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Translator's Note

Leopolis, Lwów, Lviv, Lemberg, Lvov—the city functioned under various names in different periods, its transformations reflected in documents, histories, literature as well as non-fiction. This translation uses “Lviv,” in keeping with its contemporary Ukrainian nomenclature. The same standard has been applied to other geographic names, except when those toponyms appear in cited sources, or are part of historical terms, such as the Lwów School of Mathematics.

The text and narrative footnotes retain the original orthography of Polish and Jewish first and last names; in the case of Ukrainians, even if they had customarily adopted Polish spellings, the simplified Library of Congress transliteration (LOC) was still applied. By way of example, the Metropolitan of the Greek-Catholic church figures as Andrei Sheptytsky here, and not in the once customarily used Polish rendition—Andrzej Roman Szeptycki. Where English spellings are well established, such as for Archipenko or Babi Yar, the principles of transliteration made room for readers' convenience. However, to assist with research accuracy, the bibliography and all citations apply strict LOC rules, albeit without ligatures.

On a personal note, *Courage and Fear* has proved to be a most gripping translation project. I am deeply indebted to several people in my closest circle, first and foremost the author and my sister Ola Hnatiuk, who cheerfully answered my queries as if we did not live time zones apart. My husband Doug Young rallied behind the translation before anyone thought it plausible and remained its unwavering enthusiast throughout. In the nascent stages of this endeavor, I was lucky to be able to call on my friend and translator John Eyck, who, as always, offered invaluable expert advice.

Foreword to English Edition

Courage and Fear tells the history of Lviv during World War Two. From a North American perspective, it may seem like a region remote in time and space, a relatively insignificant city in a corner of Europe. But Lviv was a rare testing ground for its occupiers—the Soviet Union and the Third Reich. There they carried out some of the most terrifying experiments of the last century. What happened in Lviv then has a resonating significance for our understanding of last century's and today's disputes.

This book examines bonds between local ethnicities, which is instructive of relations among the nations of the region still affected by stereotypes, prejudice, and mutual grievances dating back to those fateful years. One example of such a lasting holdover are the Polish-Ukrainian and, to a lesser extent, the Jewish-Ukrainian memory conflicts. Even more gravely, the legacy of the war years continues to fuel the hostilities between Russia and Ukraine. As Ukrainians defend the territorial integrity of the Ukrainian state and reassert the right to their identity and history, they again face Russia's opposition. Russia's and Germany's imperial designs have often determined the trajectory of world history, and they have left the deepest scars on the populations of Central-Eastern Europe.

In his essay "The Central-Eastern Revision," Yuri Andrukhovych summed up the fates of these countries as a back-and-forth exodus:

Existence between the Russians and the Germans is the historical destiny of Central Europe. The Central European Fear historically sways between two anxieties: the Germans are advancing, the Russians are advancing. Central European death—this is a prison or concentration camp death, a collective one too, *Massenmord*, a *purge*. The Central European journey—this is escape. But from and to where? From the Germans or the Russians?¹

1 Yuri Andrukhovych, *My Final Territory*, trans. Michael Naydan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 28–29.

On September 17, 1939, the Red Army marched into the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic. Soviet leaders claimed this military action was nothing more than “brotherly assistance.” A contemporary Soviet poster proclaimed: “we extend our fraternal hand so our brothers can straighten their spines and cast off the lordly yoke.” The “liberated” peoples rephrased it as black humor—they gave us a hand to carry us out feet first.” But by the end of that first Soviet occupation, which had lasted twenty-two months, the Polish and Ukrainian population gave up on humor, praying for any change, in the belief that “the Devil himself would be better than the Soviets.” The Nazis would prove them wrong.

Until recently, Western readers viewed the war suffering in Europe through the prism of the Western European experience. Timothy Snyder’s *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* widened this perspective, painting a poignant picture of Central-Eastern Europe between 1918 and 1945, where civilian populations fell victim to man-made famines, the Holocaust, and the Stalinist and Nazi terror. But *Bloodlands* did not submit to the national narratives of martyrdom and heroism. Indeed, in a world so saturated with violence that death became unremarkable, acts of active or passive resistance were a rare occurrence.

