VULNERABILITY, GUILT, AND SHAME: DOING ORAL HISTORY OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE DURING WORLD WAR II IN THE EASTERN GALICIA

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The positivist approach in the social sciences presupposes the objectivity of researchers. In this academic paradigm, the researcher's emotions are undesirable and should be avoided because they are associated with bias and subjectivity. Many scientific articles and monographs also make the researcher's emotions invisible, hidden from readers. Some authors deliberately avoid describing their feelings that arose during the stages of choosing a research topic, conducting the research, and writing scientific papers, probably for fear of criticism from colleagues and readers in excessive subjectivity. The avoidance by some scholars of analyzing their own emotions as a methodological challenge contributes to the myth that the researcher can easily get rid of emotions during research, pause them to write "objective" work. However, every study, especially one that deals with wars, genocide, famine, forced deportations, causes researchers to feel a wide range of emotions, which are not always possible to understand, and therefore to reflect. This is especially true for researchers who use oral history techniques. Qualitative researchers experience research "both intellectually and emotionally" (Gilbert 2001, 9). Feelings are not side-effects and something that researchers should try to avoid; they are "normal" in research, especially ethnographic (Ibarra and Kusenbach 2015, 215). As Bondo pointed out, "in research that involves interactions with other people with whom data are co-constructed, researchers enter into interpersonal relationships that generate rich emotional dynamics" (Bondi 2007, 243). The acknowledgment of this leads to a growing

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body of literature investigating the role of emotions in oral history projects from the researcher's perspective (Arditti *et al.* 2010; Bergman and Wettergren 2015; Catungal 2017; Hubbard *et al.* 2001; Reger 2001). Some studies consider the emotional response of a researcher who studies traumatic events and sensitive topics (Dickson, Kippen, and Liamputtong 2009; Drozdzewski and Dominey-Howes 2015; Maček 2014). Such issues may include the history of wars, armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, genocide, and the violation of human rights, in particular those which include excessive violence and suffering. While working with victims of violence, trauma survivors, researchers like therapists could also experience trauma, which could be referred to as "compassion fatigue," secondary, vicarious, intersectional (concept introduced by Giorgia Dona) traumatization (Doná 2014; Hesse 2002; Maček 2014, 5–6; Molnar *et al. 2017;* van der Merwe and Hunt 2019).

One of the most traumatic topics that often require the researcher's interaction with violented people in World War II history is the Holocaust. Even though there are many oral history projects on the topic of World War II, there is a lack of analysis of the impact of emotions on the researcher and the research process. This paper goes some way towards filling this gap. The fieldwork may generate a strong researcher's reactions and a wide range of researcher's emotions: positive – happiness and joy of learning and listening and downbeat – frustration, anger, sadness, loneliness. This article explores the last one – disturbing emotions, which could harm not only the researcher but the participant as well. It focuses on challenging emotional dimensions of doing oral history research on interethnic violence during World War II using Eastern Galicia as a case study. Using some of my own research experiences, I will examine my emotional response throughout the research and its impact on the research process and me. The objects of analysis in the article are the number of emotion-generating situations in the field which created the troubling feeling and emotions such as vulnerability, guilt, and shame.

Emotions and Oral History of War

In this essay, I will rely on my experience of oral history research conducted in two research projects. The first one – my personal – "Women and the war: the daily life of members of the Ukrainian nationalist underground in 1939–1950 [1]", held in 2016–2018. The second one is "The social anthropology of the void:

Poland and Ukraine after World War II," led by Dr. Anna Wylegała with the help of a group of Polish and Ukrainian researchers (starting now referred to as "Void") [2]. I have been participating in it since 2017 until today. The first project aimed to investigate the gender specifics of the experience of women who were members or sympathizers of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and its military wing, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). The second project aimed to analyze how social and cultural relations changed in small towns and villages in Galicia during and after World War II. However, the themes of both projects differed substantially. In both of them, a significant part of my attention was paid to interethnic relations before, during, and after World War II. And in both of them, one of my research tasks was to analyze how narrators (most of them identified themselves as ethnic Ukrainians) (do not) remember and tell/ keep silent about their neighbors – Poles and Jews; about family, economic, social, and cultural relations with them, and how the war and the post-war period affected these relations. Much attention in this context is paid to the events that were accompanied by the interethnic violence, in particular, during the change of political regimes in Galicia in 1939 (overthrow of the Polish government, Soviet occupation), 1941 (beginning of the German occupation), 1944 (restoration of the Soviet regime), The Holocaust and the Ukrainian-Polish confrontation in Eastern Galicia.

Given the focus of the war, in both projects, the main participants were direct witnesses and actors of the researched historical events. Therefore, the vast majority of participants were older people of both sexes born in 1928–1932. My youngest participant was 79 years old, the most aged – 96. The vast majority of them lived in small villages and towns of Galicia, a small part – in large cities such as Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk. I managed to record a total of 114 interviews. Of these, I recorded 63 interviews in the first project and 51 interviews in the second, "Void," out of a total of 250 interviewed by a group of researchers. All oral stories are recorded with face-to-face in-depth semi-structured biographical interviews using a voice recorder.

Most of the interviews were emotionally charged, as they included conversations about suffering and loss, including the loss of loved ones and homes.

Many participants talking about the traumatic events of the past could feel sadness, pity, shame, guilt, disappointment, and anger. These emotions could be expressed verbally and through gestures, facial expressions, voice changes, and emotional reactions such as crying. Some participants not only openly expressed their feelings but reflected on them. Others tried to contain their emotions and hide them. The participants' emotional responses to the interview persisted after the recording. I partly learned about phone calls from several participants who shared their impressions of the interview.

However, I was deeply emotionally involved in my studies. My emotions were expressed at different stages of research: in preparation for the recording of the interview, during its conduct and the transcription and coding of interviews, and when writing academic papers. In preparation for the fieldwork, I did archival and library research to identify available primary and secondary sources about the history of the interview area and the participants themselves. Much of the material found contained sensitive information about killings, looting, rape, deportation, famine, and disease, all of which were commonplace during World War II. It was needed to work with them not only to complete the valid questionnaire but also to emotionally prepare myself for the "difficult" stories that could be heard during the interview. To design in such a way that these stories do not arouse feelings in me, the demonstration of which could lead to a "failed interview" when the narrator feels discomfort and does not want to talk about specific issues that interest me from a research point of view. For example, in preparation for fieldwork in Bibrka, I worked on materials related to the anti-Jewish pogrom in the summer of 1941 in that city. The lack of Ukrainian memories on this topic testified to the suppression of this event in the local memory. Keeping this in mind, I elaborated a strategy of asking sensitive questions that would encourage the openness of the narrators in the conversation on this topic. The essence of this strategy was to speak of the pogrom as one of the "ordinary" war events in the history of the city, which is "well known." In addition, I decided to refer to the examples of other areas of Galicia, Volyn, Poland, and the Baltic states where the pogroms took place in the summer of 1941. In addition, it was important to consider not only the wording of the questions but also facial and body behavior and tone of voice. All this together was aimed at minimizing the negative feelings of the narrator, such as shame and guilt, which can lead to silence. In the end, this technique proved to be effective, and the two narrators not only succinctly confirmed to me the fact of the pogrom in Bibrka but also told me details that were not known from other sources.

