooperate with the state. The latter resulted from the "mediation syndrome" into which the Polish Church had fallen, trying to act as the bridge between the repressed society and the oppressive state apparatus (Casanova 2005, 184).

One of the articles relating the conflict over the chapel contains the following information: "[the vice-chair of the City Council] emphasised that the site is as historical to the city as the shipyard is to Gdańsk" (Krakowska 2015).

The feat of establishing the hospital chapel in Przeworsk in spite of the "hard times for the Church" is usually ascribed to two people, who had already passed on: priest Adam Ablewicz, who was then the local parson, and Wojciech Pawłowski, the director of the hospital. These two were referred to as "the good managers":

> "I suppose that if Mr. Pawłowski was still – which is impossible – and father Ablewicz, I don't know, in such a situation, wouldn't they just build something on that meadow [next to the hospital] and wouldn't the chapel be there, because these two had amazing ideas, both of them, they were such managers that, that... incidentally, under father Ablewicz, Przeworsk held the title of Master of Rational Management, it was said that it was thanks to father Ablewicz" (man, ca. 60 years old).

This belief, and the notions regarding the functioning of the chapel and its ownership (my interlocutors presented it as co-administered by the hospital management and the parson of the parish of the Holy Ghost), point to the existence of a certain ideal of cooperation between secular and religious authorities. Interestingly, in the minds of my interlocutors, this ideal was achieved in communist times, i.e. during a period "of opposing the Church". The entire period of communist rule was spoken of in rather positive terms; this positive valuation was evident at least in those elements of the narrative that were tied to locality, the event taking place in Przeworsk and occurrences of individual nature. Negative valuation was, in turn, focused on the more "remote" and general aspects, for instance when discussing the communist system and its relations with the Catholic Church. These observations are fully in accord with the conclusions presented in the article *Nostalgia za PRL-em. Próba analizy* by Marcin Brocki (2011). The tales of Przeworsk's past fit one more conclusion drawn by Brocki, namely that the discourse on the topic of the People's Republic of Poland is organised around the binary opposition of the categories of activeness and passivity. Father Ablewicz, the industrious parson priest from Przeworsk (who had indeed been a prominent figure in the history of the city) was portrayed as active, as were the director of the hospital, Pawłowski, and the communist authorities of the city, which "could be reasoned with". The actions of the current director were not presented in this manner by the opponents of the chapel's relocation. They saw him only as bringing destruction or choosing easy solutions, and as not being engaged in the efforts to provide a fitting space for the chapel.

SUMMARY

The conflict around the relocation of the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows in the Regional Hospital in Przeworsk undoubtedly left a mark on how this site was perceived by people associated with it, for whom the chapel constituted one of the cornerstones of religious experience. In a sense, the dispute reported in the local media categorised my interlocutors' narratives pertaining to the chapel, opinions on its aesthetic value and even the assessment of the level of involvement in church services (which sometimes differed from my own experience).

The conflict resulted from differences in how its actors perceived the chapel and hospital space, as well as larger phenomena related to religion and the public sphere. These discrepancies, in turn, stemmed from dissimilar personal experiences influencing the valuation of space, the interpretation of the historical context for the chapel's

foundation and its functioning. My interlocutors presented diverse opinions regarding the new location – the very negative evaluation expressed with the term "basement" was rejected by the director of the hospital, who referred to the new location as "lower ground floor". Differing opinions were also expressed regarding the surroundings of the new chapel, namely its proximity to the mortuary and storage areas. Recounting these narratives, I attempted to present the mentioned differences in terms of tensions between the religious and the secular attitude, accentuating the complementary nature of these concepts – since the secular approach is not tantamount to an "anti-religious" one, just as the religious attitude is not equivalent to "anti-secular". An observation which proved significant was the reciprocity of relations between the sphere of narratives and my interlocutors' image of the hospital chapel and the hospital itself. On the one hand, different narratives stemmed from different experiences, and on the other – shaped them. The analysis of the conflict in Przeworsk also revealed important aspects of perceiving the recent history of the city, and indeed the country as a whole; demonstrating the attitudes towards the communist system, described as anti-religious, yet at the same time – due to its very anti-religious nature – allowing for active involvement in the religious sphere through "fighting for" churches and chapels.

The conflict is analysed using the categories of secularity and religiosity, but understood differently than traditional approaches associated with the theory of secularisation. Referring to the emic categories utilised in the dispute, I made an attempt to demonstrate that these categories do not definitionally derive from one another. Their scope pertains rather to their relation to the idea of secularism, and what we call religious or secular depends on the particular context.

The aim of this chapter was to indicate that the "anthropology of secularity" introduced by Asad may be developed towards analysing such conflicts, which are still underrepresented in social sciences. In this respect, I am fully in accord with Jeanne Favret-Saada (2016), who made the following observation in the context of conflicts with blasphemy in the background: "Unfortunately, this abstention [of social sciences – P.G.] comes at a cost: if we merely rehash the clichés of the media on religious controversies without putting them under scrutiny, if we give in to the media's strategy of progressive polarization of public opinion, we all become idiots, ethnologists and others alike" (Favret-Saada 2016,32).

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Doc. 2 – A notice regarding the relocation of the hospital chapel put up in the Basilica of the Holy Ghost in Przeworsk.

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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 Pacławska, 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 exotizing of these groups. Focusing on relations between Polish Roman Catholic pilgrims and pilgrims of various Christian faiths coming to Kalwaria Pacławska 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.

* * *

Niniejszy artykuł dotyka relacji polsko-ukraińskich w rzymskokatolickim sanktuarium w Kalwarii Pacławskiej, 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.

K e y w o r d s: 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 Kalwaria[1] Pacławska 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 Pacławska, located at the margins of my own investigations, but crucial to a wider project pertaining to religious imageries in south-east Poland[2]. 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 Buyskykh[3], 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 Ukraine[4] by Polish ones; I would have continued to focus on other aspects of pilgrimaging to Kalwaria Pacławska (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 perfomativity 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 Pacławska. 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*.

[2] The research was financed by the National Science Centre, pursuant to the decision no. DEC-2013/11/B/HS3/01443 within the project *Multisensory Religious Imageries in Selected Catholic Shrines in South-Eastern Poland*.

[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 Pacławska, 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 Pacławska – 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 Pasieka 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 Pacławska. 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 PACŁAWSKA AS A PILGRIMAGE CENTRE

Both mine and Iuliia Buyskykh's fieldwork has been conducted in Kalwaria Pacławska, 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 Pacławska is exclusively a Roman Catholic cult site. Moreover, the region[5] 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 Pacławska 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 denominations[6] 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 Pasieka and Kinga Sekerdey's (2013) observations on the dominance of Catholicism in Poland, as well as Pasieka's on hierarchical religious pluralism in Poland, are relevant here (Pasieka 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska.

Thus, secondly, the current grassroots practices aimed at reviving the Greek Catholic cult in Kalwaria Pacławska concern not the Franciscan sanctuary itself, but the broader religious landscape of Kalwaria Pacławska (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 Pacławska is

[5] In the article I focus, above all, on the Przemyśl region in which Kalwaria Pacławska 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 Pacławska; 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 PACŁAWSKA

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 way[7] – 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-UPA[8] 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; Pasieka 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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, results in using it as a key to anthropological interpretation.

THE PRESENT CONTEXT FOR RESEARCH IN KALWARIA PACŁAWSKA

At first, my research in Kalwaria Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 church[9] in Kalwaria Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Radymno[10], thus I was somewhat sensitive to Polish-Ukrainian antagonisms at that moment. After the interview, I went to Kalwaria Pacławska. 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 1939–1948[11]. That stone had not been there in 2007. I sighed, thinking that even Kalwaria Pacławska 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 Pacławska. 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; Pasieka 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.

party[12] (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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 PACŁAWSKA

I perceive this article as, to some degree, complementary to Julia Buyskykh's work (2016a, 2018a, 2018b) on Kalwaria Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 investigated[13] 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 Pacławska, 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska. 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

[13] I focused mostly on a group from a village ca. 70 km from Kalwaria Pacławska. 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 policemen. The message of this film can offer a possible interpretative clue for the situation in Kalwaria Pacławska, 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 Pacławska, 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, multidenominational 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska. Polish pilgrims coming to Kalwaria Pacławska 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 Pacławska and to particular pilgrimages from Ukraine that visit the sanctuary, it results in certain otherizing and exotizing 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska 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 Pacławska, 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 Pacławska 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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IN THE SHADOW OF THE SACRED BODIES. THE MONTHLY SMOLENSK COMMEMORATIONS IN KRAKOW[1]

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The monthly Smoleńsk commemorations (pol. *Miesięcznice Smoleńskie*), organised in Krakow, are a special case of politico-religious rituals, which commemorate the tragic event of the presidential plane crash on the 10th April 2010. While for external observers these gatherings appear to be primarily a kind of political demonstration, they mean something more for its participants. Compared to the Warsaw monthiversaries, the Krakow commemorations differ mainly in terms of the nature of the celebration, which is a consequence of the space of national heritage (the mausoleum of Polish kings and National Memorial Cross) and the type of participants. References to religion here are not just a regular, ritual scenography. On the contrary, by referring to the authority and power of the sacred, they are, in great measure, a source of inner strength for this ideological group supporting the governing revolutionary right-wing camp in Poland. This paper will analyse the role of religion in this ritual in order to uncover both the official and vernacular religious practices that create the phenomenon of the monthly Smolensk celebrations in Krakow.

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Organizowane co miesiąc w Krakowie uroczystości upamiętniające tzw. katastrofę smoleńską są szczególnym przypadkiem rytuałów o charakterze religijno-politycznym. O ile dla zewnętrznych obserwatorów celebracje te wydają się być przede wszystkim rodzajem manifestacji politycznych, o tyle dla samych uczestników stają się także okazją do przeżycia intensywnego doświadczenia religijnego. Uczestnictwo w uroczystościach, których ramy przestrzenne wyznacza z jednej strony Katedra na Wawelu, z drugiej zaś Krzyż Pamięci Narodowej, jest dla nich niezwykle ważnym sposobem cyklicznego odnawiania i potwierdzania spójności własnej grupy, dzięki czemu, mimo wewnętrznego zróżnicowania, są w stanie funkcjonować jako zwarta i gotowa do politycznej walki wspólnota ideologiczna. Szczegółowa analiza przebiegu tych uroczystości ma za zadanie opisać rolę religii w tym procesie, a także przybliżyć zarówno te oficjalne, jak i lokalne praktyki, odwołujące się do doświadczenia sacrum, które współtworzą i podtrzymują fenomen miesięcznic smoleńskich.

K e y w o r d s: politics, religion, nationalism, ritual, heritage, Miesięcznica Smoleńska, Poland

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22:12. Behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to render to every, man according to his works.
22:13. I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.
22:14. Blessed are they that wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb: that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter in by the gates into the city.
22:15. Without are dogs and sorcerers and unchaste and murderers and servers of idols and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.

[The Apocalypse of St. John the Apostle, 22:13–16 NIV]

Research on the relationships between politics and religion, conducted within anthropology since its constitution as a scientific discipline, seems to be one of the most important subjects within the field, especially within the context of studies on nationalism and its violent nature (Appleby 2000; Lindquist and Handelman 2011). A considerable amount of heated debate about this issue is also taking place beyond the ivory towers of academia, focussing on the 'politicisation of religion' or 'sacralisation of politics', as some people term this phenomenon. In Poland, this is shown by the media debates which politicians, priests, and journalists have engaged in over the last seven years, concerning the impact of the Smolensk Crash on the shape of Polish social and political life. The first monthly commemorations of the tragic event of the presidential plane crash on the 10th April 2010[2] did not stir up many strong emotions, as they were seen as spontaneous attempts to deal with a national trauma. However, their repetition subsequent months and years has made them a bone of contention between supporters and adversaries of this kind of religious and political practice of remembrance of the Smolensk crash, and are ever-present in political rhetoric. An entirely new group of pejorative phrases referring to the monthly commemorations has been introduced to the media discourse, among them 'Smolensk religion', 'Smolensk heresy', 'Smolensk mythology', or 'Smolensk people'. This language has been insightfully analysed by Marcin Napiórkowski (2017), who pointed out its elitist and prejudiced nature, marked with the critics' exclusiveness and tribal solidarity. In this discourse, religious themes are described in terms of compensatory behaviours (using the scapegoating theory), kitsch aesthetics, irrational conduct (conspiracy theories about the crash), and with Catholic clergy assuming the role of the leaders of the nation. Within such a rhetorical framework any religious reference is considered some kind of intellectual aberration which is an affront to the rational order of today's world.

[2] On this day, a Polish Air Force plane crashed near the city of Smolensk, Russia, killing all 96 people on board. The group was flying from Warsaw to attend an event commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre, a series of mass executions of over 21,000 Polish nationals (among them the 10,000 military and police officers) carried out in Spring 1940 by the NKVD. Among the victims of the crash were the presidential couple Lech and Maria Kaczyńscy, members of the Polish Parliament, members of the Armed Forces General Command, and high-ranking state officials.

Different kinds of arguments are put forward by the authorities from the Catholic Church. In terms of political views, their comments are much closer to the beliefs of the monthly commemoration [pol. *Miesięcznica*] participants. This reasoning does not raise the question of irrationality, which negatively prejudges religion *per se*. Instead it points out the issue of dogmatic abuses which lead to the contradiction of core Christian values. Critics then focus on the fact that the nature of these practices is schismatic in terms of the official teaching of the Catholic Church, and accuse the commemoration participants of using religion as a means of political battle. The excerpt below from an article by Zbigniew Nosowski (2017), a Catholic journalist and activist, may serve as an example. Nosowski draws attention to the lawlessness demonstrated by the organisers of the events taking place every month outside the Presidential Palace, as they manifest their own religious beliefs, which by no means represent the Roman-Catholic Church's position:

> [I consider scandalous] the fact that national authorities use religion as a means of achieving their particular goals, by applying the staffage of Catholic mourning and prayer to an unequivocally political event, and then setting the pseudo-argument of 'religious practice disruption' to fight their ideological opponents. Such practice leads inevitably to the political trivialisation of what is profoundly sacred, and in a long-term perspective, to complete secularisation (Nosowski 2017).

To highlight the ambiguity and complexity of this phenomenon, we should mention the commotion about the title of the article cited above. The paper was intended by Nosowski to be titled 'Smolensk Monthiversary as a religious act?', as he later advised in his disclaimer published on the website of the Catholic magasine 'Więź' ['Bond']. Although the editorial staff of 'Tygodnik Powszechny' ['Community Weekly Magasine'] decided to put the explicit title 'Pseudo-religious act' instead.

Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek puts forward yet another argument against politicisation of religion by the monthly Smolensk commemorations, emphasising that the purpose of these gatherings is not to pray for those tragically departed in the air crash, but to fight a current political battle, geared towards fuelling conflicts. It is worth mentioning that the bishop, along with other cited critics, focuses solely on the monthly events outside the Presidential Palace in Warsaw. Do these critical assumptions apply to the Smolensk commemorations held in Krakow? Are the events conducted outside Wawel Castle a carbon copy of the Warsaw celebration, or are they unique? How can the specificity of these commemorations be described in order to avoid simplifications and not omit their constitutive meanings? I will try to address these questions – briefly, out of necessity – drawing on my own field research material. I will refer to a common understanding of *religion* as a special sort of experience of being-in-the-world aimed at ultimate, irreducible reality, as well as the deepest, yet at the same time particular, truths, which define core and unquestionable values that people are, or want to be, guided by (Lambek 2013, 2).

RESEARCH IN PROCESS: EXERCISES IN SELF-REFLECTION

Before presenting the analysis of the monthly commemorations, I would like to share a personal reflection, which may be significant when researching such hybrid phenomena as political and religious rituals. Regular monthly participation in these events allowed me to familiarise myself with the field of research itself, and to notice the nuances which would be difficult to observe even if I attended only two or three times (assuming that I would conduct the research). And this is not only about the project's two main aims, which is (a) to reconstruct the scenario of the ceremony, the identification of participants, and the network of significant relationships, and (b) define the process of changes which happen during the practice of commemoration. In this case, 'to familiarise' meant, on the basic human level, to contain emotions, and teach myself to maintain a sufficient level of detachment to the events by suspending my personal political beliefs, which turned out to be quite difficult.

Reading my notes from the first period of research, I recall how depressing these events looked from my perspective, since I had begun following them in Autumn 2016, and what a perplexing exercise in self-reflection this process was. Despite sparing no effort to keep a distanced, non-emotional attitude, my focus was almost entirely on the most – as I perceived them – controversial (and political) elements of these ceremonies, which individually and collectively affected my interpretation. The organisers' speeches: passionate, filled with nationalist rhetoric; committees; the laying of flowers to tape recorded drum roll sounds; the songs considered 'patriotic' played on loudspeakers, intertwined with religious singing, all looked extremely pompous and disturbingly anachronistic to me, since it resembled the atmosphere of the political protests in the 1980's again the Communist regime. The visual setting of the demonstrations: red and white flags, armbands with the Kotwica (the Anchor, the emblem of the Polish underground army in the Second World war) and Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej [the Confederation of Independent Poland] emblem, placards with the 'Gazeta Polska' [Polish Gazette'] logo, and, finally, a huge banner with the photo of Donald Tusk and Vladimir Putin bearing the text: 'The Crime – Treason' all indicated clear and direct political associations with national conservative ideology. They all seemed to be crowning examples of national religion in action, which Magdalena Zowczak referred to in 2015, when she was discussing the demonstration of the defenders of the cross in front of Presidential Palace in Warsaw:

> Conservatism, which is a distinguishing feature of national religion, can be observed not only among older people, but mostly within socially marginalised groups which have been excluded from, or thrown out beyond, the margins of the kaleidoscopic reality of the Third Polish Republic, and feel deceived by its establishment. They exist in a permanent, dramatic state of confrontation with compounding cultural strangeness, becoming more and more confined to their attachment to a national form of religiousness, and conspiracy theories, even if it contradicts the Catholic Church's

> authority. They demonstrate extraordinary social commitment in different forms, and their eschatological moods coincide with a traditionalist trend which has risen since the beginning of Pope Benedict XVI's pontificate (Zowczak 2015, 224).

The events, in which I participated, were deeply rooted in the government project of total reconstruction of the 'matrix of a collective conscience' in Poland[3]. Still, it remained a mystery to me as to what their exact place was on the 'map of the complex social reality', as ideology was once metaphorically described by Clifford Geertz (2005, 250). Accustoming myself to the specificity of participants' moods, language, and behaviour, I began to notice less evident details, which might have become significant tropes for an anthropologist making an effort to understand the phenomenon of the monthly commemorations in Krakow. I sensed that taking a closer look at all these moments, in which the references to religious sphere were made, would help me understand the sources of the integrity and the world of values of this, after all, small group of people[4], who, on the 10th of every month, without fail marched from Wawel Cathedral to the Katyn Cross, paying little heed to the weather or the mocking bystanders.

Act I. The Prayer over the Sarcophagus

To fully understand the religious symbolism of monthly Smolensk commemorations in Krakow, it is necessary first to briefly describe the site and proceedings of these ceremonies. On the one hand, a physical and, at the same time, symbolic framework is established by the Wawel Cathedral, the coronation temple and royal mausoleum, overlooking the city from the top of Wawel hill (Niedźwiedź 2018). The other point that maps out the march is the wooden cross-shaped monument at the top of the castle, dedicated to the Polish soldiers murdered by the NKVD (Soviet secret police) in Katyn Forest, to expatriates, political prisoners of communist regime, and to workers shot during pacifications of the general strikes in the 1970s and 1980s. In contrast to the monthly Warsaw commemorations, no long police cordons, railings or loud counter-protesters are present during the Krakow commemorations. There is no persistent and obstructive paralysis of city traffic, except for those few minutes when the column moves from Wawel hill to the Katyn Massacre Memorial on Studzinski Square, near to the exit of Grodzka Street on the Royal Route.

The official opening, a prayer meeting, takes place in the vestibule of the Crypt under Wawel Cathedral in the Silver Bell Tower. The atmosphere of this part of celebration is intimate, quiet, yet solemn. Apart from the organisers and official committees, only a limited number of the 'regular' participants enter the vestibule. The prayer meeting is conducted by one of the priests most committed to the celebration's

[3] It is a concept introduced by the conservative right-wing camp, governing Poland since 2015 under the leadership of Jarosław Kaczyński, with the support of President Andrzej Duda.

[4] The group usually consists of around 80–100 people, most of them in their 60s.

organisational aspects. In the end, participants sing 'Boże, coś Polskę' ['God Save Poland'], and then, in silence, they file past the sarcophagus, kneel, and make the sign of the cross, gently touching the receptacle. Some of them enter the adjacent room to visit the Joseph Pilsudski's final resting place.

Act II. The Mass in the Wawel Cathedral

The next act of the commemoration is set in Wawel Cathedral. Here, at the Ara Patriae altar of Saint Stanislaus, the patron of Krakow and Poland, a Holy Mass for, as the organisers phrase it, 'the late Presidential Couple and All the Victims of the Tragedy of the Smolensk Air Crash'[5], is conducted. A photograph of the presidential couple, girded with a red and white ribbon, stands next to the altar. The Mass is usually concelebrated by three priests, two of whom are regular monthly conductors of the ceremony. All participants of the monthly commemorations are engaged at this point, filling up the central nave, from the entrance, up to Saint Stanislaus confessional. Rolled up flags stand peacefully against the wall; placards and banners wait outside the church.

The people gathered before the altar form, above all, a community of believers, vividly engaged in the course of events. The liturgical service is conducted within the usual fixed structure, with the exception of the sermon, dedicated to the question of faith as an important part of life of an individual and the nation, and is filled with references to heroic and martyrological moments in Polish history. The act of giving each other the sign of peace, when the worshippers warmly shake as many hands as possible, seems symptomatic. Most of the Mass participants receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and all sing songs of praise. The epilogue, and, at the same time, the moment of symbolic connection between the Mass and the upcoming Memorial March, is the joint singing of the national song 'Boże, coś Polskę' ['God Save Poland']. It is worth mentioning, that this patriotic and religious hymn has served in Polish tradition as an unofficial national anthem since the January Uprising of 1863, and had been considered for the role in 1918, along with the current national anthem 'Mazurek Dąbrowskiego' ('Dąbrowski's Mazurka', also known as 'Poland Is Not Yet Lost')[6].

Act III. The Memory March

Following the Mass, the participants of the ceremony leave Wawel and exit through the Herbowa (Coat of Arms) Gate, where they form a marching column. The solemn atmosphere dissipates significantly, with people chatting about various issues – both personal and political, often commenting on current political events, among them the

[5] The religious service is paid for by the organisers – members of the Gazeta Polska club and the Confederation of Independent Poland – from their membership fees.

[6] The song is a version of the hymn 'Pieśń narodowa za pomyślność króla' ('The National Song for The King's Prosperousness'), written by Alojzy Feliński in 1816 in honour of Aleksander I – the ruler of the Kingdom of Poland (see: Łątka 1997, 117–119).

advancements in the Smolensk Crash investigation. Some of the participants carry red and white grave candles, lit earlier by the organisers. The police on the pavements halt the traffic for the marching crowd, and photojournalists rush into action. The casual atmosphere changes again, when, among the flashes, the column or, rather, the 'funeral procession'[7] moves towards the National Memorial Cross, also known as The Katyn Cross, on Grodzka Street. The aforementioned colour photo of Maria and Lech Kaczyński is carried at the head of the column, accompanied by a sizeable black and white portrait of the presidential couple, girded with a black ribbon, and the plaque and banners of the Gazeta Polska clubs participating in the event. The ever-present signs are those pertaining to the notion of the Smolensk coup and the high treason of the previous government[8]. Over recent months, banners of 'Solidarność', 'Solidarność 80', and a plaque commemorating the Katyn massacre could also be seen[9]. The sonosphere, usually filled with chaotic sounds of tourist life, is suddenly taken over by the marching crowd. A portable loudspeaker set, carried on the back of one of the KPN [Confederation of Independent Poland] members, crackles into life, playing songs of the Polish Legions, insurgent songs, and underground ballads of Jacek Kaczmarski and Jan Pietrzak from the communist period. When the crowd reaches the Katyn Cross, the funeral march 'Panie Prezydencie, do apelu stań' ['Mr President, Assemble for the Parade'], inspired by traditional Żywiec Highlanders' music, is heard[10]. This is when the participants freely join in with the singing.

Act IV. The Gathering at the National Memorial Cross

The fourth and the last part of the monthly ceremonies commemorating the casualties of the Smolensk crash takes place at Studzinski Square. Firstly, a red and white cross is formed at the base of the Memorial out of lit grave candles by people who carried them from Wawel castle. After that, one of the main organisers, playing the role of the master of ceremonies[11], gives an official welcoming speech to the gathered crowd.

[7] I use the notion of 'funeral conduct' according to Marcin Napiórkowski's use in his book [English transl.'Raising of the Dead. The History of Memory 1944–2014'] (Napiórkowski 2016, 53): 'A conduct, just like a procession, moves forward, yet is constantly focused on the past it has left behind. In this way of perceiving history, the past occurs to be much more important than the present. Time is moving towards tomorrow, yet it is yesterday that conceals all the significant values'.

[8] In addition to the above-mentioned banner with the photograph of Donald Tusk hugging Putin, and the text 'THE CRIME – TREASON', there are also placards saying: 'WE WANT THE TRUTH, THE TRUTH CANNOT BE KILLED; BEFORE THE PRESIDENT WAS MURDERED IN SMOLENSK, HE WAS BETRAYED... IN POLAND' (Gazeta Polska Club in Chicago).

[9] The reading on the plaque says: 'Katyn is an integral part of the fight against totalitarianism of every independent human being'.

[10] The song is performed by the band of Marcin Pokusa, who dedicated it to the memory of Lech Kaczyński and the passengers of the tragic aviation accident in Smolensk in 2010.

[11] The host is Marek Michno, the president of the Janusz Kurtyka Gazeta Polska club in Krakow.

He starts by evoking the events of 10th April 2010, when 'in the Smolensk coup the Polish President Professor Lech Kaczyński, along with his wife and 94 other people was murdered', and after that he names the primary demands[12] put forward by the commemoration's organisers. He closes his speech with a strong intonation of 'Boże coś Polskę', now sung for the third time during the celebration.

The participants' attention is now focused on the Katyn Cross and the portrait of presidential couple next to it. Accompanied by the pre-recorded snare drums, the Katyn Cross is approached by delegates from the President Lech Kaczyński Civil Academic Club in Krakow[13], The Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union 'Solidarność' (Lesser Poland Section), the President Lech Kaczyński Association of Krakow, and delegates from the various Gazeta Polska clubs. After laying flowers, a letter from the Lesser Poland Province Governor with words of support for commemoration participants is often read. Then, a priest, who has been asked to conduct the prayer service[14], sometimes gives a sermon, in which not only does he remind the participants about the tragedy of the events of 10th April 2010 – when 'the heavens cried', 'the Polish state, one might say, ceased to exist, and certainly was in a bad shape' – but also comments on current political events in a blunt, national conservative style[15]. After the sermon, he initiates the joint saying of a prayer: firstly, for the Fatherland ('Our Father, Who Art in Heaven', 'Hail Mary, Full of Grace', and 'Glory Be to the Father'), and then for 'all the victims of the Smolensk crash' (again 'Our Father Who Art in Heaven', 'Hail Mary, Full of Grace', and 'Eternal Rest Grant unto Them'). Finally, the priest entrusts the victims' significant others to Our Lady of Sorrows; participants say 'Under Thy Protection We Seek Refuge' in chorus, and they make the sign of the cross.

As we can see, political speeches intertwine with canonical Catholic set forms of prayers. The latter create a sort of scaffolding for the celebration's proceedings, on which, depending on current political events and developments in the Smolensk Crash investigation, a secular narrative is built. This intertwining continues until the end of the celebrations: next to the priest (granted the title of Professor), among several moral authorities who take the floor, appears Jacek Smagowicz, who is a member of the

[12] In short, the demands concern revealing the 'truth about the Smolensk coup', 'punishing the guilty', and erecting a monument to the victims of the crash.

[13] The person laying flowers at the cross on the Civil Club's behalf is Professor Jan Tadeusz Duda, a father of the current Polish President Andrzej Duda.

[14] This role is often played by one of The Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Henryk Majkrzak, Ph.D.

[15] The constitutive characteristics of the newspeak, discussed by Michał Głowiński (1990, 8–9) within the context of the language of propaganda, can be easily found in the discourse of the currently governing right-wing camp. Głowiński epitomises them in four ways: 1) manifestation of a clear symbolic value; 2) synthesis of pragmatic and ritual elements; 3) the magical nature of the language and its creative power; 4) the arbitrariness of the style.

anti-communist resistance movement[16] and also an activist engaged in the life of the Catholic Church. He is currently a member of the Company of the Chivalric Order of John Paul II[17], and is widely known in right-wing circles in Krakow. His speeches resemble sermons, full of teachings about matters of ethics, religion, and politics, with many references to his own personal experiences. He begins his emotional, passionate speeches with the Catholic greeting 'God bless', and, as opposed to the main master of ceremony, who uses the notion 'civic gathering', Smagowicz often addresses the gathered crowd at the Cross with the more familiar 'my dear community'. His anti-communist past, noticeable social, political, and religious activity, and above all, his exceptional energy and a refusal to compromise, highlighting his crusade he wages against the enemies of the Fatherland and Catholic faith under the Katyn Cross – all of this makes him a charismatic leader. His speeches are a permanent component of the commemorations' proceedings; the gathered crowd listens intently and applauds thunderously afterwards. To understand the role which Jacek Smagowicz plays in these monthly commemorations, it is important to carefully witness to his words. Here is a short, but representative final excerpt from the speech Smagowicz gave during the 78th monthly commemoration in 2016:

> The fight for the truth is our duty, the commemoration of the heroes is our responsibility; the concealment of the truth breeds new crimes. (...) I can see with my old eyes, but my soul still youthful, that my country becomes more and more pagan; I wish you all the strength to clearly witness our Jesus Christ, as the time is short. God bless you.

One of the permanent components of the commemorations' proceedings is the occasional appeal made by the vice-president of the Krakow Gazeta Polska club, which is in fact a variant of the policy statement of the political environment of the comemo-

[16] Jacek Smagowicz was one of the most committed members of the opposition movement in Lesser Poland. He founded the unit of NSZZ 'Solidarność' (the Independent Self-governing Labour Union 'Solidarity') in his work place, organised strikes and pickets. He was detained during Martial Law in Poland, and repressed afterwards by the Polish People's Republic authorities. After 1989 he was involved in many social and government initiatives concerning society and politics, i.e. battling the negative impact of the transformation from Communism on the labour market. He was one of the initiators of aid efforts for Chechens in Krakow, the co-organiser of commemorations of the victims of the communist regime in Krakow, and the co-organiser of the erection of the Katyn Massacre Memorial on Studzinski Square and the Memorial to the Victims of Communism on the Rakowicki Cemetery. In 2006 he was awarded with the Order of Polonia Restituta by President Lech Kaczyński.

[17] The Krakow Company of the Chivalric Order of John Paul II is a religious association of Catholic laymen, who venerate John Paul II. The Company was founded in Krakow on 3 December 2016. Currently there are 28 such companies in Poland, totalling 330 brothers (see: http://rycerzejp2.com.pl/o-nas/nasza-misja, access: 28.01.2018). Smagowicz manifests his membership not only with his words, but with his appearance. He attends the monthly commemorations dressed in his 'battledress': a black T-shirt and a fleece sweatshirt with a black and yellow coat of arms inscribed with a cross with a Marian symbol, and on anniversaries he wears his formal dress: a black mozzetta with golden and yellow emblems of the company.

rations' organisers, and, at the same time, a short, condensed lecture about political theology of the national conservative camp[18]. This is one of the examples – the appeal from 10th October 2016:

> Our gathering is a sensation on an extraordinary social scale, resembling the phenomenon of the Holy Masses for the Fatherland conducted by the blessed Jerzy Popiełuszko, and by other priests long after his death. The independence of Poland was attained by prayers and the indomitable fight of thousands of people. That pilgrimage, and the path we follow today, are rooted in faith in God who listens to those who are patient. The attacks on those who are invincible in their efforts to solve the mystery of the Smolensk coup, increase. The forces of evil are consolidating and aim to bring back the rule of lies and political egotism at any price. (...) Our goal is to unite all those who aspire to the truth, and who serve our Fatherland. We have accomplished something considered impossible. It has been a year since the greatest victory in the history of the patriotic camp. Let's allow these fruits to ripen. One of them needs to be a full disclosure of the Smolensk coup and a dignified commemoration of its victims (Michno 2016).

After the appeal, the main master of ceremonies takes the floor once again. As well as the thread of the Smolensk coup on 10th April 2010 – the topos of every speech – references to the current political situation are also present in his address. Apologetic comments on the actions of the current government intertwine with the harsh critique of the politics of Pan-European, left-wing and liberal environments. The master of ceremonies announces upcoming events, such as cyclical Masses for the intention of the President Andrzej Duda's well-being, the collection of money for the memorial of the Smolensk coup victims, and on-going trials conducted 'against patriots'.

Finally, after about two and a half hours, the commemoration draws to a close. After singing the full five stanzas[19] of the national anthem, the master of the ceremony announces the end of the 'civic gathering'. The gathered crowd calmly disperses, and the square is plunged back into the usual sounds of city life. The only signs of the ritual that just took place are the grave candles and the flowers laid at the base of the Cross.

Within the context of the investigation of religious motives it is also worth mentioning the distinctive personae in the 'background'. Even though they are never heard over the loudspeakers, and they are not institutionally associated with the groups involved in organising the event, they are quite active during the proceedings. They carry out their own mission, independent from the official gathering's, introducing eschatological and soteriological motives into the symbolic commemorations' universe. As Victor Turner remarks:

[18] I use the term 'political theology' in reference to the philosophy of Carl Schmitt, who elaborates on the conception of politics based on the triad: revelation – authority – obedience (see: Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty. (George D. Schwab, Trans.). [MIT Press, 1985 / University of Chicago Press; University of Chicago edition, 2004 with an Introduction by Tracy B. Strong. Original publication: 1922, 2nd ed. 1934].

[19] The gathered crowd sings the fifth stanza as well: The German nor the Muscovite will settle, When, with a backsword in hand, "Concord" will be everybody's watchword, And so will be our Fatherland.

> Prophets and artists tend to be liminal and marginal people, "edgemen", who strive with a passionate sincerity to rid themselves of the clichés associated with status incumbency and role-playing and to enter into vital relations with other men in fact or imagination. In their productions we may catch glimpses of that unused evolutionary potential in mankind which has not yet been externalized and fixed in structure (Turner 2010,140).

Every month a certain Mr A. distributes copious leaflets among the crowd with prophetic orations and calls from the enthronement movement, while Ms M.[20] prays fervently for the fate of the fatherland and its current leaders, the President, and Prime Minister, regarding them as heavenly envoys, able to save not only Poland, but the whole world from a certain doom. Occasionally, Mr W. joins the event, bringing a red and white cross with the caption God-Honour-Fatherland and a quote from the Gospel, reading 'Lord, Increase Our Faith!' (Luke 17, 5–10). His multi-part Cross kit, of his own inventive design had been previously blessed at the main St. Mary's Sanctuary at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa. He is among the ones who regard their participation in the ceremonies as a testimony of faith, and a fulfilment of a mission, passed on to him in a personal vision by John Paul II himself.

THE SYMBOLIC SPACE OF THE NATIONAL MAUSOLEUM

I am well aware of the fact that the above account of the monthly Smolensk commemorations in Krakow could have been slightly tedious. However, I have opted for such a formula in this paper with the clear aim of demonstrating how ambiguous, complex, and dynamic the relation between religion and politics actually is within the context of these events. As shown, the participants of the monthly ceremonies operate within the space of a symbolic potential which is extraordinarily powerful in the national Polish imaginary (Kubik 1994, 77–102). The participants draw certain codes from it and transform them according to their ideas and needs. Thanks to their dialectical nature, these codes become the object of social negotiations, and a part of interaction between the subjects and their space and environment. The organisers of the commemorations use them to build their own Great Narrative about the coup, at the same time manifesting and legitimising the authority of their own political community, whose ideological framework is comprised of the radical nationalist narrative, complete with a vision of the Catholic Church as the maker and guardian of the national identity (Smolik 2017, 344).

The power of the sacred bodies, of which the holy relics of St Stanislaus and John Paul II, placed in the centre of the Cathedral, are material representations, sacralises the political bodies lying in its crypts. Due to their symbolic potential, the bodies give

[20] The name of my interlocutor has been changed at her request.

the celebrations an extraordinary importance. The mausoleum of the Piast and Jagiellonian Dynasties, nowadays considered one of the most significant elements of national heritage, and at the same time a tourist attraction of special historical importance, is treated as a major sacred national site, around which the social memory of the past glory of the country is cultivated. Commemorative practices in the crypt under Wawel Cathedral in the Silver Bell Tower next to Lech and Maria Kaczyńscy's sarcophagus – another tourist attraction surrounded by a veil of mystery and political scandal – are of great importance for the participants of the commemorations. These practices not only begin the whole ceremony, but they form a community out of individuals, and help them cultivate the memory of their heroes, and therefore of the new history of their nation[21].