Snyder’s book cast a wider net than mine: the loss of life is counted in tens of millions, and his panorama spans the entire multinational region. *Courage and Fear* views the same history through a micro lens. It directs its focus on one city, zeroing in on the intelligentsia of three ethnicities: Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish. Its aim is not to conjure the myth of a multicultural, mosaic Central Europe, a lost Atlantis—a project so popular among Polish postwar émigré memoirists (see, e.g., *My Lwow* by Józef Wittlin, published in 1946). In contrast to those wistful narratives, this book draws on archival and printed sources to trace the relationships between select Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish intellectuals during World War Two. Their relationships are described not from the perspective of ethnic communities, but from individual points of view. A micro focus helps recalibrate our take on this history: the customary, mutually exclusive national narratives recede, making room for a more universal perspective of humanity. The history in *Courage and Fear* aims to escape pathos and bias, and to cross-examine historical verdicts so often mandated by ethnic loyalties.

The book follows the city of Lviv and its region through a period of cataclysmic changes—the Soviet and German occupations, mass reprisals, the Holocaust, and forced deportations after the war. Reviewing the choices my protagonists made in the face of conflict and constant mortal threat, I show instances of heroism and weakness, courage and fear. These stories demonstrate

the complexity of human identity and transcend categories of nationality, religion, race, and politics, all of which can distort our understanding and prevent us from truly seeing what motivates solidarity—is it love for thy neighbor or simply human loyalty?

When writing about Lviv intellectuals, we encounter people once well known, who faded into obscurity, not unlike their city. Such was the case in Philippe Sands's *East West Street*, and the same applies to this study. Among my protagonists are Irena Lille, the first female microbiologist in Lviv; Hugo Steinhaus, one of the co-founders of the Lwów School of Mathematics; the historian Mykhailo Marchenko; the singer and actor Eugeniusz Bodo; the literary critic Mykhailo Rudnytsky; and the painter Iaroslava Muzyka. Some of them were acquainted with each other, others would have never guessed that one day they would meet in this book. All belonged to the educated elite, and were selected for this project based on the narratives they left behind. My choice was guided by the accessibility of the sources, as well as the desire to portray a variety of professional milieus—medicine, academia, and art. Almost entirely absent from my study are the Catholic and Greek-Catholic clergy, whose fates merit a separate academic inquiry.

Among these well- or lesser-known figures, the protagonists of the first chapter are an exception. The story of my mother and grandmother serves as a point of departure, an opening to a broader reflection. It may shorten the distance between the author and her readers—especially for those who have Central-Eastern European roots—and find parallels to their family histories.

The literature in English regarding Lviv during World War Two is less plentiful than in Polish. But enough has been published to make unnecessary a refresher of the crucial events, developments, and figures of the period. Especially rich in facts and interpretations are the following titles: Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad. The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (1988; 2002); Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914–1947: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contested City* (2015); *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture* (2000) edited by John Czaplicka; and *The Great West Ukrainian Prison Massacre of 1941: A Sourcebook*, edited by Alexander Motyl and Ksenya Kiebuszinsky (2016). The postwar period and contemporary Lviv are the subjects of *The Ukrainian West: Culture and the Fate of Empire in Soviet Lviv* by William Risch (2012), *Ukrainian Intelligentsia in Post-Soviet Lviv: Narratives, Identity and Power* by Eleonora Narvselius (2012), and *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv: A Borderland City between*

Stalinists, Nazis, and Nationalists by Tarik Cyril Amar (2015). These studies provide a good sense of Sovietization and mass reprisals, of the Polish and Ukrainian underground resistance, of the pogroms of July 1941, the Holocaust of Lviv's Jews, and the complete overhaul of the city's ethnic structure.