However, no matter how well intellectually I prepared for the interview, it was impossible to fully predict the future interaction with the narrator, which involved dealing with other people's emotions or "emotional work" in the words

of Arlie Hochschild (Hochschild 1983). And usually, it was challenging. After all, as soon as a researcher meets with a participant, s/he should strengthen control over his or her emotions. Here I do not mean "liberation" from emotions and avoiding their demonstration. Empathy is necessary for oral history to understand the thinking, motivations, choices, and feelings of participants. While being empathetic, it is often difficult not to get drawn into the emotion, especially when face-to-face with another person who is experiencing an emotion (Dickson-Swift, Kippen, and Liamputtong 2009, 65). Empathy is critical when a researcher listens to stories related to the traumatic experiences of narrators. Then it is important to apply "empathic distress," i.e., listening in a way in which trust and belief in what is expressed by the participants prevail over certain emotional experiences of discomfort (Cornejo, Rubilar, and Zapata-Sepúlveda 2019, 4).

However, empathic listening also presupposes hiding one's attitude to the stories told, which may differ from what a narrator expresses. This hiding is part of the so-called emotion management. It involves not only efforts to change emotions but also conscious control over the physical expression of certain emotions, which may be inappropriate at some point in face-to-face communication. This is especially difficult in cases where assessments of narrators come into conflict with the values and moral-ethical principles of the researcher's life. For instance, I found it difficult and uncomfortable to listen when my narrators justified violence and the perpetrators, the victims are blamed, and they expressed anti-Semitic, racist, xenophobic, or sexist ideas. Similar feelings in me, as a feminist researcher, have also evoked descriptions of violence against women, including sexual violence, as it has brought reference to my own experience and awareness of my vulnerability as a woman (Blakely 2007, 61). It was difficult for me to control my emotions when participants accused women of provoking violence, were humorous while describing experiences of affected women, or underestimated the role of sexual trauma in the lives of victims. At the same time, I had to talk to women who had themselves been victims of sexual violence. In such situations, I, similar to other researchers investigating sexual violence, felt desperate because of my inability to provide the appropriate help or support they needed (Coles *et al.* 2014, 96). At the same time, the sadness and pity that I felt and did not hide rather played a positive role during the interview. Since my female narrators saw it as an expression of compassion and support, this allowed them to tell about a traumatic experience that some of them kept silent about during their lives and hid from their relatives.

However, a researcher's awareness of and control over his or her emotions during the recording of an interview becomes more complicated when the

fieldwork is long and intense, which is sometimes unavoidable. For example, in my research project on women's everyday life, the rule was "one trip – one interview," the next one could take place in a couple of days or weeks, whereas in the case of "Void," extended fieldwork was inevitable. After all, the objects of research were certain specific areas, and studies were conducted by a group of researchers consisting of 3–4 people. Thus, the fieldwork was preceded by long and hard work by the team of researchers who coordinated their work schedules, looked for transportation, housing for the duration of the research, studied historical sources, and searched for contacts of those people with whom to record interviews. Usually, a group of researchers went to the field for a few days (up to a week) and tried to interview the maximum number of people who witnessed the war in this particular area. Each day, each field research team member recorded an average of 6–10 hours of interviews. Such length of the interview was determined by the age of the participants, who would speak slowly, and our desire was not to force them to hurry due to respect for their time and effort and willingness to share memories. Apart from that, the researchers' daily efforts focused on informal communication with the locals, finding participants using the "snowball" method, introducing themselves as a researcher, and explaining the purpose of the study to all participants and, usually, their relatives. Therefore, the logistics of each fieldwork required a lot of effort from researchers, an integral part of which was emotional work. At the same time, the complexity of this emotional work was related not only to the duration and intensity of the fieldwork but also to the sensitivity of the research topic. After all, talking about interethnic relations during the war involved not only actively recalling traumatic events but also talking about awkward, unpopular issues that provoked emotions in all participants of the interview. The described design of the fieldwork often caused my emotional overload, which could be referred to as "researcher saturation" (Wray, Markovic, and Manderson 2007, 1397) with embodied experience – constant headaches, insomnia, pain in the neck, and digestive disorders.

Completing the fieldwork does not necessarily free a researcher from emotional involvement. Physical distance from the field is not always equivalent to the emotional one. Long after finishing fieldwork, I think about the people I met and their stories about themselves and others. Because of a large number of these stories heard in a relatively short period in the first days after fieldwork completion, they intertwined in my head into a bizarre mosaic of names, titles, and events, full of unspeakable human suffering and pain. It contained many dichotomous stories of betrayal and salvation, cruelty and mercy, love and hatred. These stories aroused in me very mixed feelings, among which the most acutely I usually felt regret, sadness, anger, and frustration.

In the following sections of this article, on specific examples from my fieldwork, I will examine in more detail how my research relates to emotions such as fear, guilt, and shame that may arise in a researcher at different stages of oral history study.

Vulnerability in the Homes of Elderly People

I recorded almost all the interviews at my participants' homes. The choice of location is due to logistics; when following the advice of locals, I just went to the homes of potential participants and asked them to share their memories. In addition, most of the participants were elderly; for some of them, it was physically challenging to leave their homes and move to another place where we could talk. In small villages, the most likely alternative to interviewing in homes is an open space, such as gardens, lawns, and parks. However, this publicity can increase the discomfort of narrators, as it arouses the considerable interest of the neighbors and by-passers. So, the choice of the interview location was primarily due to the assumption that the narrators' homes were that same space where they could feel safe, calm, relaxed, and therefore more talk-oriented, especially about complex topics. At the same time, the participants' homes may have made me feel discomfort, anxiety, and fear. First, because these houses were located in an unfamiliar area with people I did not know, they could treat me with suspicion as a "stranger" who looks and speaks "differently." This is especially true for small villages, where "everyone knows everyone." In addition, some of the houses were located on farms far from the villages, in the hills or lowlands, in the slums, in swampy areas, places with poor road access. There was insufficient or no mobile communication in these locations, so I sometimes had difficulty connecting with other research team members. In such cases, I tried to perceive it as an interesting adventure, especially if the fieldwork took place in a mountainous area with a beautiful landscape. However, I was often afraid of getting lost, getting injured, or meeting people who might hurt me. My gender was an additional danger factor for me, as rural culture has the features of patriarchy. And this sometimes resulted in a paternalistic, superior attitude of local men towards me or harassment on the street.

Secondly, by no means all the houses of the narrators corresponded to my ideas about good sanitary and technical conditions. Challenging living conditions were for those narrators who lived alone. In some cases, bad smell, dirt, dampness, and cold were constant companions for several hours of interviews. In some of the houses, the toilet was outside the home, sometimes at a considerable distance. To get to some of them, I had to walk past dogs or other domestic animals, which was not always safe, despite the assurances of the owners.