At the same time, they can be seen as involved in the sacralisation of the dead President, which seeks to legitimise the decision to entomb his body within the national pantheon and is extremely significant given the criticism and the cyclical opposition protests under the slogan 'Stop to the politicisation of Wawel castle'[22]. In fact, from the angle of the semantics of space, it can be said that placing the presidential couple's sarcophagus near to the exit of the mausoleum, in the close vicinity of Josef Pilsudski's grave completed the national pantheon of Polish rulers and nominated Lech Kaczyński as Pilsudski's direct successor. This gives material form to the idea, created by Law and Justice ideologists, that Lech Kaczyński was the last great Polish leader and the maker of the Fourth Republic of Poland, the reviver of a truly independent state and the patron of the governing political camp.

IN THE CIRCLE OF NATIONAL MARTYRS

By contrast, the Katyn Massacre Memorial, commemorating Polish soldiers murdered by the repressive communist regime, but also workers shot during the pacifications of the strikes, evokes another set of social ideas – formative for national identity – concentrated around the romantic cult of martyrdom, and the concept of dying for one's country. Smolensk commemorations prove clearly that the blood sacrifice,

[21] Within the context of the disputes over the decision of choosing Wawel as the presidential couple's final resting place, it is worth mentioning Catherine Verdery's remark on the phenomenon of the significant intensification of mourning practises connected to burials of well-known persons in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc. Verdery identifies this phenomenon as one of the characteristic elements of the transformation process. By venerating the remains of significant persons, one uses their biographies for revaluation of the national past (Verdery 1999, 18).

[22] On the 18th of every month, when Jarosław Kaczyński, President Lech Kaczyński's twin-brother and the president of the reigning Law and Justice party, comes to visit presidential couple's grave, the protesters gather to express their opposition to the decision to bury Kaczyński and his wife in Wawel castle's crypts.

considered the most superior form of heroism, is one of the main elements of the current canon of cultural and social reality for many Poles (Janion and Żmigrodzka 2001; Robotycki 1992; Buchowski 2010). From the angle of identity processes, it can be seen as a constant disposition of the past (Assmann 2009), serving as a foundation of the reconstruction processes for the collective memory, and co-organising the imagination framework of the ceremonies conducted between Wawel castle and the Katyn Massacre Memorial. The romantic-messianic myth, strengthened by religious ascetism (Zowczak 2015, 224) incorporates Lech Kaczyński into a circle of national martyrs, treacherously murdered on the orders of the Muscovite, who wears, depending on the historical context, the face of the Czar, Lenin, Stalin, or Putin. The myth heralds the Smolensk Crash to be another Katyn, with all the wealth of social ideas built around it.

Within this context, every celebration is actually a cyclical return to the days of mourning, and a repetition of ritual practises conducted in this very place right from the day after the crash on 10th April 2010. Maria Kobielska accurately describes the atmosphere of that time, pointing out the Katyn Massacre as a symbol which took over the collective memory of Poles:

> Krakow memorial sites, and the Katyn Massacre Memorial in particular, outlined the space which, at the moment right after the crash, was spontaneously filled with flowers and lit grave candles; the photography of the dead President was put on the cross itself. The placards with the slogans such as 'Katyn 1940–2010' not only designated the time which had passed since the Katyn Massacre, but also underlined the continuity and identity of those events. Among flowers, there was an obituary with the name of Lech Kaczyński written as 'Katyński' (with the sign of the cross instead of the letter 't': this literary practise, widely present on Katyn plaques, indicates the inextricable link between the crime and the religious interpretation, and merges the fates of the crime's victims with the martyrdom of Christ). Therefore, the gesture of blending his commitment to the Katyn Massacre case with the crime's victims reached the very basic and literal level – the proper name (Kobielska 2016, 142).

RECAPITULATION

The image of the 'besieged fortress', created and inhabited by the right-wing activists engaged on a daily basis in the reformation movement, makes the monthly commemorations a perfect chance for the participants to be able to go through an intense, far from everyday go through. The ceremonies make it possible to cyclically return to the days of Smolensk mourning, which, after all, is the foundation of the etiological myth of the governing revolutionary right-wing camp. Therefore, paradoxically, even though Law and Justice won the election over two years ago, the situation of the crisis of 10th April 2010 is constantly reconstructed and relived, and the imagined barricade is continuously built by the march's leaders. Each ceremony is a polyphonic event, a schema of heterogenic practices taken from liturgical, funeral, and All Soul's Day's, as well as political rituals (the march, rally, and obsequious ceremonial). Working through

the symbols and myths with an intensity that distinguishes these ceremonies, allows participants to exist afterwards in a complex and kaleidoscopic everyday reality. It helps them recover their equilibrium weakened by factional competition, and strengthens their sense of ideological community.

In other words, it consolidates the root paradigms, defined, after Victor Turner, as acknowledged but not fully controlled patterns of cultural behaviours, referring not only to the current state of social relationships existing or developing between actors, but also to the cultural goals, means, ideas, outlooks, currents of thought, patterns of belief, and so on, which enter into those relationships, interpret them, and incline them towards either alliance or division. These root paradigms are not systems of univocal concepts, logically arrayed; they are not, so to speak, precision tools of thought. Nor are they stereotypical guidelines for ethical, aesthetic, or conventional action. Indeed, they go beyond the cognitive and even the moral, into the existential domain, and in so doing become clothed with allusiveness, implicitness, and metaphor – for in the stress of vital action, firm definitional outlines become blurred by the encounter of emotionally charged will (Turner 2005, 50).

From the formal angle, for the participants every monthly commemoration is an intense, multisensory, performative experience, imbued with symbolic meanings, motion, sounds, touches, and images. Participants pray, march, carry candles and flowers, placards and flags, they sing, clap their hands, and hold aloft huge banners during the event. These commemorations can be thus considered a complex configuration of sensational forms, which can strongly influence those taking part. As Birgit Meyer, the author of the term, explains (2006, 40), by evoking certain emotions, feelings, and associations, 'sensational forms' take over a person as a whole, allowing them to reach beyond the visible world and open up to what falls outside rational cognition[23]. In the case of the Krakow commemorations, the ceremonies, repeated cyclically now for over ninety months, strengthen the community and its deep belief that it has been sanctioned by God, and sacralise the political mission it has been given.

The participants gathered for the prayer at the tomb of Saint Stanislaus form a sort of elite group with their own ceremonies, hierarchy, dogmas, inquisitorial strategy, and a clear picture of what heresy looks like[24]. References to religion are not, in my opinion, only a regular, ritual scenography the above-mentioned critics of the commemoration claim. On the contrary, by referring to the authority and power of the sacred[25], they are, in great measure, a source of inner strength for this group, as for many other radical nationalist movements, aimed at physical or symbolical fights in different parts of the

[23] I refer, after Anna Niedźwiedź, to Brigit Meyer's concept of 'sensational form' (Niedźwiedź 2015, 133).

[24] Within this context, it is worth mentioning Jacques Ellul's thoughts on political religion (Ellul 1983, 83–94).

[25] After Rudolf Otto (1993), I understand this term as a notion of a sanctity which evokes contradictory feelings of dread and fascination (*misterium tremendum et fascinans*).

world (Appleby 2000, 27–29). Thanks to them, in large measure, the participants of the monthly commemorations can play the role of the guardians of sacred principles, expressed in the Polish military motto 'God-Honour-Fatherland', and can set off for the crusade with the unshaken belief that they are the true patriots, the defenders of Christianity, and the successors of the fight for independence[26]. Therefore, being present at the Katyn Massacre Memorial is, for them a mission, a form of the fight against the enemies of the country, who they identify as everyone not sharing their worldview. In conclusion, let the master of ceremonies speak once more, with the words he addressed to the crowd gathered by the Cross of National Remembrance before the Independence Day on 11 November 2016:

> We need to defend the government, our President, these authorities, who are treading on very dangerous ground because of the traitors, who lead people out on the streets time after time, and who are now are preparing themselves to disrupt the Independence March. Let us not forget about it: only united do we stand undefeated, able to rebuild and make use of the sovereign (Michno 2016).

To sum up, compared to the monthly Warsaw commemorations of the Smolensk crash, those in Krakow differ mostly in terms of the nature of the celebration, which is a consequence of the type of participants and the specificity of the space, considered to be one of the most important for national heritage. The space in which the proceedings occur is not an arena for an open political battle, as no direct or violent confrontation between the members of the ruling PiS elite and its opponents happens here – unlike in the capital or as soon as a week later in Krakow, during Jarosław Kaczyński's monthly visit to the Wawel crypt. Therefore, in spite of the firm political tone of the speeches, the lack of protestors during the Krakow commemorations allows their participants to fully focus on the ritual itself. Besides pursuing particular political goals, they also have an opportunity for an intense religious experience of the celebration, aimed at an ultimate and irreducible reality. At the same time, the experience of the *misterium tremendum et fascinans* – before the mighty Wawel Cathedral and thus granting a symbolic connection with Polish saints, rulers, and martyrs – serves as an immensely effective way of practising an ideology in which religious notions inextricably intertwine with political goals and which are therefore also considered ultimate and indisputable. The propounded exclusive model of an ideal state (assumedly materialised in the imagined *IV Republic of Poland*), features them paradigmatically

[26] Recruited from the most radical factions of anti-communist opposition in Polish People's Republic, (e.g. 'Solidarność 80', the Confederation of Independent Poland, Republican Ligue), not accidently they include in their pantheon of national heroes such figures as participants of the January Uprising and the Warsaw Uprising, members of the Polish Legions, WiN (Freedom and Independence) and the Cursed Soldiers, and they appoint Lech Kaczyński, who died tragically, as the patron of their mission, as 'the first truly Great President after the World War II, treacherously murdered by the enemies of Poland'.

as an emanation of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ on Earth, and the nation which has inhabited it as His people ready to fight against the forces of Evil, so that the mission of moral and spiritual renewal may be completed.

Translated by Magdalena Kunz

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DO RELIGION AND CULTURE ACTUALLY EXIST? RELFLECTIONS ON JASNA GÓRA

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Focusing on displays of Catholic religion and Polish culture at Jasna Góra, this article argues that "religion" and "culture" as analytic categories lead to an oversimplification of the complex set of phenomena visible in the monastery complex. The article then references the work of American philosopher Donald Davidson to argue that any ethnographic study necessarily requires "radical interpretation".

* * *

Skupiając się na przejawach religii katolickiej i kultury polskiej na Jasnej Górze, w artykule tym dowodzę, że "religia" i "kultura" jako kategorie analityczne prowadzą do nadmiernego uproszczenia złożonego zestawu zjawisk widocznych na terenie kompleksu klasztornego. W artykule odwołuję się też do prac amerykańskiego filozofa Donalda Davidsona, aby udowodnić, że każde badania etnograficzne wymagają bezwzględnie "radykalnej interpretacji".

K e y w o r d s: Jasna Góra, religion, Paul Tillich, Rudolf Otto, culture, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Donald Davidson, radical interpretation, Agnieszka Pasieka, Tomoko Masuzawa.

INTRODUCTION

Walking to Jasna Góra as an outsider – a first time visitor in fact – I was struck by how completely it conformed to my expectations of it as a monument to Polish religion and culture. There is the crest of St. John Paul II over the gate; flags commemorate the Warsaw uprising; there are the stunning Golgotha paintings by Jerzy Duda-Gracz, and the memorial that connects the 1940 massacre of Polish officers to the plane crash that killed Polish president Lech Kaczyński. And, of course, there is the image of the Black Madonna, Our Lady of Jasna Góra, presiding over it all from its baroque shrine. At Jasna Góra, I pilgrims walking on their knees; heard them sing; I rubbed shoulders with bishops and other dignitaries who were preparing for an all-night vigil in front of the icon. From an ethnographic perspective, nothing could appear more seamless: here were Polish religion and culture *in situ*, presented in a combination of celebratory and mournful monumentalism that embodied Poland's complex history and equally

complex longings. All that remained was decoding symbols and ritual acts – something that even an undergraduate student could do.

But perhaps things weren't so simple, as I reflected afterwards. After all, I do not know Polish: I had to rely upon my research assistants and interpreters, Adrianna Biernacka and Przemysław Gnyszka, to make any kind of comprehensible bridge between me and the pilgrims – and even so I waded into those waters rather hesitantly since I was overwhelmed with the sheer material bulk of the shrine and surrounding monastery. But, as I thought to myself on the train ride from Częstochowa to back to Warsaw, perhaps the conceptual categories I was working with prevented me from noticing crucial aspects of the devotionalism – and the politics – that were expressed before my eyes. Most specifically, my mind returned to debates I participated in as a graduate student at the University of Chicago, in which I argued with my fellow students as to whether religion and culture were adequate categories for ethnographic research and writing.

Using my experience at Jasna Góra as a general frame, I would like to initiate – or continue – a conversation about our own suppositions and understandings as ethnographers when we seek to understand religious and cultural phenomena. Of course, Jasna Góra, in particular, and Polish religiosity, in general, have been the subject of sophisticated scholarly study, and I am particularly indebted to the work of Anna Niedźwiedź (2010) in this regard. I am well aware that I approach any discussion of Jasna Góra as a scholarly neophyte and so my goal is not to critique, much less supplant, the work of Polish scholars. Instead, I would like to begin in more general terms by talking about "religion," specifically the origin of the term and the debate over its applicability. I will highlight the work of Tomoko Masuzawa (2005) who maintains that the discourse surrounding religious pluralism in particular serves covertly to maintain Western dominance and intellectual primacy. I will then turn to the concept of culture and focus on the work of Adam Kuper (1999), who argues that the term "culture" carries with it various prejudicial notions that stand in contradistinction to the supposedly sensitive, irenic, and open aspects of "appreciating" different cultural forms and manifestations. To conclude, I will offer some general observations, which will not be directed toward reaching a conclusion about what position on religion and culture is "correct" in the conventional sense. Instead, I will suggest that even a non-Polish speaking outsider like me would be able – with help – to understand a place like Jasna Góra, which seems so self-evidently Polish, both religiously and culturally.

RELIGION

One of the most heated areas in the academic study of religion is how precisely religion should be defined. Classical – and some might say conventional – definitions of religion usually are derivatives from the work of Rudolf Otto ([1917] 1923) or Paul

Tillich (1957). Otto, in his *Das Heilige,* speaks of the experience of the "holy" or "the numinous" (5–8) as being the irreducible aspect of religion. He unpacks this general observation by speaking of the numinous as the "mysterium tremendum et fascinans" (Otto 1923, 12–41) Paul Tillich, like Otto a Protestant theologian, presented a simpler view of religion as "ultimate concern" (Tillich 1957, 1; see also Brown 1965). This definition opened up conventional understandings of religion by linking them to other forms of human agency and inspiration in a period when religious denominations were losing their preeminence in Western culture.

Yet each approach has its difficulties. As far as Otto's views are concerned, the difficulties arise because most fundamentally definitions are meant to exclude not include. That is, a definition should focuses attention on a specific, identifiable, phenomenon, rather than including a wide range of possible subjects for phenomenological study. So, the idea of the numinous is overly inclusive since it could potentially encompass anything from eating a good meal to the experience of a rock concert in addition to other more conventionally religious actions like worship or meditation. Moreover, by positing that religion's irreducible core is experiential, Otto effectively empties cognitive or intellectual content out of religious phenomenon since doctrinal formulations – among other intellectual constructs – function only to schematize the experience of the numinous. Tillich's definition of religion is similarly inclusive and, if applied in its broadest sense, would easily lead to movements like Nazism or Communism being considered religious. Of course, it could be argued that seeing Catholicism in practice at Jasna Góra elides these difficulties because we're talking about a well-defined tradition that is commonly accepted as religious: after all, what else could Catholicism be if not a religion?

The Difficulties with "Religion"

I primarily teach courses on Comparative Religion, and during the very first class, I ask students to define religion. It's at this point, that they all begin to take notes conscientiously because they expect the discussion to conclude with me providing "the correct definition" of religion. Students are inevitably disappointed that I do not end in that way – and maybe that's the reason why their note taking becomes less careful as the class progresses. In that first session of the Comparative Religions class, usually a student, hesitantly but bravely, raises her or his hand and says: "religion is belief in God." When I get this answer, I smile because it does reflect conventional wisdom about what religion is – at least in the Anglophone world, as far as I've observed. Obviously, that conventional definition of religion begs certain questions: for example, is belief is crucial category when it comes to thinking about human behavior? I know many Catholics – myself included, I must admit – who do many things either in the context of the mass or during a festival or procession, for which they don't have an explanation. Is it is appropriate to talk about "belief" in such contexts, when people can't explain why they're doing what they're doing? Obviously too, the concept of God requires some

unpacking: is God a higher power? Is God a super or supra natural entity? What about religions, like Hinduism, that believe in multiple gods? What about classical Buddhism, which is certainly considered to be a "religion," but does not believe in God at all?

A similar exercise that produces similar results can be performed for just about any definition of religion. And the reason for that is that "religion" as a concept is deeply embedded in Western, and Christian, ways of thinking and looking at the world. The term "religion" in English derives from the Latin word *religio* (Philologos 2007; Pals 2006). If one looks at how Roman intellectuals understood the origins of *religio* you have a variety of hypotheses: some thought that *religio* came from the word *religere*, which refers to reading and rereading a text; others attributed the origin of *religio* to the word *relegare*, which means to "bind." In this sense, *religio* described "binding" or "obligatory" performances that were understood to be part of being a full-fledged Roman citizen. As the Christian tradition developed, Lactantius, writing in the 4th century C.E., spoke of *religio* "as that which binds us to God", clearly echoing the connection with the verb *religare* (Philogos 2007). For his part, St. Augustine of Hippo related *religio* to the Latin word *re-eligare*, meaning "to choose again" – *religio* was something that brought with it new life, a new freedom "to choose again" in favor of God and against sin (Philogos 2007).

Where *religio* or what we would call "religion" becomes particularly important for scholars is during the historical period popularly called "The Reformation", which saw Christianity split into competing factions, Protestant and Catholic. Protestants and Catholics argued, debated, and warred with each other over – in part – who had the true form or understanding of *religio* (Pals 2006, 3). What is clear even in this superficial, thumbnail etymological and historical sketch is that *religio* and "religion" are inextricably linked to the Christian intellectual and theological tradition. While there is obviously nothing wrong with that in and of itself, it does cause problems when applied to different contexts not shaped by the Christian tradition.

For the sake of example, I would like to refer to an Indian context shaped by Hinduism – it's what I'm most familiar with having lived in India for four years and researched Christianity and Christian communities in India. During my time in India, I was often asked what *dharma* I belonged to. *Dharma*, within a Hindu context, means "duty" and to that extent recalls the meaning of "binding" associated with *religio*, which is one reason, perhaps, that *dharma* is often translated as "religion". So, in response, I would usually say that I belong to Isai or Christian *dharma*. For their part, many of my Hindu friends and colleagues say they belong to "Hindu *dharma*". But if you look at how *dharma* is understood and deployed in an Indian context, it's clear that it doesn't have a clear associated with "belief" in "God," but refers to a series of obligatory practices. And so, within Indian contexts, you have a *dharma* with regard to your job, a *dharma* with regard to your family responsibilities, and you have a *dharma* by virtue of your birth and your status. The problem with seeing *dharma* as "religion" is first and fore-

most that such a view overly circumscribes the term's use and blinds us to its contextual variation. If Hindus describe "Hinduism" as *dharma* it thus means something different than what most people in the Western world would conventionally call religion precisely because *dharma* as a concept is far less compartmentalized than religion, which is often understood to be its own separate sphere of behavior and practice that is distinguished from other things like status, class, professional obligation and the like.

Difficulties Compounded

In response to the obvious problems with conventional understandings of religion, many scholars have attempted to develop a definition of religion that is more nuanced and more applicable to contexts in which Christianity is not the chief intellectual or symbolic force. Of course, there is Emile Durkheim's classic definition of religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things" (Durkheim 1954, 47); also quite well known is American anthropologist Clifford Geertz's (2000, 90) windy and intricate definition of religion as

> "a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing those conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic."

I personally am inclined to a more compact definition of religion as "a patterned set of verbal and non-verbal interactions with superhuman agents", which was suggested by historian of religion Hans Penner (Penner and Edward 1972). But in all these cases, it certainly could be argued, that something is missing from these formulations: while Durkheim, Geertz, or Penner's ways of looking at religion might have greater scholarly usefulness in non-Western contexts, one might also argue that the spirit and magic of religion is also missing in their intellectual constructions.

The difficulty brought about by using "religion" as a category is perhaps best exemplified by the category of World Religions that has produced much scholarship and shapes courses such as the ones I teach. For example Tomoko Masuzawa (2005), a literary theorist teaching at the University of Michigan, argues in her *Invention of World Religions* that basically the West has seen, or constructed, an image of itself in defining the world's religions into discrete traditions or communities. Thus we have Abrahamic traditions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and then everything else. Buddhism becomes seen as a "Protestant movement" within Hinduism, and ritualism is deprivileged to reflect an anti-Catholic bias while "belief" and "textuality," primarily associated with Protestantism, are valorized.

The difficulty with the World Religions program, I would argue, is not just about projecting Western categories onto "religions" that are defined as Eastern or Other. Instead, the difficulty also lies in understanding Abrahamic traditions as monolithic wholes. For example, when we look at the Catholic charismatic movement it is easy

enough to see it in a conventional Weberian sense as a reaction against, or subversion of, the hierocratic structures of the Catholicism. If one makes that argument against the background of the World Religion program that Masuzawa (2005) criticizes, charismatic Catholicism becomes a kind of inauthentic presence within Catholicism. But it is also possible to argue that charismatic religious carries within it, and extends, the sacramental or interactive dynamics in Catholicism to other areas of religious expression. As Antonio Gramsci (1994) argued within the context of early 20th century Italy, there are different forms of Catholicism that reflect the differing attitudes, experiences, and longings of differing social strata. Seeing religion, or religions as unified wholes occludes diversity within religious traditions not to mention the diverse expressions outside the Western world, which are similarly homogenized as "religious".

Catholicism at Jasna Góra

Catholicism at Jasna Góra is rich and lush. At one of the entrance portals, there was a mosaic of St. Michael the archangel, with offerings and candles set before it. In the large baroque church, there is a monstrance displaying a consecrated Eucharistic host. There are side altars and shrines. The image of Our Lady of Częstochowa is in an elevated position and cannot be closely approached, except by priests or other dignitaries. Lay people, for the most part, are required to circumambulate the image on their knees. Of course, as in any Catholic shrines, petitions and thanksgiving for healings or favors received are important parts of the dynamic of the shrine – the material evidence of which, in the forms of rosaries and medallions, covers the walls of the surprisingly cramped, and always crowded space.

Certainly, at Jasna Góra much evidence could be adduced to confirm any number of definitions of religion. For his part, Rudolf Otto would clearly understand the whole Jasna Góra complex, not to mention the image of the Black Madonna, as related to the numinous given the strong evocation of the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, particularly when gazing upon the image of the Black Madonna. Yet problems arise when we try to locate the source of this feeling, which Otto steadfastly maintains is nonrational, though not irrational. With regard to the Black Madonna, is it her crown, her eyes, the color of her skin, or the scars on her check – what is it that evokes the numinous? Presumably, Otto would say it's all the features of the image – its composition in other words – combined with the weight of memory and custom. But I think Otto would reverse the relationship – that is, it's not as though the image is evoking such experiences in a primarily subjective way. Instead, the image is like a prism that refracts the experience of the Holy. In making such an argument, Otto would necessarily be making a metaphysical claim since the numinous has an objective status in his view. Indeed, if we understand the numinous, the Holy, or the Sacred as objective entities then cross-cultural comparison would certainly be possible, though that effort would then be subject to the criticisms of scholars like Tomoko Masuzawa who view the World Religions paradigm with suspicion and disdain.

Paul Tillich's (1957) definition of religion as "ultimate concern" gives us even less purchase when considering how Catholicism is expressed, practiced, and articulated as a "religion". Even if we accept that Catholicism concerns Catholics "ultimately" there are a number of possible ways to understand this, from the abstract or seemingly distant concern like entering heaven to a more pragmatic desire for intercession in the midst of a specific difficulty. But perhaps the real issue with Tillich's definition is not that it is overly broad but that it is overly limited. It is undeniably tempting to see religion as the most important aspect of human life, but it is not as though all religious practitioners understand their commitments in the same way or attribute the same significance to them. Indeed, it might be interesting to look at the devotional dynamics Jasna Góra not as a Catholic expression of "ultimate concern" but as subordinated to other more worldly interests.

Dispensing with the category religion with regard to Catholicism in general or Jasna Góra in particular might seem to be unnecessary. But it would – at least theoretically – allow scholarship and ethnographic observation to understand how what goes on at Jasna Góra is serially related to other aspects of life. Here Ludwig Wittgenstein's understanding of religion as a "form of life" – a kind of rule-based behavior – might be useful or instructive (see Phillips 1993). Of course, Wittgenstein's position has its own difficulties. In his emphasize upon practice, he undervalues or fails to account for doctrinal development and other expressions (see Sherry 1972). Also, by focusing so rigorously on rule-based expression, and extending his understanding of language games to religion, he often fails to recognize that human behavior often circumvents rules. At Jasna Góra, there is clearly much evidence that people follow the rules of Catholic devotionalism, from standard forms of genuflection to the numerous circumscriptions surrounding reception of the Eucharist. But it would be interesting to probe how pilgrims to Jasna Góra use the "rules" as a kind of cloak for other forms of behavior that do not follow conventional Catholic precepts – although it would take a keen and penetrating ethnographic eye to see such maneuvers.

CULTURE

Religion and culture have always been analytically liked for anthropologists. Depending on the theory deployed, a "cultural system" is what defines religion or religion defines cultural system. In any case, it's a rather uncontroversial point that culture is the primary subject of anthropological study. But difficulties come when culture is understood as a bounded, self-existing whole – even at a place like Jasna Góra.

The Politics of "Culture"

In an interesting and suggestive discussion in a book simply entitled *Culture: The Anthropologists Account* (1999), South African scholar Adam Kuper surveys the

Anglo-American fascination with culture, from Talcott Parson to Clifford Geertz. Kuper argues, quite rightly in my view, that Anglo-American anthropology has privileged a kind of cultural determinism in which human behavior is decisively shaped by the symbols and meanings within a particular "cultural" context. Such formulations tend to subordinate the significance of other aspects of human social organization such as economics, agriculture, and political institutions – just to mention a few. But what is especially noxious and damaging, according to Kuper, is how culture is associated with race. That is to say, when it comes to defining the locus or essential aspects of culture, theorists and politicians both have tended to see race as the crucial marker – all the while celebrating diversity. As a white South African, Kuper has seen the result of this: apartheid.

Simply put, when culture and race are seen as synonymous, or inextricably linked, there are a number of unintended consequences that militate against the very openness that cultural theorists have encouraged. For example, in the wake of Donald Trump's victory in the most recent US Presidential election, there has been a great deal of discussion about his supporters espousing various conceptions of "white culture" and "white supremacy." While I certainly would not subscribe to, or accept any of those formulations, there is an inevitable and pernicious logic to the category of "white culture" if one accepts the connection between culture and race. For Kuper (1999), culture is not to be thought of as a separate or autonomous sphere. Instead, culture is produced, reproduced and challenged in multiple ways, from ritual to economics. And so, there is a significant and important space for the ethnographer who seeks the specific, the local, rather than the global.

Radical Interpretation

One of the most striking aspects of Jasna Góra was its positive celebration of Polish culture. I was there on Polish Independence Day, 11 November, which celebrates the founding of the Second Polish Republic. It was not surprising, therefore, to see numerous Polish flags and to hear both "Bogurodzica" and "Maryjo, Królowo Polski" being sung by pilgrims in front of the Black Madonna. To any outside observer, there was an evident fusion of Polish and Catholic identity. Mary, as the mother who suffers, understands and nurtures Poland, the nation that suffers. But it clearly was not an isolated occurrence that same day in Warsaw, over 60,000 people marched in a nationalist demonstration (see Pikulicka-Wilczewska 2017). As Kuper argues (1999), the anthropological cultural program has an unintended dark side that can reinforce or legitimate notions of exclusive ethic or racial identities.

As cultural studies have progressed, there has been more focus on evolutionary models that seek to account for how people share certain beliefs and practices that constitute a "culture". For example, French cultural theorist Dan Sperber (1996) has spoken of an epidemiology of culture that opens the way for a cognitive scientific

approach to understanding the spread of certain beliefs within and among discrete groups of people. While such approaches have an appeal, they also come perhaps too close to understanding culture as much like a language. Recent scholarship in religious studies (see Davis and Davidson 2007) has turned to the seminal work of American analytic philosopher Donald Davidson (2009), who argues strongly against notions of "conceptual schemes". For Davidson, the idea of incommensurable conceptual schemes its itself nonsensical since all our interpretations – even those of supposedly "alien" cultural systems – are based upon a kind of radical epistemological charity. That is, we have to assume that those who inhabit different cultures or speak different languages refer essentially to the same world that we live in. Davidson argues that we are always in a position of "radical interpretation." Hence, constructs like "meaning," or even language itself, are provisional. We learn through mimicry, through triangulation between ourselves and other interlocutors. And, I would argue, if we look at culture in the same way, it becomes something less bounded and more porous. If everyone is in a position of radical interpretation, even in the same "cultural field," it is also much easier to create solidarity over and across perceived differences.

While I have doubtless radically oversimplified Davidson's view of "radical interpretation," I do think it at least provides a ray of hope for someone like me – a non-Polish speaker who found himself forced to triangulate with his interpreters and interlocutors to even begin to approach the complex dynamics at Jasna Góra. Surely my efforts at interpretation and understanding were radically different in degree from the Polish-speaking pilgrims gathered on Polish Independence Day, but perhaps they were not different in kind. As the all-night vigil was beginning I found myself in the sacristy, just adjacent to the shrine. I saw the shrine door open and I entered – and found myself for several minutes alone, gazing at the icon. At that moment, I was not just an ethnographer but also a Catholic, and a pilgrim. As I quickly departed when the assembled bishops entered the shrine, I thought to myself whether my experience was different or similar to the other pilgrims who had come to the shrine that evening. I suppose someone influenced by the notion of Davidson's radical interpretation would say that everyone's experience at Jasna Góra is distinctive but in the process of dialogue, and discussion – triangulation if you will – a particular language or dialect would emerge that necessarily would emphasize underlying commonalities in order to be comprehensible at all.

CONCLUSION

The seemingly homogenous character of Polish Catholicism is on vibrant display at Jasna Góra. But focusing on that homogeneity – even if it is not seen as some kind of metaphysical essence – can blind outsiders like me to the diversity and discontinuities

in a devotionalism that seems so monolithic. In a penetrating and insightful discussion of hierarchy and pluralism in Polish society, Agnieszka Pasieka (2015) draws attention to non-Catholics who seemingly lie on the margins of Polish society. What is particularly intriguing about Pasieka's study of the village of Rozstaje is how it recognizes contextually shifting configurations of power and affinity. While Pasieka does understand religion as the generative aspect of culture (Pasieka 2015, 4), her discussion nonetheless has a nuanced appreciation of how normativity is constructed in different ways and can have different resonances, often in spite of Polish Catholic dominance.

Recent studies in pilgrimage also interrogate conceptions of religion and culture as monolithic wholes. For example, in her survey of the Polish ethnological tradition from Władysław Reymont (1895/1988) onward, Anna Niedźwiedź (2015) charts the progressive reexamination of the phenomenological tradition and the decline of "folk or folk-type religiosity" and "peasant culture" as an analytic concepts. In her own work on the dynamics surrounding Our Lady of Częstochowa, Niedźwiedź (2010) focuses on the "anthropology of experience", especially biography, and also cites studies by Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska (2013) and Inga Kuźma (2008) as examples of the new Polish ethnology that foregrounds peformativity and the "inner worlds" of informants. For Niedźwiedź, it is the category of "lived religion" that is most promising precisely because it focuses on what people say and do, as opposed to rigidly applying abstract and essentialized categories to human experience.

As for myself, in thinking about religion and culture at Jasna Góra, I suppose it would be fair to say that religion and culture exist to the extent that people self-consciously construct them. As analytic categories, however, they perhaps lead to an oversimplification of the complex set of phenomena visible in the monastery complex. But for ethnographers, it is not only the pilgrims at the shrine who have interest and relevance; it is also those who do not find meaning in the practices there or are excluded by its discourse experiences are central to understanding whether and how the categories "religion" and "culture" are descriptively helpful in Poland – or anywhere else.

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STUDIES OF MEDIA AUDIENCE: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH[1]

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This article summarizes the project *Ethnography of Media Audience and Local Common Sense*, implemented 2012–2014. The introductory part briefly presents previous ethnographic fieldwork undertaken in Poland and other countries concerning the reception of media, as well as basic theoretical assumptions, which are explained in relation to the literature of the subject. The results presented in this paper pertain to the specifics of conversations in the rural areas of Podhale and their subjects in relations to the media: the influence of movies, TV series, local means of Internet usage, and associated dangers and opportunities. The concluding summary concerns: local ways of verifying media coverage through confrontation with everyday life experience; transformation of media coverage through previously acquired common knowledge; reinforcement of regional stereotypes by the media; and strengthening of the Internet as a technology that creates new means of earning money and heavily divides the already existing age groups.

* * *

Artykuł podsumowuje projekt *Etnografia odbioru przekazu medialnego a wiedza potoczna*, realizowany w latach 2012–2014. W części wprowadzającej krótko zaprezentowano dotychczasowe badania etnograficzne dotyczące odbioru mediów, przeprowadzone w Polsce i na świecie, oraz nakreślono podstawowe założenia teoretyczne, sformułowane w odniesieniu do literatury przedmiotu. Część główna referuje wyniki badań terenowych przeprowadzonych w ramach projektu w wioskach podhalańskich, zogniskowanych na odbiorze przekazu telewizyjnego, radiowego i na lokalnych sposobach korzystania z Internetu. Prezentowane są lokalnie stosowane sposoby sprawdzania prawdziwości przekazu medialnego, procesy włączania treści z przekazu medialnego w korpus zastanej wiedzy potocznej, procesy konstruowania tożsamości regionalnych, a także nowe sposoby zarobkowania oraz realizowania relacji społecznych umożliwione dzięki upowszechnieniu się na wsi Internetu.

K e y w o r d s: Poland, rural areas, Podhale, media audience, common sense, local knowledge, regional identity

[1] This article summarises the research work undertaken as a part of the project financed by Polish National Science Centre (grant OPUS 2011/03/B/HS3/00338) titled *Etnografia odbioru przekazu medialnego a wiedza potoczna* [Ethnography of the perception of media and the common knowledge] between 2012–2014, conducted by myself with contractors – students of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Warsaw. The results of the research have already been published in Polish (Malewska-Szałygin 2014).

"The youngsters nowadays are interested in the Internet, not sheep!" – said, with a hint of nostalgia, an elderly breeder in the market place of Nowy Targ [New Market] in 2013, located in the mountainous Podhale region in the South of Poland. The picture of the relationships that connect people and media, painted by the inhabitants of Podhalan villages, is created using binary oppositions, such as the aforementioned sheep versus Internet. Classic ethnologists (Levi-Strauss, Mietelinski, Eliade) tie such oppositions to the mythical way of observing and relating reality. This 'presence of the myth' (Kołakowski 2005) remains visible in contemporary common thinking. However, when the researcher ventures beyond the level of common truths, he or she immediately realises that they are not dealing with simple binary oppositions such as tradition-modernity, old-young, city-village, online-offline; but instead – with a Gordian knot of mutual interconnections. The researcher also aptly realises that the youth can actually be interested in sheep – on the Internet!

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

As rightfully noted by Mirosław Filiciak (2013), each study related to the perception and the functioning of the media is inevitably sentenced to becoming an incomplete, unfinished 'beta-version'. Technologies, together with media, change so fast that the papers written on them become outdated even before they come to be published. Thus, presenting the results of the *Ethnography of the perception of media and the common knowledge* research, conducted between 2012–2014, I am fully aware of the temporal limitations of its conclusions.

The research project, financed by the Polish National Science Centre, was realised using ethnographic fieldwork methods, understood as research conducted "under conditions of social intimacy with real informants" (Herzfeld 2001, 296). I chose this research method, although rather obvious for an ethnologist, as I was led by the conviction that it is ethnography that:

> "provides an ideal access to the point of conjuncture between local perceptions and practices on the one hand and mass-produced forms of representation on the other" (Herzfeld 2001, 299).

The fieldwork was conducted in the villages of the Nowy Targ district, Podhale Region, such as Pyzówka, Morawczyna, Lasek, Trute, and others. Although romantically associated with highlanderness, it is rather a "modern location of disenchanted villageness" (Herzfeld 2001), as can be found in my previous research project, summarized in the book *Social Imaginaries of the State and Central Authority in Polish Highland Villages, 1999–2005* (Malewska-Szałygin 2017). The fieldwork was conducted together with the group of students of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Warsaw: Nina Abboudi, Stanisław Grzywalski, Sarian Jarosz, Dominika Nizińska, Maria Popielewicz, Marta Sałyga, Katarzyna Talewicz,

Paula Wolińska, and Żaneta Żebrowska. The students, led by their research aims, conducted open and in-depth interviews, transcribed them, and prepared their own topic assessments that are currently kept in the archive of the Institute.