In conclusion, I wish to thank everyone to whom I owe the English edition of *Courage and Fear*—above all, my translator and sister Ewa Siwak. She was the first one to insist that the book merited a translation into a language more universal than any of the Central-Eastern European languages, and took on this monumental task with great passion and dedication. Special thanks also go to Serhii Plokhyy and Oleh Kotsyuba for supporting the English edition at its every stage and for suggesting Academic Studies Press (ASP) as the co-publisher. I am grateful to the entire editing team at ASP for their editing and graphic work: the project coordinator Kate Yanduganova, academic editor Jodi Greig, copy editor Stuart Allen, series editor Vitalii Chernetsky, and production editor Kira Nemirovsky. Just as importantly, I would like to express my gratitude to Andrzej Dąbrowski, the chairman of Kolegium Europy Wschodniej, and Laurynas Vaičiūnas, the director of its press. They published the Polish original, and without their efforts the present book would not have been possible.

Preface

Every book has its own story. Among its characters are loved ones, friends, and acquaintances, as well as archivists, librarians, editors—people whose help is indispensable to an academic project. Working on my previous books, I had always been conscious of the contributions of these others, but had never perceived them as essential. Somewhat self-importantly I ascribed authorship exclusively to myself. *Courage and Fear* is my most personal book—you would expect that it would not only be my most subjective, but also the one most intimately of my own making. It is, after all, an individual narrative that does not follow the convention of “scholarly objectivity.” It steers clear of the tradition of invoking academic authorities. In my perception, however, it is precisely this book that owes the most to friends, with whom I was able to discuss individual chapters, and to others I was lucky to have met and who were willing to share their own perspective on both the present and the past. To mention them all would necessitate a personal second index. Allow me therefore to limit my acknowledgements to the initial readers and critics of the larger sections of my book: Bogumiła Berdychowska, Marta Bohachevsky-Chomiak, Marta Boianivska, Leonid Finberg, Timothy Snyder, Danuta Sosnowska, Stanisław Stępień, Vladyslav Verstiuk, and Kazimierz Wóycicki.

The idea for this project emerged a year after my mom passed away, my mother with whom I spoke too little, especially about the things that most interested me: composite ethnic identities, individual choices, and personal courage. In other words, matters that tend to determine our life’s path. No one likes to talk about fear and it is no surprise that my family also avoided the subject, which was painful for both my parents.

My mother was born in Lviv at the start of World War II. She left her hometown in 1946 with the last transport of “repatriates” (Poles who had settled Eastern Galicia and other Eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic annexed by the Soviets in 1939), as Poland’s borders shifted west and dramatic population swaps followed. In the fall of 2008, I decided to recruit friends and colleagues and organize an exhibit devoted to the first two years of

World War II in Lviv. The exhibit would depict the experiences of various communities—Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish—in the face of Soviet occupation. Despite various obstacles and unforeseen circumstances, eventually the project was realized. In July of 2010, after a year of preparations, Lvivians and tourists alike were able to view the first large Ukrainian exhibition hosted in a public space: Lviv's Market Square facing City Hall. Its authors were Oleh Pavlyshyn, of the Institute of Historical Research at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, and Mariusz Zajączkowski, of the Lublin branch of the Institute of National Remembrance. Magdalena Śladecka developed the art design, and Iaroslav Hrytsak, Rafał Wnuk, and myself served as academic consultants. The project came about because of the cooperation of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance, the Ukrainian Institute of Remembrance, and the embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kyiv. The Polish Institute's president, Janusz Kurtyka, its director, Agnieszka Rudzińska, and the vice-president of the Ukrainian Institute, Vladyslav Verstiuk, spared no effort in overcoming the obstacles in our path. Polish ambassador Jacek Kluczkowski supported the initiative, at the same time building a foundation for a new kind of dialogue between Polish and Ukrainian historians. Things turned out differently than expected, unfortunately. But discussions and arguments among authors, consultants, and patrons ultimately led to this book. On a personal note—although I had previously known each colleague at least by title—those months nourished our friendships.