Sometimes I had to spend the night in the houses of the narrators. The reasons for this were poor transport links and the distance from hotels. This did not allow me to easily get to a place where I would feel more comfortable and safe after a lengthy interview. The same circumstance created obstacles in case I wanted to continue the conversation the next day. It was easier to spend the night at the participants' house (it was only women) and resume the conversation in the morning than to spend time and effort getting back to her house. Sometimes the decision to spend a night at the participant's house was made exclusively on the participant's insistence because they wanted to spend as much time as possible with me to tell their life stories. In most cases, those women live alone, and their desire could be connected with the feeling of loneliness.

The third reason for my discomfort and feelings of vulnerability in the narrators' homes was my dependence on relatives who lived in the house. They had real strength in the home. Therefore, building a good, trusting relationship with them was the key to the success of the interview. This became especially important when it depended on their position whether the interview would take place at all. Some relatives had to be convinced of the importance of their parents' or grandparents' memories and that my visit would not cause them much inconvenience, but may vice versa be desirable for their parents, who, due to their old age, have forced limited socialization. Sometimes such negotiations were unsuccessful and led to my frustration and disappointment[3]. And even if relatives gladly agreed to let me into their home to record the interview, it was essential to convince them that their presence was unnecessary. It can significantly influence the choice of narrators about what and how to talk. I tried to politely and clearly explain to narrators' relatives about myself, my research, the purpose of the interview, its content, as well as the methodology, which assumes an absence of "bystanders." However, some relatives did not consider these arguments convincing and insisted on their presence for various reasons. A common motive was concern about the possible adverse effects of the interview on their

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[3]   In particular, the son of one of the narrators hinted at a monetary reward as a condition of his assistance in arranging a meeting with his mother. Perhaps he thought this was acceptable since his mother was a well-known member of the Ukrainian nationalist movement during the war. Without his help, my meeting with her could not have happened. He had absolute control over her social life at that time, as health problems forced her to stay mostly at home, and he lived with her. The son's position genuinely upset me. I did not want to give him money because I was not sure it would be spent to meet his mother's needs. So, he refused to let me in to see his mother. She had to be interviewed over the phone. I got her phone number at the local history museum. During the conversation, it turned out that the woman felt lonely and was glad that someone was interested in talking to her. This circumstance only increased my frustration about communication with her son.

parents' health. They explained to me that their presence was necessary to provide parents with immediate and adequate assistance in case of need, including psychological ones.

Curiosity played an essential role in motivating relatives to be present during the interview. Some of them, for instance, were there because of the desire to learn something new from their relatives' stories or learning something more about me and my research. Interviewers are often treated as guests, and people find it necessary to devote a significant amount of their time, attention, and resources to them. This was shown, in particular, by the homemade dishes and alcoholic beverages. Shaffir emphasizes the importance of researchers being ready to "engage in social behavior that respects the cultural world of his or her hosts" (Shaffir 1991, 73). Therefore, knowing the local customs of a Ukrainian village, where the refusal to try what is offered to guests can be perceived as an insult and a sign of disrespect, I was forced to behave politely and taste the food and drink. However, it did not always suit my preferences and taste. At the same time, the excessive attention of relatives on me could take the form of open aggression. There have been cases where male relatives of participants, under the influence of alcohol, made me unwanted compliments of a sexual nature, joked ambiguously, or touched me[4].

An important motif for the relatives to be present during the interview was their sincere desire to "help" me. Aware of some of their parents' memory or hearing difficulties, they tried to make the parents' narrative more understandable, structured, and informative. Some of them clarified names, explaining local specificity or the meaning of regional dialects. They could also "prompt" their parents with certain stories they had heard from them. In other words, they are desperately trying to manage potential risks when each interview wandered into murky territory like taboo topics (awkward aspects of inter-ethnic relations

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[4] In particular, while recording an interview with Maria (name changed), her grandson began to show me unwanted sexual attention. He sat with us for several hours, explaining that he missed his grandmother because of a long separation from her the day before. Taking advantage of his grandmother's poor eyesight, he tried to touch my arm and leg, showing ambiguous signs of attention that were unpleasant to me. In this situation, I could not make a scene and openly tell him about my feelings because everything happened in the presence of a participant, whom most of the time did not object to the presence of her beloved grandson. I was afraid to upset and offend her. Mrs. Maria was very pleased with my visit and was happy to talk to me until late at night. Her grandson sat next to me until almost the end of the interview and, while saying goodbye to me, hinted that our next meeting with him would be very soon. This hint frightened me, as I stayed overnight in the participant's house. At night I woke up to the creak of the front door. Someone came into the house. Since then, I could not sleep thinking about Maria's grandson and his words. I was afraid of his night visit. Although no one then knocked at the door of my room or tried to open them.

during the war or sensitive family information that, according to relatives, could undermine their social status or lead to a loss of reputation if it becomes public). As a result, some of them as family history guardians tried to control their parents' narrative, including censoring it and determining what should be said and what should be kept quiet. Such situations were some of the most difficult in my fieldwork. Since on the one hand, I constantly had to neutralize, or at least minimize, the interference of relatives in the narrators' stories. On the other hand, I had to resist their attempts to control my behavior.

A vivid example of such a difficult situation for me was an interview with Maria (name changed) in village Barysh, in the Ternopil oblast. The interview took place at her home. At that time, she was 96 years old. She had apparent memory problems, so I did not object to her daughter's presence. However, I asked her not to interrupt her mother and interfere in my conversation with her only when necessary, such as at her mother's request or mine.

Nevertheless, from the beginning of the interview, the daughter commented on every answer of her mother, sometimes being the first to answer my questions. She also tried to undermine the competence of her mother, saying the opposite of what she said. For example, this is shown in the following excerpt from an interview about Maria's fellow villager, a Jew named Usher.

> Interviewer: What did he do for a living?
> Daughter: He had a store at his house.
> Maria: Yes, he had a store in his house.
> D.: Even I still remember. I know that the door was huge; a wagon could fit there.
> I .: And what was sold there?
> D.: Everything.
> M.: It seems like they sold everything needed for the kitchen. And nothing more.
> I .: Did he have a wife, children?
> M.: Yes, he did. He had a wife.
> D: They don't remember.
> M.: I know well – a wife and children.
> D.: The daughter went to school with them.
> M.: Her name was Khaika.
> I .: Khaika.
> M .: And his daughter went to school with me; Etka was her name.
> […]
> I .: And what did she look like?
> M.: She was quite good-looking.
> D.: Come on, tell how did she look like – was she ginger or dark-haired? What was she like?

M.: She was like that.

D.: Did she have long hair?

M.: No, she had short hair. No long hair. She had short hair. She went to school with me; I know this very well. Because I came to her more than once, she called me to school.

D.: But what did she look like, what did she look like? Was she tall or short?

I .: You say she invited you to her home?

D.: No, only to school.