The theoretical framework of the project can be summarised by yet another quotation from Michael Herzfeld: "the force that media representations carry in the construction of contemporary imaginations, identities, and power relations" (Herzfeld 2001, 294). The main research question was: How are the media used to create those imagination and identity constructs? How do people use the media to create individualised "modern social imaginaries"[2] (Taylor 2004)?

THE STATE OF RESEARCH

The presentation of the outcome of the research should be preceded by a short historical introduction, depicting the way in which anthropological discourse on the perception of media in the post-war period has changed and continues to evolve. In the 1950s, during the subsequent media revolution tied to the mass dissemination of television, Marshall McLuhan predicted that the process of global homogenisation of culture will run parallel with the development of media. In the subsequent decades, however, it became clear that this is not happening. The reasons for this are varied, for example, it was noticed that the recipients of media are not a passive audience that thoughtlessly accepts the transmitted content, but instead they 'decode' them through the prior cultural codes that they possess (Hall 1980). The research, continued into the late 1970s and early 80s, revealed that this process of coding and encoding is not only a matter of inscribing and deciphering meaning, but also a type of activity which ties together elements of dominance and resistance – thus, the 'strategies' of the media producer are confronted by the perception 'tactics' of the consumer (de Certeau 2008, XXIV, 34). What is more, the spectators/listeners do not merely encode, but instead they utilise the media messages, using them for their own means. Thus, the term 'uses of media' (de Certeau 2008, XXII) seems entirely obvious in the age of the Internet; however, during the times when audience studies were concerned mainly with television, cinema and the radio, this term served to highlight the creativity of the spectator, whose activity is insidious and dispersed, omnipresent, silent and somewhat invisible, as 'it does not manifest itself through its own products but through its *ways*

[2] "The social imaginary is not a set of ideas; rather, it is what enables, through making sense of, the practices of a society" (Taylor 2004, 2); they are "ways in which the people imagine their social existence (...) and also the expectations which are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images which underlie these expectations". "The social imaginary is that common understanding which makes possible common practices, and a widely shared sense of legitimacy" (Taylor 2004, 23); it is "that largely unstructured and inarticulate understanding of our whole situation, within which particular features of our world show up for us in the sense they have" (Taylor 2004, 25).

of using of the products imposed by a dominant economic order' (de Certeau 2008, XXII–XXIII). Already in the 1990s, it became obvious that the audience "can interpret the contents transmitted by the television in ways diametrically different from the ones intended by the makers of these contents". It stems from the fact that "people come to media from the perspectives of their many subjectivities, which have been influenced by a whole 'multitude of discursive practices' encountered during their lifetimes" (Herzfeld 2001, 301). It was also noticed that media "are largely continuous with everyday experience, which they also help to shape and through which they are interpreted" (Herzfeld 2001, 297). Thus, "the media (...) become part of their consumers' constructions of reality" (Herzfeld 2001, 304).

The 1990s were a time of ethnographic research of the perception of the media realised in many exotic places and summarised by many fieldwork monographs and a collection titled *Media Worlds* (2002). The most interesting ones include the research projects of Brian Larkin – focused, among others, on the perception of Bollywood motion pictures by the Muslim Hausa living in Nigeria (1997); Richard Wilk – about the cultural changes caused by the widespread popularity of satellite TV in Belize (2002); Lila Abu-Lughod – on the diversity of strategies of Egyptian series makers and the tactics of perception thereof by the village women in Upper Egypt and female cleaners in Cairo (2005); Purnima Mankekar – about the political consequences of the screen adaptations of the Mahabharata and Ramayana epics and their impact on the escalation of nationalism in India (1999); Faye Ginsburg – on the ways in which the local television creates new identity constructs (2002); and the research project of David Miller and Don Slater (2000) describing the use of the Internet in Trinidad, which shows how this seemingly socially-alienating and individualising medium has perfectly assimilated itself with the local family and community life.

The publications from the first decade of the 21st century show that in the "culture of convergence" (Jenkins 2006), the consumers participate in the creation of media productions.

> "Convergence should be understood primarily as a technological process bringing together multiple media functions within the same devices", however, "convergence occurs within the brains of individual consumers and through their social interactions with others" (Jenkins 2006, 3).

This concatenation of various media forms – films, series, computer games – also encompasses the 'mediation of things' (Lash and Lurry 2007), and the "culturification of industry" (Lash and Lurry 2007, 9); moreover, it initiates a global flow in which "image has become matter, matter has become image: media-things and thing-media" (Lash and Lurry 2007, 9), demanding from the audience not to interpret the media contents, but rather to 'navigate' between them (Lash and Lurry 2007, 8).

In Poland, ethnographic fieldwork research on the perception of media has been undertaken, among others, by Anna Woźniak (2006), Bogumiła Mateja (2010), and Łukasz Sokołowski (2011). Moreover, the project of Mateusz Halawa discussing the

use of television was published in a book *Życie codzienne z telewizorem* [Everyday life with the TV set] (2006). Its author also participated in the interdisciplinary research project summarised in the report *Młodzi i Media* [The Youth and the Media] (Filiciak *et all* 2010), which shows how contemporary Polish youth use digital media.

LOCAL WAYS OF SCRUTINISING MEDIA

I would like to start a presentation of results of my research project from the demonstration of the villages' tactics of verification of media messages. Before doing this, a few theoretical models need to be presented beforehand. The media, which in theory relate the current affairs objectively, in fact create 'mediascapes', namely, "image-centric, narrative relations of the fragments of reality, produced by private or public companies" (Appadurai 1996, 34). Mediascapes are constructed by producers who realise particular agendas, which are carefully concealed in order to make "an impression of objectivity" or "the illusion of bedrock factuality" (Herzfeld 2001, 295). The titles of news programmes: *Wydarzenia* [News], *Fakty* [Facts] only summarise the process of creating the illusion of thorough reference. Thus, in the process of these attempts made by the media producers, the perceived reality becomes 'hyperreality' (Baurdillard 1994, 1). Facts are replaced by 'simulacra' (Baurdillard 1994, 1), and these, in turn, 'obscure the events' and subsequently turn them into 'our legends' (de Certeau 2008), which have the incredible capacity to create realities through appearances.

The efforts of producers to construct a, or indeed the, picture of reality, whilst at the same time realising their own agendas, consequently encounter strategies of the audience, which are no less clever as they are grounded in their local knowledge and tap into what we can refer to, after James Scott (1988) and Michael de Certeau (2008), using the Greek word *métis,* a term which they use to describe the specific cleverness of Odysseus (Detienne and Vernant 1978). *Métis* is a form of intelligence, which is always steeped in some kind of practice, "which merges together intelligence, scrutiny, foresight, flexibility of thought, cunning, resourcefulness, careful attention, intuition, various skills and the continually accumulated experience" (de Certeau 2008, XIX).

In the interviews collected as a part of the Nowy Targ research programme, *métis* takes the shape of deliberations about 'how much they lied' and becomes the local method of assessing the probability of media messages. The TV relations of events are verified by the interlocutors by contrasting them with their own experiences and with the stories of their relatives, neighbours and acquaintances. This method of confronting the media portrayals with a knowledge that stems from one's own experience is described by Mateusz Halawa in his book (2006, 106, 130–131). What is interesting is that the spectators verify the probability primarily on the emotional level. The media message which seems emotionally probable in light of one's own, neighbourly, or

family experiences might be therefore accepted as factual. This approach can be thus called 'emotional realism' if we use the term coined by Ien Ang, who research audience reception of the *Dallas* television series (1985).

The local methods of verification of media messages are best visible during conversations about health and illness. Nowadays, the Internet has become one of the main 'expertise systems' (Giddens 1991) in this regard, to which its users declare a significant, albeit not uncritical trust. Other media authorities in this regard include the medical television series. The portrayals of advanced medical technologies, and the standards of hospital interiors and medical care shown on the television are favourite topics for comparisons with one's own, neighbourly, and family experiences. These comparisons are frequently concluded by bitter jokes.

The method of verifying media messages observed in the villages of the Podhale Region adopts the 'mediated experience' versus 'lived experience' opposition as a tool. The problem lies in the fact that researchers of media perception write about the 'conjugation' of both types of experience (Halawa 2006, 106) and about how the media provides their audience with a "language that objectifies their own experiences" (Halawa 2006, 107), which in turn "helps the audience to organise their experiences" (Sokołowski 2011, 198), and finally, about the dissolving of television in everyday life and the dissolving of everyday life in television to such an extent, that an 'indiscernible chemical solution' is created, which marks the disappearance of all binary and polar structures (Baurdillard 1994, 30). In this way, by deconstructing simplificatory binary oppositions, the researchers distance themselves from the cognitive-verificatory tools used by people who are less educated.

The users of common knowledge, however, do not know and ignore those research discussions and employ a sharp contrast between both types of experience. This black-and-white differentiation allows for the confrontation of what was perceived with what was watched, thus becoming a significantly useful apparatus; a cognitive tool that allows reducing the uncertainty and the threat stemming from the numerously emerging sources of knowledge that are significantly different from the well-known village authorities. Having a mechanism that allows verifying the messages arriving from *orbis exterior* functions to overcome the feeling of hopelessness and gives the impression of controlling the information, which, after verification, can in turn serve to reinforce the arsenal of prior categories that form what Geertz (1983, 77) refers to as 'common sense'.

THE ALTERNATIVE WORLDS OF THE DRAMA SERIES

A classic example of what David Morley (2000) calls 'armchair tourism' is watching travel programs, such as Wojciech Cejrowski's *Boso przez świat* [Barefoot through the world], Martyna Wojciechowska's *Kobieta na krańcach świata* [The woman on the edge

of the world], or travel-culinary ones, such as *Makłowicz w podróży* [Makłowicz on the road]. These TV shows were eagerly watched in the villages of Nowy Targ, however, the contents and portrayals shown in them seeped significantly less into the everyday conversations as opposed to the messages shown in TV series. The real journeys for the spectators are the ones that they are launched into by pressing the control button on the remote – the alternative worlds of people shown in the movies and TV series. The escape from everyday reality into the alternative reality of the drama series can provide them with emotional experiences and knowledge about other ways of looking at the world and at people. Lila Abu-Lughod (2005) analysed the statements of women villagers and cleaners from Cairo that related to the TV series they watched. She noticed that the different lifestyles, flats, clothes, attitudes to love, friendship and other interpersonal relationships are fascinating to the feminine audience, but also can be incredibly frustrating. The portrayals of other ways of experiencing reality thus become a cognitive challenge. They widened the current thought horizon and proposed new assessment criteria, both aesthetic and moral ones. The value system proposed by the media producers thus does not match the *habitus* that is known since childhood. According to Lila Abu-Lughod, the life of Egyptian women villagers, contrasted with the adventures from the TV series, often seems improper, neither beautiful nor good enough to them. Following David Morley, letting the outside world to one's home through the television set constitutes a threat of destabilising his intimate world – the one which the spectator has grown accustomed and in which they have been brought up (2000).

How was this threat dealt with by the inhabitants of the villages of the Podhale Region? A number of women spectators, particularly the lovers of TV series, did not escalate the otherness of the drama-series worlds, instead engaging emotionally in the stories of their favourite characters, sharing their happy and sad moments, discussing their adventures shown in consecutive episodes and treating them as friends or cousins. The alternative realities that surrounded the actors (prettier interiors, better cars, more elegant clothes) seemed irrelevant in situations when the relations and emotions that they experienced were perceived as familiar. The emotional realism led to a situation in which the media messages were accepted with an intense engagement. This attitude of trust, connected to recognising emotions, caused a kind of blindness; a disregard for the otherness in the media transmission. In these types of situations, the outside world seeped into the inside one without instigating resistance.

Some viewers, particularly men[3], distanced themselves from watching the series, saying that they only watch them to laugh at the stupid ideas of their directors, the poor dialogues and mediocre acting. Such a phenomenon of the creation of a conscious, critical consumer of media that keeps distance to the watched contents and

[3] On the gendered difference in the perception of TV programmes and the power relationships tied to them, see: Halawa 2006, 65.

portrayals is described by Bogumiła Mateja (2010). She argues that the attempts to distance oneself from the watched series are most often a guise. Even the most critical viewer inevitably becomes caught in the web set by the producers of series, and the only method of keeping a critical approach to series is... not to watch them. I have to agree with this conclusion. The innovative declarations of being distant from the TV series usually go together with detailed knowledge of their characters' recent adventures, and a comprehensive awareness of the conditions of their life and work. The sarcasm and irony connected to talking about the series thus did not constitute a barrier that would prevent the contents of the media transmission from seeping in. Even when, in the conversation, the lifestyles presented on screen were criticised, these differences were perceived directly by the interlocutors, thus forcing them to formulate opinions and taking stances. A good example of that is the situation in which a homosexual motif was shown in the TV series watched by a team of construction workers during their lunch break, provoking a number of explicit comments and jokes. The media transmission, thus, even though it is filtered by local categories of thinking and value systems, affects the audience, and brings new contents and pictures into their thought horizon, in doing so affecting their prior knowledge. This frequently occurs unnoticed by the viewers and thus usually does not satisfy the producers.

MEDIA AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

A stroll through the market in Nowy Targ, a visit to the clothes shops, a glance at a photo album with family celebrations or interior decorations of the rented accommodation shows that 'highlanderness' is currently very fashionable in Podhale. The interlocutors from the villages surrounding Nowy Targ told the researchers:

> "this tradition is coming back nowadays (…) it became profitable, and fashionable, yes! Highlander dialect is the newest craze!"

The researcher approaches this declaration of 'returning tradition' with a pinch of salt, seeing a thoroughly modern and new phenomenon in this popularity, tied to the current shape of economy and culture (Sennett 2006).

A visit to the extracurricular classes organised by the village school in Pyzówka prove that there is a significant interest in learning the highlander dialect, dances, and songs amongst the youth. The classes are conducted by a professionally trained instructor. Parents, asked about the reasons they had signed their children up for the highlander dialect classes, said: 'it is good if they learn it. They live in this culture, so it will be useful!' The owners of the agritourism farm assumed that the knowledge of this dialect would prove useful for marketing purposes, as the tourists prefer to rent rooms from 'real' highlanders. Thus, highlander dialect, in the same way as English

(which is learned by most school children in the village), increases the cultural capital and provides a chance for a better future.

When talking about the 'fashion for highlanderness', the local government officials, activists from the local associations such as '*Czas na Pyzówkę!*' [Now is time for Pyzówka!], animators of village community centres, and the school directors did not consider it as 'inventing traditions' (1983). The idea that the tradition used by them for promotional reasons is invented or constructed in fact seemed outrageous and threatening to them – questioning the authenticity of the heritage of Podhale was not in their interest. On the contrary, the local entrepreneurs, activists and government officials need a tradition whose authenticity is certain and indisputable. Moreover, it is best if this authenticity is confirmed by ethnographers, who will assess which *zbójnicki* [robbery] dance is the most traditional and which traditional youth song ensemble sings it most authentically – with expert scrutiny. Such a role of the expert-ethnographer in constructing local folk culture is described by Antoni Kroh in the book *Sklep potrzeb kulturalnych* [The shop with cultural needs] (1999). He illustrated his argument with the example of the process of codification of the *zbójnicki* dance. The pattern for this dance, constructed by ethnographers, has served as an assessment tool for many decades during numerous regional competitions.

The tradition and the identity built on it, which can be exposed in the 'supermarket of culture' (Mathews 2000), are necessary not only by activists and politicians, but by all the inhabitants of Podhale who want to attract tourists, compete with other regions, and show a highlanderness that is attractive, colourful and authentic. Such an attitude can be termed, after Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'practical essentialism' (1990). It is also worth noting that the locally constructed images of the region are made using a heavily aestheticised tradition. The poverty, hunger, and heavy physical toil of the inhabitants of Podhale are thus not appropriate components used in creating the media showcase of the region. Many older interlocutors pointed to this selective treatment of the regional heritage: 'they do not show at all how hard people worked with those hoes, how one had to toil in Podhale!' In the highlander identity narratives, the reminiscence of the hardships that had been experienced by the previous generations is thus replaced by the 'internalised narrative of colonisers', namely, the large-city intelligentsia, mainly from Kraków. This narrative, following Maria Małanicz-Przybylska (2013, 176), 'seems quite comfortable to the modern highlanders' and is becoming an important element of the performances, during which the 'highlanderness' is played out to 'one's own' (Małanicz-Przybylska 2013, 176).

The use of highlanderness by the television and the Internet is generally received well by the interlocutors from Nowy Targ, especially TV series such as the *Szpilki na Giewoncie* [Heels on Mount Giewont] (2012) or the regularly repeated *Janosik* (1973) series about a Polish/Slovak highwayman who robbed nobles and gave the loot to the poor. The fact that those portrayals are far from the truth about the experiences

of ancestors remains a local secret, partially revealed by half-smiles, sarcasm, irony and jokes. It is not easy to lift the regional mask and reach the level of 'cultural familiarity', which is 'the recognition of those aspects of cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment, but that nevertheless provide insiders with assurance of common sociality' (Herzfeld 2005, 3). For it is not perceived well if the ethnographer abandons the role of competition-expert and peeks under the intricately designed Podhalan mask. It is perceived even worse if the media do this, for example, when in 2011 Magda Gessler, presenting the culinary program *Kuchenne Rewolucje* [Kitchen revolutions], pointed out the 'Highlander's vices' in her celebrity cooking shows, among which drunkenness and unequal relationships in marriage were mentioned. The programme, when aired, caused a particularly lively and critical reaction from the viewers in Podhale. Many interlocutors said that the media producers, driven by jealousy, were trying to slander the region, seeing how the highlanders prosper thanks to the development of tourism. Thus, when we consider the interrelationship between regional identity and media, it is worth highlighting that this relation is too complicated to be described with a simple vector of the influence of media on highlanderness. In the search of the language which would be sufficient to express the specifics of their mutual enmeshment, it is worth employing the concept of 'structural coupling' (Lash and Lurry 2007), which is based on the fact that the modern media audience is comprised of participants rather than passive consumers and not only interprets the message, but 'navigates' through media content and images (Lash and Lurry 2007, 7). Additionally, the researcher also becomes a participant in this connection and navigation as they follow the contents and images that leave their original media context and modify the common knowledge through common conversations and everyday actions.

THE INTERNET IN THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

According to the older interlocutors, the Internet breaks down the village community because, among other reasons, 'the children and the youth do not meet together, they do not chase after one another like they used to. In the winter, there are even fewer of them outside than in the summer. It is the age of the computer – the child comes, it has its game, it has its laptop, and he plays it.' Halawa (2006, 63) recalls the categories of James Lull (1990) that differentiated between two functions of television – affiliation and avoidance. The older people, used to watching TV together with the whole family and before that, with neighbours too, see the isolating factor of the Internet. For the youth who have access to the Internet, it is primarily a tool that includes them in a community, however, it is a community that the older generation neither notices nor understands. It thus does not seem real to the older interlocutors.

The middle-aged interlocutors perceive the computer as a threat in the process of bringing up children. The necessity of parental control in terms of media is obvious for them and sets the standards of being a 'good parent' (Halawa wrote about this, 2006, 67). The computer thus poses a more significant educational challenge, as its middle-aged and older users are less familiar with the computerised worlds of their children than with the temptations of television. A family father describes this situation as follows:

> "I sleep in the room where the computer is, naked! The TV is downstairs and over there, the kids can sit, watch, and after that, in the evening, go to sleep upstairs. If I gave them the computer – if I slept elsewhere – f**k knows when they would go to sleep. I sleep where the computer is, and they are forbidden to use it at night! Go to sleep, shoo! (…) No computer – go study! Books and notebooks! I don't want them sitting on the computer. There is no chance, no way! (…) They are supposed to study, not look at the computer! And they are always on about some games and other rubbish, they don't think about learning at all. That's the truth!"

This statement shows that by properly arranging the 'spatial geography of the home' (Morley 2000, 193), the father manages to keep his function as 'the selector' (Halawa 2006, 67). Judging from his statement, the television set no longer poses as great a threat as the computer with Internet access, hence the fatherly disciplinary operations concentrate on this new medium that is harder to control. Therefore, as we can see, one has to guard access to the home PC with his own bare chest.

The anxieties of the older generations that stem from the lack of computer skills make this medium seem particularly dangerous to them. For example, the librarian in the village library oversees the time spent while using the computers as well as checks the history of the virtual spaces visited by the pupils, limiting access to games and videos containing violence and nudity. The control at home is, however, much weaker. The parents that perform manual labour can trace and select the Internet browsing choices of their children to a much lesser extent. Most commonly, they limit the time spent at the computer to 2–3 hours per day, after the homework is done. In crisis situations, they can turn off Internet access entirely; for example, one of my interlocutors decided to do this when her 20-year-old sons lost their jobs on a construction site because they had spent their whole nights in front of the computer screen. We also encountered situations when children aged 8–12 had unrestrained access to the computer and could endlessly play games or watch violent or disturbing movies. The opposite side of this spectrum of parental control were the families of educated people, in which the access of the children to the Internet content and media there was strictly and meticulously traced, similarly to the television. Nevertheless, a conversation with 14 and 15-year old boys of the village school showed that they are able to find different ways to access the Internet pages forbidden by their parents. In school – but of course, outside the control sphere of teachers – there is an exchange network of CDs with games and films that would cause outrage amongst parents and educators.

The fears of the generation of grandparents about breaking the village community, together with the fears of the parents connected with the education of children mark the consequences of the Internet's advent. Many interlocutors, however, highlight the positive changes that were brought together with it. The Internet, for instance, has proven to be an immense convenience for everyone who was running their own business. The availability of quick bank transactions and social security benefit transfers were frequently mentioned by my middle-aged interlocutors. Many small producers also mentioned the ease in which they could order the parts needed for the production online. Many also stressed that the Internet expanded their customer base and improved their sales. The examples related to the online distribution of electronic equipment, but also the distribution of cakes, dumplings and other home-made products. It was also highlighted that the Internet introduces new possibilities to promote products without having to spend large sums on advertising. Many interlocutors also declared that the Internet provides them with inspirations and ideas for making cakes, jewellery, and tailored clothes. Some of them mentioned Internet searches for subsidies that are available for small-scale entrepreneurs.

The inhabitants of the village that are forced to stay at home because of their situation in life have been granted new possibilities with the Internet. The mothers of small children and people with disabilities have gained new chances to earn money. A situation in which such extra form of income becomes the basis of sustaining the family fundamentally changes the distribution of roles in the family. The women, whose earnings had only complemented the family budgets, have suddenly obtained stronger positions in the family groupings. One example of this is the mother of small children who obtained extra income through selling home-made cakes and dumplings. In the winter, when the snow prevented her husband from working on the construction site, her earnings provided for the entire family. The Internet played a significant role in promoting and distributing her products. Furthermore, Internet portals such as allegro.pl or ceneo.pl allow quick checks of the prices on the market. Examination of the prices and negotiating them on Internet auctions were compared to the marketplace which had always served the purpose of becoming familiar with the prices of products. Some of the businesses typical for Nowy Targ, for example trading clothes imported from the US, mostly moved online, 'on Allegro' or 'on Facebook', thus confirming the observation that 'constructing the border between what happens between people on the Internet and the "real", offline reality is an unjustified process' (Cichocki 2012, 23). In the usage of the Internet, we can also see a visible age barrier. The elderly – the makers of the woollen products, cakes, regional slippers – rarely use this medium to reach customers. On the other hand, the middle-aged people, low-scale producers, and the owners of rooms for rent do so often. For the youth, it is the basic method of communication. The research of the use of the Internet in Nowy Targ confirms many findings of David Miller and Don Slater (2000), who speak of the new medium that

initially caused anxiety by threatening to alienate and break social bonds, but in the end perfectly fitted itself into the family, neighbourly, and regional relations (however still causing anxieties amongst the elderly). The conversations on Skype with the family members that work seasonally abroad, and searching for information and sharing it online and offline prove, that the border between the 'real' and the virtual sphere is increasingly indistinct in the local discourses and practices.

CONCLUSIONS

Concluding the results of the research realised in the project *Ethnography of the perception of media and the common knowledge*, it is worth to stress the clever local tactics (*métis*) that verify the media transmission through juxtaposing the contents and images from the media and one's own/relatives' experiences. This contrast is treated as a cognitive tool to assess the authenticity of the transmission, which is verified mainly on the emotional level. Employment of the scientifically deconstructed discourse opposition: mediated experience versus lived experience, thus becomes a locally useful tool to select the contents that leach from the media transmission into everyday conversations, local discourses and imaginaries.

The use of media is tied to opening oneself to new ways of perceiving and understanding the world. New lifestyles, different value systems, distinct linguistic styles, unorthodox behaviours and activities bring about a situation in which the media users face an otherness, which sometimes entirely transforms their grounded view of the world. However, the consumers filter the media transmission through their prior knowledge. Nevertheless, in a confrontation with the new contents and pictures, these prior categories also become modified themselves. Thus, their mutual relation has a character of a feedback loop: the local common knowledge causes distortions in the transmission, and the transmission modifies the common knowledge. The process of mutual interrelation is therefore a complicated one and is not possible to be described through recourse to a simple explanation focused around the category of 'media influence'.

The media allows for an expansion of the reachable audience by popularising the image of the region. Films, TV series, advertisements, through spreading the regional stereotypes, actually reinforce them by showing selected, aestheticised elements of cultural heritage. Deconstructing this image-mask, questioning the authenticity of its counterparts is neither in the interest of the local government nor of the local (e.g. agritourist) business owners'. Many of the counterparts of this regional identity construction, exhibited on the shelves of the supermarket of culture, prompts a sarcastic, ironic smirk from the people that share cultural familiarity, but who will, however, continue to loyally protect this 'traditional' image of the region due to its practical benefits.

The Internet has been shown to be a medium which is significantly less alienating that is had seemed, and it has fitted perfectly into the family and working life; it gave new possibilities of money earning and job hunting. It has also brought new educational challenges, as it has become significantly harder for parents to trace their children's online peregrinations. It is also a technology which sets clear borders between age groups, hence, the youth communities tied together via Internet bonds are considered to be supportive by the youth themselves and to be socially destructive by the older generations. The observed practices and recorded conversations prove that the division of reality to 'real' and 'virtual' is therefore not an adequate way of describing this, and that this is borne out in the villages of Podhale.

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POLISH SUCCESSFUL MIGRANTS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THE WESTERN EUROPE METROPOLITAN AREAS

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The aim of the paper is to present some of the results of a research project on the adaptation strategy of Polish migrants living in five west European capitals (Berlin, Dublin, London, Oslo, and Stockholm). The target group was composed of migrants who had settled in host countries either before and after the accession of Poland into EU. The migrants selected for the investigation belong to the category of well integrated and successful people. The central aim of the study is to present the mechanisms and circumstances of the process of achieving success. The migrants' success is identified here in two ways: according to objective criteria (social and economic advances), and in terms of emic perspectives, disclosing a subjective satisfaction of migrants and their feelings of well-being. Another topic discussed in the paper is the transnational context of the adaptation and integration process. The importance of social and cultural capital brought by migrants from their country of origin and their openness and positive attitude toward the receiving country is also delineated. One of the most interesting findings is that migrant success is more often achieved in the context of relative isolation from the ethnic community (diaspora) established in the host country. At the same time the "migrants of success" participate frequently in an unformal social network of ethnic relations and continue to maintain ties with the home country.

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Artykuł przedstawia niektóre istotne, ustalenia dokonane w ramach projektu badawczego poświęconego polskim migrantom w kilku stolicach zachodniej Europy (Berlinie, Dublinie, Londynie, Oslo i Sztokholmie). Badaniami objęci zostali imigranci, którzy osiedlili się w tych miastach zarówno przed jak i po wstąpieniu Polski do UE. Szczególna uwaga zwrócona została na „Polaków sukcesu", którzy w nowym środowisku dobrze zintegrowali się ze społeczeństwem i krajem osiedlenia. Jednocześnie przedstawiony został mechanizm i warunki osiągania sukcesu przez migrantów. Sukces ten zinterpretowany został z dwóch perspektyw: jako zjawisko obiektywnego awansu migrantów wynikającego z osiągniętej pozycji społeczno-zawodowej i ekonomicznej oraz jako fenomen ujmowany emicznie, tj. wynikający z subiektywnego poczucia satysfakcji opartej na statusie „dobrostanu". Omówiono również związki zachodzące między transnarodowymi powiązaniami migrantów a ich skuteczną adaptacją i integracją. Zwrócono przy tym uwagę na znaczenie kapitału społecznego i kulturowego migrantów, z którym przybyli oni do nowego kraju, a także na takie ich cechy sprzyjające sukcesowi, jak otwartość, elastyczność i pozytywny stosunek do kraju i społeczeństwa przyjmującego. Jednym z bardziej interesujących ustaleń jest to, które wskazuje, iż bardzo często sukces migracyjny został osiągnięty w warunkach względnej izolacji od zinstytucjonalizowanego środowiska etnicznego (diaspory polskiej). Jednakowoż nie oznacza to, iż Polacy sukcesu odcinają się radykalnie od swego rdzennego środowiska, tylko tworzą własne sieci kontaktów z bliskimi i przyjaciółmi oraz kontynuują różnorodne związki z krajem pochodzenia.

K e y w o r d s: Polish migrants, success, integration, adaptation.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The central themes of the anthropological research project presented below were the adaptive strategies of migrants from Poland along with their integration efforts. At the heart of the project, carried out from 2015–2018 by a team of Polish anthropologists, and headed by myself, was the question of immigrant success[1]. Therefore we decided to study the mostly invisible group of transnational Polish migrants currently living in five metropolitan areas of western Europe, namely in Berlin, London, Dublin, Oslo, and Stockholm. As a matter of fact, our main target group has been composed by Poles who had migrated to the West immediately after the accession of Poland to the European Union in 2004, with the migration peak during the period from 2007 to 2012 (White 2011). To some degree we also investigate Polish migrants who left their home country in the 1980s and '90s as a push effect of Marshall Law[2]. According to Polish terminology the older migration wave is usually labeled as "post-solidarity migration", and the second one – as "post-accession migration" (Friberg 2012). Among both groups of migrants there are many successful Poles who have adapted well to their countries of residence and who are well integrated with the mainstream of their host societies. The period spanning Poland's incorporation into the EU and the years of our field research is in fact long enough to offer the possibility to observe the trajectories of migrants' adaptations and the process of achieving success by some of the most active migrants, whom we term here – "the Poles of success". The term has only a symbolic meaning for us, because we have focused our attention on a much broader group of "successful Poles", instead of concentrating on the much more narrow and elitist group composed of eminent scholars, artists, and businessmen.

I should stress here, that the frequently used word "success" in my paper – is here applied as a kind of metaphorical expression adapted to the category of migrants, who in spite of many objective obstacles and barriers, typical for immigrants experiences, were able to realize their dreams and establish a satisfactory place/position in a new

[1] The project (No. 2014/13/B/HS3/04927) under the title "Polacy sukcesu – między emigracją a transnarodowością. Nowe oblicze polskiej diaspory w Europie zachodniej" [Poles of success – between emigration and transnationality. The New shape of Polish diaspora in Western Europe] was approved and supporting financially by the "Narodowe Centrum Nauki" [National Science Center]. It was carried out by a team of five anthropologists: A. Szymoszyn and A. Szczepaniak-Kroll (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology PAS), R. Beszterda (Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the Nicolas Copernicus University in Toruń), and Ł. Kaczmarek (Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań), under the supervision of A. Posern-Zieliński (Polish Academy of Sciences).

[2] Marshall Law was introduced by the Communist regime during the period of Solidarity's burgeoning socio-political influence and was followed by the early years of Poland's transformation into a market economy, which initially brought about serious social crises, high unemployment rates, and feelings of disappointment (Gomułka 2016).

country. At the center of the research is aim to: understand the process of achieving success, to identify the circumstances of migrants' progress, and capture the emic perspective of the migrants' experiences, their opinion of their achieved well-being, and their subjective feeling of satisfaction.

Another topic covered by the project was the transnational context of the integrational process. The crucial question here is the dilemma: which factors are more important in the process of achieving success: a) strong ties with one's own national community (diaspora) formed abroad, or b) the opposite strategy: deep incorporation into the host society. We identified a strong tendency that real success has been more often achieved in relative isolation from their own established ethnic community in the host country. However this context does not mean that successful Poles have decided to break all their ties with their own compatriots. On the contrary, they have participated frequently in a kind of informal social network of ethnic relations that has been built in a given host country/city and simultaneously have maintained some ties with the home country.

Additionally, the process of acculturation and assimilation among recent successful migrants is also observed with the aim of identifying how the social and cultural capital they brought from the home country could influence the speed and quality of acquiring new competences needed to succeed in the host country.

There are lot of published texts – both in Poland and in the diaspora – on individual successful Polish migrants, but a majority of them are short reports, press releases, and interviews depicting the biographical histories of, e.g. scientists, businessmen, artists, and physicians. Such stories are usually published to combat the power of the dominant stereotype of Polish migrants, found on the lower levels of social strata. Stories on individual achievements of Polish migrants succeeding in the mainstream society of a receiving country have the potential to change the popular image of Poles abroad and instead create a positive picture, showing, that within a broader category of migrants, there are individuals who, in spite of objective barriers, were able to achieve success in a number of prestigious fields.

In contrast to the articles in popular press, the issue of successful Polish migrants has been understudied in the social sciences. Instead, a majority of studies have focused more on the mainstream groups of migrants. Such a situation is the result of two factors: firstly reaching this largely dispersed category of people during the fieldwork is difficult, and secondly, it is quite hard to extract relevant data from statistical sources. Another issue is the need for such studies to develop more sophisticated research tools than regular methods used by sociologists or demographers. According to the experiences of my anthropological team, the most effective approach to such a target group was without doubt ethnographical deep interviews, based on biographical schemes, combined with mutual understanding, trust and a sympathy between researcher and respondent. An important problem during the research was the issue of reaching and

selecting potential respondents corresponding to the roughly defined criteria of 'successful migrants'. This problem was initially solved by personal contacts with the Polish diaspora community, including activists and ethnic authorities, and expanding from here, the next stages of research using the "snowball" method were effectively applied[3].

TARGET COUNTRIES

The project was carried out in those countries of western Europe where Polish migrants have established a large presence, especially in metropolitan settings. It is in such urban environments that migrants have found the best conditions for achieving success. It should be stressed here that among the target group, a majority of migrants are well educated, and have been able to take advantage of their professional competences.

For comparative purposes, the study was conducted in three different regions of western Europe. The first target area is Germany, which has traditionally been considered as an attractive destination for Polish immigrants since the nineteenth century and remains popular to this day (Praszałowicz 2010, Wolff-Powęska and Schulz 2000, Nowosielski 2011). The number of successful Poles in Germany is growing, especially in Berlin, thanks to the potential opportunities offered by the capital and its close proximity to the Polish border. Many of the Polish inhabitants of the city have established their own businesses, others work as employees in local companies operating in the Polish-German market, taking advantage of their competences in both languages, cultures, and economic systems. According to some current estimations around two million migrants from Poland (of different legal status and migration background) currently live in Germany. They are mostly dispersed in large and middle sized cities in the former West Germany, such Munich, Frankfurt, Mannheim, and of course Berlin, where their population totals around 100 thousand (Zensusdatenbank 2011). Among those migrants there is a large group of young, well-educated people, with a lot of social capital that has allowed them to reach their goals successfully.

Since WWII the UK has been a home for many refugees and DPs from Poland; even the Polish Government in Exile was based in London during the Cold War and the Communist regime in Poland. Over the course of time this "old emigration", composed mainly of "intelligentsia" and war veterans, became quite well integrated with the host society (Stachura 2004, Sword 1989, Zubrzycki 1956, Patterson 1961). But after accession of Poland to EU, a new and sizeable wave of young migrants (many of them from small towns, the countryside and regions affected by high unemployment

[3] More on the methodological assumptions, description of the research and the approach applied, see: Beszterda 2016; Szczepaniak-Kroll and Szymoszyn 2016.

rate, but also a lot of graduates) decided to move to "the Islands" looking for work, better opportunities, and to complete their education in UK and Ireland (Burrell 2009; White 2011). A majority of them found their place as simple workers in public services, construction, or transportation, but many newcomers relatively swiftly achieved more prestigious positions in, for example, the IT industry, the City, academia, or started their own small businesses (medical clinics, stores, restaurants, workshops etc.) (Irek 2012; Garapich 2012; Ryan 2010). Today around 900 thousand Polish migrants live in the UK and they constitute the largest national group among all newcomers from the EU countries. In the metropolitan area of London alone the Polish population is estimated at close to 160 thousand (Winiecka 2016, 116–124).

In contrast to UK, the republic of Ireland is a new destination for Polish migrants. Before the period of accession only a tiny group of Poles (numbering only a few hundred) were present on the "Green Island". The situation changed dramatically when the "gates" were opened to migrants from Central Europe. Around 140 thousand Polish migrants currently live in Ireland, but a fixed number is hard to establish due to the mobility of many newcomers, who move to Belfast, London, continental Europe or just return to Poland (Kaczmarek 2017b).