A short while after the exhibit, it occurred to me that we barely touched on the issues I had set out to raise. The challenge was too weighty to address in the simplified format of an exhibition. It wanted something. I resolved to find a more adequate format to tell this immeasurably complex story. The work that followed resembled the typical research phase leading up to a book. It differed in one aspect, though: from the start I never intended to focus on unearthing new information, since the historical facts are well established. Recent years have seen the publication of several reference works, which I felt freed me from any duty to reiterate basic information. Moreover, in the course of the past dozen years historians have conducted intense research, substantially deepening our stores of knowledge about wartime Lviv, thus preempting the need to correct assertions and narrow down numbers, dates, or personal information. In this light, even new facts without a strikingly new interpretation do not amount to more than mere supplementation and ultimately cannot alter our current knowledge. Despite the existence of such an impressive body of contemporary scholarship, I chose not to rely exclusively on publications

and documents in print. Instead, I delved into archival collections relatively unknown in Poland and underutilized even in Ukraine.

The fundamental goal I set for myself when I began writing was to refocus my story from a national to a personal narrative. Every national narrative dealing with an ethnic community is interested, above all, in the destinies of its “own” protagonists. An “other” may be allotted a limited part, but always under the condition of fitting into the existing canon. If this narrative perceives its “own” to be a victim, and the “other” an enemy, it assigns the respective roles from the start, making the nationalities of positive and negative protagonists easy to predict. No space remains for stories of cooperation, mutual support, or solidarity. National narratives treat each manifestation of those behaviors as exceptions that only prove the rule, without ever reframing the overall image. Even if those less standard stories are in fact exceptional, they deserve all the more attention. They attest to individual courage and to the human will to confront evil, even when faced with the threat of death. To view such actions purely as exceptions to the rule sheds light on our deeply rooted negative stereotypes. My personal experience, as well as my background in national identity studies, suggest that we cannot overcome stereotypes, because they are inherent to how we structure thought. I therefore set a more modest goal for myself: to show divergent patterns.

My choice of the main characters is not personal, albeit nearly all of them played a part in my life, the encounters occurring through family history, readings, films, or songs. What informed my selection above all else was the multifaceted and ambiguous aura these protagonists exude, their ideals and life stories, their survival strategies, and, finally, the accessibility of source materials about them. We can attribute their attitudes and relationships to their individual worldviews or their social origin in the educated elite. They functioned in Lviv’s multinational community, which was admittedly ripe with conflict, yet not steeped in hatred. Under different circumstances—in short, had it not been for the abuses by functionaries of totalitarian regimes and by their underlings who in carrying out political visions bear a share of the responsibility for the Shoah and for crimes against humanity—ethnicity would have played only a minor role in their choices and life stories.

My aim was not to write an individual biography or focus on particular figures. Instead, I wanted to paint a picture of relationships among protagonists of different nationalities who happened to coinhabit occupied Lviv during the war. While each chapter has a key character, and the narrative spotlight falls on a particular life story, my main interest lies not in the sum of their

biographies, but rather in the bonds tying them to their respective milieus. Hence the narrative does not follow along simple chronological lines of their lives or of the war. Although this more customary narrative frame would make for easier reading, it presents an obstacle when telling stories of intricate relationships. Instead of a linear narrative structure, characteristic for accounts based on chronology, I relied on nested storytelling. In a similar fashion, I chose not to construct my narrative around a simplifying plot. Thus, each chapter seeks not so much to solve a puzzle or ascertain a fact, as to establish the persons, events, and web of circumstances that came to influence a protagonist's strategy. To that end, I draw on a broad variety of documents of a personal nature (*ego-documents*): journals, memoirs, letters, third-person accounts, even interrogation transcripts. Other sources play only a secondary part. I make limited use of memoirs by Karolina Lanckorońska¹ and Aleksander Wat,² which are widely known and quoted in Polish scholarship. I applied a similar strategy to established Ukrainian and Jewish sources, such as the writings of poet Ostap Tarnavsky and the librarian and archeologist Larisa Krushelnyska, as well Kurt Lewin³ and Ignacy Chiger,⁴ to create a space for lesser-known or previously unquoted personal accounts.