M.: Yes, I visited her, I did.[5]

In general, the conversation about the fate of Jews during the war was quite calm. As it was expected, the topic of cooperation of the local population with the German occupation regime was an irritating one. The participant and her mother kept repeating that none of the locals, including the police, were involved in the anti-Jewish actions (Puchała 2017, 241–242). Maria's daughter even denied that one of the locals in the village Barysh was the village head during the war (Arkviv Upravlinnia Sluzhby bezpeky Ukrainy, 70). Tensions began to escalate as we approached the topic of the Ukrainian-Polish confrontation during the war. Ahead of me, Maria's daughter immediately emphasized: "You hear, they [mother] say that the first aggravation was started by Poles." This statement became the leitmotif of the further story of my interlocutors. One of the main issues that interested me was the attack of the UPA detachment subdivision led by "Bystryi" on Barysh on the night from February 5 to February 6, 1945. Most likely, this village was attacked by the UPA because there was a Soviet-formed militant battalion (destruction battalions, colloquially *istrebitels*, which literally means "destroyers"), which took part in anti-guerrilla actions (Motyka 2006, 407*).* UPA helpers were local people who, in particular, showed the insurgents the former homes of Poles (Interview with Khrystyna, archive of the project "The social anthropology of the void"). The UPA command's cold report on the incident reported: "Many Bolshevik servicemen were killed in the battle" (Volianiuk 2012, 306). According to some estimates, more than a hundred people died that night, according to some estimates, 135 people (Motyka 2006, 408)[6]. According to eyewitnesses, the victims were mostly civilians, including women and children (Wołczański 2005, 141–142).

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[5] Interview with M., archive of the project "The social anthropology of the void".

[6] The number 135 is written on a memorial sign erected in 2012 on the grave of the dead Poles in the local cemetery in the village Barysh.

My interlocutors did not hide that the attack was carried out by the "Bander-
ites."[7] However, clarifying questions about the causes of the attack, how exactly
it happened, whether the locals took part in it, who the victims were and how
they were buried made Maris's daughter feel uneasy. She was unhappy that Maria
named her brother among the participants in the attack. So she tried to deny her
mother's words, emphasizing: "It seems to me that he was not there." I went on
asking about other nationalists in the village and their activity. Maria's daughter
then asked me about the "purpose of gathering information," although I told her
about myself and the research before the interview. I had to explain the purpose
of my visit again. To which she suggested that I was "against Ukrainians," so
she "doubts" my intentions. Then Maria's daughter convinced me that in her
opinion, the Poles "liked the Soviet authorities" and "maltreated the Ukrainians."
She began to interrupt her mother even more persistently and to comment on
my every question. She also stressed: "But they [mother], I want to tell you,
when they had a good memory, they used to say that all that massacre, all those
events were started by Poles. They always would tell me that."

Maria's daughter was visibly nervous and angry. She said sharply to her son,
who had also recently come to the room: "Call [your] dad." This request puzzled
me. It seemed that by doing so, she wanted to involve him in the conversation
to convince me of her statement about the "guilt" of the Poles, who, in her
opinion, was the first to commit hostile actions against Ukrainians. So, a tall and
stately middle-aged man entered the room. He did not sit down and stood the
rest of the interview, making me feel uncomfortable and even threatened. I felt
powerless, and I couldn't ask him to leave the room. Predictably, Maria's son-
in-law became another participant in the interview, and he also started comment-
ing on my questions. It was difficult for me to continue the interview, but it also
seemed wrong to end it in such an atmosphere. I tried to ease the situation by
changing the topic to a less sensitive one. In particular, I began to ask about
pre-war Ukrainian-Polish relations, as well as the post-war resettlement of Poles
to the Polish People's Republic and the resettlement of Ukrainians from Poland
to Western Ukraine. The conversation then became less tense.

However, my colleague Dr. Anna Wylegała soon entered the room where we
were recording the interview. We agreed with her in advance that we would
finish work at a certain hour in the evening. This hour was just approaching. So,
Anna decided to come to me and return together to the hotel in the nearest town,

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[7]   This was the name given then to members and sympathizers of one of the currents of
the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, headed by Stepan Bandera. This organization
had political leadership over the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.

where we stayed. However, in that situation, it did not seem to be the best decision. My biggest fear at the time was to hear Anna's language, her slight Polish accent. I was afraid of the reaction of Maria's daughter and son-in-law to her language. I was scared of their possible aggression[8]. When Anna entered the room, I motioned for her to be silent and promised to finish the interview quickly. In the last part of the conversation, about twenty minutes, I tried not to touch on controversial topics and formulate questions more carefully. At the end of the interview, I did not ask a summary question like, "Would you want to say something we didn't have time to talk about?" I did not ask primarily because I didn't want it to encourage Maria's daughter and her husband to express distrust of me and my research. I thanked Maria and her relatives for the interview and left the participant's apartment with relief since it was a space of stress and vulnerability for me for about two hours; a place where I felt an imbalance of power between me on the one hand and the participants and her relatives on the other. This situation showed how unpredictably field research may develop on sensitive topics and how difficult it can be to search for effective interview techniques and emotional work of the researcher.

Guilt and ethical issues

Apart from vulnerability, discomfort, and stress, there are other emotions that I feel during fieldwork. One of them is guilt. It arises from the realization that interviews can negatively affect the well-being of participants, in particular, their physical and psycho-emotional state. And this contradicts one of the fundamental principles of oral history – Not harm your interlocutor (Rossi 2009, 20). This became a real dilemma for my research, as most of the eyewitnesses of World War II. Therefore my potential participants at the time of recording the interview were senior-aged individuals and had certain underlying health conditions and

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[8]   When planning the field research in the village Barysh, we were fully aware of all the risks associated with the accent of the Polish participants of the project. Therefore, it was decided that field research in the village will be done only by those researchers for whom Ukrainian is native. In our opinion, this should have contributed to the greater openness of the locals, for whom the murder of Poles in February 1945 from the side of the UPA remains a painful topic. Nevertheless, the locals were very reluctant to talk about it, worried, kept quiet, denied that they remembered or knew anything. Some openly said that they were afraid to speak because their children and grandchildren lived in the village. For example, one of the participants, Maria (b. 1929), answered my question about who killed Poles: "How would I know who killed them? Who saw whom? We didn't see anyone and anything." To the clarifying question about the reasons for the attack, she answered: "How do I know what it was like? Banderites, they said. How would I know what they were like? How do I know? They hid. And how would I know what they were like? How do I know? I don't know that."

chronic illnesses. Thus, when arranging the interview, I tried to get an unequiv-
ocal answer from them that they agreed to a conversation that would probably
last at least an hour.