The third region of our study is Scandinavia (Norway and Sweden), where a high percentage of educated Polish migrants are employed in accordance with their professional qualifications, which has of course been a contributing factor to their relative high social status (middle class). The Scandinavian migration policy also facilitates and speeds up the integration of newcomers and helps them economically and socially at the beginning of their settlement (see Wiesbrock 2011). The good working conditions, appropriate salaries, and high standard of living, all these factors mean that Sweden and Norway are becoming a permanent home for many Polish migrants. In Sweden the number of Poles is estimated at around 100 thousand, with approximately 30 thousand living in metropolitan area of Stockholm (Wiesbrock 2011). A similar number of Polish newcomers live in Norway (around 100 thousand) and they form the largest ethnic/immigrant group in the country. A majority of them have settled in the Oslo metropolitan area (Friberg 2012).

TARGET GROUP

The topic of success in migration studies has not been yet analyzed sufficiently, especially with regard to research on the Polish diaspora.The majority of research has been centered on groups: confronting social problems, poorly adapted to the new environment, requiring support, or forming isolated ethnic/national neighborhoods. Such approaches are relatively typical of all types of social studies, which prefer to concentrate their interest on marginal and exploited groups, people from lower social

strata (peasants, workers, minorities, or indigenous groups), and only rarely, if ever, paying attention to mainstream society, the middle class, elites, or successful members of society. In anthropology and related studies, however, there is now a growing tendency to shift from that traditional position toward studies on upper social strata and the highly skilled migrants (MacCleansy 2002).

Unsurprisingly the above mentioned tendency also exists in studies on Polish migration, (including anthropology). However, an anthropological approach that uses qualitative methods combined with ethnographic fieldwork would appear to have promising potential for studies on individual migrant strategies. Most recent research carried out by sociologists (who as usually prefer quantitative, hard data) has been focused on various economic aspects of migration and has analyzed the situation of migrants who have serious difficulties in coping with their life in the country of residence. On the contrary to the group identified as "migrants of survival", the "migrants of well-being" or "migrants of success", form an almost invisible category, as they are relatively dispersed, and rarely provoke any trouble. It is probably these elements that have been decisive for successful migrants not being an important focus of research interest. This notwithstanding, this category of migrants is noticeably growing. In contrast to traditional migrant communities, usually living in a compact grouping (ethnic/national neighborhood), the latter should be defined as a kind of "scattered" community, well integrated with the mainstream host society, yet still maintaining and/or building a social network of personal relations with compatriots of a similar status. In spite of their integration they usually maintain their Polish identity and preserve a strong interest in Polish current affairs. As such, thanks to their competences within both host and origin cultures and societies, they can operate freely in a network of transnational connections.

In the migration studies of today there are two basic and complimentary approaches analyzing the post-migration process of adaptation and integration: a) from the perspective of the majority of migrants trying to survive in a new country, and b) from the perspective of successful migrants, who in relative short time are able to achieve a stable economic position and level of life satisfaction. Both perspectives are important, interrelated and neither should be omitted or neglected.

The key word in the project is "success", but in the course of our investigation, we discovered that the most important task should be the reconstruction of migrants' biographical trajectories that have guided them to a successful life, their adaptation strategy in post-migration context, the importance of social and cultural capital as factors facilitating social advance, the ties with the home country, ways to build new social networks, the role of transnational connections, and the types of relationships with their own ethnic diaspora in country of residence (Beszterda 2016).

All these aspects were analyzed from anthropological perspectives, giving priority to the perception and evaluation of migrants themselves on the basis of their narratives.

The primary research task was to find out how the migrants speak about their success, how they try to define it, how they evaluate their own success, and which moment of their biography they treat as crucial for success.

Such an approach is important for two reasons. It allows researchers to see the post-migration process as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, composed of objective conditions, developed strategies, and respected values. On the other hand, research on migrant success helps reduce the impact of the still existing popular stereotype that sees Polish migrants as occupying only the lowest, unskilled jobs. Through such images the stereotypical recent Polish migrant works abroad cleaning dishes in an English pub, or as a plumber fixing a ruined bathroom in France, or as a construction worker remodeling an old Irish house for less than the market rate.

The road to migration success and effective integration is linked not only to the applied strategy, but also depends, to a large extent, on the nature of the initial migration process itself. The most distinctive types of such out-migrations leading from Central European countries to western Europe are as follows:

a) Temporary employment seeking migrations to accumulate money and return to the home country with savings. However, in many cases, such stays have been transformed into more stable and longer periods of residence, especially after discovery of new job opportunities, adjustment to the new environment, and realizing how easy it is to start a new life in the West.
b) One way migration as a desperate escape from difficult economic situation and/or life crisis (unemployment, poverty, lack of perspectives in a small town or countryside, family problems etc.).
c) Typical chain migration; in the first stage a few braves migrants leave the country and try to stabilize themselves, after some time other persons (friends, family members, neighbors) join them to start a regular life abroad. Stabilization and the final decision to stay for good in the new country usually comes at the moment when the family is reunited and children appear.
d) Migration of professionals: (artisans, HT and IT specialists, medical doctors and nurses, university graduates, academics, etc.), mostly on the basis of previously arranged contracts. At the beginning of their stay, they could be termed as transnationals, but in the course of time, their shift to the status of permanent immigrant is becoming more common.

Successful Polish migrants come from all these categories, although to a different degree. It is obvious that among newcomers with good professional experience that is well suited to the labor market of the receiving country, the number of successful migrants is very high. However, many people that could also be categorized as "successful persons" came to the new country under more difficult migration paths and, thanks to their social capital, determination and continuing education in situ, has achieved their "success".

DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF SUCCESS

There is no doubt that the concept of success belongs to the classic vocabulary of (neo)liberal discourse and, according to such a perspective is valued very positively in contrast to persons considered as "losers". The American myth of the self-made man could serve here as a good example of an immigrant's achievement, from a street shoe shiner to a stockbroker. Today the idea of success is treated in a more complex manner and at least three different dimensions of success should be identified. The first is associated with the argument of personal potential for upward mobility, which always facilitates the process of achieving success in any circumstances, especially by smart and dynamic persons. The second dimension refers mostly to the argument of know-how and is based on the assumption that success can be achieved under the condition that the person is able to properly master a professional skill and can follow some technical rules that will guide him/her towards their goal. Finally, we have the third argument, which refers to the importance of a favorable system. According to this, success is generally the result of good conditions, shaped by the social, political, legal and economic systems in which the migrant acts. If we analyze the question of success in the migration context, it is obvious that all of the above mentioned dimensions play a crucial role in forming a complex structure, but in each individual case the combination of decisive factors could be composed of slightly different configurations.

The many contradictions attached to the concept of success, as well as its colloquial use, brought about a tendency in the social sciences to substitute the word "success" with more appropriate expressions such as "subjective well-being" or "achievement". The concept of subjective well-being (developed and discussed extensively in Latin American as the idea of *vivir bien* [to have a good life]) has become quite popular, especially in the last decade, and is applied frequently to post-colonial studies, indigenous research, critical studies on globalization, and de-growth studies (Fisher 2014).

Our studies, carried out among migrants, have fully confirmed such an approach. The word "success" is more or less avoided by immigrants in conversations; instead, they prefer to describe their newly achieved positions and improved standard of living as finally attaining "life satisfaction" or achieving a "good life". Within the range of the semantic field formed by such expressions we have found following arguments:

- economic well-being adjusted to current needs,
- social and health security and family life stabilization (in terms of good household, access to education, money for holidays and vacation),
- fulfillment of professional aspirations,
- respect, prestige, good relationships in the workplace and local neighborhood,
- empowerment – as subjective perception, that their current life and prospects are in their own hands and are mostly dependent on their own activities.

A migrant's success has at least two dimensions: individual and collective. It is well known that in immigrant countries (like the U.S.A. or Australia) some ethnic groups have achieved success in a relative short time, thanks to the implemented strategy of integration, an effective self-supporting social network, and inherited cultural capital (patterns of behaviors and value orientation). Such ethnic communities (like Jews in the U.S., Lebanese in Latin America or Chinese in Malaysia) have made their progress more quickly than other migrant groups and, as result of the proper strategy, they occupy higher economic positions, and frequently are overrepresented in prestigious professions. Instead of promotion of a "culture of small stabilization" on the already-attained level, they generate a "culture of success", facilitating further advances for following generations.

However in some cases the same ethnic group splits itself in two parts: one, following the "culture of success" and the other choosing "small stabilization". Such a situation is easy to find among Polish-Americans: On one hand there is the old Polish diaspora ("Polonia"), formed mostly of working class people, descendants of poor countryside immigrants, and on the other we encounter Polish migrants from the "Solidarity" period (1980s.), mostly originating from well-educated and urbanite newcomers (Posern-Zieliński 2003). Another recent example of this "split" is the sharp contrast between Polish migrants in Norway: *Polakkenen* (Polish workers) living mostly in ethnic isolation, versus professionals from Poland aspiring to find a space in the mainstream of the host society (Pawlak 2015).

If collective success can be measured with the use of more or less objective criteria, then individual success should be looked at differently. Each person evaluates their achievements quite differently, and in a similarly subjective way is evaluated by their friends and relatives. This means that the concept of success is in fact a relative category, showing, above all, a positive individual assessment of a person's current satisfying situation. One of the most common approach to studies of migrant success is to apply a set of objective criteria, which can be found in statistical data directly related to migrant populations. In this methodology, migrant success is frequently measured by:

a) economic criteria (for example – annual income as an indicator of belonging to the middle class),
b) professional criteria (high ranking occupations, percentage of such professionals in the national group),
c) lifestyle (character of neighborhood, category of house or flat, ways of spending holidays and leisure time, etc.),
d) education (graduation from prestigious universities, type of schools selected for children),
e) VIP (authority) position (within host society, in own national group, on international level).

However such objective criteria of success have some limitations, especially if we want to study success from an anthropological perspective and prefer to concentrate on

emic evaluation, which could disclose the personal point of view of the migrant. Such opinions allow us to ascertain in which way migrants define their success, how they evaluate it, what subjective comparative criteria of success they apply (referring to their current position as newcomers in foreign country, comparing their current situation to their life condition before migration, contrasting the initial period of stay in the new country with recently achieved level, juxtaposing their situation with friends', or taking into account the general standard of living in the receiving country. Therefore everything indicates that, from an anthropological perspective, success should be seen as a subjective category, albeit one that is strongly related to objective facts shaping biographical experience and the advance of migrants.

According to our research the migrants' perspective on their own success is mostly based on the assumption, that if the previously projected goals have been achieved, they feel satisfaction, which for them is the real source of success. It is obvious that every person perceives a success in their own, individual way, but the applied criteria are quite similar. In a majority of cases the migrants stress the fulfillment of projected goals (economic, professional, educational, related to family stabilization, possibility of self-realization, breaking the barriers typical for the initial period of migration, etc.).

People identified as successful migrants belong to the category of "very active", they are usually able to overcome lots of obstacles, they have a special motivation to progress in their life, they consequently try to fulfill their aspirations and ambitions. Bearing that attitude in mind, it is obvious that, for them success does not mean something spectacular. Rather, it is limited to stability through achieving the projected goals. A common conviction pertaining to success is the need for balance between having a good employment status (in terms of satisfaction, salary, and social relations) and prosperity in the family arena (Kaczmarek 2017a).

The data gathered from our interlocutors confirm that the success should be analyzed as a process, as the result of long lasting endeavors; its subjective evaluation might change over the course of time due to transforming life conditions. At the beginning of the post-migration period, success could be seen in the preliminary stabilization in the new country. But after a few years new expectations appear on the scene and the next set of achievements might be treated as real migrant success. Conversely, if the planned goals are not attained, then frustration and deprivation may appear.

A similar approach to the question of migrant success has been applied by German sociologists, who prefer the term *Erfolg* (achievement). Consequently the target group under study is usually labeled *erfolgreiche Migranten*. To this category is made up mostly of migrants with university education, who are able to reach *Spitzenposizion* (a top position) within mainstream society in the receiving country (Nowicka 2014). The idea of *Erfolg* is mostly applied to the following aspects of migrant life:

a) to the successful migration from home country to the new home, completed through satisfactory attainment of stability,

b) to the successful process of integration in the receiving country,
c) to substantial advancement in one's professional career.

These findings, established on the basis of the sociological research on the Polish migrants living in Germany and the UK, to a large extent coincide with the results of our own research. It is also quite interesting that some basic conclusions developed by Armand Farsi (2012), in his book on highly qualified migrants (university and research center employees) are very similar to the results obtained in our study on Poles in five metropolitan cities of Europe. In both sets of research, conducted in different settings and analyzed from different perspectives, inherited social and cultural capital, relatively loose ties with own migrant group, and strong transnational attitudes, are given crucial roles in the process of achieving success, satisfaction, and/or high social status.

Another interesting and valuable intervention on migrant success can be found in Sabeen Sandhu's book (2012), in which the author describes the "culture of success" developed by a group of IT specialists from India, working in transnational companies in Silicon Valley (USA). The author implemented an anthropological perspective and decided to study the perception of success among Indian professional migrants, as well as their strategy of personal success management. The last task was analyzed thanks to the reconstruction of biographical schemes, which facilitate the discovery of a main pattern, leading the migrants directly to the level of satisfactory achievement.

Among other interesting conclusions developed by Sandhu, and quite similar to the findings present in our studies on Poles in Western Europe, are three important factors, connected to migrants' strategies of successful integration:

a) active adaptation to mainstream society, to the specificity of the workplace (corporative environment), and to the lifestyle of the middle and upper middle class.
b) othering" strategy – tendency to create some kind of boundary between migrants of success, (especially professionals, well integrated and belonging to the middle class) and the traditional (old) diaspora institutions and working class migrants. This distancing mechanism – based on class, culture, values and worldview – is responsible for the relative isolation of both groups from each other, and underlines the division between many successful migrants and their ordinary ethnic compatriots, usually considered as people unable to adapt properly to a host country's way of life.
c) Loose ties with family and kin members and a reluctant attitude to support their applications for jobs in the same corporation (anti-nepotism).

Studying the question of migrant success would be unjustifiable if we were to omit the contradictory relationships between the feelings of life satisfaction and relative deprivation, which is a phenomenon quite frequently observed among newcomers. Migration, conceptualized as process of leaving one's home country, could be considered as a kind of dramatic "flight" or "escape" from an unsatisfactory condition. At

the same time, such migration is also seen as a kind of adventure, a journey toward a mythical "promised land", where it is very easy to find well paid job, where everybody can start a new life, devoid of everyday struggles, and where a good professional career is a real possibility for the newcomer.

After coming to a new country, the divergence between the migration myth and new, everyday reality starts almost immediately, forcing the migrant to develop their own strategy of adaptation and plan how to overcome any obstacles they may encounter. As the result of this divergence the following feelings and attitudes appear:

a) severe disappointment, leading to, in some cases a decision to return to the home country,
b) acceptance, but not full satisfaction, with new conditions, based on the assumption that the person has already achieved an income and standard of life that is much better than in the home country,
c) relative deprivation, based on the sudden discovery that the expected status and projected career, rooted in personal ambitions and educational qualifications of the migrant are in fact not in the potential range attainment.
d) acceptance of the migrant' difficult life, and the connected high social cost, combined with the conviction that in the future, or at least for the next generation, the decision of migration will be beneficial.
e) the strategy directly related to the discussed topic, based on a complex strategy of overcoming all the above mentioned objective and subjective obstacles to find a way that leads to upward social mobility, integration within the mainstream of the new society, and satisfaction.

SUCCESS AS STABILIZATION AND NORMAL LIFE

As already mentioned above the findings of our project, in many aspects support the results of German and American research on migrant success. In those studies two contradictory categories of migrants have been identified: "winners" – or successful migrants, and "losers" – unsuccessful migrants. This division, however, does not fully correspond to the situation of Polish migrants, the majority of whom are considered satisfied, because of the level of income and standard of living achieved. The important difference takes place between those who are more willing to integrate, and those who are deeply immersed in the national diaspora. According to the perception of "winners" in our study, they describe their post-migration success as a kind of "normality", "normal life", "regular life", "easy life", "life performed at a satisfactory level", not affected by limited family budget and bureaucratic barriers. The migrant's assessment of his achieved life situation as a state of "normality" is quite common and has also been registered by other researchers (Lopez Rodrigez 2010; Rabikowska 2010) They

stress how easy is to find employment, to earn a good salary and access social security. All these factors are treated as migration "benefits", which to some extent reduce or neutralize the feeling of deprivation caused in many cases by the necessity to work below their previous professional status and qualifications.

A lot of migrants compare their new situation (the achieved success) with their social and financial position in Poland. The success is evaluated as solid financial stabilization, but frequently at the cost of working in a field that is unrelated to their higher education and which is below their professional aspirations. For these migrants, the post-migration situation was the real success, because it is in this period that they achieved a level of well-being without the day-to-day problems and money shortages that they frequently experienced in the old country.

The new social and cultural environment opens up new possibilities of self-realization to migrants. They appreciate their new experiences and discoveries of their previously unknown abilities. For many of them their success is expressed as a pride at being able to overcome all the trouble they encountered after migration. One respondent said: "I did it myself despite many obstacles and without the help of any relatives or friends". It is quite typical that the majority of Polish migrants, regardless of their real status, prefer to identify themselves as successful people and that they evaluate their decision to migrate positively.

The migrants consider their success mostly as a kind of personal "successful achievement", related strictly to their own way of life and their social status. Personal "success" is mostly defined as a stable everyday life, which means: financial security for the family, self-realization (understood as career advancement), favorable conditions in the new country, the overcoming of successive barriers, and critical moments typical for migrants. Success is also connected with the concept of well-being and a dignified life, satisfaction, social security, respect, and good relationships with coworkers.

For the Polish migrants one of the dimensions of "success" is "normality", a stable life without balancing precariously on a tightrope, and attaining a standard of living correspondent with their level of education and qualifications. Success is also described as the fulfillment of aspirations typical for educated migrants. The last category of migrants have a strong drive to join the "middle class" as quickly as possible and to start living a middle class lifestyle. For the migrants originating from lower social strata and the countryside, "success" could have a different meaning. It is, for them, not only important to achieve a relatively good standard of well-being, but first and foremost, they appreciate their new financial and material status, which they would not be able to achieve in their home country. At the same time, they are quite conscious that their success was facilitated thanks to the Western system of an effective, functioning economy and a highly developed social security system. Yet, they always stress that without their personal activities, determination, risky choices, hard work, and ambitions, it would be impossible to reach their chosen goals.

Successful Polish migrants point out that they very quickly discovered the right way to attain professional advancement. They also stress that they were able to fully concentrate on their professional career, without spending time working additional jobs to supplement their income, which was the common occurrence in Poland. Another issue they raise is the easy access to language lessons and professional workshops, which facilitated their adaptation and upskilling. Migrants consider the atmosphere at the workplace as an important factor conducive to success, where an employee who performs his duties well is appreciated and frequently promoted over time. They also stress that through being in a new country, they discovered their own, previously unknown potential to shape their future, their power to overcome obstacles, previously hidden abilities to activate their creative mind, and the strength to struggle with new challenges. The last statements were expressed mostly by the newcomers who had decided to change their profession and found satisfying work in new fields. It is also true that in some cases, economic conditions (like the oil boom in Norway, high demand for construction workers in UK, or a shortage of IT specialists in Ireland) have accelerated the advancement of migrants.

In such favorable situations success appears as the result of reinforcement of migrants' potential combined with the possibilities of the market. There is no doubt that despite all the above mentioned features, migrant success is frequently conditioned by good luck. That said, such unexpected events – according to the newcomers – are only properly utilized and capitalized on by smart, well prepared, hard-working people. It also should be mentioned here that some migration strategies are applied even before arriving in the new country and are based on carefully prepared plans and long periods of diligent preparation. A good example of this strategy can be seen in the boom of interest in mastering the Norwegian or German language by Polish students of medicine and nursing. Many of them plan to start their professional careers abroad, after they complete their mandatory internships, and thanks to their language competences, the regular adjustment period is often eliminated.

INTEGRATION, MIGRANT SUCCESS, AND MAINTENANCE OF IDENTITY

One of the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of this research project on "successful migrants" was the assumption that migrant success could be achieved much easier in relative isolation from the migrant's own national group (diaspora). In a majority of the individual cases analyzed, this assumption has been fully justified. During the first period of their post-migration stay, the relationships of the newcomer with their own national community (including institutions) in the new country are usually strong and such links are quite natural. However, over the course of time and due in part to a greater level of stability, such relationships become gradually less and less weak and are

expressed only at the occasional and/or symbolic level (like incidental participation at important religious holidays, or national events). This shift is also confirmed by sociological research conducted recently among Poles in the UK (Ryan 2011; Pustułka 2013).

Well integrated migrants gradually reduce their activities in ethnic associations and clubs; they do not participate in cultural events tailored specially for Poles, leaving that space for people who are less integrated, who have limited knowledge of the host country's language, and who mostly originated from lower social strata. This does not mean, however that successful migrants are eager to break completely any relations with their compatriots. It is more that they locate their natural need for familiar/national proximity in other, more intimate spheres (continuing contact with family members, building networks composed of friends and colleagues, etc.). This kind of tendency is often one of reasons for the weakening of the importance of Polish organizations as official institutions to represent the interests of the diaspora towards the country of residence and origin. On this aspect of changes and its consequences, rightly pointed out Nowosielski (2014; 2016) in his studies on the situation of Poles in Germany. There is no doubt, that this process has a much wider range and is noticeable also in other European countries, as well as in the USA. The acceptance of the life style of the mainstream middle class is, for them, very important as proof of their successful integration. They stress their solidarity and loyalty toward the receiving country, explaining, that such an attitude should be a logical reimbursement for all the opportunities and chances they have encountered in the new land. In more simple terms, they would like to live and behave like "natives".

Concluding the remarks on integration and the strategies of Polish migrants, at least six main features can be identified as important factors in the processes leading migrants to become successful.

1. Inherited social, cultural and educational capital brought directly from the home country.
2. Proper understanding of the local system and effective adaptation to it, thanks to previous knowledge of the language, general orientation in social reality and life conditions in the West, and in many cases – previous experience of work or study outside the home country.
3. Personality, facilitating professional advancement (determination, adaptability, strong motivation, consistency in life planning, ability to overcome problems, and confront challenges).
4. Advancement of the integration process due to the migrant's positive attitude toward the society/country of settlement, with the successful elimination of barriers, and last but not least, with the reorientation of the migrant's mentality to the new values and patterns prevailing in the receiving country.
5. Successful migration is also correlated with weak (or even absent) relationships with their own national group (institutional diaspora). However, despite their

integration and good social status in mainstream society a majority of successful migrants still maintain an attachment to their ethnic identity, which is cultivated through personal and family contacts (and supported thanks to the modern electronic media and the possibility of frequent visits back to the home country).

6. After many years abroad, migrants of success (I mean here both categories: those with real [objective] achievements and those feeling satisfaction with their personal well-being) are on the right path towards build their future in the receiving country; they invest in flats and houses, the remittances they send back home gradually shrink, and they carefully plan their children's education. All of this means, that they are not, at the moment, candidates for return migration, which from time to time is suggested in Poland, especially in the political discourse. Some of them could – of course – plan a re-emigration after retirement, but such decisions are difficult to predict today.

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WHO SPEAKS BELARUSIAN? THE LANGUAGE SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

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The article presents the current situation of the Belarusian language and of its speakers. The analysis is based on empirical material collected with the use of ethnographic methods during the period from 1998 to 2005 and 2010, as well as on information found in the professional literature on this subject and on the Internet. The article explains why Belarusian is seen not only as a communication code, but also as a stigma and a manifestation of political views, and how this situation shapes the attitudes towards the language. Additionally, the article presents efforts focused on the promotion of Belarusian language and culture undertaken by informal groups, such as *Spajemstvo* or "Let's Be Belarusians!" The article also shows the difference between the perceived and real use of Belarusian in everyday life.

* * *

Artykuł poświęcony jest współczesnej sytuacji języka białoruskiego i jego użytkownikom. Źródłem analiz są materiały empiryczne zebrane metodą etnograficzną, podczas badań prowadzonych od 1998 do 2005 i w 2010 roku, literatura tematu oraz dane, pochodzące z Internetu. Wyjaśnia z czego wynika zróżnicowane postrzeganie języka białoruskiego – jako kodu komunikowania, stygmatu, manifestacji poglądów politycznych i jaki ma to wpływ na stosunek do tego języka. Opisane zostały także działania na rzecz białoruszczyzny i kształtowania środowiska białoruskojęzycznego, podejmowane przez nieformalne grupy, takie jak *Spajemstvo* (lata 90. XX wieku), czy kampanię „Bądźmy Białorusinami!" – funkcjonującą od 2008 roku w Internecie i w rzeczywistości. Ważnym wątkiem artykułu jest zwrócenie uwagi na to, komu przypisywane jest posługiwanie się językiem białoruskim, a kto rzeczywiście z niego korzysta w codziennym życiu.

Keywords: Belarus, bilingualism, grass root movement, national identity, social activism, social organisation, *Trasianka*, vulnerable language

"A person is defined by the language they speak"[1] (KW. Archives. Interview 20). This is what I heard during one of the first conversations I recorded during the ethnological

[1] Orig. "Čalavek ës'c' tym, na âkoj move ën razmaŭlâe". All quotations are from recorded and transcribed conversations. The original quotations in Belarusian and the information about the interlocutors (limited to gender, age, place and the year the conversation was recorded) are provided in the footnotes. The entire material collected during research in Belarus is held in the author's archives.

research I conducted in the Republic of Belarus[2]. At first I thought that these words pertained to me as the researcher, who, not fluent in Belarusian, was asking questions by mixing Polish, Russian and Belarusian words. However, remembering the rule that one should use the language of the researched community, I did not give up and with time, my questions became clearer and the conversations started to flow naturally. It was then that I understood what the above comment about the defining properties of language meant. It referred to the relationship between language and national identity, which was very meaningful in the Belarusian context.

The fall of the USSR and the creation of the Republic of Belarus in place of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR) raised many questions for the citizens of this country. One of the questions pertained to language, understood in national and communication terms. However, the answers varied and they depended on the context and the interlocutor. The same was not only true for average citizens, but also for the intellectual elite and power holders.

With this in mind, the objective of this article is to present the current situation of the Belarusian language and to identify and describe its users and the contexts in which the language is being used[3]. The activities shaping Belarusian culture will also be described.

A FEW NUMBERS

According to the 2009 national census[4], the population of Belarus is 9,503,807 people, including 7,957,252 (83.7%) Belarusians, 785,084 (8.3%) Russians, and 761,471 (8%) from other nationalities[5]. The language data included in the 2009 census is divided into two categories: the declared language for home communication and the declared language for general communication. Belarusian for home communication was declared by 4,841,319 (approximately 61%) people and 2,073,853 (approximately 26%) declared they use Belarusian for general communication. By contrast, 2,943,817 (approximately 37%) indicated Russian as the language of home communication and

[2] The research was conducted from 1998 to 2005, and in 2010 in Minsk and the surrounding areas, with the use of ethnographic methodology (conversational interview), and several conversations per person. There were 95 subjects, 80 of them declared themselves to Belarusian. Out of the 15 non-Belarusians, 11 were Russians. Conversations were conducted in Belarusian, Russian and occasionally in *Trasianka*, a popular language mix in Belarus.

[3] The article does not deal with issues related to the use of the Belarusian language in religious institutions (including the Roman Catholic Church). This subject requires a separate, detailed discussion.

[4] The 2009 census was the most recent national survey in the Republic of Belarus. The next is planned for 2019.

[5] Nacional'nyj statističeskij komitet Respubliki Belarus. http://belstat.gov.by/homep/ru/perepic/2009/vihod_tables/5.8-0.pdf, access: 23.01.2014. See also: http://census.belstat.gov.by/pdf/PopulationNation-ru-RU.pdf.

5,551,527 (approximately 70%) as the language of general communication. Bilingualism was declared by 2,216,374 (approximately 28%) of Belarusians[6].

Analysis of data from the 1999 and 2009 census indicates a decline in the use of Belarusian, both for home and general communication. In 1999, 85.6% of Belarusians declared Belarusian as the language of home communication and 41.3% as the language of general communication[7].

In March 2012, a social organization "Let's Be Belarusians!" and the Laboratory for Axiometrical Research NOVAK, conducted a survey called *Belarusian, the Language of the Elite and the Opposition*[8]. In this survey, 57.2% declared Belarusian and 78.7% Russian as their language of communication. The total number indicated that 35% of the surveyed population were bilingual. The survey also aimed to assess the number of people, who "know" Belarusian and those who "actually use it". The results indicated that 23.4% know the language, but only 3.9% use it. The comparison of the 2012 and 2009 data showed a decrease of 10% in the 'know' group and of 2% in the "use" group.

Additionally in 2007, the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies conducted a survey pertaining to the use of Belarusian by the President of Belarus. The results indicated that 34.3% did not see the need for the President to speak Belarusian, 34.1% thought that the President should address citizens in Belarusian on special occasions, such as national holidays, and 29.7% wanted the President to use Belarusian in daily communication (Eberhardt 2008, 25).

On the one hand, the above noted examples indicate the decline in the number of users declaring Belarusian as the language they know and use and, on the other hand, they signal an ambivalent attitude to this language. As the result, an application to declare Belarusian as an endangered language was filed and the language was designated as 'vulnerable' in the UNESCO Interactive Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger, on 30 May 2013[9].

THE SITUATION OF THE BELARUSIAN LANGUAGE AND ITS USE

The data presented in the first section of the paper, although important, does not explain the causes of the vulnerable position of the Belarusian language. Therefore, the collected narrations provide additional information on the current situation of this

[6] Nacional'nyj statističeskij komitet Respubliki Belarus. http://belstat.gov.by/homep/ru/perepic/2009/vihod_tables/5.8-0.pdf, access: 23.01.2014.

[7] Nacional'nyj statističeskij komitet Respubliki Belarus. http://belstat.gov.by/homep/ru/perepic/2009/vihod_tables/5.8-0.pdf, access: 23.01.2014.

[8] Vynìkì sacyâlagìčnaj apytankì: belaruskaâ mova – mova èlìty cì apazìcyì. http://www.tbm-mova.by/monitoring17.html, access: 23.01.2014.

[9] UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger. http://www.unesco.org/culture/languages-atlas/en/atlasmap/language-id-335.html, access: 04.02.2014.

language. Almost all conversations pertaining to this subject started with an assessment that the language issue is difficult. As justification, people often added that "Belarusians do not speak Belarusian not because they do not want to, but because they forgot how to"[10] (KW. Archives. Interview 16). They also tried to explain the causes that led to this situation. Many historical facts, memories, and stories of personal experiences appeared in the collected narrations. The events mentioned in the interviews went back to the 19th century and included, for example, the ban imposed by the Tsar on speaking Belarusian in public places[11], but also to the concerted efforts to develop Belarusian language and culture, called Belarussification[12], which took place during the 1920s and 1930s, or to the repressions imposed by the Soviet authorities on Belarusian intellectuals in the 1930s. Most of the interviewees knew about these events from books and the fact that they recalled them during the interviews indicates that the state of the Belarusian language has long been ambivalent.

Other events recalled by the interviewees took place in the 20th century, and hence had been witnessed by some of them. People evoked the time of World War II[13] and the post war period, when the Soviet nation was shaped. The Soviet nation building process included tactics such as the strengthening of the pro-Russian administration[14], repatriations[15], increasing the membership of the Communist Party[16], and an increased Russification[17]. Out of all the tools used in the process of building the Soviet nation Russification was the most significant as it followed the directive of Nikita Khrushchev, who during the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the BSSR in Minsk said that "the sooner we all start speaking Russian, the sooner we will build

[10] Orig. "Belarusy ne razmaŭlâûc' na belaruskaj move ne tamu što ne hočuc', a prosta âny zabylì âe".

[11] It refers to the 1830s ban on sermons in Belarusian, connected to the revocation of resolutions of the 1596 Union of Brest, which established the Greek Catholic Church in Belarus (Szybieka 2002, 77).

[12] In Belarusian historiography, Belarussification denotes the period of Belarusian language and culture development.

[13] During World War II approximately 2,700,000 of Belarusians were killed (on in four people). A memorial in Khatyn commemorates the lives lost and all towns and villages that were burnt entirely at the time.

[14] From 1945 to 1955, approximately a million Belarusians (cultural and professional elite) were deported and replaced with Russians. Russians were also placed in the positions of power in the national and local administration (Mironowicz 1999, 183).

[15] From 1947 to 1953, approximately 90.000 Belarusian workers left their homeland and were replaced by Russians (Szybieka 2002, 371).

[16] After 1945, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus adhered to the resolution of shaping the society in the spirit of the Soviet patriotism, and in hatred towards the German invaders (Szybieka 2002, 372–373).

[17] Russification intensified after the 1945 toast by Joseph Stalin, in which he called the Russian nation the leading power of the Soviet Union (Szybieka 2002, 372). In 1951 censorship of literature was imposed and the number of Belarusian newspapers and periodicals was reduced. In the 1960s the majority of cultural institutions used Russian as the official language (Mironowicz 1999, 188–189, 211).

communism"[18] (Szybieka 2002, 375). The implementation of this postulate was visible in the public and private sphere and most of all in education[19]. The ubiquitous Russian popularized Communist propaganda while pushing national Belarusian messages to the level of ethnography and folklore (Radzik 2000, 76). These concerted efforts contributed to the "progress of denationalization and de-Belarusification" (Lucèvìč 2010, 236). Moreover, the Soviet propaganda of that time promised benefits resulting from using Russian. One of the interviewees recalled:

> "At the time I was more keen to use Russian, but it was my parents' fault, because they decided for me. They thought that speaking Russian was more prestigious"[20] (KW. Archives. Interview 27).

The spread of education in Russian[21], to the detriment of Belarusian schools, was a sign of those times. In that period, Belarusian schools kept functioning only in smaller towns and villages. All city schools were Russian. They offered classes in Belarusian, but only as an elective subject. Additionally, a rule allowing exemption from learning Belarusian on the grounds of a doctor's note and parents' request was introduced (Dubâneckì 1997, 45, Trusau 2007, 115). One of the interviewees spoke about it:

> "When I started school, you did not have to study Belarusian. Parents provided all kinds of excuses, be it health reasons or family problems. Any reason was good to get an exemption from Belarusian class"[22] (KW. Archives. Interview 58).

At the end of the 1960s, a division had occurred with respect to the use of language. Russian became the language of cities and Belarusian the language of rural areas. Hence, the city was associated with Russian, education, social advancement, and with the elites while the country was equated with Belarusian, lack of education, backwardness and lack of culture. This issue was strongly emphasized in the interviews:

[18] This was a paraphrase of the 1956 Tashkent resolution stating that 'Russian should become the second official language for all nations belonging to the Soviet Union and it should be the source of lexical enrichment for their native languages' (Mironowicz 1999, 210).

[19] From 1949 to 1951, a seven-year primary education was mandatory and it was extended to eleven years after 1959. Due to the initial lack of Belarusian teaching staff, Russian teachers were brought in. Later, local Belarusian teaching staff was trained, but the teachers' education was in Russian. Initially, it led to bilingualism at schools. After 1951, Belarusian was no longer obligatory as the language of instruction or examination. Beginning in the 1970s, the programs of study were designed in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) (Szybieka 2002, 375, 400).

[20] Orig. "Â bol'š aryentavaŭsâ na ruskuû movu, u gètym vìnavatyâ mae bac'kì – âny zrabìlì takì vybar, tamu što ruskì âzyk lìčylsâ znac' bol'š prèstyžna".

[21] All institutions of higher education provided instruction in Russian (with the exception of the Departments of Philology, where one could specialize in Russian or Belarusian).

[22] Orig "Kagda â pastupìla ŭ školu bylo tak, što nas asvabadžalì ad belaruskava âzyka, to est' po kakìm- lìba pryčynam: to po sastaân'nì zdarovìâ, to es'lì ŭ kago-ta nepalnacènnaâ sâm`â. Lûbaâ pryčyna padhodzìla dlâ tavo štoby asvabadzìc' rebënka ad belaruskava âzyka".

> "When I arrived in Minsk in 1981, I felt strange, but I knew that in the cities people did not speak Belarusian. My cousins, who went to the city to study, told me about it. They had adopted the Russian lifestyle and they spoke Russian, so I also tried to speak Russian, when I moved there"[23] (KW. Archives. Interview 94).

With time, terms such as, "the language of the country", "rural language", "farmer's language", "futureless language", "dirty language", and "broken Russian" became equated with Belarusian, while terms such as, "high language", "language of education", and "language of intelligent people" became to denote Russian.