While this book is not intended as a monograph devoted to Lviv's creative milieus, it was important to me to represent the life stories of representatives of various professions: doctors, scholars, writers, artists, and musicians. In tracing their mutual relationships, I show that they were not necessarily linked through narrow professional interests, and that these connections had a tendency to cross ethnic lines.

The majority of books about Lviv strike a nostalgic tone, which I made an effort to avoid. Yet just to invoke the complexity of this bygone world can evoke nostalgia.

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- 1 Karolina Lanckorońska, a well-known art historian from a prominent aristocratic family, was among the first people to give testimony about the massacre of Lviv professors.
 - 2 Aleksander Wat was a noted poet of the Polish avant-garde featured in Marci Shore's study of Polish leftist avant-garde poets *Caviar and Ashes: A Warsaw Generations Life and Death in Marxism, 1918–1968* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).
 - 3 Kurt Lewin, the eldest son of Lviv rabbi Ezekiel Lewin, witness to the Holocaust, author of a number of memoirs.
 - 4 Ignacy Chiger, the father of Krystyna Chiger-Keren, published a memoir *Świat w mroku. Pamiętnik ojca dziewczynki w zielonym sweterku* (Warsaw: PWN, 2011). His daughter's memoir *The Girl in a Green Sweater: A Life in the Holocaust's Shadow* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2008) was adapted by Agnieszka Holland into a screenplay for the 2011 film *W ciemności* [*In Darkness*].

I would like to express my gratitude to the administration and the employees of the Shevchenko Scientific Society (New York), to the Lviv National Art Gallery, the Manuscript Collection of the National Library of Poland, the Manuscript Collection of the Warsaw University Library, the Central State Historical Archive in Lviv, the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy Archives, the Archive of the National University of Lviv, the State Archives Department of the Security Service of Ukraine, the Archive of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences (New York), the Polish Academy of Sciences Archive (Warsaw), the Archive of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington), and the Ossolineum Library (Wrocław).

Droga Pasi!

Naprawdę, bardzo cierzymy się z tego, że odualastyśmy adres Państwa. Wątku minionymi lat niejednokrotnie wspominaliśmy Pasiu, a ja, dokładnie wypytywałam Mamusię o wszystkie te = nas, gdy nadarzyła się okazja, Mamusia poprosiła tego pana (który odwiedził Państwa), aby, jeżeli to byłoby możliwe, zdobył adres. Chcieliśmy przekazać przez p. Filipasaka list do Pasi, ale wyjechał on nieposłuszenie właśnie, niż pierwotnie zamierzał, więc nie mogliśmy skierować nawet kilku słów, że co bardzo przepraszamy.

Mieszkamy teraz w Stupsku. Jest to miasto przeszło 50-tych tysięcy, położone na Pomorzu Zachodnim, 18 km od morza (województwo pomorskie, na linii Gdynia - Szczecin). Mamusia pracuje tutaj jako pielęgniarka w szpitalu Wojewódzkim. Małżonka jest obywatelką - przeszło 900 tysięcy i do tego położona w dwóch kompleksach gmin, oddalonych od siebie o 2 km. Została ona tramwajowego na tej trasie mi ma, wobec tego traci się dużo czasu na dojazd do szpitala, kurzy się nieregularnie. Wobec tego szanowny Panu Mamusia ma obywateli nawet pracy, nie pozwalając nawet na prowadzenie korespondencji, więc proszę, abyś ją napisał, co u nas się dzieje, a sama dopiئة pokaż stół na koniec. Ja ze swojej strony przepraszam, że robię to dopiero teraz, ale w związku z egzaminami miałam bardzo dużo pracy i trudno było mi znaleźć chwilę wolną na napisanie listu.