At the same time, I emphasized that participants can sit or lie on the couch in
any position convenient for them and find how to work in any way. The absence
of a video camera on me played a crucial role in this because it deprived the
participants of additional worries about their appearance. However, the coordi-
nation of these organizational aspects did not deprive some participants of their
fears. Many of those with whom I arranged interviews in advance admitted to
me that they were anxious and had insomnia on the eve of our meeting. This was
due to their "preparatory work" – searching for photos, documents, remembering
names, titles, planning the structure of their story. And for this, I am very grateful
to them because I understand that this "work" could provoke strong emotions in
them. The interviews themselves could also be stressful and even harmful for
them. For example, one of the participants, talking about her stay in the Gulag,
was so agitated that she asked me to help her respite. At that moment, I felt fear
and guilt for the deterioration of her health. This guilt was fueled by the fact that
she lived alone, so I had no one to turn to for help. I suggested she call an ambu-
lance, but she refused. So, I was just there for her, and we talked about topics not
related to my research, including her children and grandchildren. It calmed her
down. I never returned to cases that were too sensitive for her.

The intense emotional response from participants can provoke feelings of
guilt in me, especially if they are associated with feelings such as shame and
embarrassment. Despite my efforts to formulate the questions so that they do
not contain evaluative judgments and words with negative connotations, many
participants felt ashamed talking about socially reprehensible events and ques-
tionable from a moral-ethical point of view. This is especially true when it comes
to the social reality during the outbreak of World War II in Galicia in September
1939, when, using the temporary lack of governance, locals looted the estates
of wealthy Polish owners (they called them contempt as "Pany" [lords of the
manor]) and committed acts of violence on their Polish neighbors. Or when it
comes to looting Jewish homes by locals after they were forcibly evicted to the
ghetto or deported. Participants were embarrassed to name local government or
police officers during the Nazi occupation, using the phrases "they are long
gone," "their children are still alive." Participants felt visible shame when
talking about performative acts of violence against Jews during the war. Partic-
ipants often try to avoid mentioning local perpetrators, using the generalizing
"Germans." Characteristic in this regard is the following excerpt from an
interview with Kateryna about the abuse of Jews in her native village Dobryniv,
near Rohatyn, in the Summer of 1941.

Kateryna: When Germans were here, they danced for the Germans, the Germans forced them, the Jews and that Laika, and those daughters and all who were there. You write it down because I was there. I even saw them dancing, in Dobryniv in the center, where there is now a cooperative, that's where they danced. On that exact spot, I wouldn't lie. […]
Interviewer: And who made them dance?
K.: The Germans.
I. And what language did they speak?
K. Ukrainian, as I am today, as I am speaking to you.[9]

After the last phrase, Kateryna lowered her eyes and crossed her arms, which can be explained as a bodily manifestation of shame. I was afraid that she would not want to continue a conversation on this topic, so I followed her lead and called perpetrators "Germans" rather than locals to tell more about this particular case, which she witnessed. After a while, we started talking about the executions of Jews on the outskirts of Rohatyn. Kateryna told the stories she had heard from locals about these murders. I understood that this was a threatening topic for her, so I decided to return to it later, at the end of the interview. In particular, I asked if Kateryna had seen how Jews from the ghetto were taken away to be shot with her own eyes. She said, "I [wasn't] there." This answer rather indicated that Kateryna herself was most likely not an eyewitness to how Jews were taken to be executed. However, it did not mean that the narrator knew nothing about other eyewitnesses to the murder of Jews. Then I asked if her husband was there. And she answered affirmatively and curtly. To make it easier for Kateryna to tell me about it, I wondered if he had been forced to do so. And she again answered affirmatively but succinctly. When asked about the specific functions of her husband at the place of execution, she already kept quiet, but her relative, who was present in the room, said: "The other one shot, and he [Kateryna's husband] had to throw them in the pit." Then there was the following conversation:

Interviewer: Did your husband tell you how it was?
Kateryna: I have no idea.
I .: Did they even pay him for that work?
K. [Silence]
Relative: *What payment are you talking about? It's good that they didn't shoot him*. And how *(indignant)*

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9   Interview with K., archive of the project "The social anthropology of the void."

I .: Did he do that for a long time?

K.: For as long as it was needed.

I .: So what was his job?

K. [Silence]

R .: *To put them away. The other one shot, and he had to throw them into the pit.*

I .: And bury?

K .: And bury, yes.

[…]

I .: And how many local guys did it there?

K. Who knows how many.

R .: *There were about eight of them there: there was Mykhail, there was Mykhail's brother, the one who died, Mykola…* [10]

This excerpt shows that Kateryna did not want to talk about the involvement of locals, including her husband, in the execution of Jews, nor did she want to talk about her husband's life and activities during the Nazi occupation. Her relative did not feel an ethical dilemma in the open discussion of this topic and vividly retold everything he most probably knew from family stories. Kateryna was dissatisfied with his frankness and showed it with facial expressions and a low but firm voice. She stopped joking, as she had done before during the conversation. At the same time, she did not deny what her relative said and did not ask him to remain silent. She also chose a strategy of ignoring some of my questions and did not answer them. It was a challenging situation for me because the story of a relative aroused my interest in this episode even more, and I wanted to know as much as possible about it. On the other hand, Kateryna's negative reaction, in particular her shame, left me little room to continue talking about her husband. As Erica Owens highlights when a narrator feels ashamed, he or she will not be able to get rid of it quickly, so in the future, the interview "will be shaped by the presence of shame that walls off potential avenues of talk" (Owens 2006, 1168). Since most of the topics I was interested in at the time, Kateryna and I had discussed, I decided to stop the interview. Later, analyzing this situation, I realized that it is controversial from a moral and ethical point of view, and I am sorry that for Kateryna, this part of the conversation was uncomfortable and unpleasant.

Among other participants' emotions that make me feel guilty are their sadness and grief. After all, in-depth biographical interviews lead to the fact that narrators remember what they may have tried to forget, not to recall, what they did not want to talk about. The topic of the "disappearance" of Jewish and Polish

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[10]   Ibid.

neighbors leads to the crying of some of the narrators. However, the most sensitive issues in most cases are those directly related to their personal lives, as well as the fate of their loved ones. For example, an interview with 92-year-old Zenovii contained many stories related to the killings of Jews and the violence of Ukrainian nationalists against Poles in his native village Radvaniv, near Rohatyn. However, he expressed the most incredible emotional reactions when he spoke about the significant girls and women in his life. For the first time during our conversation, he cried when he said that his Polish mother, having made a will, did not leave him an inheritance, unlike for his four brothers and sisters. This doomed him to poverty and hard work. Explaining the possible reasons for this, Zenovii remarked: "My mother, may she rest with God (*crying*), hated me […]". The next time Zenovii cried when he talked about the rape of his friend, Hanna, with whom he was in love. It was the most emotional period of the whole interview. Zenovii cried when he told the details of this sexual violence. In 1945, the NKVD detained her and Zenovii on suspicion of collaborating with the nationalist underground. Along with other detainees, both of them were placed in one of the houses in the village and taken in for questioning. Hanna violented by an NKVD lieutenant during interrogation and then taken to a room where Zenovii was staying. That is how he described the event:

> He stripped her naked, but she did not want to do it. So he beat her so hard that she was all blue and stuck his finger in there. Blood flowed from her. They took her hands and feet and threw her in our room. I had handkerchiefs, gave them to her. She stuffed those handkerchiefs wherever there was blood […] The blood stopped. Oh, God, I can't talk about that *(crying)*[11].