The first significant signs of change occurred in the 1980s and were brought about by protests organized in defence of Belarusian. The protests included letters[24] written by Belarusian intellectuals to Mikhail Gorbachev and an underground publication *Mother Tongue and the Moral-Aesthetic Progress*[25] by Aleg Bembel (1985)[26]. These efforts resulted in small incremental changes in the attitude towards the Belarusian language and its speakers. It showed that also educated people speak Belarusian. Subsequent changes occurred after the fall of the Soviet Union, when the independent Republic of Belarus was being formed. The beginning of the 1990s was the time of concerted efforts in rebuilding the prestige of the Belarusian language, which was established as the official language of the Republic[27]. The assessment of these changes by the interviewees was ambivalent, although no one doubted that Belarusians should speak "their language", that is Belarusian. However, the interlocutors remarked that the return of Belarusian to official status stemmed from the political agenda rather than from the actual need to use Belarusian[28]. Moreover, the protagonists who had earlier been

[23] Orig. "Kalì â pryehala ŭ 1981 godze u Mìnsk, mne bylo dzìŭna, ale â ŭžo vedala, što ŭ goradah ne gavorac' pa-belarusku. Mne gèta kazalì mae svaâkì âkìâ ŭžo vučylìsâ ŭ goradze j perajšlì na ruskì lad ì gavarylì pa-rusku, tamu j â staralasâ ŭ goradze gavaryc' pa-rusku".

[24] It refers to the letters written in 1986 and 1987 and signed by 28 and 134 renowned writers, scientists, journalists and artists, respectively.

[25] Orig. *Rodnae slova ì maral'na-èstètyčny pragrès.*

[26] Similar protests also took place earlier. Already in 1956, Bronislav Rževuski, Professor at the Pedagogical Institute in Grodno wrote a letter to the BSSR authorities in defence of the Belarusian language. In 1957, Lavon and Michas Bely posted fliers all over Minsk, informing the public about this letter. The same year, an article by Barys Sačanka entitled *Šanavac' rodnuju movu* was published in the periodical *Literatura i Mastactva.* In 1968, students from the Public Belarusian University demonstrated against the Russification. Finally, in 1977, an anonymous at the time author (in fact Alâksej Kauka) published a letter entitled *To My Russian Friend* (Szybieka 2002, 389–415).

[27] Article 17 of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, dated 15 March 1994 establishes Belarusian as the official language. The Constitution also guarantees freedom of communication in Russian, which is regarded as the language of international communication.

[28] Nelli Bekus has noted that, at the time, the language policy centred around the ethno-linguistic project of Belarusification, which focused on the Belarusian language, while rejecting everything that was related to the Soviet times and the Russian language. She deemed it a mistake of the Belarusian patriotic opposition, because in her opinion, the Belarusian nation was shaped under the rule of the Soviet Union, together with the modernization of the society. Therefore, the idea of the Belarusian nation is not in

involved in eradicating Belarusian became its biggest supporters and propagators in the new Republic, which resulted in an inconsistent message:

> "If someone steps up on a podium and says that it is our duty to speak Belarusian and then you visit them in their home and their children speak Russian, then you ask a question: Who is he preaching to? Why do you tell others that Belarusian is important, but you and your family do not have it in high regard? When I notice this, I do not believe you anymore and I will not do as you tell me"[29] (KW. Archives. Interview 5).

Moreover, the fast pace of re-Belarusification often felt as the language was being forced on the speakers. However, the interviewees also talked about the positive sides of the process, such as the return of Belarusian as the language of instruction in schools and the idea of a 10% salary bonus for those that spoke Belarusian. Overall, the interlocutors admitted that communicating in Belarusian was important, but that it should not have been forced.

The language issues reappeared when Alexander Lukashenko became the President of Belarus in 1994. The interviewees emphasized that this event marked the return to the policy of Russification[30]. One of the signs of this policy was the referendum of 14 May 1995 asking citizens whether Russian should also have the status of the official language in Belarus. 83.3% of voters supported this option[31], which resulted in an amendment to the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, proclaiming two official languages, Belarusian and Russian. This amendment was added to the Act of 26 January 1990 on Languages in the Republic of Belarus[32]. It is important to note how the regulation pertaining to the use of Russian and Belarusian was formulated, especially how the conjunctions 'and', and 'or' were applied in the text of the document. The first conjunction is inclusive while the second one is exclusive[33], which impacts the interpretation of the language regulation. The conjunction "and" was used in the article sanctioning two official languages. However, the conjunction "or" was used in the articles pertaining to the use of language in the following areas of public life:

opposition to the Soviet experience and the Russian language is not perceived as a foreign language, but rather it is an integral part of the Belarusian cultural heritage (Bekus 2011, 120–122).

[29] Orig. "Kalì čalavek vyhodzìc' na trybunu ì gavoryc' što trèba kab byla belaruskaâ mova, a pryhodzìš da âgonaj haty, a âgo dzecì razmaŭlâûc' pa-rasejsku. Dyk dlâ kago ž ty gètyâ lozungì kìdaŭ? čamu ty gavaryš ìnšamu, što gèta ës'c' kaštoŭnas'c' a sam gètaga ne ŭâŭlâeš sabe ì svaëj sâm`ì? Ì kalì â adzìn raz zlavìl câbe na gètym, to â bol'š tabe ne veru. Â ne budu rabìc' tak âk ty kažaš".

[30] However, analysts assess the situation differently. Mainly, they notice the populist character of A. Łukaszenko's actions and they see it as a part of his strategy to ensure the continuation of the language policy from the times of the BSSR (cf. Bekus 2011, 122).

[31] The reported participation rate in this referendum (approximately 80%) was very controversial and doubts were voiced with respect to the accuracy of the reporting.

[32] The most recent changes to this Act were introduced in July 2011. See the webpage of: Zakon Rèspubliki Belarus, 26 studzenâ 1990 g. N 3094-XI, Ab Movah U Rèspublicy Belarus'. http://tbm-mova.by/laws1_8.html, access: 23.01.2014.

[33] Sometimes the conjunction 'or' is inclusive or clarifying.

technical documentation, democratic rights (voting), courts (including civil, administrative, criminal, and notarial)[34], public services (transportation, communication, health care, and commerce), education (although detailed regulations also make use of the conjunction "and/or"), research, cartography, and trademarks. On the other hand, the conjunction "and/or" is used in articles pertaining to public administration and its documentation (including personal identity documents), academia (meetings and conferences), culture, media, military, international agreements, adverts and commercials. The conjunction "or" appears once in the article pertaining to the provision of legal protection. Average citizens do not notice these nuances, because they are convinced that the law ensures them the right to both languages, which is guaranteed by their equal official status. However, in reality the Russian language has a privileged position[35].

Other activities confirming Russification, mentioned by the interviewees, included: limited use of Belarusian in the media, closing of Belarusian periodicals, a decreasing number of books published in Belarusian, and closing of Belarusian schools. All these issues are highlighted by the Tavarystva belaruskaj movy ìmâ F. Skaryny (TBM)[36], which is lobbying for changes in the actual status of the Belarusian language[37]. One of the ongoing campaigns of TBM is filing official requests with the authorities and publishing the replies on the TBM's website[38]. One such reply to the inquiry pertaining to school closures reads that the issue is not the number of schools, but the number of children who attend them. On 12 January 2009, the Ministry of Education released information that a total of 91,290 children started school in 2008/2009, including 73,579 (83.3%) children enrolled in Russian language schools and 14,712 (16.7%) in

[34] An interesting article on the use of official languages in the legal system of Belarus and the requirement for document translation is available on the webpage of: http://www.tbm-mova.by/pubs28.html, access: 23.01.2014.

[35] I was able to confirm this during my visit to Minsk in 2010. As a foreigner temporarily living in Belarus, I had to register my place of residence with the local authorities. The registration form I was given was only in Russian. I was told that the equivalent form in Belarusian did not exist. Other examples include instructions for computer use provided to the participants of the 5th International Congress of Belarusian Studies or signs posted around the city, such as notices about conservation works (despite the fact that the name of the company performing the work was in Belarusian, *Mìnska spadčyna* [*Heritage of Minsk*]), etc.

[36] The F. Skaryna Belarusian Language Society was established in 1989. Its objectives are to defend the language rights of Belarusians and to support the development of Belarusian language and culture. More information is available at the TBM website: http://www.tbm-mova.by, access: 23.01.2014, also 29.04.2018.

[37] These objectives are included in the TBM's document *Strategy of the Belarusian Language Society. The Belarusian Language Development in the 21st Century* prepared by Zaprudski S., Anisim A., Koščanka U., Kručkou S., Maldzis A., Tabolič A., and Cychun G., available at the TBM's website: http://www.tbm-mova.by/mova.html, access: 23.01.2014.

[38] In 2015, the idea of sending requests to the national and local authorities and to various institutions took on a form of monitoring the ease of access and the freedom to use the Belarusian language in various areas of life. The published reports indicate how and where the law on the equal status of the Belarusian and the Russian languages is upheld. See: http://www.tbm-mova.by/monitoring.html, access: 29.04.2018.

Belarusian language schools[39]. These numbers confirm the low status of Belarusian, although the choice of education in Russian is not surprising. Taking into consideration that education in Russian has been mandatory since the 1930s, attending schools with the Russian language has become "natural" for many people. It might be why

> "Belarus is the only country in the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS) without a *Russkiy Mir* Centre [an institution for the promotion of Russian language and culture], while there are eight such centres in the neighbouring Ukraine" (Wierzbowska-Miazga 2013, 28).

This indicates that Russian has a strong position in Belarus, while Belarusian and attitudes towards Belarusian are determined by the environment. When Belarusian is used for challenging the authorities, it becomes the synonym of opposition and is viewed negatively. Outside this context, it is just another means of communication.

As the result, Belarusians function in a system of two languages, Belarusian and Russian, and in the increasingly popular *Trasianka*[40]. *Trasianka*, as the communication code, is created by mixing Belarusian and Russian, although more languages may be included in the mix. The choice of languages and the percentage of elements from each language in *Trasianka* depend on the region. For example, *Trasianka* spoken near the Russian border would include more Russian elements, while spoken near the Polish border would include more Polish words. Some of the interviewees were convinced that *Trasianka* is mostly used by people from rural areas while linguists claim that

> "*Trasianka* is more often used by people holding administrative and technical positions in rural areas and also by the inhabitants of small and medium towns than by uneducated rural population" (Smułkowa 2000, 92).

Finally, we need to ask how different spheres of life impact the use of the above noted languages. The interviewees stressed that the choice varies and depends on the context (the situation, places, people involved in the conversation, but also the ability to communicate – an ease in code switching is noticeable in these situations). However, some regularities in the use of language can be established. The majority of interlocutors mentioned the use of *Trasianka* in the home environment. Very few people declared the use of pure Belarusian or Russian in those circumstances. The mixed language also dominates in informal situations (for example during breaks at schools or on the street). However, at school and at work (and in other formal situations) Russian is the dominant language while Belarusian is rarely used. On the other hand, Belarusian has become "an export language" of sorts, because people who travel[41] (mostly to Western countries) try to speak Belarusian (if it is required).

[39] Lìst Mìnìstèrstva adukacyì Rèspublìkì Belarus ad 12.01.2009 No 06–17/7231/ds. http://tbm-mova.by/pubs18.html, access: 23.01.2014.

[40] The word *Trasianka* is derived from the word *treści* meaning "to chop" or "to mix" (Sudnìk and Kryŭko. eds. 1999, 666).

[41] Obviously, apart from speaking foreign languages, mostly English.

THE USE OF BELARUSIAN

Looking at the speakers of Belarusian in the above-noted context, the interviewees distinguished two groups. The first group includes people from rural areas, but also blue-collar workers, who as the first generation have moved to the city, and older people who have left their villages to move in with their children living in the city. This shows that city dwellers can also speak Belarusian, assuming they come from the country[42]. Hence, speaking Belarusian determines membership of a social group, which follows the stereotype instilled during the times of the BSSR (Belarusian is the language of rural areas and Russian is the language of the cities). The second group of Belarusian speakers includes people with higher education, especially intellectuals with a background in humanities[43]. Thus, the group includes Belarusian philologists, who often teach Belarusian, writers, and artists. The fact that this group was singled out by the interviewees may be seen as the continuation of the view instilled at the times of the BSSR, that the only form of Belarusian spoken in the cities is professional jargon. On the other hand, the interlocutors claimed, those intellectuals constitute a group especially interested in literature, history, art and broadly understood culture. Moreover since 2000, teenagers and young adults are increasingly counted amongst the speakers of Belarusian. One of the interlocutors noted that:

> "there is a noticeable tendency amongst the youth to speak Belarusian, because it brings them prestige"[44] (KW. Archives. Interview 5).

Another interviewee added:

> "Young people who see their future in the independent Belarus, begin to be interested in the Belarusian language"[45] (KW. Archives. Interview 72).

Andrej Dyńko, editor in chief of *Nasza Niwa*, a Belarusian weekly, made similar observations:

> "Belarusian is no longer the rural language of the kolkhoz [collective farm in the Soviet Union] and of [local] broadcasting. It is the language of young people, artists, and intellectuals. It is the language of protest, nonconformism, punk, challenges, and of western way of thinking" (2007, 62).

[42] The dominant view is that all Belarusians come from a rural background.

[43] It is important to note that science background is not in opposition to an interest in humanities. For example, Professor Jury Hadyka, who initiated research on Belarusian culture, is a physicist and a philosopher of religion.

[44] Orig. "Užo sârod moladzì vìdac' tèndèncyû razmaŭlâc' pa-belarusku. Gèta dlâ âe prèstyžna".

[45] Orig. "Da belaruskaj movy pryhodzìc' moladz' âkaâ z'vâzyvae svaû budučynû z suverènnaj kraìnaj".

Hence, small changes are visible in the attitudes of the speakers of Belarusian[46] as well as in attitudes towards the speakers themselves. The environment plays a significant role in this process. The creation of a Belarusian-friendly environment is not easy, yet not impossible. The activities of informal groups such as *Spajemstvo*, NGOs such as the World Association of Belarusians *Baćkouščyna* or of independent institutions of culture, such as the art gallery "Ŭ" in Minsk are a proof that it is possible.

Spajemstvo was established in 1996 in Minsk[47]. Its founder, a psychoanalyst, wanted to create a space, where people who wished to communicate in their mother tongue (Belarusian) but had no opportunity to do so at home or at work, could come together. At first the group met at the clinic, then at the offices of the Minsk branch of the Belarusian National Front (BNF) and finally at the building of the Belarusian Language Society. In principle, anyone could become a *spajemnik*, however, meeting notices were published in *Naše Slovo,* a Belarusian newspaper, which indicates a specific readership. In general, new members were introduced to the group by the old members. Members of the group included people of various educational and professional backgrounds. What brought them together was the need to speak Belarusian. One of them said:

> "Today, a person who is interested in speaking Belarusian is alone and needs a group of people with similar interests"[48] (KW. Archives. Interview 40).

Another person added:

> "I work in an international environment and I miss the warm Belarusian support network, I miss someone that I could talk to ... I need close friends"[49] (KW. Archives. Interview 44).

Membership of the *Spajemstvo* varied, although there was a core group of about ten to twelve people who attended the meetings regularly. Although the form of the meetings and objectives of the group[50] resembled therapy sessions, the meetings meant much more to the participants. They provided an opportunity to meet friends and some people continued their friendship outside of the formal group meetings. Soon, the group began to organize other activities, such as bonfires, trips around Belarus, and staged a play by Janek Kupała, entitled *Paŭlinka*. The group continues to meet

[46] It is especially visible on the Internet, where an increasing number of comments come from people who use Belarusian. This group includes public figures, such as Mikita Najdzionau, the leader of the band HURMA. See: Mikita Najdzionaŭ: W twórczości jestem całkiem białoruski. http://eastbook.eu/2014/01/country/belarus/mikita-najdzionau, access: 22.06. 2014.

[47] My attendance of "Spajemstvo" meetings made me aware of the existence of other groups of this kind. I learned that there were a few of them in Minsk and also in other cities, e.g. in Maladzyechna and Grodno.

[48] Orig. "U naša vrèmâ kalì čalavek ìncerèsuecca belaruskìm âzykom, èta značyc' što ën sam ì âmu patrèba adnadumcaŭ."

[49] Orig. "Maâ praca absalûtna ìntèrnacyânal'naâ ì mne brak ščyraga plâča belaruskaga, z kìm možna spakojna pagavaryc' (...) mne trèba lûdzej blìzkìh".

[50] Objectives included: improvement of language skills, learning about Belarusian culture, finding people with similar views, self-improvement, and the development of Belarusian patriotism.

today, although the deciding factor nowadays is a long-lasting friendship rather than the need to speak Belarusian.

Another example of shaping the Belarusian-speaking community is the "Let's Be Belarusians!" campaign initiated and organized by the World Association of Belarusians *Baćkouščyna* in 2008. The campaign is conducted both online and one the ground[51]. The objectives of the campaign include educating the public about the value of Belarusian language and history. The name of the campaign is very telling as it calls for the creation of a community by organizing social and cultural events aimed at all inhabitants of Belarus, regardless of their language, national identity or political views (Garoška 2009, 4). The campaign encourages consistent use of Belarusian in all its activities and is characterized by a high level of professionalism, cultural acumen and artistic quality. Some of the projects include: a postcard series entitled "We are Different!"[52], the production of music albums of new bands singing in Belarusian, computer keyboard stickers enabling typing in Belarusian on keyboards with Latin alphabet, an animated film about the history of Belarus[53], and a series of short films showcasing places of historical importance all over Belarus and encouraging travel around the country[54]. Another educational series, employing elements of fantasy has the same objectives[55]. Moreover, the "Let's Be Belarusians!" campaign supports the organization of many cultural events[56] and provides current information about these events on its website. An increasing number of people participate in this wide range of activities. Consequently, more people realise that "culture improves the quality of life" and that "speaking Belarusian is modern and provides a good foundation for the future"[57] as the slogans of the campaign say. Undoubtedly, the activities of "Let's Be Belarusians!" help to increase the number of Belarusian speakers and help to promote the status of Belarusian as the language of public communication.

The third example of promoting Belarusian and supporting creativity is the art gallery "Ў"[58], established in 2009 in Minsk. The main objective of the gallery is to shape an active artistic community, but also to provide a space for various cultural, educational, and social events. Since the beginning of 2014, the gallery has been offering free Bela-

[51] Organisation's webpage: Budz'ma belarusamì!. http://budzma.org/, access: 22.06.2014.

[52] Eight postcards present symbols of Belarusian identity. They include renowned Belarusians, such as Francysk Skaryna (philosopher, writer and printer), Józef Drozdowicz (painter), Stefania Staniouta (actress), Borys Kita (mathematician), Pesnary (a folk-rock band) and cultural symbols such as the kontusz sash, manufactured in Slutsk, Hussar wings, and the letter "Ў".

[53] Available at: http://files.budzma.org/video/mult/BUDZMA_BELARUSAMI_H264.mp4, access: 22.06.2014.

[54] Available at: Kraj BY. http://budzma.by/category/kraj-by, access: 22.06.2014.

[55] Example: In the Land of the Dragon, available at: U pošukah cmoka!. http://budzma.by/country/cmok.html, access: 22.06. 2014.

[56] For example the annual Festival of Belarusian Advertising and Communication "Ad.Nak!"

[57] See: About Us. http://budzma.by/about, access: 22.06.2014.

[58] Gallery webpage: Galerèâ sučasnaga mastactva "Ў". http://ygallery.by/, access: 22.06.2014.

rusian language lessons under the heading "Language or Coffee". The lessons are the idea of Kaccâryna Kibal'čyč, a Belarusian journalist working in Moscow, who organised the first free Belarusian lesson there in 2013. Lessons in Minsk are taught by Alesia Litvinouska and Hleb Labadzienka. Students' are of all ages, come from all walks of life, and are at various levels of Belarusian language proficiency. Their motivation for attending the lessons also varies and includes passion for learning, the need of conversation in Belarusian, finding something to do in their free time or meeting new people. The motivation that brings people to the gallery is not important for the organisers, because the objective is to improve the attitude towards Belarusian and to increase the number of Belarusian speakers[59]. It is worth noting that as early as 2014, these meetings were officially registered as an organization called: "Social and Cultural Institution for the Development of the Belarussian Language and Culture «Mova Nanova»"[60]. Since then, the meetings have been organized as free language courses in Minsk and other cities in Belarus – indeed everywhere where there are people wishing to learn the language and a volunteer teacher, who wants to teach them. People who are learning the language or are speakers of Belarusian can find useful information on a special portal http://www.movananova.by/. The portal offers teaching materials, Belarussian literature (written texts and audiobooks), articles on Belarusian issues, Belarusian films and foreign ones translated to Belarusian (for all age groups), theatre plays, and Belarusian pop music, etc. The portal also encourages participation in various initiatives, such as register of people who declare Belarusian as their first language, which was launched in 2016. Although by April 2018, only 1,900 people have registered, the majority of them are young, which may indicate the change in attitudes towards the Belarusian language.

The examples described in this paper are not exhaustive by any means. Moreover, it needs to be emphasised that the majority of these projects are grass root activities and indicate the strengthening of national identity among Belarusians.

IN PLACE OF A SUMMARY – THE BELARUSIAN LANGUAGE AND THE BELARUSIAN IDENTITY

For the past few years, Belarusian intellectuals have been discussing the issue of Belarusian in the context of national identity. However, the passing of time and the challenges of the contemporary world make an increasing number of people accept the bilingual option, providing that Belarusian and Russian have an equal status (as opposed to the current situation described in this paper). One of the proponents of this idea, Piotr Rudkouski, claims that:

[59] See: Mowa ci kawa. Darmowe lekcje białoruskiego w Mińsku. http://www.polskieradio.pl/75/921/Artykul/835293,Mowa-ci-Kawa-Darmowe-lekcje-bialoruskiego-w-Minsku, access: 22.06.2014.

[60] Orig. "Socyjâlna-kulturnaâ ustanova razviccâ belaruskaj movy i kultury «Mova Nanova»". http://www.movananova.by/pra-kursy/, access: 29.04.2018.

> "Bilingualism does not threaten Belarusian identity. Language is a value, but not an absolute value. An abandonment of our language or its rejection would be a serious ethical error. The nation would not disappear, but a certain value, something extremely precious would be lost" (2009, 114).

However, is the Belarusian language treated as something valuable by Belarusians? The stories collected during my research indicate that it is. My interviewees appreciated the importance of the Belarusian language in shaping their national identity and at the same time they refused to treat it as a symbol. Instead, they insisted that Belarusian is a language for communication. On the other hand, the historical language context, especially in the previous century, is the reason why speaking Belarusian is not an essential element of Belarusian national identity. The existing bilingualism (Belarusian-Russian) and an increasing use of *Trasianka* may lead to the weakening of Belarusian national identity or it may create its new (different) quality.

The words of Alexander Lukashenko confirm the ambivalent language situation in Belarus. In his speech of 22 April 2014, he said:

> "If we stop speaking Russian, we will lose our mind and if we forget how to speak Belarusian, we will stop being a nation'. At the same time, he declared support for 'the development of Russian on the level equal to the mother tongue [Belarusian]"[61].

This last sentence was wildly commented on the Internet, showing polarisation of views and the noticeably paradoxical situation of the Belarusian language in Belarus. Moreover, it has proven that the issue of the Belarusian language is vital not only for academics, but for citizens too.

Translated by Zofia Orly

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[61] Lukašenko zaŝiŝaet russkij âzyk, no obeŝaet razvivat' ego naravne s 'matčynaj movaj, http://news.tut.by/society/396153.html, access: 22.04.2014.

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ETHNOLOGY AND SOCIOCULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN KYRGYZSTAN[1]

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The article is focused on the state of sociocultural anthropology and ethnology in Kyrgyzstan. It seeks to map the disciplines' intellectual and institutional history in the sociopolitical context in which it has evolved. The material for the study comes from published and internet sources as well as from a series of interviews with Kyrgyz anthropologists/ethnologists and academics from other countries who have worked in Kyrgyzstan. The article aims at placing the discipline in the sociocultural and political contexts of socialism and postsocialism in Kyrgyzstan. By considering power relations and economic relations as factors of the discipline's development, the article refers to broader debates on the social production of anthropological knowledge.

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Artykuł poświęcony jest etnologii i antropologii społecznokulturowej w Kirgistanie. Celem tekstu jest naszkicowanie intelektualnej i instytucjonalnej mapy dyscypliny w perspektywie historycznej, z uwzględnieniem kontekstu społeczno-politycznego, w którym się rozwijała. Materiały empiryczne pochodzą z publikacji tradycyjnych i internetowych a także z serii wywiadów z kirgiskimi etnologami i antropologami, a także z uczonymi z innych krajów, którzy prowadzą badania antropologiczne w Kirgistanie. W artykule dążę do umieszczenia dyscypliny w kontekście społeczno-kulturowym i politycznym

[1] The idea for the article stems from a symposium 'Anthropology in Spain and in Europe', where I presented a desk-research based report on the situation of sociocultural anthropology in Central Asia. (See details at: http://webs.ucm.es/info/antrosim/indexeng.htm). The symposium was an inspiration for me, and after it had ended I decided to carry out a more in-depth study about anthropology in one of the Central Asian countries, my native Kyrgyzstan. While being a fascinating journey, this project took much longer time to complete than I had initially thought.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the people who shared their knowledge of Kyrgyz anthropology and ethnology with me: Sergey Abashin, Aida Abdykanova, Stephanie Bunn, Aigerim Dyikenbaeva, Jeanne Féaux de la Croix, Peter Finke, Alisher Ilkhamov, Aksana Ismailbekova, Emil Nasritdinov, Ruslan M. Rahimov, Madeleine Reeves, John Schoeberlein and Mucaram Toktogulova. In on-line (skype mediated) interviews and in face-to-face interviews, which I conducted in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, as well as through email exchanges, these scholars have generously provided me with their views and perspectives on the field as well as the valuable comments and corrections to the earlier drafts of the article. It is important to emphasize, however, that the responsibility for the article in its final shape – and for the possible errors and misjudgments it might contain – rests solely on the author.

socjalizmu i post-socjalizmu w Kirgistanie. Jako czynniki rozwoju dyscypliny rozpatruję relacje władzy i stosunki gospodarcze, w ten sposób umieszczam ten tekst w szerszych debatach na temat społecznego konstruowania wiedzy antropologicznej.

K e y w o r d s: Kyrgyzstan, ethnology, sociocultural anthropology, research, teaching, knowledge production

1. KYRGYZ ETHNOGRAPHY[2] IN THE SOVIET PERIOD: POLITICALLY GUIDED PRACTICE

1.1. The Institutional Landscape

It could be claimed that the development of ethnography in Kyrgyzstan and arguably other Central Asian countries was not much different from the development of the discipline in other Soviet Union republics during the socialist period. Despite the complex interplay of the bottom-up and top-down influences that shaped it, the immense prevalence of central state imperatives over strictly academic and local ones imprinted itself on the discipline's profile.

Soviet rule was established in Kyrgyzstan in 1924 and the status of Soviet Socialist Republic was acquired in 1936[3]. As well as installing new political and economic institutions, the Soviets launched the building of cultural institutions in the region, notably the academic and educational structures aimed at replacing the previous ones or creating new ones in accordance with their modernization project. The emergence of Soviet Kyrgyz ethnography (as a subdiscipline of history) was one of the many parts of this project[4]. The first ethnographic expeditions in which Kyrgyz researchers took part were

[2] The term used in the former Soviet Union to denote academic practices roughly similar to socio-cultural anthropology or ethnology in Western countries is "ethnography" (compare: Dunn and Dunn 1962). Since the beginning of the 1990s, the terms ethnography and ethnology has been used interchangeably in Russian, the latter one is more formal however, i.e. it is used in the names of academic institutions etc. The term 'Kyrgyz ethnography' denotes the disciplinary tradition that developed within the territorial and institutional structures of the Kyrgyz SSR.

[3] The violence and persecution that were an unalienable part of Soviet expansion, as well as the repressions during Soviet period, are commemorated but have not become the central narrative of the contemporary memory policies in Kyrgyzstan, see: Abashin (2018) for examples and discussion.

[4] It is difficult to reconstruct the pre-revolutionary history of ethnographic/ethnological knowledge in Kyrgyzstan. In his critical article on the state of Kyrgyz historiography, Tchoroev makes a remark that is relevant to this study: "(...) no Kyrgyz historian who wrote a history of the nation can be identified before the end of the 19th century. Of course, there were many relaters of genealogical legends and stories based mainly on folk heritage. This paucity of indigenous historiography is the reason that Kyrgyz history has been written mainly from external sources in various languages, including Chinese, Arabic, Iranian, Greek, Turkic, Mongolian, and Russian. Kyrgyz historians made their first attempts at publishing histories at the beginning of the 20th century under the influence of the reformist movement known as Jadidism. Some Kyrgyz intellectuals brought out works in Kazan, Ufa, and Orenburg. For example, books by Osmonaaly Sydykuulu were published in Ufa in 1913 and 1915" (Tchoroev 2002, 351).

organized in 1926. Their interests were in the history (B. Soltonoyev, B. Jamgyrchynov), language (B. Junusaliev), social relations and religion (S. Iliasov) of the Kyrgyz. There were also scholars from the centre – i.e. Soviet Russian research institutions – participating in establishing the tradition of Kyrgyz ethnography (e.g., S. Abramzon; compare: Tabyshaliev 1990). The first expeditions were aimed at collecting materials for the Republic Museum (opened in 1927). In 1928, the Research Institute of Regional Studies affiliated with the Council of National Commissionaires of the Kyrgyz Autonomous Soviet Republic was formed. When a Kyrgyz branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences was established in 1943, ethnography found its institutional place within the structures of the Institute of Language, Literature and History and, from 1954, was part of the History Institute of the Kyrgyz Republic Academy of Sciences. In 1966, the Chair of Ethnography was created, which was 'promoted' to the status of a division in 1989. Though the ethnography unit in the History Institute existed at the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences from its inception in 1954, the institutionalization of ethnography as a university discipline took place much later. The Chair of Archaeology and Ethnology in the History Department of Kyrgyz State University was founded in 1978.

The complex interplay between the political and academic fields (to use Pierre Bourdieu's terminology) in the soviet period can be illustrated by the case of Saul Abramzon's work that received negative reviews from Kyrgyz party leaders. His first book on Kyrgyz culture published in 1946 was criticized by K. Orozaliev, the Kyrgyz Communist Party Propaganda Secretary, for the underestimation of the positive effects that contact with the Russian revolutionary nation had had for the Kyrgyz (Tabyshaliev 1990, 8). When the monograph on the ethnogenesis of the Kyrgyz people was first published (Abramzon [1971] 1990), the critical review in the newspaper *Sovetskaya Kirgiziya* by the academics S. Iliasov, A. Zima and K. Orozaliev was followed by a public criticism by the first secretary of the Kyrgyz Communist Party T. Usubaliev who blamed Abramzon for ideological and methodological mistakes. There were two main lines of criticism: 1) allegedly, Abramzon augmented the role of the survival of tribal relations and underestimated the changes that took place after the revolution among the Kyrgyz (compare: Abramzon 1954), and 2) he represented the Kyrgyz people as extremely divided into numerous tribes and moieties, therefore undermining the unity of the Kyrgyz nation (Tabyshaliev 1990, 9). The negative review was considered by a special committee of the USSR Academy of Sciences and most of the criticism was refuted as unsustainable[5].

[5] The outcomes of this incident were relatively mild for Abramzon (although he felt deeply hurt and left Kyrgyzstan where he had spent most of his adult life), while sometimes failure to satisfy the authorities' expectations resulted in the loss of a job and/or repression as was the case for Sabyr Attokurov, the first head of the Chair of Archeology and Ethnography at Kyrgyz State University, who "was forced to leave the university, [and] students who supported him were nearly expelled from the history faculty" (Tchoroev 2002, 363).

Several tensions seem to manifest themselves in this incident. First, it proves that science was ruled by politics and expected to fulfil a social role ascribed to it[6]. The very possibility of local party leaders formulating criticism in wording like "serious ideological-political mistakes [were made]... that considerably diminish the academic and pedagogic value of the book" (cited Tabyshaliev 1990, 9) is telling in itself: it was the mark of the totalitarian state that subsumed all levels of social life. Second, the role of ethnography – and more broadly, of the humanities – revealed itself as that of serving the political goals of nation building and the creation of the Soviet nation as well as contributing to the national consciousness development of the titular nationalities. Third, the incident gives away the tension between the central and local (republic) level of governance. The affiliations of the actors indicate that scholars and party leaders at the republic level were in opposition to the scholars and party leaders at the central level. It is beyond the scope of this article to evaluate the merit of the argument or to establish what exactly the stakes that produced the tension were, yet this incident demonstrates that neither science nor politics in the former Soviet Union were as conflict-free as it might seem from a contemporary perspective.

1.2. Ideology/Theory Nexus

Some of the institutional traditions, methods and theoretical ideas of imperial Russian ethnology, ethnography and folklore studies were continued during the Soviet period (compare: Bertrand 2002). Yet there were also shifts in the discipline (Azrael 1978; compare: Huttenbach 1990; Knight 1998). The nationality question was recognized as politically significant as early as 1917. The ambiguity of nationality politics lay in the combination of two conflicting imperatives: 1) the declared importance of nationality, especially the nationalities oppressed by imperial Russia as well as the famous Leninist 'national self-determination' principle underlining the equality and self-dependency of nationalities, and 2) the need to minimize the political meaning and 'fission' potential of any particular national/ethnic group within a newly established multi-ethnic polity. It could be suggested that Soviet ethnography – alongside other disciplines such as history or philosophy – was used as one of the instruments for overcoming the tension between the need to establish nationality as a basis for social 'fusion' and the fear of the 'fission' potential inherited in it[7]. Among its other uses, the discipline was instrumental

[6] In fact the Academy of Sciences acted as one of the government bodies in the USSR (compare: Beyler, Kojevnikov, Wang 2005, 31).

[7] The discipline's outlook changed largely in response to the state and party politics, e.g. Abashin suggests distinguishing the Stalin, Khruschev, Brezhnev and Gorbachev epochs (Abashin 2009). Similarly Ilkhamov points out that political tendencies directed the development of science in the former Soviet Union (e.g. from the early 1930s the political rationale pushed ethnographers towards the incorporation of some parts of the pre-Soviet legacy). Therefore viewing the whole Soviet era as a monolith period is untenable (Ilkhamov 2009). See also: Sokolovskiy 2017.

in establishing an association of all things national with the past, while the present was supposed to be largely internationalist. Associating ethnic groups' characteristic features with the historical past was a technique for dominating these groups by making them politically irrelevant to the present (compare: Fabian 1983).

Paradoxically, the Soviet state also built many of the institutions that facilitated the emergence of national consciousness before and nation building processes after the collapse of the USSR (Terry 2001; compare: Hirsch 2005). At the same time, the institutionalization of national tradition went side by side with the limitations put on practising ethnic differences in professional and everyday life, e.g., by limiting indigenous language use at work and in public places; by controlling school and university education in native languages; by rationing publishing (the press included) as well as cultural events in indigenous languages and the like.

Yet another contradiction was inherent in the (quasi)federal character of the state. The administrative division of the USSR into the Soviet republics, and a number of autonomous republics and oblasts within the latter, triggered a hierarchical division of nationalities into more and less important, or 'big' and 'small', ones (Tokarev 1953)[8]. The political and social rights of particular ethnic groups were differentiated accordingly. Thus the situation of the titular nationalities of the USSR republics was different from the situation of such ethnic groups as Crimean Tatars, Jews or the Uyghur.

The often arbitrarily drawn administrative borders of the republics – arguably – required legitimization not only through coercion but also through consent. Legitimization could be partially provided through finding the scientific proof of a titular nationality 'rootedness' in an assigned territory. Especially, but not exclusively, in the case of nomadic peoples such as the Kyrgyz this required 'inventing traditions' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). It also resulted in a particular rigidity of nationality (*ethnos*) as a salient classificatory (and ideological) category in postwar ethnography, especially in the 1960s when the theory of ethnos was created by Bromley (1979)[9]. Nationality was thus considered as a relatively stable set of cultural features maintained over time; the theory of ethnos can thus be called primordialist. It must be

[8] The terms *natsia*, *natsionalnost'* and *narodnost'* reflected this hierarchy (e.g. Hirsch 2005).

[9] Importantly, the term *ethnos* did not have the same status during the whole Soviet period. For instance, in the 1930s during the times of repression ethnos was regarded as an almost 'reactionary' term (Abashin 2009). Moreover, there were two ethnos theories, the first developed by Yuri Bromley (1979) and presenting an evolutionist and Marxist-Leninist view of nations (i.e. that presenting historical stages of development and stressing socio-economic relations, for more details see: Sokolovskiy 2017); the second was developed by Lev Gumilev (1989) who perceived ethnos as a natural cosmic phenomenon. The latter theory was not considered 'scientific' during the Soviet period but gained wide followership among national political elites and the public in the post-Soviet period, notably in Kazakhstan. Sergey Abashin suggests that its attractiveness for post-Soviet Central Asian countries might also stem from Gumilev's positive evaluation of the Golden Horde and Turkic legacy that was in contrast to Soviet historiography (private communication).

added that primordialist conceptions were by no means unique to Soviet ethnology – e.g. they were developed in German ethnology in the nineteenth century (compare: Eidson 2017) – yet, they gained a lot of currency in the Soviet (and ironically post-Soviet) period and therefore are often associated with Soviet ethnography. In contemporary discussions on the legacy of Soviet ethnography, the concept of 'primordialism' acquired a heavily value laden (negative) meaning, which will be discussed in the next section of the article.