Jeżeli chodzi o nas, to nieujemy się tutaj zbyt dobrze. Najbardziej powielne dobre daje się nam nie znaleźć - dwie córki u

Letter from Halina Lewkowska to Jaroslava Muzyka, 1957

CHAPTER 1

Girl with a Dog

My mom, Halina Siwak, née Lewkowska, was born in Lviv on September 18, 1939. Both the date as well as the birthplace are ominous. As a child, for reasons unknown to myself, I would stare at the entry “Place of Birth: Lviv, USSR,” on Mom’s identity card, examining it again and again. For me, born in Warsaw, this always stirred an unease, a vaguely threatening feeling. It is hard to say today what sparked it, whether this fear had roots in stories I had heard as a young child, or whether it appeared once the date of September 17, 1939 became as significant to me as September 1, 1939.

My school curriculum carefully skipped over September 17, 1939 when the Soviets marched in, focusing instead on the Nazi campaign in Poland that began on September 1, centering on the heroism of the Polish soldier and German bestiality. Certainly, already in elementary school I knew that the Red Army had invaded the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic. It was officially forbidden knowledge, banned from the school curriculum. I acquired it mostly from family history, though, and in part also via my mom’s former dorm roommate and friend, Zofia Błaszczyk. Ms. Błaszczyk had arrived in Poland from the USSR in 1956 (our contact with her broke off after we moved to a different district of Warsaw in the spring of 1969, much in the same way as had contact with Mom’s contemporary, Hanna Gnoińska, born into a Polish-Jewish family in Lviv). Much later, in tenth grade in high school, I also learned the truth about Katyn (the 1940 executions of almost 25,000 Polish officers and civil servants ordered by the Soviet Political Bureau and blamed on the Nazis), albeit thanks to my friend Paweł, the grandson of Stanisław Swianiewicz. Swianiewicz was one of those few fortunate reserve officers who extricated themselves from Soviet imprisonment after that massacre. Being teenagers, we were as unwilling to compromise as we were aggravating. We would frustrate our newest teacher’s history classes (he led the Basic Communist Party Organization in our high school), and his lack of reaction would only



Iaroslava Muzyka, *Portrait of a Girl with a Dog*, 1946

cause us to grow increasingly more impudent. In my case, our behavior yielded unwelcome results: my high school diploma bore the evaluation, “Pupil under the influence of foreign propaganda,” which could have made it impossible for me to start my adult life. Especially if you wanted to matriculate as a humanities student. But the year was 1980...

Raised in Polish culture and as a Roman Catholic, Mom made a choice out of love for Dad that would result in nothing but problems. First of all, her relationship with her mother and more distant relatives grew colder. This was the end of the 1950s, when family bonds were much stronger than half a century later—not to mention that those bonds made it easier to survive within a system of perennial shortages. To belong to an oppressed Ukrainian minority had its consequences as well, despite their having emerged from the oblivion where they had been condemned by the Political Bureau’s decision of forced expatriation and draconian rules of resettlement that all but ensured the community’s disintegration. This minority continued to find themselves in a position inferior to other Polish citizens, at the time comparable only to that of a small number of Germans remaining in Poland. The authorities drew an ideological equals

sign between those two minorities, a perspective which persisted for decades and has survived as a stereotype (“collaborators,” “fascists”) to this day.

My mom’s choice was unusual in every way. It was a choice not in favor of a *closed identity*, one that was characteristic of an era when nationalisms fought each other. Under the cover of the official international rhetoric a nationally monolithic state was emerging. Only many years later did I become acquainted with the concept of *open identity*, one that is inclusive, and *closed identity*, one that excludes. The slogan, “Who is not with us is against us,” commonly evoked in the era of real socialism, was foreign to Mom as well. Not just because she came to belong to the excluded—it so happens that the excluded can use the logic of exclusion too.