Zenovii also cried when he told how a girl he knew was accidentally shot dead during an NKVD anti-guerrilla operation. He also cried as he described the arrest by Soviet authorities of his sister Olha, who was suspected of collaborating with the OUN. All these moments of the interview were emotionally difficult, not only for Zenovii. It was difficult for me, as a researcher, to see how sad he was and to realize that the interview was the catalyst for this sadness. It was difficult for me, as a feminist, to hear about violence against women and their sufferings. But at the same time, as a person, I felt sorry for finishing the interview and leaving Zenovii's house. After all, despite the sadness he experienced, for Zenovii this interview became a space for reflection on his lived life, highlighting its significant stages, events, people, and "free" expression of his

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[11]   Interview with K., an archive of the project "The social anthropology of the void."

feelings. The emotional intensity of the interview was probably because, to Zenovii I was a stranger whom he might never see again. I also assume that my gender played a role in allowing him to speak openly and emotionally about the important women in his life and their fates.

I realized that this conversation might have had some therapeutic effect on Zenovii. This became clearer to me at the end of the interview, when Zenovii, after almost 5 hours of continuous conversation, asked me to stay with him and talk. He offered me lunch and candies. However, I could not stay. The moment I explained to Zenovii that I had to go, I felt guilty for not being able to comply with his request. After all, I left him alone with all his painful memories. My guilt was heightened by the fact that Zenovii was alone at home at the time, and I assumed that his loneliness would continue till the evening until his relatives returned home. Today, more than three years since my conversation with Zenovii, he may have already passed away; I still feel sadness and guilt for the fact that I had to leave "so quickly."

"Aren't you ashamed… You are Ukrainian!": Constructing Shame

On the evening of July 2018, Dr. Anna Wylegała and I were in an abandoned Jewish cemetery in the town of Pidhaitsi, Ternopil oblast. It has existed in the city since the 16th century and is one of the largest now in Galicia. We looked at the sloping stone graves – matsevas. I tried to read the inscriptions on them. Some of them had nowadays made images in black and green paint, some of them obscene. We talked about the local memory of the life and death of Jews, who before World War II made up the majority of the population of Pidhaitsi. At once, we saw a large dog quickly running towards us. I was wary. After all, I am afraid of dogs because I was bitten by one as a child. Looking closer, we saw a figure of a man. We understood that he was the owner of the dog. I was troubled by the thought of why he so quickly let his dog run without a leash. Even if he believed that the dog would not harm us, we did not know it for sure. The man came closer to us and began to ask what we were doing here. He did not introduce himself. But from his speech, we guessed that he is a local ethnographer who is actively involved in taking care of the Jewish heritage in the city. He is the author of several publications on the history of Pidhaitsi. It is to him that foreigners who come to the town turn to learn about the fate of the Jews who lived here.

Exactly to Ivan (name changed) that I called on the eve of our field research in Pidhaitsi, informing him that the research team of our project would be in the city and would like to meet with him. However, I planned to do so at the end of

our visit to Pidhaitsi, not at the beginning. The reason for this was that Ivan could be attributed to the so-called "professional narrators" – people who repeatedly tell the history of their homeland in public, referring to the results of their amateur research, because they are not professional historians. At the same time, they do not have personal memories of the war because they were not eyewitnesses. Their memory of the war is formed from family stories, other people's stories, books, literary works, folklore, and movies. That is, Ivan could tell us the "official version" of the story, which became part of the local "meta-narrative." At the same time, this story could be read or listened to thanks to his public speeches and books. And we were primarily interested in the stories of direct eyewitnesses of World War II. Another reason for postponing the conversation with Ivan was that I had fears that he would direct us only to those potential narrators who corresponded to his ideas about the stories to be told. Experience in field research in other areas has shown that such an algorithm for finding participants is quite problematic, as the sample may not include people whose memories are unconventional, i.e., those that contradict the "official memory."

Ivan was likely dissatisfied with my decision to talk to him at the end of our visit to Pidhaitsi, not at the beginning. After all, he is one of those people in the city who is very interested in the history of the local Jewry. We spoke to most of the locals to recognize his "competence" and see him as the main, "legitimate" narrator of this story. So it seemed to me that Ivan was offended by me at the time of our meeting because he said that he knew that we had been in the city for a long time and were recording interviews with old residents, but we had not come to him. Later on, we continued an informal conversation with him, which we did not record. We asked him about the Holocaust in Pidhaitsi and, in particular, the murder of Jews in the cemetery where we were at the time. When we asked him about the participation of local people in anti-Jewish violence, Ivan unequivocally stressed that only the "*lumpenproletariat* and *the Volksdeutschers*[12]" and the Polish Blue Police (*Polnische Polizei im General- gouvernement*) were involved (Wylegała 2018). The latter, of course, did not exist in Pidhaitsi, since during the German occupation of the city, there was the local Ukrainian police (Ukrainian Auxiliary Police). The latter, according to Ivan, "did everything under duress." Ivan also denied that Ukrainian nationalists were involved in the persecution of Jews. His view that violence against

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[12]   Volksdeutschen – ethnic Germans who lived outside Germany, in particular in Europe. It is worth noting that Holocaust survivors from Pidhaitsi and surrounding villages have repeatedly mentioned the involvement of local ethnic Germans in anti-Jewish actions (See, for instance, Rosenbaum 2013, 337, 340, 379, 384; Fortunoff Video Archive, HVT-1197).

Jews was perpetrated by only a small number of local social marginals ("a few bad apples") contradicted the memories of Jews from Pidhaitsi and its suburbs who survived the Holocaust. In much of this evidence, despite stories of help from locals to Jews[13], Ukrainians and partially Poles are portrayed as robbers, humiliators, and murderers of Jews during the war. Especially traumatic are the memories of Jews who survived the liquidation of the ghetto in Pidhaitsi in June 1943. Holocaust survivor Oscar Friedfertig stressed that of the 140 Jews hiding in the woods near Pidhaitsi, only about two dozen survived (Fortunoff Video Archive, HVT-1197; USC Shoah Foundation, Oscar Friedfertig). Others were found by local residents and killed, or locals gave their whereabouts to the police. Jean Melzer is the only survivor of one of the Jewish groups that consisted of 39 people who were hiding in the woods. According to her recollections, they were attacked by local people who called themselves guerrillas. Before her eyes, they shot the whole group of Jews, including two boys aged 5 and 7, and robbed them. She managed to survive because these men considered her dead (USC Shoah Foundation, Jean Melzer)[14]. Regina Flaszner recalled that she was most afraid of "nationalist gangs." Speaking about the murder of her brother, who came out of the bunker, she stressed: "It is probable that Ukrainians did it." Regina's conviction is probably because two Ukrainian peasants once saw her and her mother, and they severely beat her mother while she was able to run away (USC Shoah Foundation, Regina Flaszner). Sigmund Soudack recalls that a Ukrainian was afraid to hide him and his family for fear of the "Banderites," who "constantly hunted down Jews" (USC Shoah Foundation, Sigmund Soudack). Even after the expulsion of the Germans from Pidhaitsi in the spring of 1944, the Jews still hid for some time because there were rumors that local Ukrainians, in particular, "guerrillas" were killing Jews so that they would not hand them over to the Soviet authorities (Aleksiun 2013, 269; Fortunoff Video Archive, HVT-1196).