At the same time, not all ethnographers dealt exclusively with nationality issues – research was undertaken on material culture, everyday life (*byt*), family relations, food, shamanism, economic relations and other topics (e.g. Antipina 1962; Makhova 1959; Iliasov 1953; Mambetalieva 1963). This was partly due to shifts in the 'social order' (*социальный заказ*) for themes, like the interest in new forms of production and the associated forms of everyday life and social relations that generated a number of 'kolkhoz monographs' in the 1950s and 1960s (compare: Abashin 2009) or ethnic sociology from 1970 to 1990 (Drobizheva 1998)[10], but also partly to the fact that the search for topics outside party interests was a search for a degree of academic freedom, which could only be achieved to an extent, since research topics had to be approved by centralized academic institutions.

The fourth aspect of the interplay between political and academic fields lies in the theoretical underpinnings of Soviet science. Congruent with but not identical to the previous three was the enlightenment (or positivist) project of Soviet science, ethnography included. Science was juxtaposed with 'local knowledge systems' (religion, medicine etc.) and, in the case of ethnology in particular, this meant waging a war on all *perezhitki* [survivals] (outdated, outlived practices, compare: DeWeese 2009): religious beliefs, 'backward' customs (such as bride kidnapping, *kalym* etc.). Materialist and atheist theory required firm identification of these practices with the past (with the practical goal of bringing them to an end).

Therefore in Soviet Kyrgyz ethnography the issues related to *ethnos* constituted the core of ethnology's research interests[11]: national history, culture, kinship and belief systems were meticulously studied (Kochkunov 2002). Additionally, in Kyrgyz ethnology the studies of 'other' groups or cultures were far less prominent than the studies of one's 'own' group, although there was some research on the Uzbeks, Tajiks, Dungans, Germans and Russians. Expeditions (often centrally organized) were the core mode of ethnographic investigation; they were carried out collectively and usu-

[10] In Kyrgyzstan, the ethnosociological tradition was developed by A. Aksakanov and his students, some of them from Osh University (Aksakanov 2004).

[11] In Soviet Russian ethnology, this tendency was also strong but was somewhat diverted in the 1970s and 80s, when ethnographers began to undertake research on contemporarily relevant topics such as ethnic conflict (Sokolovskiy 2017). Yet, in Central Asian republics this tendency was much weaker and the scholarly interests inherited from 1940–60 continued well into the 1980s.

ally included representatives of several disciplines, such as linguists, archaeologists, historians and ethnologists.

As for the theoretical outlook of the discipline, it was enclosed in the framework of dialectic materialism or Marxism as a grand theory as well as Bromley's ethnos theory as a middle range theory of the discipline[12]. The alleged theoretical paucity of Soviet era ethnography – or its inability to produce an alternative grand theory to Marxism such as the structuralism of Levi-Strauss or interpretative anthropology of Clifford Geertz – is currently referred to as the 'descriptive' character of the ethnography practised by anthropologists/ethnologists in the region. The advantages of doing ethnography differently than in the Soviet period are seen, among other things, in the introduction of interpretations and theoretical conceptualizations (compare: Reeves 2014). Interestingly, this very juxtaposition was used by Saul Abramzon when he assessed the contribution of his pre-revolutionary predecessors:

> "The ethnographic study of the Kyrgyz nation in the pre-revolutionary period can be considered primarily as a period of accumulating factual material (...) [after the 1917 revolution] the researchers do not limit themselves to observations and simple registering the facts, but aim at generalisations and interpretations" (Abramzon [1971] 1990, 12–13).

His usage of the descriptive/theoretical dichotomy is almost identical to the contemporary criticism of Soviet era ethnography (compare: Durand 1995). It appears that criticism goes round in circles and as such it is largely ideological, i.e. it does not clearly define the actual weak and strong points of the respective traditions but merely provides simple categories for the negative labelling of the Others' academic practice and praising of one's own. The side effect of this criticism – that is often put in evolutionist terms – is a view of knowledge accumulation in which the stage of collecting material precedes that of building theory and therefore the scholarly practice of collecting material is denigrated. This issue will be dealt with further in the following section.

2. ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY IN KYRGYZSTAN IN THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD: DECENTRALIZED POLITICIZATION

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the establishment of independent states in Central Asia, post-Soviet science in the region started undergoing rapid changes as far as ideological incentives as well as the economic and institutional conditions of its functioning were concerned. In the following section of the article, the attempt is made to demonstrate the impact of the transformation period on Kyrgyz

[12] Yet denigrating Soviet Marxism as just one stream of (dogmatic) thought is perhaps an oversimplification. As some research has demonstrated, there were attempts at 'creating a space to ask new, intellectually challenging questions about processes of historical change and mechanisms of social inequality' (Luehrmann 2005, 851) within this stream.

ethnography as a discipline. Both the continuity with the discipline's traditions developed in the Soviet period as well as current and potential tendencies and directions of (paradigmatic) change will be reflected upon.

2.1. Institutional Developments in Ethnology and Anthropology in Kyrgyzstan

After 1991, academic institutions in Kyrgyzstan found themselves in a state of crisis due not only to a radical decrease in funding[13] but also to the diversification of the sources of funding and significant changes in the ideological landscape that affected the position of science in society.

The institutional situation of ethnology in the **Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences** (KAS) – the fundamental research institution – is an illustration of the demise of centralized state-sponsored research in the post-Soviet period (compare: Sokolovskiy 2017). After 1991, the number of academic positions available at the KAS diminished fivefold. Libraries stopped being regularly supplied with new books and periodicals from Russia, not to mention publications from other parts of the world. The lack of funding made it impossible for ethnologists to rely on their institutions for research development and travel costs. Very few doctoral theses were defended in the 'ethnology' speciality during the 27 years after gaining independence, and the degrees are conferred outside of Kyrgyzstan (for the good overview of the PhD theses in sociocultural anthropology by Kyrgyz scholars, as well as western scholars working in and on Kyrgyzstan, see: Reeves 2014). The Academy leaders encouraged applied research as a remedy to poor state funding. Recently some new initiatives have been introduced in the Academy of Sciences, e.g., a special programme in history (including social anthropology) supported by the French Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and the EHESS aimed at junior scholars working at the KAS. Yet the precarious financial as well as political situation[14] does not make it possible to be optimistic about state supported academic ethnographic research prospects.

The situation at **universities** is perhaps slightly better thanks to the liberalization of the higher education system. At least the mushrooming of universities across the country, especially in Bishkek, creates an impression of development.[15] However,

[13] Independent Kyrgyzstan is a rather poor country, and science is far from being privileged in the state budget, although education (including schools) receives about 20% of government spending. According to the CIA World Factbook, in 2017 gross domestic product per capita in Kyrgyzstan was estimated at 3,700 US dollars (compare: Kazakhstan – 26,100; Russia – 27,900 and the EU taken as a whole – 39,200).

[14] There were two violent uprisings in the republic, two presidents were ousted in the space of 5 years between 2005 and 2010, thousands of people lost their lives and many more their homes or belongings, especially in the 2010 conflict in the Osh region.

[15] Some commentators draw attention to the fact that the increase of the level of higher education in the country in the post-Soviet period is disproportionally larger than the number of qualified jobs available for people with high qualifications (DeYoung 2008).

ethnology chairs and/or departments in old and new universities occupy a somewhat marginal position and, in the majority of cases, are situated in departments of history. As a consequence, ethnology is still taught in a way that concentrates on material culture and customs of the past rather than on contemporary life. At Kyrgyz State National University (in Bishkek) the Chair of Archaeology and Ethnology has a considerable archaeological bias in research and curriculum. The same is the case for Osh University. At Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University (in Bishkek) there is a Chair of History, Ethnology and Social Education that offers not a full programme but a module in Social Anthropology. Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University (in Bishkek) has established the Department of History, Culturology and Marketing within an interdisciplinary Faculty of Humanities. Some archaeological projects are carried out there, but others – aiming at contemporary cultural problems such as ethnic conflict resolution – are conceptualized as 'culturology' (*культурология*). The emphasis on applied research and the departure from an ethnological perspective has been further deepened by the recent introduction of marketing and advertising-related subjects to the curriculum. Students do not normally pursue ethnological careers after graduation and do not even expect to be able to do so.

The American University of Central Asia (AUCA) in Bishkek is a peculiar exception in this picture. It was created from scratch with USA money[16] but primarily by Kyrgyz scholars who used the political change as an opportunity to leave their stamp on the discipline and introduce the classic four-field formula of American anthropology[17] to the university curriculum (Madeleine Reeves, personal communication; compare: Reeves 2014). At the Anthropology Department, apart from the permanent academic staff consisting of linguists, folklorists, social anthropologists and archaeologists, there are also a number of visiting fellows and guest lecturers from Western universities (European and American). In the beginning much teaching was in Russian, currently more teaching is done in English and there are also several courses in Kyrgyz.

The shift from Soviet ethnographic traditions at the Anthropology Department of the AUCA manifests itself in the attempts at engaging in comparative research and moving away from the domination of the ethnos theory and towards theoretical pluralism that includes interpretative and structuralist theories alongside ethnos theories. Additionally, there are courses devoted to studies of the contemporary world: 'applied anthropology', 'medical anthropology', 'environmental anthropology' and 'political anthropology'. Special emphasis is placed on intensive fieldwork which is a part of the curriculum.

[16] The university is funded by Eurasian Foundation of the U.S. State Department and the George Soros Open Society Foundation.

[17] It has to be emphasized that currently in the USA this formula is considered rather problematic by the representatives of the discipline, since it 'cracks' not only theoretically or methodologically but also institutionally, compare: Sylverman 2005.

Although the Anthropology Department has been highly successful in many ways, and can be seen as a *spiritus movens* behind the consolidation of Kyrgyz anthropology and ethnology[18], its institutional role within the AUCA has recently changed into a 'concertation' (or program) within a larger Liberal Arts and Sciences Department.

Apart from traditional academic institutions, there are more flexible institutional arrangements that create opportunities for the development of ethnology in the region: **non-government research organizations and international projects**. These include think tanks and research centres (e.g., *Aigine*[19]) that incorporate an ethnological component. It has to be emphasized, however, that in most of these projects the discipline is not treated independently but is linked to archaeology, history, sociology, political science, international relations or economics.

International projects indisputably trigger a lot of valuable research initiatives in ethnology and anthropology in Kyrgyzstan, yet they are relatively short-term and, more importantly, they often bring research agendas from outside and do not really allow them to emerge locally in a bottom-up fashion. Despite this reservation, in the economically weak and only moderately politically stable conditions of contemporary Kyrgyzstan, international projects create an alternative to state support of research institutions. There are several types of projects that could be placed in the category of projects with an anthropological component. There are the UNESCO policy-oriented programmes, research projects initiated by Western universities or foundations sponsoring science and also quite specific and valuable projects catering for didactic needs.

A large-scale UNESCO project 'Integral Studies of Silk Roads – the Roads of Dialogue' has been functioning in the region since 1987. The project has resulted in a number of initiatives ranging from studies on the situation of women in the region to the organization of an ethnic handicrafts and art festival[20]. In 1995, the International Institute for Central Asian Studies (*MICAI*) was established in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, by UNESCO. In 2006 *MICAI* organized an interdisciplinary archaeological-ethnographic expedition, 'The Study of Migration Processes in the Ancient and Medieval history of Central Asian Peoples', to the Xingjian-Uyghur region of China. It included Kyrgyz ethnologist A. Asankanov (currently at Kyrgyz National Pedagogic University in Bishkek)[21]. Interestingly, in many large-scale projects anthropology/ethnology is not treated independently (and therefore ethnological research questions do not constitute

[18] Between 2014 and 2017 four editions of the national Congress of Anthropologists and Ethnologists took place, with roughly two thirds of the participants representing sociocultural anthropology (the remaining participants represented the field of archaeology) and coming from a number of Kyrgyz universities of Bishkek, Osh, Naryn.

[19] http://www.aigine.kg/, access: 10.01.2018.

[20] UNESCO CLT/CPD/DIA/2008/PI/68.

[21] A. Asankanov also participated in an international expedition to Altay, Khakasiya and Tuva in 2003 aimed at archeological research into Kyrgyz presence in the region, joined by S. Alymkulova and O. Karataev; the expedition was supported by the governments of Kyrgyzstan and Russia.

a goal in their own right) but is linked to archaeology, history and literary monument studies as well as to tourism development rationales and practices[22].

Since 1991 the George Soros Open Society Foundation (OSF) has contributed significantly to scholars' development in the country through individual grant schemes (CARI grants) as well as publishing projects[23]. The latter included a particularly valuable component devoted to translating major ethnological work into Kyrgyz.[24] It supported anthropological education in the region, providing funding for the AUCA as well as developing the Regional Seminar for Excellence in Training (ReSet) HESP[25] projects, highly relevant to the development of the discipline in Kyrgyzstan: 'Nationhood and Narratives in Central Asia: History, Context, Critique' and 'Building Anthropology in Eurasia'[26].

The 'Building Anthropology in Eurasia' project (2007–2010) was aimed at undergraduate university lecturers. The project was hosted by the Aigine Cultural Research Centre, Bishkek (in cooperation with the AUCA and the Programme on Central Asia and the Caucasus at Harvard University, USA). It was aimed at promoting the institutionalization of sociocultural anthropology in the region. The project's mission was the replacement of the old Soviet tradition of ethnography/ethnology with a new one[27]:

> "Anthropology, as known elsewhere in the world, *did not exist in the Soviet Union* [my emphasis – A.H.][28] and has been very slow to develop in post-Soviet space. The Regional Seminar on 'Building Anthropology in Eurasia' 'will undertake to provide a substantial beginning for anthropology to scholars in this new space" (Project's website).

[22] To give an example, there is an institution harbouring ethnological/anthropological research worth mentioning: the *Institut français d'études sur l'Asie centrale* opened in 1992 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. It is a part of the Main Office of University Research Cooperation, Department of Archaeology and Social Sciences, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (http://www.ifeac.org/fr/). It has its branch in Kyrgyzstan, headed by Amantur Zhaparov, an ethnologist specializing in nomadism and migration (e.g. Zhaparov 2007, 2009). The research activities of the Institute are not limited to anthropology, but ethnological/anthropological topics appear in their publications. Since 1996, the Institute has published annually *Les Cahiers d'Asie Centrale,* an interdisciplinary journal in French.

[23] Unlike in Uzbekistan, in Kyrgyzstan OSF has been functioning without any major disturbance (compare: Laruelle 2005; see also: Reeves 2014). Reeves argues that among five post-soviet Central Asian countries Kyrgyzstan is the most welcoming for western researchers.

[24] The lack – if not complete absence – of textbooks and monographs in Russian or Kyrgyz that represent a social/cultural anthropology perspective is a predicament for the discipline's teaching practice. Translation work is needed. Sometimes students from urban areas also lack a good working knowledge of Kyrgyz. Some universities try to develop teaching in English, which has its downside in making anthropology studies even more elitist.

[25] Higher Education Support Program.

[26] http://www.csen.org/BuildAnthroEurasia/BuildAnthroEurasia.html, access: 10.01.2018.

[27] Elsewhere, the project's initiator John Schoeberlein described Soviet science as dogmatic and ideology-driven thus unable to harbour serious theory development (compare: Schoeberlein 2009).

[28] American anthropologists who were engaged in dialogue with Soviet ethnographers in the Soviet period put it more mildly – as a difference of languages and/or scope in the discipline's names in the USSR and USA (Dunn and Dunn 1962, 329).

Despite the patronizing rhetoric of this description which suggests that Kyrgyz (and other post-Soviet) scholars have to be taught how to do things 'properly', the project creates a framework for regular cooperation between scholars from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Western Europe and the USA, who evaluate it very positively as a platform for authentic debates without predetermined answers (private communications with several of the participants). Perhaps, it is the case that demonstrates that the level of rhetoric of academic endeavours and the level of practice are very often discrepant.

International projects and cooperation with individual scholars from the West is an intricate part of the Kyrgyz ethnology/anthropology landscape. Yet cooperation with Western partners is, in principle, problematic and is viewed as such for the simple reason of the immense disparity of power between the different sides in such partnerships (this especially refers to extremely unequal access to economic and academic resources). In the beginning of the 1990s

> "(...) there was also a fear that large bodies of rich, original unpublished work might be published by wealthier Western colleagues, possibly without acknowledgement (a genuine fear)" (Stephanie Bunn, private communication).

If direct exploitation was rarely the case, hegemonic relations have been developed in which demotic subjects act according to exogenously rather than endogenously set agendas. I am not suggesting that cooperation should cease, though. Far from it, I am rather calling for more self-reflexivity by all those involved in cooperation. This would be a type of critical reflexivity similar to that exercised with regard to the problem of the unattainable objectivity of knowledge in the humanities.

2.2. Lines of Research in Post-Soviet Kyrgyz Ethnology and Anthropology

Ethnological research in Kyrgyzstan is primarily aimed at the study of ethnic groups, their customs, oral and literary tradition and material culture, including architecture. Among the scholars who have embarked on the tradition of cultural and social anthropology as opposed to ethnography, the anthropology of religion (e.g. beliefs, rituals, shamanism, Islam) is one of the most prominently represented lines of research alongside the studies of ethnic/national identity and history (Aitpaeva, Egemberdieva, Toktogulova 2006; Alymkulov and Ashakeeva 2004; Chotaeva 2004, 2005; Toktogulova 2006, 2007). Relatively new fields of research include the development of political and economic anthropology, with special interest in rural development, urban anthropology, new perspectives in the studies of nomadism (Zhaparov 2007), the nexus of politics and kinship (Ismailbekova 2017) and the anthropology of trade (Nasritdinov and O'Connor 2006; Nasritdinov 2007, 2012) as well as research into the influence of ecological and geographic aspects of the environment on cultural practices and vice versa. Migration has also become an important line of research (e.g., Zhaparov 2009; Fryer, Nasritdinov, Satybaldieva 2014; Nasritdinov 2016). Predictably, there is

also an interest in the theory and methodology of anthropology, though no theoretical framework seems to have be dominant, even if the 'constructivist' approach – the term that often implies Anderson's 'imagined communities' template – is usually considered a viable alternative to the Soviet ethnos theory. At the same time, I have not come across either sustained critique of the Marxist theoretical framework or proposals for engaging in alternative (grand) theories. Rather, ethnologists/anthropologists are more concerned with methodological issues and testing the relative advantages of participant observation as opposed to expedition research. (In the AUCA, Malinowski-type fieldwork is treated as the ideal way to practice anthropology as a discipline; however, in actual fact a lot of research relies on literary and historical sources due to their accessibility and relatively low cost, although staff puts a lot of strenuous effort to secure external funds for fieldwork trips, through research grants or otherwise, and in some cases succeeds). Folklore studies and linguistic anthropology fall within the group of research interests that are a continuation of Soviet ethnological and folklore studies but some new approaches are applied within this subfield e.g. in narrative and travel writing analysis (Dyikanbaeva 2005; Turdalieva 2005, 2009). The actual distinction between ethnology and anthropology only appears in certain contexts (e.g. in its strongest form perhaps in ReSet projects and at the AUCA), while in the others both terms are used interchangeably. Moreover, the bulk of research projects undertaken are clearly interdisciplinary in their theoretical and methodological outlook: history, archaeology, ethnology and historical linguistics is one combination, others include anthropology, political science, sociology and international relations. This interdisciplinarity – or syncretism – of humanistic knowledge is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can be destructive for the development of (relatively weakly formed) anthropology. On the other, it might allow for a more innovative outlook in the discipline that would be keener to address the issues relevant to contemporary societies.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Over a period of 65 years (1926–91), ethnography (ethnology) in Kyrgyzstan developed as a discipline under Soviet rule. As a consequence, its character was influenced by Soviet state-building imperatives as well as by the tensions between the centre and periphery inherent (although not always overtly articulated) in the Soviet empire. Kyrgyz ethnographers – the national elite – were educated and socialized in Soviet academic institutions (e.g. S. Iliasov, K. Antipina, T. Bayalieva, K. Mambetalieva, I. Moldobaev and others). The political and economic transformation in Kyrgyzstan in 1991 unquestionably affected the development of ethnology and anthropology. The pluralization of political pressures since 1991 has allowed opportunities for theoretical and methodological pluralism in anthropology/ethnology to emerge. However, the

paradigmatic shift within the discipline as such is not as dramatic as one might have expected (compare a similar assessment for Russian anthropology by Funk and Nam 2017). The content of disciplinary knowledge has changed (e.g., new historical narratives, positive assessment of national tradition etc.), but the terminological apparatus of Soviet ethnography has been largely preserved. National traditions, national culture and identity (the key topics of ethnographic studies) are most often approached in essentializing terms (despite some attempts to use 'constructivist' approaches). The materialization and aesthetization of the concept of culture have been boosted by nation-building objectives and tourism development incentives as well as by a generally positivist view of science, that is ideally expected to bring some 'hard data' and not speculations and hypothesizing (Kanef and King 2004; Pelkmans 2005).

The teaching of ethnology/anthropology follows history-bound curriculums in many of the country's universities, yet there are also examples of the introduction of a four-field American type anthropology to the academic curriculum (AUCA). The economic conditions in which anthropology departments function are not favourable: quite simply, research funds are meagre. Western grant-giving institutions play an important role in supporting anthropological research and teaching, but their capacities cannot be compared to those of long-term state funding of fundamental research (which is much needed but lacking due to the country's poverty). What is more, their interest in the region is volatile, which is indirectly proven by Madeleine Reeves' (2014) statement that the funding available to the western scholars who want to do research in Central Asia dwindled over the period between 2004 and 2014. Moreover, the rationale of international projects (i.e. which themes are supported and which approaches promoted) is not often congruent with that or those of Kyrgyz scholars. In a similar fashion, Petric (2005) has argued that the rationale of international NGOs operating in the region is incompatible with local interests and needs (compare: Petric 2015). Due to the misbalance of power between partners, international projects are inherently problematic regardless of their initiators' and participants' intentions. The attempts at building sociocultural anthropology from scratch, in sharp opposition to Soviet ethnography, are bringing very interesting research results, yet they also create tensions within the discipline and among the discipline's practitioners in the country: those anthropologists who fully embark on the discipline's new project and those who consider that Soviet ethnology should not be totally dismissed are starting to perceive each other as rival camps with the labels of 'descriptive', 'outdated' or 'conformist' easily attached to one or the other.

The ideological uses of ethnology / anthropology and, generally, the politicization of humanistic knowledge are still very prominent trends in the use of science in society today, although – in comparison with the Soviet period – currently political incentives have become more numerous and decentralized and the geography of pressures has significantly changed. The powerful institutions (national and international) are oper-

ating more through economic and symbolic pressures and less (if at all) through direct coercion. For 'small ethnology' like that in Kyrgyzstan, this means that the attainment of a (somewhat) equal status in the new global order of a largely Western-centred and hierarchical neoliberal academy is hardly a feasible prospect (compare a diagnosis of a 'gloomy' picture for Russian anthropology by Funk and Nam 2017), despite the brave efforts tirelessly undertaken by the discipline's practitioners in Kyrgyzstan. Many of the Kyrgyz scholars of younger generation are 'sucked in' Western academia (the UK, Germany, USA), as the list of PhD theses defended by Central Asian anthropologists and ethnologists made by Reeves (2014) attests. The peripheral position of Kyrgyz ethnology/anthropology largely remains. On a different scale and with a different intensity, similar processes and tensions are emerging in other countries of the former Eastern bloc (compare: Skalnik 2002; Buchowski 2017) and seem to be a paradoxical outcome of the large-scale geopolitical change.

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CHINESE TERMS REFERRING TO THE FAMILY AND KINSHIP

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WARSAW

The article is concerned with Chinese terms describing the family and kinship through different periods of Chinese history. On the basis of Chinese classical literature, works of the most famous Chinese anthropologist – Fei Xiaotong during the first half of the XX century and contemporary anthropological studies, it makes summary of most important from them and describe the family and kinship structures to which they refer.

* * *

Tematem niniejszego artykułu są pojęcia używane na określenie rodziny i jej członków w różnych okresach historii chińskiej. Zostały one przeanalizowane na podstawie odwołania do chińskiej literatury klasycznej, badań wsi chińskiej wykonanych w latach trzydziestych i czterdziestych XX wieku przez jednego z najwybitniejszych chińskich uczonych – Fei Xiaotonga oraz ustaleń współczesnych antropologów kulturowych i obserwacji autorki niniejszego tekstu.

K e y w o r d s: Chinese terms, the family, kinship, 家*jiā,* 宗族*zōngzú*, 家族*jiāzú*, 家庭*jiātíng*, 大家庭*dàjiātíng*

Chinese kinship structures were a basic of the Chinese society. Like all social institutions they were changing and evolving. Their structure was expressed through multiple terms, whose connotations were changing along with the changes of the society. In my article I made a sketch of most important of them from three perspectives. The first one is Chinese classical literature, the second is the Chinese society as it was presented by Fei Xiaotong's research published in 1930s and 1940s, an the third is their usage in contemporary China as described by contemporary anthropological researchers and my own observations.

It should be noted that the Chinese language in this paper indicates 汉语*hànyǔ* (literal meaning: 汉*Hàn* language), a common language mainly shared by the 汉*Hàn* ethnic groups (who constitute the majority of China's population), widely known as Mandarin language. The Chinese terms which I investigate are orginally written in 汉字*hànzì* (literal meaning: 汉*Hàn* characters), the written form of 汉语*hànyǔ*.

Materials in oral form are adopted from 普通话pǔtōnghuà, the spoken language of modern 汉语*hànyǔ*[1]. The descriptions of Chinese society in the article represent the majority of 汉*Hàn* Chinese community.

TERMS REFERRING TO THE FAMILY IN ANCIENT LITERATURE

A wide diversity of terms have been used in Chinese language with regard to the family throughout history, until present times. The variety of the terms should not only be taken as a result of language change, but also as a reflection of the changes in dynamics of the family structure as society has undergone change.

家jiā

The word 家*jiā* was used to refer to a family house or residence, and also applied to name a kinship group with no regard to its scale. In some places, the term was also used as a verb which referred to setting up a home.

1. house
   之子于归，宜其家室 Zhīzǐ yú guī, yí qí jiā shì
   This young lady is going to her future home,
   And will order well her chamber and house. (诗经 周南 桃夭 Shījīng Zhōunán Táoyāo)
2. the family
   四海之内若一家, 通达之属莫不从服Sìhǎi zhī nèi ruò yījiā, tōngdá zhī shǔ mòbù cóng fú
   If the world will merge into one family, there would be no one who would disobey. (荀子 儒效Xúnzi Rúxiào)
3. setting at somewhere
   平原君为人辩有口，刻廉刚直，家于长安。
   Pingyuanjun is skilled in mouth and upright. He lives at Chang'an.
   (史记·郦生陆贾列传Shǐjì·Lì shēng lù jiǎ lièzhuàn)

族zú

The term 族*zú* was generally applied for the lineal kinship.

宫之奇以其族行Gōng zhī qí yǐ qí zú xíng
Gong Zhiqi leads his kin. (左传 僖公*Zuǒzhuàn Xī gōng*)

[1] A detailed introduction of Hanyu see Künstler 1970.

九族*jiǔzú* literally means nine 族zú, i.e. nine generations of relatives from great-great-grand father down to great-great-grand son (Qu Tongzu 1961). There are different interpretations of 九族*jiǔzú* in Chinese history. The 古文说*Gǔwénshuō* (Older interpretation), defined the nine grades of relation in the paternal line. This is the understanding I am applying in this paper (Qian Hang 2011, 171–179). 今文说 *Jīnwénshuō* (contemporary school of interpretation), defines the nine grades of relations to be four generations from the paternal line, three from the maternal line, and two from the wife's (Qian Hang 2011, 179–192). In this case a signal of bilateralization of the hitherto strict patrilineality can be found. Yet another interpretation suggests that the "nine" figuratively stands for a large number in the Chinese speech and culture. Historically it has been used to denote a collective capital extermination of living kin of a state offender. It was a brutal, but seldom exercised execution of laws (For more explanation of the custom see Qu Tongzu 1961, 16–17).

宗族zōngzú

The term 宗族*zōngzú* is composed of two terms which are 宗*zōng* and 族*zú*. According to 说文解字*Shuōwénjiězì*, 宗*zōng* refers to architecture in the use of sacrifice. The character 宗*zōng* used to write it is a pictogram. It combines two parts, with "a roof" as the upper part, symbolizing an architecture, and "a ritual of sacrifice" as the lower part. As I already mentioned, the term 族*zú* in Chinese historical context points to patrilineal groups. Together with the term 宗*zōng*, the form 宗族*zōngzú*, amplifies the meaning of a patrilineal kinship group to the position of an established social institution. Chinese historian Qian Hang claims that this institution had been gradually formed, starting from the 11th century BC, and its final shape came from the 2nd century BC (Qian 2009, 6). 宗族*Zōngzú* functioned as the basis of the 宗法 *zōngfǎ* institution[2]. 宗族*Zōngzú* has been recorded in various sources since ancient times. Qian Hang has attempted to explain the topic. According to him, 尔雅*Ěryǎ*, the oldest surviving Chinese encyclopedia (from about the 3rd century BC), defined the term 宗族*zōngzú* for the first time. It reads "父之党, 为宗族*Fù zhī dǎng, wèi zōngzú*", which means that the kinship based on the patrilineal lineage is 宗族*zōngzú*. Next, forty-six pairs of kinship relations within 宗族*zōngzú* were systematically listed. All the listed relations can be classed into one lineal group and five collateral groups. It is made clear in his book that 宗族*zōngzú* is formed according to the patrilineal principle but not necessarily of blood relations. What is more, it also implies the scale – the kinship order – as the limits of a 宗族*zōngzú* at the time. However, this definition was considered to be insufficient by Qian Hang in the sense that it lacked a crucial

[2] 宗法Zōngfǎ is a term describing political influence in which the degree of political power is determined by the degree of kinship relations with ruling dynasty.

portion of information about the term. First of all, it did not mention the co-residence form of 宗族*zōngzú*, which is one of the two core features of the organization. Another deficiency was that it failed to describe the function of the group.

The deficiencies were erased by the great historian Ban Gu (32–92 AD) of the *Donghan* kingdom (25–220 AD). In *Testimonies on the White Tiger Hall* (*Báihǔ tōng*白虎通, 79 AD), which is a book containing collected interpretation of the Confucian classics made by Confucian scholars of the time, compiled by him, several paragraphs of it were especially dedicated to 宗族*zōngzú*.

> 宗者，何谓也？宗者，尊也 为先族主者，宗人之所尊也.
> Zōng zhě, héwèi yě? Zōng zhě, zūn yě. Wèi xiān zú zhǔ zhě, zōng rén zhī suǒ zūn yě.
> Who is [great] ancestor? [great] ancestor is someone respected. Because he is the head of kin before us. All people respect him. (白虎通疏证 宗族 *Báihǔ tōng shū zhèng Zōngzú*)

Ban Gu not only gave a more comprehensive definition of the term, but he also examined its function. The definition was made in two parts, explaining two components of the term. 宗*zōng* was interpreted in two ways. One was as the symbol of the deceased patrilineal ancestor as I mentioned above[3]. To this, Ban Gu had added another interpretation, claiming that the term could also illustrate a level of respect to ancestors. In this sense, the word 宗*zōng* meant the respect paid to one's deceased ancestors from the patrilineal side. He then continued pointing out the two functions of the term 宗*zōng*, that is: to cultivate harmony within the 宗族*zōngzú* and to help administer its members. Thus, the common ancestor offers a common foundation of the identity for members of 宗族*zōngzú*, which become united as a social entity. Besides this, the 宗族*zōngzú* contains a prescribed order to determine the lineal distance to the ancestor as well as a social distance to other members of the unit. The shorter the genealogical distance one holds to the ancestor, the higher the status and the more power one has.

While emphasizing the genealogy of the 宗族*zōngzú*, *Testimonies on the White Tiger Hall* also contains an introduction to the term 族*zú*. This generally pertains to a group, understood as a form of co-residence, which is customary for the 宗族*zōngzú* members. Ban Gu did not stop here though. He made a further elaboration of an abstract meaning of 族*zú.* He argued that the word still had a symbolic meaning as a sort of way (道*dào*) which guides people living together and arranged around a practical business. That is the concrete life style of the members of the 族*zú.* For example, they have the wish and obligation to care about each other, obey the hierarchy within the group, and although living separately as a rule, they are expected to assemble and function as one entity when a need arises.

After analyzing the two parts separately, Ban Gu provides us with a comprehensive definition of the term 宗族*zōngzú*. It is presumably a group formed by people from the

[3] Usually in the form of the wood tablets with the name and the birth date of a deceased person.

same patrilineal kinship line, living in a neighborhood, and obliged to certain interactive responsibilities. There is a mutual dependence and help anticipation between the group members. For the 汉*Hàn* (Chinese) people, 宗族*zōngzú* has been not only an actual residence form, it also means a life style, an obligation to fulfill a series of social expectations, e.g. unconditional mutual interdependence among the group members subjected to an inner hierarchy[4].

Summarizing, the ancient Chinese terms, 家*jiā* is a general word for the family and kinship system. It is equal to terms family and kinship in English but in addition provides prescriptions for behavior, whereas the term 宗族*zōngzú* refers to the Chinese patriarchal lineage which used to be the dominant form of family institution through much of the Chinese history.

FEI XIAOTONG'S FAMILY STUDIES

Anthropology as a research subject in China started during the 1920s, and the 1940s was the first period of its maturation. After that, because of the political situation, the subject largely remained the same from the beginning of 1950s to the late 1970s, although research was carried out, albeit with varying intensity (Xing 2003, 18). Due to this, the results achieved by researchers in the 1930s and 1940s later have become both important and unique. Learning with the renowned B. Malinowski, he developed his teacher's functional method in his works about rural life in the south of the lower reach of the Yangzi River during the 1930s and 1940s. His most importants books are *The peasant life in China* (1939) and *From the soil: The foundations of Chinese society* (1948), both are milestone works in Chinese anthropological studies.

Five terms are commonly applied for the family in Fei's book. They are 家*jiā*, 家庭*jiātíng*, 大家庭*dàjiātíng*, 家族*jiāzú*, and 宗族*zōngzú*. Three traditional terms I have introduced above and two other –家庭*jiātíng* and 大家庭*dàjiātíng* are the products of the Chinese language modernization movement of the 1920s in China. 家庭*Jiātíng* has been used as the counterpart of the family and the term 大家庭*dàjiātíng* is the combination of word "da", literally meaning large and the word 家庭*jiātíng*. The term 家庭*jiātíng*, 大家庭*dàjiātíng* has been used to point to a Chinese family, which is usually bigger in size than the western nuclear family. Thus, it (imprecisely) equals an extended family.

In his works, Fei tried to search for the real connotation of the terms referring to the family. In his first book in English in 1939, he claims that "the 家*jiā* is a small kinship group consisting of a family as its nucleus and several dependent relatives" (Fei 1939, 29). He applied the word "expanded" to family to describe such a group. By using the expanded word, he emphasizes that the family is usually bigger than its

[4] To read more on Zongzu, see Qian Hang 宗族的世系学研究.

English nuclear counterpart. The reason of this enlarged form is the habit that sons usually keep living at their parents' home immediately after their marriage. In the local language, this kind of kinship is also commonly referred as 大家庭 *dà jiātíng,* literally this could be translated as "large family". In his later work, Fei made a correction on this issue; considering the structure of the 家*jiā* in the Yangtze Valley, he argued that a better term for describing such form of kinship group should be 小家族*xiǎojiāzú:*

> "I suggest this new term because I want to clarify the difference in the structural principles of Chinese and Western "families". The difference between the so-called big and small family is not one of size, not one concerning the number of people who can be included, but one of structure. Structurally, Chinese families are lineages (家族*jiāzú*) ... I will use the term small lineage (小家族*xiǎojiāzú*) to indicate a single-lineage social group. Small and large lineages rest on the same structural principles, but they differ in number and in size. That is why I prefer not to use the term large family (大家庭 *dà jiātíng*) to identify a lineage. By using the term small lineage (小家族*xiǎojiāzú*), I emphasize the structural characteristics of the Chinese family and not just the size" (Fei 1939, 81, 83).

In the time of Fei's studies the average size of the 族*zú* contained eight families (Fei 1939, 85). However, the range of the term was far from rigorous and is a much more of a ritual group than a fixed group. Fei noticed that during the different anniversary occasions, different 族*zú* members attended the event, all depending on the intention and the affluence of the host family. There was a social expectation to invite many 族*zú* kins, but often only the closer kin actually appeared.

He also examined the function of 族*zú* from the functional aspect. Besides the function of child-bearing and caring, 族*zú* had other functions which made it a more coherent social organization. They included education, economic cooperation, and ritual obligations, etc. One 族*zú* often used to own a common property, fields, houses for rent, a school, sacral commemorative compartment, and a cementery whose aim was to benefit all the members as more complicated affairs needed more people to cooperate. Thus, this is why 族*zú* connotes a bigger size than even the most extended family in the West.

Observed from the aspect of the structure, one may get an impression that 家庭 *jiātíng* (nuclear family) is either a hidden, independent, or even nonexistent unit. In fact, 家庭*jiātíng* is included in 家族*jiāzú.* "The smallest lineage may, in fact is, equal to a nuclear family household"(Fei 2004, 55). No matter the size of the 家族*jiāzú*, they share the same patriachal principle. It is worth mentioning that Szynkiewicz (1992) argues that a nuclear family did not exist in early times as a separate functional unit, and that the basic family unit was大家庭*dàjiātíng*.