Mom, although she had learned Ukrainian only a few years before, taught me the Ukrainian alphabet. Her carefully calligraphed board was prepared according to the dictionary compiled by two linguists from Lviv, Witold Taszycki and Stanisław Jodłowski. With Latin alphabet letters corresponding to the Cyrillic ones, it was supposed to make it easier to read the Roman Catholic catechism. It hung above my bed like a picture of a saint. I have kept both the board and the catechism to this day. The catechism was published in Przemyśl in the fateful year of 1946, the same year in which Soviet authorities delegatized the Uniate Church, and the UB (the Polish Security Office) handed Bishop Iosafat Kotsylovsky over to the NKVD.

In the area of Polish stylistics Mom was my oracle. Her speech, with the characteristic “i” and voiced “h” resembled prewar pronunciation; she paid careful attention to diction, and tried to impart that care to me. This could seem somewhat ostentatious, smacking of the careful education of a “*girl from a good home*.” True, Mom’s intelligentsia roots played a very important part in her identity, but she never let others feel like they lacked in education or manners. Through her attention to linguistic formations and social formalities she was fighting her private war. It was a war she had declared against the glut of mediocrity and coarseness (a reflection of those times was the saying “crooked, straight—who cares as long as it’s a short-cut”). Doing so, she was expressing her love for her mother tongue, which she strove to share with both her immediate and more distant surroundings.

Many times I would ask myself how it happened, how did this marriage come to be? The Shakespearean topos of Romeo and Juliet can be applied to my parents, but did Shakespeare not sentence his lovebirds to death? Let us try to consider this decision as a social phenomenon: how do you overcome such strong aversion between two nations? These nations are not the feuding

Montague and Capulet clans who can only reconcile over the lovers' grave! On the contrary: the parties to this conflict are fenced off by a "border of friendship," and Romeo and Juliet go on living. Rather, the Shakespearean topos might be compared with another, terror-provoking literary motif: Gogol's Taras Bulba kills his son ("I begot you, and I shall kill you"), because when his son follows his heart, in the father's eyes he is committing apostasy.

Ukrainians considered those Poles who had been repatriated during operation "Vistula" from beyond the Bug River to be their greatest enemies, and those repatriates returned the hostility in kind, at the encouragement of Polish communist authorities. Official propaganda very effectively fomented this negative stereotype, labeling those who had any connection with the Polish underground as "a reactionary force of spittle-bespattered dwarves," and the others as "Bandera's criminals and killers." In this clever way they diverted attention from the real perpetrators of the misery of repatriation. Additionally, a widespread postwar fear, which today we would identify as post-traumatic stress disorder, fueled the mutual hatred between these two ethnic groups. Just how closed both communities remained is shown in the Polish movie *Sami swoi* ("Our Folks"), a film with an exceptionally large viewership in Poland. (This comedy depicted the lives of two village families from the area of Vilnius after they had been resettled in the Recovered Territories. Despite losing their little homeland, they cling to their identity, in part by fiercely cultivating their old property line dispute.) Because the topic of Ukrainians in Poland was taboo, it would be difficult to find a similarly well-known example involving Ukrainian deportees. Ukrainians felt compelled to keep their national identity hidden from neighbors, as well as at work and at school. The resulting Ukrainian community closed itself off from others, and suffered the typical psychological and societal consequences.

During her studies Mom associated herself with a group of "repatriates" who resembled her, and also with arrivals of the "new wave"—the deportees released from Siberia during the Thaw of 1956. Among them were not only Poles, but also citizens of the prewar Republic of Poland who represented other nationalities: Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Jews. Deprived of everything, virtually naked and barefoot, yet with sizeable baggage from the trauma of labor camps and sometimes even prisons, they longed to seize the opportunity to get an education, as afforded by measly government scholarships.

In the 1950s, scattered across all of Poland after operation "Vistula," young Ukrainians found it very difficult to break into academic life and secure university admissions. Not only were those forced expatriates restricted from

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