From most Jewish memoirs, it is impossible to identify Ukrainian perpetrators accurately. Those whom the Holocaust survivors call "Banderites" or "nationalists" could not formally belong to the OUN or UPA. But Holocaust

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[13]   Kateryna Sikorska, a resident of Pidhaitsi, and her daughter Iryna are well-known local saviors of Jews. They hid three Jewish men in their house. For this, Kateryna was sentenced to death. Other well-known Jewish rescuers are the families of Lev Biletskyi and his brother Ievhen Biletskyi from a farmstead near village Zavaliv in Pidhaitsi district. They helped a group of 23 Jews hide in the woods, brought them food, helped build bunkers. (The Righteous Among the Nations Database, Sikorska Katerina, Biletskiy Leon, Biletskiy Yevgeni and their relatives, Yad Vashem Website).

[14]   Another Holocaust survivor, Nachum Pushteig, wrote in his memoirs about this event: "These Ukrainians were Benderovches. They knew about our places and wanted to take our money. They attacked us at night on the 20th of Tammuz» (Rosenbaum 2013, 339).

survivors' views of Nationalism and ethnic hatred were among the main motives for their actions against Jews during the war. Therefore, it is not surprising that they call many local perpetrators nationalists or Banderites because it was the Bandera wing of the OUN that was then associated with the institutionalized nationalist movement. In addition to this, according to Holocaust survivors' memories, local people who helped them used the word "Banderites" to refer to those people Jews should have to beware of. According to the results of my oral historical research, the identification of perpetrators with Banderites provokes strong emotions in many participants and their relatives due to the dominance of the official memory of Banderites as fighters for an independent Ukraine who fell victim to both the Nazi and Soviet regimes. At the same time, perpetrators are silenced and marginalized in the grand narrative at the official levels, both – local and national[15]. However, it may be present in individual, family memory.

Therefore, the position of Ivan, who did not want to talk about the participation of local Ukrainians, including nationalists, in anti-Jewish violence did not seem to be original or extraordinary. A similar view was shared by other locals. In particular, Khrystyna Korpan emphasized in her interview: "The Banderites did not kill anyone [among the Jews]" (USC Shoah Foundation, Kristina Korpan). However, I did not expect to hear this from a local ethnographer, who was probably familiar with more sources on the history of Pidhaitsi than average city dwellers. Moreover, he knew that he was talking to professional scientists, such as Anna Wylegała and me, at the time of our conversation. I found myself actively struggling to manage my emotions of disappointment and anxiety, although my professional duty required me to do so. I started with Ivan in a discussion on the complicity of Ukrainians in the killings and looting of Jews during the Holocaust. This hurt Ivan's feelings and believes, which was not my intention but the by-product of the inexpedient choice I made by starting this conversation. It turned out to be not very pleasant for both of us. When I returned to the hotel, I was utterly exhausted from field research. The fifth day of our work was coming to an end. At that time, I recorded several dozen hours of interviews. During them, I listened to the participants' stories about violence and human suffering and justifying this violence. That evening, I thought that my experience is similar to burnout syndrome (Jenkins and Baird 2002, 426).

Thus, I decided to take a break from recording oral stories in Pidhaitsi. I also gave up the idea of meeting Ivan again because, in those circumstances, it seemed unproductive. Another participant in our research project would have to meet him now. I decided to return home early the following day. And so I did. Arriv-

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[15] See more on the memory politics in post-Maidan Ukraine, which made the memory about OUN and UPA and "national heroes" central to it (Marples 2018).

ing at the station in my hometown Lviv, I saw that Ivan was calling me. I picked up the phone. Ivan spoke emotionally, not hiding his disappointment with our conversation the day before, particularly with the "accents" in our study of war and interethnic relations. He stressed that he was "not surprised" by the position of Anna Wylegała, who is Polish, but very surprised by my position. "Shame on you!? You are Ukrainian!" – something like that I heard in my address from Ivan. His claims to me were that I, as a Ukrainian researcher, should be "responsible to Ukrainian people" and not emphasize "Ukrainian faults" in my studies. After our conversation with him in the cemetery, this was the second conversation when I saw in Ivan's position supremacy, ageism, and sexism. However, this time, it seems, his goal was to make me feel ashamed of actions and words that he thought were socially disapproving.

Shame has accompanied my research since five years ago, and I began studying sexual violence during World War II and Holocaust in Ukraine (Havryshko 2016; Havryshko 2018). I find myself stigmatized (Lee and Renzetti 1990, 512) by some people for studying this topic. Some colleagues, acquaintances, members of the public try to instill in me a sense of shame because the objects of my research from their points of view are controversial, "awkward", or "deviant" and could potentially undermine the bright image of "freedom fighters" – members of Ukrainian nationalist underground involved in gender-based violence. However, it is during my oral history research that shame occupies a prominent place. Some participants, their relatives, acquaintances, gatekeepers do not see the importance of researching sexual violence during the war or shame-based punishment of women for intimate relationships with enemy men. Some condemn my "excessive" interest in the fate of Poles and Jews in Eastern Galicia during the war and the "underestimation" of the victimization of ethnic Ukrainians by the Nazi and Soviet regimes. And this condemnation is aimed at cultivating shame in me.

Instead, the shame I feel during fieldwork is rather a shame, described by La Caze as a "shame at the actions of others, whereas the ones who have committed the crimes are shameless; they are not concerned with justice or how they appear in the eyes of the world. The gap left by their shamelessness is filled by the shame of the victims and witnesses " (La Caze 2013, 91). In the context of fieldwork, I feel like a "witness" to the numerous crimes, cruelty, betrayal, and inhumanity of the people I hear about, which led me to what can be described as "loss of positive illusions" (Bloom 2003, 464) about the people and the world. And as a "witness," I feel ashamed of these wrongdoings, as well as the fact that some participants justify them. In the context of the Holocaust in Galicia, I feel embarrassed when the oral narratives of stories about the suffering of Jewish neighbors are marginalized or erased. In contrast, stories about local perpetrators of anti-Jew-

ish violence are silenced or deliberately distorted to expose perpetrators as helpless victims of circumstances. In the same Pidhaitsi, I had to talk to a woman who convinced me that her father had been hiding a Jewish woman with a baby on his farm until "someone reported" and the Jews were taken away by the police (Interview with Oksana, archive of the project "The social anthropology of the void"). To my clarifying questions about whether the narrator's father was detained or arrested by the police and whether he was somehow punished for helping Jews, she answered that he was not punished. And this made the story controversial because Pidhaitsi resident Kateryna Sikorska, who was hiding three Jews at home, was not just arrested but sentenced to death for helping Jews. On the same day, an acquaintance of this participant told me that "everyone in the city knows" that her father himself informed the authorities that he was hiding Jews, educated his children, and built hoses on "Jewish gold." Similar stories, when those who helped Jews for a time for a monetary reward and then betrayed them, were not uncommon during the Holocaust in Eastern Europe. Therefore, this story seemed plausible, as did the participant's story of her father, but neither is unfortunately verifiable with other currently available sources. These stories, as well as the general fieldwork in Pidhaitsi, left me with very mixed feelings, among which one of the main ones was the feeling of shame for the "shameless" stories told by participants, in which the suffering of local Jews in the war were acknowledged, but not those, in which locals took part, including those who are perceived as national heroes in the collective local memory.