Returning to the question of the essence of the Chinese 家*jiā,* Fei argues that 小家族*xiǎojiāzú*, instead of 家庭*jiātíng* 大家庭*dàjiātíng* could reflect its real structural characteristic (Fei 2004, 53–55). In his work, 族*zú* and 家族*jiāzú* are used as equivalent terms and 家*jiā* stands for the English term "family", while 族*zú* and 家族*jiāzú* additionally denote patrilineage.

CONTEMPORARY TERMS REFERRING TO THE FAMILY

Different from ancient Chinese, the terms which refer to the family in contemporary Chinese language are more variable both in numbers and forms. According to my experience as a native Chinese language user, four words are frequently used: 家*jiā*, 家庭*jiātíng*, 大家庭*dàjiātíng* and 家族*jiāzú*. The connotations of these words are to some degree overlapping, but each has its specific use. In common speech, 家*jiā* is generally applied to a normal, small family; 家庭*jiātíng* on official occasions; 大家庭*dàjiātíng* is used to refer to larger families, more numerous than a normal small one; and 家族*jiāzú* is used to refer to lineage, usually seen in scholarly texts and literature. The two last terms tend to develop in a bilateral direction. Certain connections amongst them can be noticed and it is necessary to clarify these in order to identify their meaning.

家jiā

Along with its most frequently used ancient connotations which were already mentioned above, the term 家*jiā* is still widely used both in daily communications and written language. In modern Chinese, the sense of the word is much more manifold than before. So far *The Modern Chinese Dictionary* has listed more than ten of its applications, including family, home and residence, a family or a single person engaged in certain trade, specialist in a certain field, school of thought, domestic etc. (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 现代汉语词典 2009, 653). The dictionary has listed its two senses which relate to the family, that is to say the family, and home and place of residence, which are the two most frequently used meanings out of eleven. The word 家*jiā* in the sense of family or home is used mostly in common speech, while rather rarely used in written language or in formal occasions. This is attested by the research Center For Chinese Linguistics of the Peking University (CCL).

The CCL is a data base of samples from printed literature. The use of 家*jiā* as a keyword suggests that the two meaning items (family and home) constitute a minor share of results when compared with other functions of the term. Thus, it is reasonable to claim that 家*jiā,* in the sense of family, is more likely to be used in oral conversations rather than as a formal word of the same connotation.

Sample sentences used by Chinese users serve as good examples to directly demonstrate how the terms are applied.

1. Family

   It has been mentioned above that when applied to the family, the term 家*jiā* does not give an explicit implication of the size of the family, similarly to its ancient usage. According to *Modern Chinese Dictionary* one can simply describe one's family by saying: 他家有五口人*Tā jiā yǒu wǔ kǒu rén* ["His family has five people"]. Here

家*jiā* is equal to the common understanding of the English word *family*, which usually refers to a small nuclear family. But it should not be any shock if anyone come across such an expression in modern Chinese literature, saying: 张家和王家是亲戚*Zhāngjiā hé Wángjiā shì qīnqì*[5] ["The Zhang family and the Wang family are relatives"]. How to understand the family (家*jiā*) in the sentence depends greatly on the context. The 家*jiā* here could be a nuclear family, a stem family or the Zhang's lineage and Wang's lineage. All the three forms exist in social structures.

2. Home, the family place of residence
   回家*huíjiā* ["go home"];
   我的家在上海*Wǒ de jiā zài shànghǎi.* ["My home is in Shanghai" or "My family live in Shanghai"].
3. Function as a morpheme
   Together with other morphemes, it can be used to construct words meaning family or domestic. In the first category, it is used as an attributive which modifies the noun morpheme after: 家人*jiārén* [family members]; 家长*jiāzhǎng* [family head]; 家谱*jiāpǔ* [a genealogy book].
   In the second category of words, 家*jiā* is combined with different words, which all relate to family: 家庭*jiātíng* [family] where *ting* means the yard or main hall of the family; 家户*jiāhù* [household in a scholarly context]; 国家*guójiā* [a country][6].

家庭jiātíng

It could be possible that it was the ambiguous meaning of the term 家*jiā* that urged the emergence of the new term. The word 家庭*jiātíng* is generally applied for the normal small family in more official occasions rather than in common speech where the term 家*jiā* dominates. The term constantly appears in the state laws on the family, and this serves as a good argument for the previous judgement.

Compared with 家*jiā,* the word 家庭*jiātíng* has a limited range of meanings. Through analyzing the searching results of the term in CCL, it was found that it is generally used in two ways, as an independent word which refers to family, e.g.

> 国家、社会、学校、家庭，依法保障适龄儿童，不分性别、种族，应当接受规定年限的义务教育。 *Guójiā, shèhuì, xuéxiào, jiātíng, yīfǎ bǎozhàng shìlíng értóng, bù fēn xìngbié, zhǒngzú, yīngdāng jiēshòu guīdìng niánxiàn de yìwù jiàoyù.*

The state, community, school and families shall, in accordance with the law, safeguard the right to compulsory education of school-age children and adolescents. (*Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China* Article 4).

[5] Both *Zhang* and *Wang* are the most popular surnames in China.

[6] The formation of the word 国家*guójiā* is commonly interpreted as a metaphor that a country is like a family for its people.

家庭*jiātíng* is also the term applied by Chinese scholars to define a family:
家庭是以婚姻和血缘关系为纽带的社会生活组织形式*jiātíng shì yǐ hūnyīn hé xiěyuán guānxì wèi niǔdài de shèhuì shēnghuó zǔzhī xíngshì.* Here, the family is a social grouping based on marital union and blood ties (Pan Yunkang 1986).

The other function of the word 家庭*jiātíng* is when applied as an attributive before other nouns, meaning the "family's..." which are widely applied in official documents e.g.

家庭关系*jiātíng* guānxì family relationship
家庭财产*jiātíng* cáichǎn family property
家庭制度*jiātíng* zhìdù family institution

家庭jiātíng大家庭dàjiātíng

As stated in the review of Fei 's family studies, 大家庭*dàjiātíng* is used by people in daily life to refer to their kinship beyond the nuclear family. Compared with his research conducted in the 1940s, people now tend to apply the word in a more flexible way.

Generally, two interpretations could be made for this word semantically. One refers to a large sized family, which need not necessary have a complicated family structure, but which does have relatively more numerous members, e.g. families consisting of parents and three, four, or even more children, which are already relatively large in scale among contemporary Chinese families due to restrictions on procreation. The other refers to a group of close kin, which consists of at least a nuclear family and another member. There, the word "big" in the term is applied to account for the complexity of the family structure, whereas, the range of the group varies, greatly depending on individual's personal feeling and judgement. The latter is of our interest here, in a sense of "the big family" applied for an ambiguous kinship which more or less equals to the western concept of the "extended family" when Chinese people refer to kin clusters in common speech.

My field studies have verified this finding. When asked how many family members do they have, the Chinese informants rarely responded without hesitation. Instead, they would require a clearer range of the family by asking back in return: "you mean *the big family* or *the small family*"? If they were encouraged to give the answer as they like, they would probably offer two versions, with *the small family* almost exactly referring to their nuclear family while answers for the *the big family* remained ambiguous. Generally, the answers for the latter covered grandparents, uncles, aunts, siblings, first cousins etc. from either the patrilineal or matrilineal side, but were mostly automatically categorized by the respondents in two systems. A typical pattern to answer the question would be "on my father's side, there are ... and on my mother's side..." The answers indicate a growing tendency to adopt the concept of bilateral kinship in contemporary China.

No matter how the term is interpreted, the application of this new word implied the changing concept of the family for Chinese people. That is to say, the small size 家庭 *jiātíng*, i.e. the nuclear family, has become the de facto reference point of understandings of the family for Chinese people. Furthermore, the widely used term大家庭*dàjiātíng* is used to describe the family which is over the normal small (nuclear) family size, which also points to a changing idea of the family.

It is widely accepted by scholars that the scale of the traditional Chinese family was limited by its property. This limitation made the big five-generation family only an ideal rather than a fact during most of Chinese history. For example, even though the desire for a big family was a social fact which was highly supported by the social and political institutions in imperial China, the average household was also rarely larger than five people in the 18th century (Wang 2009, 128). However, the term 家*jiā* at the time was used, above all, in the sense of the big extended family and at the same time the small family had no a particular name. The present appearances of the words 家庭*jiātíng* and 大家庭*dàjiātíng* are signals of the changing of the understanding of family structure for Chinese people.

宗族zōngzú and 家族jiāzú

Anthropologists have examined the two groupings, investigating their existing forms and integration with the contemporary social life. Another task of anthropologists when studying the two terms in the Chinese society, regardless of their original intention, lies with the theoretical interests. That is, how the Chinese family system – in terms of a local knowledge – meets or challenges the existing family theories found globally. However, no matter from which aspect, the definitions of the terms are being highly essentialised. It is from here where the differences of the definition emerge and disagreements have materialised.

Generally, 宗族*zōngzú* is the special term for a Chinese patrialineage institution. The definition of the term is rather clear and stable, and has been over the span of history. Currently, the word is a largely a scholarly term and not used in people's daily speech. The other term, 家族*jiāzú*, without an explicit historical academic root, as is the case with the word 宗族*zōngzú*, functions as an ambiguious word which refers to a large Chinese family in a general sense. Thus it has been understood by scholars in a very different way.

Some scholars, e.g. Zhu Fenghan (1990), Zheng Zhenman (1992), Xu Yangjie (1992; 1995) claim that there are no strict differences between 家族*jiāzú* and 宗族*zōngzú*, and consequently they used both terms synonymously. Feng Erkang (1994) argues that Chinese 宗族*zōngzú* or 家族*jiāzú* should include four elements, the patrilineal relationship among its members, based on families as its basic units, co-residence or relatively stable residence location and being registered under the state family administration.

Other researchers argue that the two terms should be distinguished from the perspective of differring aspects. Xie Jichang (1984) and Qian Hang (1990) argue the two terms represent two ways of generalization of two important types of social relationships. 宗族*zōngzú* stresses the consanguinity – beyond a genealogical principle, while the term 家族*jiāzú* stresses the relationship formed by marriage and birth. Translated into English, 宗族*zōngzú* is the counter-part for "lineage" or "Chinese lineage" while 家族*jiāzú*, is a counterpart of the family. In this case, it stresses that patrilineage is organized along the lineal principle, while the family includes a new aspect of consanguinity through the wife, that is, there is an affinity.

The second opinion held by researchers like Shi Yilong (2011) is that 家族*jiāzú* is the branch organization of 宗族*zōngzú*. During Shi's anthropological field work in several villages in Fujian province, the region where 宗族*zōngzú* used to be widely existed, found that the term is applied differently by people in daily life. In general, inside the 宗族*zōngzú*, two levels of smaller groups could be identified: 房族*fángzú* and 家族*jiāzú*.

房族*Fángzú* and 家族*jiāzú* are sub-groups within a 宗族*zōngzú*. If 宗族*zōngzú* could be translated into English as Chinese patriarchal lineage, then accordingly 房族*fángzú* and 家族*jiāzú* could be called sub-lineages or smaller lineages within a bigger lineage, which follow the same patriarchal principle but on a somewhat reduced scale.

The formation of new 宗族*zōngzú* is usually connected with population movements during history because of, for example, wars, disasters, state organized emigration, or individual choice etc. 宗族*zōngzú* usually begins from the ancestor who was found, or believed to be, the first person who settled in the place which his descendants recognized as their site of origin. Everyone from the first ancestor to his latest descendants are counted as members of the same 宗族*zōngzú*.

Generally, 家族*jiāzú* is counted several generations up and down from the speaker. Thus, it is applied for the social organization formed by most close families or individuals in the sense of a patrilineal relationship. The common ancestor worship rituals in the villages in south China provinces, such as Hunan and Jiangxi etc. embrace five generations starting from the originating adult.

Beyond 家族*jiāzú*, stemming from the first common ancestor of the whole 宗族*zōngzú*, there can be several 房族*fángzú*. Theoretically each new generation after the first ancestor could initiate a separate 房族*fángzú*. But in practice new 房族*fángzú* were identified mostly when a branch of the 宗族*zōngzú* resettled in new location. Such a change in the family history was usually recorded in the genealogical book for the whole 宗族*zōngzú*. It is worth mentioning that there are usually smaller "房fáng" which are unwritten but exist in people's minds, particularly in elders'[7].

[7] It is also worth mentioning that sometimes, above the concept of "房fáng" there remains "房派fángpài", graded at a higher rank. It consists of several "房fáng" and is used in genealogical books. Essentially, it is a "房fáng" but contains relatively more generations.

In brief summary, 宗族*zōngzú*, 房 族*fángzú,* and 家族*jiāzú* are three similar kinship structures based on the patriarchal principle. 家族*jiāzú* are the most fundamental units, which consist of different scales of 房族*fángzú* that stem from one 宗族*zōngzú*. From the speaker's point of view the kin from the same 家族*jiāzú* are genealogically closer than the kin from the 房族*fángzú,* while the rest of kin from his or her 宗族*zōngzú* are yet further removed, though still forming one larger lineage.

Accordingly, the following categorization, which demonstrates the existence of the three structures within the kin space among habitants of Fujian, was listed by Shi Yilong. To make it clear, an introduction to another set of terms is necessary.

祠*Cí* relates to memorial buildings that commemorate ancestors; 谱*pǔ* means genealogical books; 同……的*tóng……de* applies to people from the same kin group. They are used in creating the following three groups of terms as recorded by Shi:

> 宗祠*zōngcí* / 宗谱*zōng pǔ* / 同宗的*tóngzōng de*
> 房*fáng cí* / 房谱 *fáng pǔ* / 同房的*tóngfáng de*
> 家祠 *jiā cí* / 家谱 *jiāpǔ* / 同家的 *tóng jiā de* (Shi and Chen 2011, 35–43.)

The most common methods are to build common memorial halls, compile genealogical books. The memorial hall dedicated to an ancestor of the whole 宗族*zōngzú*, which additionally includes several earlier generations, is called 宗祠*zōngcí*. Similarly, structures erected for ancestors of particular 房族*fángzú* or of a 家族*jiāzú* are called by the group's generic term supplemented with *-cí.* The same logic of word formation is followed in the naming of different segments in genealogical books.

Other members of a 宗族*zōngzú* can also be categorized into different subgroups and named accordingly. Kins from the same 家族*jiāzú*, 房族*Fángzú* or 宗族*zōngzú* are thus called 同家的 *tóng jiā de*, 同房的*tóngfáng de*, or 同宗的*tóngzōng de* , disregarding particular relationships between individuals and pointing instead to kin groupings within the 宗族*zōngzú*.

However, 家族*jiāzú* and 宗族*zōngzú* are used by scholars in different ways. There are opinions that 家族*jiāzú* has a wider connotation than 宗族*zōngzú*. As mentioned above, the Chinese word 族*zú* means a sort of community, thus here the meaning of 家*jiā* is extended to something larger than a nuclear family. However, Sun Benwen (1947) produces a historical perspective to argue the point that 家族*jiāzú* not only includes patrilineal 族*zú,* but also the mother's 族*zú* and the wife's 族*zú,* thus mixing the laterality with affinity. In this case 宗族*zōngzú* would be a group of the same surname, while 家族*jiāzú* does not, as it includes spouses. A similar voice also comes from the standpoint of contemporary social reality. Yang Shanhua and Liu Xiaojing have argued that given the fact of the growing importance of kinship practices from the mother's side in rural China, 家族*jiāzú* should be defined as a patrilineal kinship together with the spouse's (Yang and Liu 2000, 84).

In short, it can be summarised that 宗族*zōngzú* is the more scholarly term for the Chinese lineage. 家族*jiāzú* is a term less scholarly, more common, and is interpreted in various ways. The actual meaning of 家族*jiāzú* is, to a great degree, determined by the perception of individual researchers on the basis of changing term usage (and perhaps of local variations).

In this paper I have mainly focused on the research done by the Chinese scholars, as our crucial goal is to examine how Chinese family terms were, and continue to be interpreted by insiders. However, it should not be ignored that numerous studies dealing with kinship-related matters in both past and present contexts have been made by scholars from outside China (cf. Freedman 1970; Ebrey and Watson 1980; Brandtstädter and Santos 2009). In their works, the Chinese terms referring to the family were also observed and investigated.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have reviewed the frequently used terms in Chinese that refer to the family. I am aware that these terms do not cover all the words that Chinese people apply in describing the family but they are the most typical ones.

Practically all Chinese terms applied for the family have their specific usages. 家*jiā* is a term which has been used both in ancient times and in contemporary China. With great flexibility, it can include the various forms of family. 家庭*jiātíng* is a relatively new term and it is the official description of the family. It is usually applied for the common small family. The term is less often used by people in daily speech.

大家庭*dàjiātíng* is applied by the Chinese for relatively close kinship around their nuclear family. More and more Chinese intend to define the word from a bilateral perspective. The most difficult term to define is 宗族*zōngzú*, which is an ancient term referring to the Chinese lineage. The term is rarely used in people's daily communication mostly because lineages disappear. Some scholars argue that 宗族*zōngzú* as a social institution has barely survived in contemporary China. The current iteration of 宗族*zōngzú* is a ritual group rather than an economic-oriented cooperating unit as it was before (Yue 1994). Nonetheless, considering that rituals have been restricted to patrilateral kin, it carries a meaning of a descent group with the kind of lineage. At present, the extent of such a lineage may vary greatly, and usage of the term itself is on the wane, despite the continued importance of ritual offerings to ancestors. It appears that the 宗*zōng* remains the last resort of patrilineal family grouping and has now becomes only an imagined one. One thing that is certain is that in ancient times it extended to the most removed ancestor, revered by the congregation of those performing the ritual. However, it is not clear how far removed he was. Some researchers point to nine generations, but nine could also be merely an auspicious number rather than a symptomatic one.

Lastly, the term 家族*jiāzú*, which in recent history generally referred to the smallest patrilineage around an extended form of several closely cooperating nuclear families, each being a separate 家*jiā*. Along with the transformation that kinship obligations continue to undergo, 家族*jiāzú* now tends to display a more evident bilateral connotation.

The usages of the new terms e.g. 家庭*jiātíng* and 大家庭*dàjiātíng* and the changing connotation of the traditional Chinese terms referring to the family imply the modernization of the Chinese family. The process can be summed up as the dual tendencies of minimization and bilateralization in Chinese family development.

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RATHA YĀTRĀ OF BAṬUKA MAHĀDEVA AT CHHATRARI: SOME ART HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS ENQUIRIES

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This paper seeks to excavate the relationship between the tenth century *Mukhaliṅga* and the eighth century main icon of Śakti Devī, both kept in the sanctum sanctorum or the *garbhagṛha* of the Śakti Devī (locally called The Śiva-Śakti temple) in Chhatrari, Chamba District, Himachal Pradesh. The former is known as Baṭuka Mahādeva and is taken out of the temple in a holy procession every year, on the last day of the Maṇimaheśa *chaṛī* or *yātrā*. My research is based not only on epigraphic and art historical studies but also on field work conducted in Chhatrari and adjacent sites.

* * *

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest ukazanie związku między XI-wieczną *Mukhaliṅgą* a ikoną Śakti Devi z VIII wieku, które znajdują się w sancto sanctorum, czyli w *garbhaghaha* Śakti Devi (lokalnie zwanej świątynią Śiva-Śakti) w Chhatrari, dystrykt Chamba, stan Himaćal. Pradeś. Ten pierwszy znany jest jako Baṭuka Mahādeva i co roku jest usuwany ze świątyni w uroczystej procesji, w ostatnim dniu Māimaheśa *chaṛī* zwanym yātrā. Moje badania opierają się nie tylko na epigraficznych i historycznych badaniach sztuki, ale także na pracach terenowych w Chhatrari i sąsiednich miejscach.

K e y w o r d s: Chhatrari, Baṭuka Mahādeva, *ratha yātrās, mohrās*, *linga*, *mukhaliṅga*, Maṇimaheśa, Śakti Devī Temple, procession, ritual, performance, pilgrimage, *Purāṇas*

INTRODUCTION

In the sanctum sanctorum or the *garbhagṛha*[1] of the Śakti Devī (locally called the Śiva-Śakti temple) at Chhatrari, Chamba[2] District, Himachal Pradesh, there are sacred

[1] Methodologically, the use of terminology that is either original or as close to original object or context is desirable, especially in this case where religious contexts, both historical and contemporary, are being discussed. The use of western terminology would imply widely anachronistic and culturally distant meanings. For those readers who are unfamiliar with South Asian or Himalayan contexts I give translated meanings of rare terms in footnotes or in the text.

[2] Chamba is used to describe a geographical region; the ChambaValley which covered upper regions of the Buddhal, Ravi, Bairasiul rivers and Sal rivers. Chamba also refers to the historical kingdom of Chamba largely contiguous with the valley. There is also the Chamba town, the main town and capital of the Chamba kingdom. In addition, Chamba is a modern administrative unit, originally a subdivision (*tehsil*) and now a district of the state of Himachal Pradesh.

Hindu icons that include a tenth century statue of *Mukhaliṅga* (*linga*[3] with a face) and an eighth century icon of Śakti Devī. The *Mukhaliṅga* is known as Baṭuka Mahādeva and is annually taken out of the temple in a *śobhā yātrā*[4] procession on the last day of the Maṇimaheśa *chaṛī* or *yātrā*. The idea and practice of such a ceremonial procession of an icon is not witnessed elsewhere in the Chamba-Brahmour valley and provides a link with the Siraj Region[5] of the Western Himalayas[6] where such *yātrās* with *mohrās*[7] are the norm. The procession as **ritual and performance** provides certain interesting insights into the religious formations in the upper Ravi valley.

Stylistically, the brass icon of the *Mukhaliṅga* does not conform with those of Meru Varman-Guggā lineage[8] and needs to be assessed afresh in terms of its origins, function and influence on other art production in the valley.

THE OBJECT: RE/PLACEMENT AND RE/USE

Chhatrari is the site of the Śakti Devī temple complex that contains not only the eighth century Śakti Devī icon housed in an original cedar/deodar wood temple, but also variegated small and big icons with distinct Śaiva affiliations in the sanctum and smaller shrines; these icons include the Umāsahita Maheśvaramūrti along with a *Śivaliṅga* to the north of the temple. One of the icons is a bust of Śiva, located to the left of the main Śakti Devī icon (Photo 1) this bust is the only object at Chhatrari which is taken out of the temple in a *yātrā* on a *ratha*[9] in the tradition of the *mohrās* of the Siraj region of the Western Himalayas.

The main icon, in comparison, is *sthāpita*, immovable, or *achala*. This bust of Śiva is one type of *Śivaliṅga* that has been described in the *Śiva Purāṇa* as *cara* or mobile in its

[3] *Linga* – the concept comes from Sanskrit and refers to Shiva. One of the elements of the Śiva religiosity is the adoration of *linga*. Linga means: the birth (in the sense of the male organ), the attribute, the distinctive sign, the main object of worship in the form of a cylindrical column with a rounded top and an incremental round base (see: Davis 1995, 637–648; Dennis Hudson 1995, 305–320).

[4] *Yātrā* – a pilgrimage, a procession.

[5] Siraj is a traditional term used to refer to parts of Mandi and Rampur districts of Himachal Pradesh; it is divided into upper, middle and lower Siraj.

[6] The term 'Western Himalayas' implies a region and a geographical zone rather than altitude. For Chamba, Mandi and many other districts in the region the general term 'Western Himalayas' is used from the time of Imperial Gazetteers, in Government of India gazetteers, Survey of India, in all historical literature produced on the subject, and in scientific discourse.

[7] In the case of this article *morhas* mean various kinds of coverings (cloth, jewellery, and metal faces) mostly imposed on *lingas*, but also on other images of deities.

[8] Meru Varman was a legendary *raja*, the founder of the Mosuna dynasty, known also as the Meru-Mosuna dynasty, which was the only royal lineage ruled the Chamba state from its inception in the seventh century to April 15, 1948, when Chamba was merged with the Indian Union (Sharma 2009, 38).

[9] *Ratha yatra* – a festival or public procession with a chariot carrying deity' images or idols sculptures.

Photo 1. Mukhaliṅga of Baṭuka Mahādeva set on a slate pedestal, within an assemblage of multi sectarian small brass images. Author: S. Bawa.

list of auspicious *liṅgas*. The syllable Om (a+u+m) is described as the *Dhvani Liṅga,* the *svayambhūliṅga* as *Nāda Liṅga*; the *Yantra* (diagrammatic contrivance) as *Binduliṅga. The* 'M' syllable is the installed (*pratiṣṭhitita*) *liṅga*. *The* 'U' syllable is mobile (*cara*) *Liṅga* and the 'A' syllable is the *Liṅga* of huge form (*Guruvigraha*) (*Śiva Purāṇa,* Ch. 1. 113–114)[10]. A person who worships the *liṅga* for eternity is believed to become a liberated soul.

The spatial placement of this bust is interesting insofar as the left side or *vama* is associated with the feminine, which would suggest that in terms of power and status

[10] The *Guruvigraha liṅga* is of the kind that is worshipped as Maṇimaheśa in Brahmaur and also at Saho in the Sal valley.

the icon of Devī enjoys a higher and more exalted position than the male deity. Originally, it seems that the bust may have served as the *mūlapratimā*[11] in some other temple.

The Śiva visage has generally been dated to the 10th century, about two centuries later than that of the Devī (Postel, Neven, Mankodi 1985, 71). However, an earlier dating of around the middle of the eighth century may be posited on stylistic grounds, and this visage may have been the precursor of the similar Harsar image as well as Kashmir sculptures and may be related to other eighth century images from Brahmaur-Chhatrari as discussed below. Some authorities believe that it has affiliations with the Kashmir style (Postel, Neven, Mankodi 1985, 71) based on its masculine V shaped torso, narrowing waist with a fold in the stomach containing a cross in the navel and somewhat defined chest muscles.

The object under study here is an *ekamukhaliṅga* made of brass that stands about 48 cms high from the pedestal base to the tip of the crown. The *mohrā – mūrti*[12] represents Baṭuka Mahādeva, which, according to a priest, the *pujārī* of the temple, is supposed to be the *bhakta* (a devotee- of the Devī) form of Śiva. This identification is not given in the short description of the Chhatrari *Melā*[13] in a village survey of 1961 (*Census of India 1961* 1964, 50–1). There is however a photograph of the image, which has just been labelled 'The Deity'; in addition, a similar image of the bust can be seen in the background of a photograph, however this image is now not available.

The bust is set against the *liṅga* on a *yoṇi pitha*[14] made of uneven slate stone (see photo 1). The figure is two-armed, with the arms emerging from the pedestal itself. It has the following attributes: In the right hand is an *akṣamālā*, a rosary necklace made of beads or seeds used for keeping track of prayer and mantras. Śaivite *akṣamālā* are generally made of *rudrākṣa*[15]. In this case there are approximately 27–28 beads in the rosary. Tantric practitioners, instead, use small skulls carved of ivory. Many *akṣamālās* have either 50 beads to correspond to the number of letters in the alphabet or 108 which is viewed as an auspicious number (Jones and Ryan 2006, 22)[16]. In the other hand the figure keeps a *matalunga* (a fruit rich in seeds or citron), *bīja*[17]

[11] *Mūla* literally means a root, and *pratimā* – a differentiated image.

[12] *Mūrti* – literally means any form, embodiment or solid object, and typically refers to an image, statue or idol of a deity or person in Indian culture (Monier-Williams 2011, 824; Acharya 1946, 426).

[13] *Melā* – feast, festival or fair.

[14] *Pitha* – "resting place, seat, pedestal, altar". Hindu term for the name of the place where the power of the deity was rested (most often female deities) (see: Sacha-Piekło and Jakubczak 2003, 135).

[15] *Rudraksha* (Sanskrit: *rudrākṣa*) – Shiva's teardrops; a seed traditionally used as prayer beads in Hinduism. The seed is produced by several species of large evergreen broad-leaved tree in the genus Elaeocarpus (Stutley 1985).

[16] In my text there are some inclusions (e.g. about *akṣamālā* or *matalunga*) which are significant in describing the historical and iconographic art through which I explain the religious thought and practice connected with the *mukhalinga*, the object embedded in the art.

[17] *Bīja* – literally seed, is used as a metaphor for the origin or cause of things and cognate with *bindu* (a dot).

or vīja puraka. There is a snake as a *yajñopivata* and an *ekavalī* necklace around the neck falling to the waist.

Compared to similar figures of Śiva, there is one at Elephanta, where Śiva-Mahādeva is also depicted as holding a *matalunga* (citron) in his left hand (Kramrisch 1988, 447, pl. 4). In Kashmir Śaiva tradition, the citron is especially venerated and has been mentioned as one of the objects held in the hands of *dūtīs* (two women who are partners in Tantric rites). *Dutis* are attendants of Abhinavgupta, who is visualized by Madhuraja Yogin in *Dhyāna ślōka* as Dakṣiṇāmūrti – an incarnation of Śiva. Abhinvagupta is one of the greatest exponents of Kashmir Śaiva Siddhānta and is visualized here as holding a rosary in one hand (Muller-Ortega 2010, 46). The reference to Elephanta and Kashmir shows the wide prevalence of this iconography.

Elements of this description match prescriptions given in an important text containing significant *Śilpaśāstric*[18] portions, dated to the seventh century and considered to have been composed in Kashmir, The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, though a Vaiṣṇava *Upapurāṇa*, also contains information regarding forms of deities popular amongst the Śaivite of the northern region. It says that "the staff and the citron are in the hands allotted to the Bhairava[19]". In the hand of Bhairava there is the gem of seed which is traditionally said to contain all of the atoms of the entire seed of the universe. (*Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*[20] 1928 Part III, Ch. 48, Verses 1–20).

It further prescribes that one should make Vasuki (the serpent king), Śiva's sacred thread. Mahādeva, the god of gods, should be represented with ten arms. This strong-armed (king), should bear in his right hands a rosary, a trident, an arrow, a staff and a lotus. In the left hands of the trident-bearer, the god of gods, should have a citron, a bow, a mirror, a water-pot and a piece of skin. The colour of the whole (image) should resemble the rays of the moon (*Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* 1928, Part III, Ch. 44, Verses 1–21). Though the Chhatrari image is two armed, it does bear a snake on its torso as well as a citron and rosary.

In addition, other Śaiva images within the precincts of the temple also conform to the descriptions of forms of the Śiva; one such image is the Umā Maheśvara, a 16 cm, made of brass, ninth century Śiva seated in a yoga asana on a circular stool on a lotus with Uma[21] on his lap and the head of Nandi[22] peeping from behind. Another important icon is the Pratihāra-style-Gaurī Śankara icon (Photo 2) enshrined in a small temple behind the main Śiva Śakti temple.

[18] *Śilpaśāstra* – a category of Sanskrit texts, or manuals, dealing with such arts/crafts (*śilpas*) as iconography, and the production of paintings (Johnson 2009).

[19] Bhairava is a fierce manifestation of Shiva associated with annihilation.

[20] The *Vishnudharmottara Purana* is a Hindu text, encyclopedic in nature. It is a supplement or appendix to the *Vishnu Purana* (see: Hazra 1962, 272–278).

[21] Uma, known as Satī, Dakṣayaṇi – in the Hindu tradition, one of the forms of Devi (Parvati), Śiva's wife.

[22] Nandi – in Indian mythology bull, a palfrey (*wahana*) of Śiva.

Photo 2. *Pratihāra* style Gaurī Śankara icon enshrined in a small temple behind the main Śiva Śakti temple. Author: S. Bawa.

This large composite figure shows Nandi standing behind the divine couple, while the halo like frame or *prabhāvali*[23] has narrative and mythological scenes from Paurānic myths and stories carved around the main image, including the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī and Bhikṣāṭanamūrti[24]. It is dictated in the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* ,that the left half of his body should be Pārvatī, and Śiva should be with four hands. The rosary and the trident should be depicted in the right hand while in the left a mirror and lotus should be shown. Śambhu (Śiva) should have one face, two eyes and be adorned with ornaments, and in the left part of the body should be his consort. *Prakṛti* (unconscious nature) with *Puruṣa* (self, consciousness, universal principle) are marked by close union and celebrated as *Gaurīśvara* (half-female form of Śiva), which is worshipped by all men (see: *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* 1928 Part III, Ch. 55, Verses 1–6).

In stylistic terms, the *ekamukhaliṅga* (one-faced *linga*) of Baṭuka Mahādeva, is closely related to the figure of Śiva on the entrance doorjamb (Photo 3) on its *deva śākha*[25] that has depictions of gods and goddesses.

Here a four armed Śiva is shown as standing, and Nandi in the form of a bull (*vāhana*) stands behind him. The torso is square with a cross shape around the navel while the face is also squarish with slightly open lips. Significantly, this Śiva figure holds a rosary and a citron in its front hands that bear stylistic similarities with the bust inside. The other hands hold a trident and ring like objects. Similarities between the enshrined image and the one on the doorjamb have also been noticed in the case of Lakṣaṇā Devī at Brahmaur and Mahiṣāsuramardini on the jamb of the Śakti Devī Temple (Bawa 2014, 212).

Comparison may also be made with the *mūlapratimā* or the main icon of Śakti Devī (Photo 4).

The indentation above the lip in both the Śiva and Devī icon are alike as are the three folds on the neck. It should also be mentioned that in terms of facial features, the Devī's face is elongated, nevertheless the sharp ridges of the nose and the fullness of the lips suggest that the same atelier, based in the Brahmaur Chhatrari region, was the workshop responsible for the creation of the wooden carving, the Śakti Devī and the bust inside the shrine. Moreover, the Devī image has an inscription dating from the early eighth century that provides us with the names of both the patron and sculptor; Meru Varmana and Guggā respectively. A translated text of the Śakti Devī image reads:

[23] The *Prabhāvali* represents something similar to *prabhamaṇḍala*; the former is, however, a ring of light that surrounds the whole person of a god, while the latter is a circular halo that is shown close to the head. The *Prabhāvali* is an ornamental circular or oval ring, with a number of *jvālās* (or "protruding tongues of flame") (Gopinatha Rao 1993).

[24] *Bhikṣāṭanamūrti* refers to an image (*mūrti*) of an aspect of Śiva. *Bhikṣāṭana* literally means "wandering about for alms" (Wisdom Library).

[25] *Śākha* – literally means a branch. It is the name of a *gaṇa* (attendant of Śiva).

Photo 3: Śiva on the entrance doorjamb on its Deva Śākha of the wooden Śiva Śakti temple. Author: S. Bawa.

Photo 4. Detail of the *mūlapratimā* or the main icon of Śakti Devī, brass, early eighth century. Author: S. Bawa.

> "There was an eminent chief from a pure race called the illustrious Deva-varman of celebrated fame. His son, charming by every virtue, [is] the illustrious Meru-varman, renowned on earth. First, for the sake of the spiritual merit of his parents, he, out of devotion, caused the image of Śakti to be made, after having conquered [his] foes in their invincible strongholds. His life was prolonged by glory, fame and religious merit. It was made by (*krita)* a workman called Guggā" (Vogel 1911, 145).

The same pair were also responsible for the creation of three other images at Brahmaur in the Chaurāsi complex, comprising the Ganeşa, Nandi and the Lakşaṇā Devī images, all belonging to the broad Śaiva Śākta sect.

There may have been a large Śaiva complex either at Chhatrari or the nearby village of Khani Maṭha that was mentioned in Yugākarvarman's Brahmaur inscription, where details of a Śaivite ascetic institution being dispossessed of the benefit of a Narasiṁha temple are mentioned. *Maṭhas* were popular institutions of Śaivite practice in Kashmir and Central India. *Maṭhas*, such as the one at Khani, were attached to Śakti temples, in which Śiva and Śakti became inseparable components of worship in Śaiva monastic establishments having Tantric overtones (Bawa 1998, 41–43).

The Harsar image, as it stands today, is a later copy of the original image that was stolen from Chhatrari *mukhaliṅga.* The copy was donated by the *pujārī* of the temple in March 1994. The original image, probably inspired from another one, hailed from the sixteenth century; was two-armed with one hand holding a rosary while the other – a citron; the image was decorated with a serpent as *yajñopavita* (a sacred cord). This was referred to as Mahādeva and was installed at Arsarin (Harsar) as mentioned in a dedicatory inscription by donors Gaṅgu and Kiṣanu, the sons of Bhagasyani Nathu (Vogel 1911, 251).

The presence of such a magnificent image, replete with the mythological complexities of sectarian worship associated with Paurānic Brahmanism, demonstrates a close association and the influence of Śivaism as practiced in early medieval north India, especially Kashmir and the central regions. The Śiva-Śakti temple too must have been an independent shrine perhaps with a stone *śikhara*, which is no longer extant, though remnants of a stone temple can be seen in the contiguous Lakṣaṇā Devī Temple at Brahmaur. A similar trend involving the disintegration of stone temples and the relegation of their stone images to the peripheries of newer Devī temples can be seen elsewhere in the Western Himalayas, such as at Kao and Mamel in the Karsog valley.