How to manage the researcher's disturbing emotions?

Oral research on sensitive topics, such as inter-ethnic violence during the war, cannot be emotionless. The researcher's emotions in this context are essential not only because they affect the subject matter, design, structure, and methodology of the study but also on participants during the conversation, their well-being, emotions, and responses. Therefore, it is important that, on the one hand, unpleasant emotions of a researcher do not cause feelings of fear, danger, distrust, shame, the embarrassment in participants. On the other hand, the researcher's emotions must not be traumatic for him or her, which can potentially "paralyze" (Widdowfield 2000, 201) the research process and make it impossible to write a critical work. An effective solution to these dilemmas may be to first recognize and accept the researcher's emotional involvement in the study as a whole and its aspects and to determine how his or her gender, national, ethnic identity, worldview, and experience affect these emotions. It also helps to understand which and why some topics cause certain emotional reactions in him or her. Deep reflection on this will allow us to simulate different situations

during fieldwork, which can be potentially problematic and require a researcher's emotional work. At the same time, reflection on one's emotional involvement will allow one to analyze the results of the interviews already conducted and identify its "weaknesses" associated with ineffective management of the researcher's emotions during the conversation. At the same time, it is essential that a critical assessment of one's own negative emotions, which one failed to repress or cover, contributes to developing more effective techniques and methods dealing with discomfiting and "trouble-making" feelings in the field. For example, fear and feelings of threat and vulnerability can be seen in the context of researching socially violent situations. And such can be situations of being in unfamiliar places, in the homes of participants, and surrounded by people who may demonstrate animosity to you or research. All of this can be a catalyst for reviewing the security aspects of the logistical aspects of organizing fieldwork and recording the interviews. The guilt felt by the researcher for various reasons can be a source of reflection on the ethical principles and power relations during the interview, as well as on how their research affects the lives of the narrators. Shame can provoke reflection on how a researcher's personality, political, socio-cultural factors, individual and collective memory, and memory policies all affect fieldwork and research results.

Knowing about potential emotional distress should encourage researchers to take care of themselves bodily, mentally, socially, and spiritually and develop different coping strategies based on those described by trauma psychotherapists (Lofland and Lofland 1995; Saakvitne, and Pearlman 1996; Stamm 1999). One such strategy should be building a professional network – a supportive community of qualitative researchers who can share their experiences of work-related emotional issues. It could be done through social media and online platforms (Woodby *et al.* 2011, 835) or by in-person meetings, in particular with peers in a team (Coyle and Wright 1996, 438). We widely use this strategy in "Void." It has several forms. The first is informal communication at the end of each working day during the fieldwork when we discuss not only the organizational and technical aspects but also share our thoughts and feelings related to the experience. The second form is methodological seminars, where we discuss all the difficulties and challenges associated with the project, including our emotional response to them. These meetings have many positive effects for me personally because I feel the support of colleagues and learn from them about coping strategies they use. I am also relieved to learn that other project participants are experiencing similar emotions to mine. However, it seems to me that the team of each oral history project should include a professional psychologist or psychotherapist who would provide regular individual and group consultations to the researchers who record the interviews.

For me, informal conversations with my foreign colleagues, who explore the "faults" of their own countries, peoples during World War II, or other "unpopular" topics, have also become part of the strategy described above. These conversations take place sporadically during conferences, seminars, workshops, or during my research internships abroad. They helped me realize that difficulties in researching complex, controversial topics, including those involving locals cooperating with the Nazi occupation authorities and participating in its genocidal policies, are similar for historians from different countries, no matter what research methods they use. Like me, researchers of these topics may face misunderstanding, stigmatization, and condemnation from colleagues and other people. This leads to a deeper understanding that not all issues are equally "safe" and "sensitive." Some require additional skills from researchers, primarily related to managing such emotions as fear, guilt, feelings of vulnerability, and insecurity.

Another strategy widely used by oral historians is to keep a research journal (Rowling, 1999, 167). It provides an opportunity to process the experiences and emotions of the researcher and can have therapeutic functions. I also have my journal. I keep records of individual interviews or a series of interviews recorded in a particular area or with certain individuals. There I note the general information about the interview – the conditions of its conduct, duration, my expectations and results, and my general impression of the interview. I also describe the emotions and body language of the participants, which cannot be "seen" in the transcript. But at the same time, the journal gives me space to reflect on my own emotions during fieldwork and my attitude towards them. The importance of the journal in this context is that it is possible to record those reflections that are difficult or embarrassing to verbalize in public or to other colleagues. For example, it is not always easy for me to admit that I could not contain my own emotions of anger and disappointment during the interview, as this may call into question my professionalism in the eyes of colleagues. Also, it is not easy for me to talk to colleagues about the fact that sometimes I cannot control my tears as reactions to participants' memories of death or violence.

The self-care strategies listed above could have a different level of effectiveness that depends on the researcher's personality, life circumstances, knowledge, and skills developed through appropriate training and detailed research guidelines. Those could be provided by supervisors and mentors at universities and research institutions in which they are affiliated, by the manager of research projects, or/and by professional associations, particularly in the field of oral history. In addition to that, scholars should have easy access to professional supervision (Dickson-Swift *et al.* 2008, 139). Those individual and institutional strategies are crucial for researchers in dealing with their potential stress, burnout, and trauma connected to the study of sensitive and emotional topics and

their cooperation with participants, which should be harmless, empathetic, and respectful. Thus, emotion management strategies are inevitable for making well-planned, structured, and high-quality research. The experience of each scholar undertaking highly emotional research should be taken into consideration while developing those strategies.

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VULNERABILITY, GUILT, AND SHAME: DOING ORAL HISTORY OF ETHNIC
VIOLENCE DURING
WORLD WAR II IN THE EASTERN GALICIA

SUMMARY

This article focuses on the disturbing emotions experienced by qualitative researchers who study traumatic historical events, particularly those that happened during World War II and Holocaust. Based on her own research experience in doing an oral history of interethnic relations and violence in Western Ukraine (Galicia) in WWII, the author examines her personal negative emotional response throughout the study and its impact on her participants in the research process in general. The objects of analysis in the article are several emotion-generating situations in the field, which created troubling feelings and emotions such as vulnerability, guilt, and shame. The article also provides some insights related to coping strategies with stress and trauma, which could be used by other researchers dealing with emotional difficulties in the field.

Keywords: oral history, emotions, trauma, researcher, ethnic violence