IDENTITY AND ITS REMNANTS

Local tradition[26] identifies this Śiva bust as Baṭuka Mahādeva, and the term itself is intriguing, because early Paurānic texts do not mention Śiva in this form. The *Śiva Purāṇa*, *Visnudharmottara* and other *Purāṇas* in which *Śiva* and other iconography find mention are specially significant to trace how resonances of an older tradition are still echoed in identities and practices in recent times. The one reference in the *Śiva Purāṇa* to Baṭuka is in association with the incarnation of Pināka bearing Lord Śiva as Kirāta who killed Mūka and with pleasure granted favours to Arjuna. In it, Lord Krişṇa says that he propitiated Lord Śiva for seven months in the mountain of Baṭuka and thus pleased Śiva. (*ŚivaPurāṇa*, 37.13–14). The location and identity of the mountain

[26] Place: Chhatrari, District Chamba, Date: 15th September 2002, Informants: Chuuni Lal-Pujari, Suresh Kumar-Pujari, Puran Chanda and Chatur Ram-Kothari and Riharu Ram-Chela (medium) of the Devī (also known as Mata da Grahanu).

is unspecified but Baṭuka has traditionally been associated with Bhairava and in fact, his child form or *bāl rūpa* is often seen in later Śaiva tradition.

Baṭuka Bhairava has always been considered an unorthodox deity associated with dogs and unclean demons, perhaps belonging to autochthonous cultural traditions that were incorporated into the Brahmanical religious matrix. This is part of an extended tradition where the Yajurveda describes Rudra as Śvapati (Lord of Dogs) and the Atharvaveda as being accompanied by howling dogs (Chakravarti 1986, 46).

The description of the Baṭuka Bhairava icon, given in the *Rupamandana*, with eight arms does not match the image at Chhatrari, for it is prescribed that in six of these arms *khatvanga*[27], *pasa*[28], *suta*, *damaru*[29], *kapāla*[30] and a snake should be held. Of the two hands adjacent to the body, one carries a piece of flesh and the other is in *abhaya – mudra* (gesture of fearlessness). The figure is flanked by a dog which is the same colour as Baṭuka Bhairava. Even the *Vatuka-bhairavkalpa,* a later text devoted to this particular form, describes that this aspect of Bhairava should be depicted with red *jatās* (matted hair), three eyes and a red body. He should carry in his hands the *śūla pāsa*, *damaru* and *kapāla* and ride a dog. In addition, he should be stark naked and surrounded by a host of demons (Rao 1998, 177–179). In the Tantric tradition there are 64 *bhairavas* or *kṣētrapālas*, each having a dog as its companion. For Baṭuka and Kāla Bhairava, the dog actually becomes the *vāhana* (vehicle) (Krishna 2014, 105).

It is in Kashmiri Saivism that Vaṭuka Bhairava has a major presence in textual as well as ritual practice and represents the *rājas guṇa*[31]. In one of the myths, it is narrated that at the early dawn of creation, Mahādeva meditates on his Paramśakti. His meditation leads to a revelatory vision of a beautiful Himalayan forest called Sundermal where Parmaśakti gives instructions to her Yoginīs to prepare meat dishes and other delicacies for human consumption. Mahādeva takes the form of the Svachanda Bhairava (5 faces, ten arms and 15 eyes) and approaches the supreme force, Mahāśakti, while her attendants are terrified and struck dumb by this form.

It is believed that on observing their dread, Paramśakti or Mahādevī cast an infuriated eye at a pitcher of water whereupon Baṭuka Bhairava emerged. Here too, he has been ascribed as ten-armed holding a spear, a pitcher, a *damaru*, a noose and two arms in *abhaya* (gesture of fearlessness) and with favour-giving postures. The narrative relates that Baṭuka Mahādeva and the Yoginīs are unable to ward off Mahādeva in his

[27] *Khaṭvāṅga* is a long, studded tube originally created as a weapon. It was adopted as a religious symbol in Indian religions.

[28] *Pāśa* – translated as "noose" or "lasso", is a supernatural weapon depicted in Hindu iconography.

[29] *Damaru* is a small, two-headed drum.

[30] *Kapāla* – a skull or a skull-cup – a cup made from a human skull and used as a ritual implement (bowl).

[31] *Rajas* is sometimes translated as passion; it is one of the three *Guṇas* (tendencies, qualities, attributes), a philosophical and psychological concept developed by the Samkhya school of Hindu philosophy (Larson 2001; Lochtefeld 2002).

Svachanda Bhairava form. The Svachanda Mahādeva however leaves and Paramśakti blesses Baṭuka and Ramana Bhairavas created thus as embodiments of *rājas* and *sattva guṇas*[32] respectively. In another version of the story Bhrangesh Samhita Brahma and Viṣṇu are humbled by Śiva instead of Baṭuka and Ramana. As a reward for their efforts the Mahāśakti, grants these Bhairavas protection and on the 13th *Krishna pakṣa*[33] of *Phālguna*[34] (called *Herath*) *yōginīs* merge with the Mahāśakti, and she in turn with the *jvālāliṅga* (Toshakhani 2010, 157–159).

This is celebrated in Kashmir Saivism through a fortnight long ritual around the 13th of *Phālguna* where Bhairava emerges as a *jvālā-liṅga* or a *Liṅga* of blaze and overwhelms Vaṭuka Bhairava and Rāma (or Ramana Bhairava) the mind born sons of Mahāśakti.

In another part of the Himalayas, in Nepal, Baṭuka Bhairava has a temple contiguous with the Vatsala temple in Paśupatinātha and an independent procession is held there and this Bhairava is taken outside (Michaels 2008, 13).

JATĀRS: CHAṚĪ YĀTRĀ, ŚOBHĀ AND RATHA YĀTRĀ

The entire area has numerous *jatārs* or fairs and festivals, either linked to or independent of each other. Three- day- festivals, such as the one at Chhatrari, are also celebrated in other parts of the erstwhile *riyāsat* ("a state", region) including Pangi, where the *Iwān* is celebrated every year in Dharwas and the *Unoni* at Lujh, Suraalm Karuni and Karias to venerate the Devī in her various forms (*Census of India 1961* 1964, 37).

Every year at Chhatrari, a *yātrā* known locally as *śōbhāyātrā* is taken out of the main Śakti Devī temple and taken around the village. This *yātrā* takes place annually on the occasion of the three-day *melā* (feast, festival or fair), which coincides with the last day of the better known Maṇimaheśa *chaṛīyātrā*, when the *chaṛī* (staff) starts its return journey to the Charpaṭi Nāth *samādhi* in Chamba town. The *yātrā* and the accompanying rituals are conducted in four stages, each with a separate yet interlinked significance.

On the first day of the *melā* at Chhatrari, the main idol of Śakti Devī is washed in the morning with water brought from the Maṇimaheśa Lake (*Census of India 1961* 1964, 50) and later the small *mukhaliṅga* is taken out in a palanquin in a procession

[32] *Sattva* is one of the three *Guṇas* or "modes of existence" (tendencies, qualities, attributes), a philosophical and psychological concept developed by the Samkhya school of Hindu philosophy (Larson 2001; Lochtefeld 2002).

[33] *Krishna paksa* refers to the dark lunar fortnight or waning moon in the Hindu calendar. *Krishna* in Sanskrit means "dark". *Krishna paksa* is a period of 15 days, which begins on a day *Purnima* (Full Moon), culminating on a day Amasvasya (New Moon). *Krishna paksa* is considered inauspicious, as the moon loses light during this period (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paksha, access: 10.11.2017).

[34] *Phālguna* is a month of the Hindu calendar. *Phalguna* is the eleventh month of the year, and corresponds with February/March in the Gregorian calendar (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phalguna, access: 10.11.2017).

as described below. On being asked about the relationship between the Maṇimaheśa and Śakti Devī temples, the *pujārī* said it was an 'old tradition'. The same explanation was offered for the *melā* and its importance.

Nevertheless, it is interesting that the Maṇimaheśa *yātrā* links the entire Chamba Brahmour valley, an area under the control of the Mosuna dynasty[35] from the time of Meru Varman (the legendary *raja*, a founder of the dynasty) onwards and within a pilgrimage and homage circuit. The Maṇimaheśa *chaṛīyātrā*[36] is taken out by a sect of wandering mendicants known as *sādhus* from the Daśnāmi *akharā* in Chamba town after consecrating the twin staffs of Charpaṭnāth, symbolizing Śiva and Pārvatī. Then there is a *pujā*, the feeding in a gathered communal feast called *langar*. The Jaṅgams or the Viraśaiva sing the praises of Śiva and are paid a ritual fee *dakṣiṇā* by wandering mendicants known as *sādhu bābās* who are their patrons or *jajamāns*[37] during this period. The next stage of the ritual takes place at the neighboring temple of Dattātreya[38]. The group of *sādhus* next go to the main Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa temple complex where the *chaṛī* is hosted by the temple committee and pay obeisance to the shrine of Charpatnāth and to the *tri-mukhaliṅga* within the Cañdragupta temple. It continues on its onward journey, halting at designated spots to reach Brahmaur where it stays within the precincts of the Chaurāsi complex. Here, the tall Maṇimaheśa temple is to be found with a large *liṅga* that is enshrined within. The *chaṛīyātrā* which continues from Brahmaur (Photo 5) goes up to Brahmani Devī before it proceeds to the Dal Lake.

On the way to Maṇimaheśa Dal, all pilgrims are enjoined to bathe in the Brahmāṇī Kuṇḍa, at the temple of Brahmāṇī Devī, also known as Bharmāṇī (*Census of India 1961* 1964, 62). This ritual started because of a belief that Śiva granted a favour of precedence to the Devī to expatiate his sin of having stayed in Devī's Vatika (a pasture). In another version there was a struggle for supremacy in the area and the vanquished Devī asked for this favour (Bawa 1998, 59). There are other sites associated with Śiva and Gaurī and one of these is Barachundi, where it is believed that Śiva as a bridegroom plaited Pārvatī's hair after she had bathed in the Gaurī Kuṇḍa (a site on way to the Lake).

The linkages between Śiva and the Devī continue through the mixing of Pauranic Brahmanical textual traditions with local beliefs. Here, instead of Kāmākhya in Assam, it is the Dal that is believed to be the site where the *yoṇi* of Sati fell after she committed herself to the fire of Daksha's sacrifice or *yajña* and was ritually dismembered by Viṣṇu's *cakra* to calm Śiva who carried her body and wrought destruction on the universe. It is believed by the Brahmin community of Gaddis that Śiva who had witnessed the dropping of the last limb of Sati's body into the nether world (*patāla)* now changed himself

[35] See: footnote 8.

[36] Field survey in August September 1993, 2003, 2012.

[37] A *jajamān* is a person who requests and pays for a performance.

[38] Manimahesh Lake and Mani Mahesh Kailash Peak are located in Himachal Pradesh, between Mahoun and Hadsar, in the Himalayan range Pir Panjal.

Photo 5: The Maṇimaheśa *yātrā* with the *charīs* carried by *sadhus* on way to the Maṇimaheśa Lake. Author: S. Bawa.

into a mountain, taking the form of *Parvata Liṅga* to uphold the *yoṇi*. This site came to be known as *Yoni-Tirtha* or *Pīṭha*. The importance of the *yoṇi* as *pīṭha*, or receptacle for the *liṅga,* is mentioned in various *Purāṇas* such as *Devī-Bhāgvata Purāṇa* (7.30–44–45) and *Kālika Purāṇa* (18.36–54) and is also elaborated on in the *Śiva Purāṇa* which says:

> "The phallus is united with vagina and vagina is united with phallus. For the sake of perpetual enjoyment here and hereafter the devotee shall worship the phallic emblem which is Lord Śiva Himself. He is the sun giving birth and sustenance to the worlds. His symbol is justified in the coming into existence of things. Persons should worship Śiva, the cause of birth, in his phallic form. That which makes the *Puruṣa* known, is called *Liṅga,* (the symbol). The unification and fusion of the symbols of Śiva and Śakti is thus called *Liṅga.* The Lord delighted at the worship of His symbol wards off the function of the symbol. Hence the devotee shall worship the phallic emblem with the sixteen forms of service and homage to acquire benefit from *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* through, meaning inherent or extraneous" (*Śiva Purāṇa* I. 105–109 and I. 136).

So, a devotee is asked to worship both Śiva and Śakti. Rituals involved in the worship of Śiva and Śakti are prescribed regularly. It is believed that they can lead to the attainment of material and spiritual benefits through urging devotees to not be deceived in regards to money, body, mantra or conception. In such rituals Śiva, in the company of his wife, feeds his devotees (*Śiva Purāṇa* I.140–142). Thus, public feasting and festivals are encouraged in the Pauranic version of Śivasim.

As mentioned before, water from the Maṇimaheśa Dal or lake is taken to bathe the idols at Brahmaur and Chhatrari on Radha Ashtami or Durbashtmi. The next day of the ceremony it continues to Harsar and then proceeds via Dhhancho to the shore of the Maṇimaheśa Lake at the foot of Kailāśa Mountain[39]. In its original form, the act of ritually bathing and consecrating the image of Śakti Devī with sacred waters brought to Śiva not only links the two sites of the rituals, but also the deities. The Maṇimaheśa *yātrā* and the one at Chhatrari not only reinforce the sacredness of Brahmaur but also unite all the main temples of Chamba-Brahmaur in a relationship of priority and kinship (Bawa. 1998, 37, fn 5).

On the morning of Radha *aṣṭami*, a sacred dip is also performed at other sites, holy to Śiva, in the Brahmaur region such as at Tri-Lochan Mahādeva on the Chamba Brahmaur road, in the Sal river at Saho, in a pond at the site of a temple called Anala Mahādeva near Pukhri village and also at Kunjar Mahādeva in the Bhattiyat division. In Chamba town, people bathe in the Ravi River, where it is believed that the waters of Maṇimaheśa Dal reach by mid-morning, and then pay obeisance to the Śiva temple of Chandragupta in the Lakşmi Nārāyana temple complex.

Once a relatively restricted pilgrimage, in which mainly the Gaddis, Chambyāls and Pangyāls[40] participated, it has now grown into a pan- regional pilgrimage with people from Punjab, Jammu, Kashmir and other parts of Himachal joining in. According to a local tradition in the Bhadarwah, across the Padri Pass, there is an account of sectarian conflict between the *nāgas*[41] and Vaişnava cult represented by Garuda, and Śiva, in which is recounted that Śiva decided to relocate to Kailaśa after a request from Vasuki Nāga, who presented a *maṇi* (a jewel) to Śiva and thus Śiva is called Maṇimaheśa Mahādeva. Even the Jammu state of Chanheni claims a connection with Śiva and says that Gaddien Dhār or the ridge of the Gaddis from Mantalai to Maṇimaheśa was given to Gaurjāas as a dowry and thus the populace of Chanehni go with Gaurjā from Mantalai to Maṇimaheśa Kailaśa every year along with the *yātrā*, bringing the goddess to her natal home for her annual visit to her village. The legend resembles that of Nandā Devī as Gaurja and her marriage to Śiva in Garhwal region.

THE EVENT: RITUAL AND PERFORMANCE

In phase two, after bathing the idol, the actual procession of the Śiva bust from the sanctum of the temple and its short foray outside the *garbhagṛha* (a small sanctum) takes place. The *ratha yātrā* is described as a *śōbhā yātrā* by temple functionaries. The

[39] Manimahesh Lake and Mani Mahesh Kailash Peak are located in Himachal Pradesh, between Mahoun and Hadsar, in the Himalayan range Pir Panjal.

[40] Tribes living in Himachal Pradesh.

[41] *Nāga* is the Sanskrit and Pali word for a deity or class of entity or being taking the form of a very great snake, specifically the king cobra, found in the Indian religions(Elgood 2000, 234).

Photo 6. The *śōbhā yātrā* of Baṭuka Mahādeva emerging from the Śiva Śakti temple. Author: S. Bawa.

ratha is a small wooden *pālki* or palanquin made of a woven *niwār* (a coarse kind of tape) around wooden posts made of *devadar* wood (Himalayan cedar). It is prepared to receive the *mūrti* by lining it first with a blanket, then covering this with a red brocade cloth (called *sāl* or *sālu*) and finally, placing round cushions as support on two sides of the palanquin *ratha*. The brass *mukhaliṅga* described above, which is kept on a platform (along with other small images) to the right of the main image, is taken out of the *garbhagṛha* by temple functionaries and placed on the *ratha*. It is then decorated with two long necklaces of silver and gold. A *mukuṭa* (a crown decoration) is placed in front of the crown on the bust. Thereafter, a silver *chhatra* (an umbrella) is placed atop the image (I was permitted to observe these preparations up to this point but then was asked to leave).

The *ratha*, carried by the *kothāri* and other temple functionaries, is taken out by the main temple door (Photo 6).

It descends into the *Kuṇḍa* area (an enclosed courtyard with a fire altar or *vedī*), ascends steps on the left and does a circumambulation (*pradakṣiṇā*) of the temple. It leaves the temple's premises from a south gate, goes into the *bazār* and finally, re-enters from the middle gate and is rushed directly into the temple. The *ratha* is accompanied by musicians playing the *dhōl* (drum), *narasiṅghā* (broad trumpet), *paun* (a percussion instrument) and *nagāṛā* (kettledrums).

On being asked whether such *ratha yātrās* take place elsewhere in the valley, the reply was always in the negative. The reason given for this singularity was that such a *mūrti* did not exist elsewhere. On being further questioned about the specifics of this particular *mūrti*, the *kothāri* said that only this *mūrti* can be taken outside. Other *mūrtis*, not even the small idols in the sanctum, can be transported around. This ritual appears to be significant given that a *liṅga* cover (called *mohrā*), of this type, is rare in the Chamba valley. The Vajreśvari in Chamba town and maybe even the Harsar images are probably the only such examples. The Vajreśvari image installed in a temple of the same name, in Chamba town, is a *mohrā* – a brass mask that is used as a mobile icon to be carried out in the *rathas*, and is also often installed for regular and daily worship in the Mandi region, previously known as Siraj. However, in case of the Vajreśvari icon, it is considered to be the *pindī* – the primeval body of the Devī, and is never taken out of the sanctum for a procession.

THE MASK DANCE

Stage three involves a performance of Śiva-Śakti and the demons being played out in the public arena through a mask dance enacted on the premises of the temple. There are six masks in total, all made of wood and called *khapar* or *mukhauṭā*, and are daubed with layers of orange-red paste. While witnessing the *ratha yātrā*, I observed that the masks were placed against the outer entrance wall of the main shrine throughout the day. As soon as the *ratha yātrā* is over, six men enter the temple and don the masks after shutting the main door. After they are dressed, the men dash out of the temple and run around in the *pradakṣiṇā* rite[42] of the courtyard in front of the Umā-Maheśvara temple (Photo 7). Here they sway and dance around each other. During the entire performance, boys from the village beat them with *bicchū-būṭī* (nettles) and then masked men chase them off. The masked men then run back into the temple and the doors are shut again.

The dance is supposed to be a re-enactment of the fight between the Devī and a Rākṣasa called Buḍhā (identified with Mahiśāsura). It is believed that the Devī killed him at Chhatrari and the temple was constructed to commemorate the event. Of the six masks, one represents the Devī, three are those of the Buḍhā *rākṣasa* and two those of Chandrahauli[43]or dancing girls. The nettles are considered to be the guardians of the Devī.

[42] *Pradakṣiṇā* – the action of walking clockwise round a person or deity as a mark of respect (*English Oxford Dictionaries*).

[43] Perhaps this is a local version of the term *Chandramauli*, the crescent moon on Śiva's forehead which is referred to in the *Mahābhārata*.

Photo 7: Mask wearing dancers circumambulating the Śiva Śakti temple Chhatrari, 15th September 2002. Author: S. Bawa.

The outer walls of the sanctum are painted with 18th–19th century murals depicting various Purānic and popular incidents from narratives of Rādhā-Kr̥ṣṇa and the struggle with and defeat of various demons by Kr̥ṣṇaas well as Durgā. The faces of these demons (Photo 8) be they Śunga and Niśunga, or Caṇda and Muṇda are painted in orange-red very much in the vein of the Mukhautā used in the masked performance.

The description and details of the mask dance are not given in the village survey but there are two photographs that show the dancers with masks and some rudimentary additional attire such as a scarf called a *dupaṭṭā* that identifies the wearer as feminine. Another photograph shows the villages surrounding the dancers (*Census of India 1961* 1964. Chitrari, unnumbered photographs). All the men who don masks belong to the Sipi and Lohār castes. Their names, when I was viewing the procession, were Hans Rai, Devī Chand, Mangu, Pritam Chand, Prito Dev and Hukama Ram. Jago Ram played the *dhōl*, Baladev and Hansa were on the *bans* (flute), Chunni Lal-Narasiṅgha, Manoj Kumar and Naresh Kumar were on the *paun* while Gyan Chand on the *thāli* accompanied them.

Photo 8: Painting on the wall of Śiva Śakti temple showing a red bodied demon being vanquished by Varaha, left panel. Author: S. Bawa.

RITES OF POSSESSION: THE CHELA

The performance continues with rites of possession, where the medium or *celā* (Rihāru Rām) is sprinkled with water in front of the Śakti Devī image, not unlike the lambs and goats that are sacrificed to the deity. During the ceremonies witnessed by me, throughout the day, devotees sacrifice sheep and even tiny little lambs to the Devī. The sacrificial offerings are tied to one of the wooden post-supports of the temple, water is sprinkled on them to make them shiver and then the actual decapitations take place. The sacrifices are independent proceedings where the *pujārī* is not required.

Apparently the Devī possesses the *celā* (this takes about twelve minutes). I could see him twitching and shivering through a crack in the wall. He then rushed out of the temple, ran around it in *pradakṣiṇā* up to the courtyard where he swayed and jumped up and down. Village elders asked him questions about the crops and rains which surrounded him. This did not last very long and he soon dashed back into the temple. This ended the ritual/performance part of the *melā*.

The next two days of the *melā* are mainly devoted to various kinds of community dances. The area around the temple used to organize village activities such as volleyball matches, rides and dances by the Gaddi tribesmen. Stalls selling wares from Chamba region and even Pathankot are just outside the temple, and villagers buy trinkets and items from them. This is also the time when devotees beseech the Devī for favours. If these are fulfilled, they then return the following year with offerings for the Devī.

Deities in mask or *mohrā* forms, are displayed in many parts of the Kullu-Mandi region or at pan-regional fairs or festivals such as Śivaratri at Mandi and Dussehrā at Kullu. However, there are also local processions and fairs that establish familial and hierarchical relationships between deities at an inter-village level. Cases in point being the two villages of Kao and Mamel in the Karsog valley; a *mohrā ratha* of Mamleśvara, a form of Śiva, is taken out to meet the *mohrā ratha* of Kāmākṣrā Devī from Kao

where they meet as husband and wife. Similar practices are observable elsewhere in the Tirthan valley.

The observations of the objects, rituals and performances highlight the peculiarities of the *jatārs* (festivals) of Gaddis. These bind the region together within a network of mythology, ritual performance and pilgrimage, translating classical Brahmanical ideological and metaphysical framework into local legends, beliefs and ritual practices. Many layers of religious experience have created this multivalent system of *jatārs* in the valley. The resonances of Kashmir Śivaism are easily explained, given the physical proximity and the system of exchange of religious elements in the region (Bawa 1998, 39, 42, 45, 50). The *vamsavali* or the genealogy of the kings of Chamba, records that the founding king reached Varmapura or Brahmaur via Kashmir. His descendant, Meru Varman, obtained the images in Brahmaur and Chhatrari established under the influence of his eminent guru who was an inhabitant of Kashmir (Vogel 1911, 90–1). The practices and cults peculiar to Kashmir such as Baṭuka Mahādeva thus find echoes in local cultic beliefs in the upper Ravi valley, as do stylistic affiliations in art.

The processions out of the temples, mark or delineate the territory of Devatā or the deity, while also allowing all those present to be sanctified through his *darśana*[44], in a practice that may have travelled with the Gaddi herdsmen as they traversed the Western Himalayas. The mask-dance, rites of possession and sacrifices further enhance this experience by perpetuating the memory of a mythical event with all the characters, conflicts and contestations embedded in it. The Devī, Śiva and the demons all inhabit the physical and religious landscape of Chhatrari and Brahmaur and constantly adjust, shift and find visibility in the *ratha yātrā* of Baṭuka Mahādeva.

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[44] Darśana (darshan) is described as an "auspicious seeing or beholding" of a holy person, which bestows merit on the person who is seen. It is most commonly used for theophany, "manifestation / visions of the divine", in Hindu worship, e.g. of a deity (especially in image form), or a very holy person or artifact. One can receive darśana or a glimpse of the deity in the temple, or from a great saintly person (Flood 2011, 194; Encyclopaedia Britannica).

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Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska. 2018. *Reko-rekonesans: praktyka autentyczności. Antropologiczne studium odtwórstwa historycznego drugiej wojny światowej w Polsce* [Reenactment reconnaissance: the practice of authenticity. An anthropological study of World War II historical reenactment in Poland]. Kęty: Marek Derewiecki Publ., 391 pages.

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Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska's book on historical reenactment analyses the practice of authenticity, understood as the means of "presenting and experiencing History in historical reenactment used by reenactors themselves" (p. 9). The content indicates that the author, having accumulated a vast knowledge, gathered a broad research material, and conducted thorough field research on the phenomenon of reenactment, has consciously and deliberately constructed her project and the resulting publication to revolve around the titular issue of the practice of authenticity. This choice leads to certain consequences, three of which appear to have the most significance: (1) the author presents and analyses reenactors' own attitudes towards reconstructing and experiencing the past in historical reenactment, which is one of the many perspectives that may be adopted to study and describe the cultural phenomenon in question. From the point of view of the audience, the conclusions may have been different; (2) the issue of authenticity is essential for understanding the phenomenon, as it is in its very core; (3) last but not least, such a research angle grants the author the opportunity to analyse the phenomenon on the peripheries of historical research, paving the way for and validating the anthropological approach towards it.

The author grounds her study on experiencing history through historical reenactment in the anthropology of experience, but makes frequent references to the concept of performance. Such a framework proves fitting, as it allows her to present the complexity and ambiguity of the reenactors' attitude towards the past. Although at least several important academic works on historical reenactment have been published in the West, as far as Polish academia is concerned, Baraniecka-Olszewska's anthropological research is pioneering in nature. This is not to mean that Polish scholars take no interest in the phenomenon of historical reenactment, but rather that they rarely see it as valuable, treating the studied issues in a selective and fragmentary manner,

or make no attempts to "investigate the attitudes the reenactors themselves harbour towards their actions, or to show how they utilise the possibility to get closer to the past, provided by historical reenactment" (p. 9). The aim set and consistently pursued by Baraniecka-Olszewska was therefore not only to present the phenomenon in a particular manner ('from within', or, as the author put it, shifting the focus towards the emic nature of the phenomenon), but also to select and use theoretical frameworks and methodological tools which would enable her to show this cultural phenomenon from a new perspective, after a thorough analysis which opens the way to further questions. Consequently, the centre of attention moves away from the opinions of the reenactors (who frequently present a rather hagiographical vision of themselves and their actions) towards the author's efforts to understand and conceptualise hat the reenactors are saying.

Baraniecka-Olszewska demonstrates that the actions and experiences of reenactors are more than the light entertainment with no deeper involvement they may seem to be on the surface. She emphasises that she only focuses on the public aspect of reenactment, i.e. "coming in contact with the past during activities conducted in the public sphere" (p. 13) within the framework of contemporary Polish culture, consciously disregarding the private side of reenactment (the so-called social aspect). The author stresses that, in practice, her research was conducted on various groups reenacting events from different time periods, from the 10th century to the Second World War. Ultimately she made the choice to limit her analysis to the reenactment of the history of Poland and the Second World War, stating that it is this period that arouses the strongest emotions, implicating reenactment in historical and social conflicts. Although the topic of reenactment being entangled in historical policies, debates on collective memory and the nature of public spaces is not the main focus of Baraniecka-Olszewska's research, she is fully aware that in the case of the cultural phenomenon under analysis some additional aspects, such as the political involvement of reenactment, cannot be fully disregarded (p. 24). Not to question the author's right to narrow the analysis down to the groups reenacting the Second World War, one is nevertheless tempted to ask whether a study conducted among reenactors of other historical periods would yield similar results, for instance in the context of the questions posed in the penultimate part of the book and revolving around the issues of the impossibility to portray the past or the problems of impersonating enemy troops.

Using abundant research material and a thorough analysis of the concepts and theories known from relevant literature, the author introduces some complexity to the simplified narration on experiencing and living the past in historical reenactment. This social movement, distinctly present in contemporary culture, has often come under (not always unjust) criticism in the media and the academia. In keeping with her initial Baraniecka-Olszewska does not discus all the charges laid against reenactors and reenactment, focusing solely on "analysing arguments pointing to the lack of

authenticity, both as a factor eliciting specific experiences, and as a form of presenting the past (...)" (p. 308). The author is very thorough in her analysis of the narratives present in the public sphere and subsequently undermines the allegations of kitsch, infantilisation, falsifying history or commercialisation (p. 310) made against reenactors as well as against reenactment as a phenomenon. Thus, she emphasises that even an imperfect form of representing the past (this imperfection, naturally, has its limits) may elicit a deep emotional response in reenactors. Although the author uses many convincing arguments to disprove the critics' allegations, it seems that presenting a thorough image of the phenomenon would require more research on the reactions and experiences of the audience. The reenactors' activities take place in the public sphere, and therefore their experience remains, at least to a certain degree, connected to the reactions and experiences of the audience. Thus, their experience is relational in nature, even though this relationality is of a different kind than the one mentioned by the author (p. 92). An analysis of this interrelation between the reenactors (the addressants of the message) and the audience (its recipients) would certainly enrich, complement and perhaps even change the image presented in the publication.

The book is composed of twelve parts divided into sub-sections, each of which focuses on a specific issue. The analysed topics include experiencing the past, the legitimization of authenticity, the time-space of the reenactors, the image and presence of women in historical reenactment. Instead of providing only a general overview, this task-focused approach offers a deeper insight into each of the issues connected with the practice of authenticity in the reenactment milieu. All parts of the book reveal Baraniecka-Olszewska's qualities as a scholar, such as astute analytical skills, the ability to conduct the narrative from general statements to their material exemplification, and stylistic clarity. This does not mean, however, that the book is uniform in all its parts.

The author's considerations on the subject of experience in historical reenactment, the experience of the past, as well as the issue of truth and authenticity are presented masterfully indeed. What is more, Baraniecka-Olszewska offers a thorough analysis of the titular notion of reenactment, stating that it could mean three things: "a general cultural phenomenon, a method of work used by historians, or a single historical presentation" (p. 27). Baraniecka-Olszewska is in favour of a broad understanding of historical reenactment, beyond the actual moments of recreating past events and including "other activities related to the process of reconstructing the past necessary for enacting it, such as the search for and the study of source material, the preparation of equipment and experimenting with it, training, drills, meetings, discussion, making plans for the so-called reenactment season, and the organization of events. It also encompasses seeking information on the daily life of soldiers (...)" (pp. 29–30). Ultimately, all these elements influence the experience of the past and the methods of its reenactment, even though, as the author emphasises, the complexity of the cultural phenomenon comes not only from itself, but also from the context in which

it functions (p. 31). This being said, Baraniecka-Olszewska does not accentuate that significant aspects of the contemporary context include a kind of commercialisation of experience, which is promoted and 'consumed' similarly to products or services available on the market. Although this subject is not tackled in the book, viewing the reenactors' experiences of the past in this context does not seem groundless.

Portraying historical reenactment as a modern rendition of the past (p. 55) and a resultant of the change in attitude towards history observable in our culture (p. 53), Baraniecka-Olszewska develops her own notion of 'reenactment history', a form "dependent on history and created in close connection with the past, yet inextricably related to the present (...)" (p. 61). This notion allows the author to present history as a construct and to situate historical reenactment within historical culture, providing more validation to anthropological studies of the phenomenon. She also emphasises the unique nature of this form of recalling the past, indicating that significant properties of reenactment history include "an individualised, or even intimate contact with a specific vision of the past" (p. 67).

The part relating the manner in which reenactors experience the past is truly informative. Baraniecka-Olszewska offers a detailed analysis of her vast research material and demonstrates that the reenactors' experience of the past is multi-sensual and embodied (p. 113). This sensual aspect of reenactment is sometimes criticised by scholars, yet the author argues that it is these embodied experiences that make reenactors feel a special connection with the past. Such experiences prove to be a unique manner of acquiring knowledge about history. A communal experience of the same vision of history or the same representation thereof, so crucial for reenactors, does not mean, however, that each of them experiences it in the same way (p. 88). The author shows that experiencing the past within the framework of historical reenactment means not only collective experience, but also experiencing things in relation to someone or something, i.e. relational experience (p. 92). Baraniecka-Olszewska makes that conclusion on the basis of intensive communication with reenactors, which included numerous discussions and prolonged contact. However, since no in-depth study of the experiences and reactions of the audience has been attempted, it would be difficult to assess whether the fact that the reenactors come in such contact with the past is in any way noticed and perceived by outside observers and whether it has any convincing external manifestations.

The author's thoughts on the relations between experiencing the past in reenactment and the concept of non-linear time (p. 107) are equally valuable, especially to non-anthropologists. The different perception of time is where one of the many performative aspects of reenactment is realised, thereby granting it the potential to touch the past. Leaving material and immaterial traces in the present, the past transforms the bodies of the reenactors into specific archives which constitute the principal instrument of experiencing, presenting and processing the remnants of the past in the present (p. 110).

Despite the theoretical and methodological value of the work, in this respect the author's claims do not seem fully convincing and would, in my estimation, require further research on historical reenactment, conducted also in the context of its reception.

The author's considerations on truth and authenticity are truly impressive in terms of analytical insight. Both these categories form the theoretical framework for the entire analysis. Drawing on cognitivist tradition, Baraniecka-Olszewska skilfully reconciles the two notions, going beyond their literal and common-sense understanding. She explains that the immanent tensions imprinted in historical reenactment are best represented with an emic understanding of the constructivist take on authenticity (p. 132). Such oscillation between two extremes – one being the need to touch history and the reenactors' belief that it is sometimes possible to get close to it, the other being the conviction that an absolute knowledge of history is beyond our reach and one may only try to reenact it – is dubbed by the author as the titular 'practice of authenticity': "It is a grassroots method of coping with situations in which the original may only be accessed in the realm of almost mystical experience, and Truth is replaced with this emically constructed authenticity, based on various sources, including those performed by the archive of the body" (p. 133).

The chapter entitled *Czy wszystko można rekonstruować?* [Can everything be reenacted?] discusses intriguing and extremely difficult issues of the meaning and possibility of reenacting certain past events. The essential questions revolve around the tactics and ethics of representing the past, and therefore around the boundaries of reenactability and of appropriate representation. The author demonstrates that discussions on this topic hold much significance both for reenactors themselves and the wide circles of their audience. This is one of the contexts which highlight the involvement of reenactment in controversial debates on collective memory, the nature of public space, and finally on historical policies. Baraniecka-Olszewska takes efforts to understand the standpoint of reenactors, who aim to construct specific messages, and presents the complex network of relations between the reenactors' idea to represent the past as it truly was, the process of selecting motives to portray, the availability of means of expression, and the reenactors' intent to tackle controversial topics in order to change the audiences' attitude towards their activities and elevate reenactment to the status of an institution propagating knowledge of history. This is another case where presenting a full picture would require a more thorough study of the audience. Baraniecka-Olszewska is compelling in her analysis of irrepresentability, which, as far as reenactment is concerned, appears to be a relational and situational category (p. 287). She successfully proves that irrepresentability is rarely an immanent feature of the subject of representation, but a project of a kind, a specific strategy of action (p. 268). The author also offers a detailed presentation of the complex relations between the authenticity of items and existential authenticity in the context of the irrepresentable in historical reenactment. This part of the book may, however, leave the reader wanting more. This is on the

one hand due to the analytical skill and in-depth investigations the author presents in other chapters of the publication; on the other, the issues discussed, for instance in the context of impersonating enemy units, are so fascinating and complex that it would certainly be difficult to answer all the related questions without disturbing the proportions of the publication. The author touches on many topics, and therefore not all of them are given the same attention. Parts which might benefit from a more detailed analysis include the presentation of the conflict between the authenticity of items and existential authenticity among the reenactors, their ethical standpoints, the problem of identifying with the impersonated troops and the limits of responsibility.

The issue of women in historical reenactment is also treated in less detail than many others. Ultimately, however, the author does provide the reader with a sizable amount of data regarding the position of women, or rather the dynamic attempts at seeking it in the reenactors' milieu.

To recapitulate, *Reko-rekonesans: praktyka autentyczności* [Reenactment reconnaissance: the practice of authenticity] offers a meaningful and original voice in the context of the debate on experiencing and presenting the past in the public sphere in contemporary Polish culture. The author tackles an interesting, if difficult, topic of reenacted reality, focusing on the emic nature of the phenomenon. Given the incessant discussions on the types of engaging in history or getting involved with the past, Baraniecka-Olszewska's book with its high academic, methodological and cognitive quality, constitutes an important source for anthropologists and other humanists alike. It shall certainly inspire scholars to further research and discussions on the changes in the attitude towards history observable in our culture, as well as on the culture-shaping role of reenactment practices.

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