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The Ethnic Removals of Ukrainians and Poles in Eastern Europe after the World War II and their Impact on Post-war Czechoslovakia

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The article focuses on ethnic removals as the aftermath of the outcome of World War II. The removal of the nations of Eastern Europe, especially Ukrainians and Poles, had irreversibly altered the ethnic circumstances or security situation of many states except Czechoslovakia. The transfers of inhabitants and the transformation of the frontiers where the ethnic collectives originally lived were radical solutions to the severe societal tensions of that period. The article discusses migration movements which in consequence influenced Czechoslovakia.

Key words: *WWII; Ethnic Removals; Czechoslovakia; Geopolitics; Ukrainians; Poles; Czechoslovak army*

The study offers a synthesizing view on the topic of post-war displacement in Central and Eastern Europe, which can also contribute to answering many similar questions from more recent and recent times. The methods chosen for this study are the direct method of archival sources and published sources of Czech, Slovak and foreign provenance. Secondary literature and its reflection on the topic are of considerable help.

Resettlements of population became a well-established and natural form of the victors´ as well as losers´ acting. In both cases, the main motive for resettlement was safeguarding and improving one´s own existential conditions, although usually at the expense of another nation, a different group of people. Ethnic relocations in particular were a standard feature throughout the human history during the war as

well as peace, often as an outcome of peace conditions negotiated during the war. Always, however, at the cost of huge human casualties and losses.[1]

Relocation became an escalated form of controlling the population. New decisions manipulated the nations, groups, elites, nationals and citizens under the principle of reaching absolute political power based on dictatorship of a single party and building of fascistic, socialistic, Nazi and communist models supported by collective industrial plans, homecoming or race purity. Violence committed on individuals, selected groups and entire nations became a natural component of resettlement for long centuries. Manipulations, conflicts and wars based on religious, power, political, ethnic or racist factors emerged as a result of xenophobia, discrimination and persecution, which were manifested by mass dimensions of repressions, genocide and holocaust – killing on a factory-production scale with a single goal – exterminate! That´s sad history of 20th century especially in Eastern Europe.[2]

East Central Europe can be seen as a region where landscape changes were often caused by several waves of migration. These changes were combined with attempts of the ruling regimes to shape the transforming landscape according to their ideological perceptions. At the same time the affected migrants to a great extent integrated aspect of landscape into their memory of their "lost home". The latter concerned not just the German expellees after 1945 but also Poles, Ukrainians, Czechs, Slovaks, Magyars or several other ethnic groups who were resettled in the middle of the twentieth century or migrated for other reasons. East Central Europe is therefore an area where the connection between migration and landscape transformation can be analysed in a specific way. In this region all the above-mentioned contexts converged with overlapping forms of migrations and diverse political ruptures. The forced migrations in East Central Europe that were set in train by National Socialist Germany's belligerent expansionist policies and the war of extermination that began in 1939, and whose consequences were to continue to be felt after 1945, radically reshaped the landscapes of the entire region. These events opened out spaces in the truest sense of the word in which to produce a new order of real or imagined landscapes.[3]

Soviet Ukraine's borders remained unchanged from 1920 to the outbreak of World War II in September 1939. After the fall of Poland, the Soviet Union annexed

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[1] Zudová-Lešková, Z. (2015). Resettlement and Extermination of the Populations – Fixed Part of Human History. In Zudová-Lešková, Z. (ed.), *Resettlement and extermination of the populations: a syndrome of modern history.* Praha: Historický ústav, The work of Institute of History, Czech Academy of Sciences, p. 11.

[2] Ibid, p. 12.

[3] Zückert, M. (2016). Migration and Landscape. Intentional Change and the Long-Term Transformation of Cultural Areas in East Central Europe. In Zückert, M., Hein-Kircher, H. (eds.), *Migration and landscape transformation: changes in East Central Europe in the 19th and 20th century.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, p. 5.

western Volhynia and eastern Galicia as far as the San River (November 1939). In June 1940, the Soviets also annexed Bessarabia and northern Bukovina from Romania. Northern Bukovina and the far-southern region of Bessarabia were given to Soviet Ukraine. Soviet Ukraine's territorial gains were wiped out, however, in the wake of Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union (June 1941). Eastern Galicia was made a district of Greater Germany's Generalgouvernement Poland. Most of the rest of the country became part of the Reichs-kommissariat Ukraine.[4]

With the end of World War II in 1945, Soviet Ukraine's western border was re-established so that it included most of the territory acquired by the Soviet Union following the destruction of Poland in 1939. The 1945 border did not reach as far as the San River, however, but instead followed the post-World War I proposal by the British foreign minister Lord Curzon and the upper San River (in favour of Poland), territorial changes came in the historic region of Carpathian Rus. Already before outbreak of World War II, when Czechoslovakia was forced to dissolve, that country's eastern province, called Subcarpathian Rus, was annexed by Hungary. As a result of a Soviet-Czechoslovak treaty (June 1945), the region was annexed to the Soviet Ukraine.[5]

The Second World War, its course and consequences completely changed the ethnic and national circumstances in Central and Eastern Europe. Violent excesses and ethnic crimes have become a common part of the war to an extent we do not know in modern history. Historian Timothy Snyder reports that in the Soviet Union and Poland during the war in its aftermath, 12 million Ukrainians, Poles, Belarusians and other nationalities fled or were violently force to move, not counting about 10 million people who were killed by the Germans during the occupation, the majority of whom had been forced to migrate before that.[6]

In the post-war period, the Germans could lose a life of similar probability as the Poles, who represented another group of population shifted to the west. However, the Ukrainians, Romanians, or members of the Baltic, Caucasian, or Crimean nations were more likely to be killed in those relocations. During or as a direct result of escape, expulsion or deportation, less than one German and Poles died out of ten, while in the case of citizens of the Baltic States and the USSR one of five died. In general, the deportation took place in the east, and the more Soviet the regime was involved in it, the more deadly it was.[7]

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[4]   Magocsi, J. P. (2018). *Historical atlas of Central Europe. Third revised and expanded edition.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, p. 137.

[5]   Ibid, p. 139.

[6]   Snyder, T. (2013). *Krvavé země. Evropa mezi Hitlerem a Stalinem.* Praha: Paseka/Prostor, pp. 320–321.

[7]   Ibid.

Forced migration of Slavic nationalities after the Second World War, the migration of Ukrainians and also of the Poles were important in their impact on post-war Czechoslovakia. How is it possible? The smaller part of Galicia is the only one where they originally lived mostly Ukrainians remained Poland, which otherwise made the decision of the superpowers made a move on the map to the west. Territory lost in the east by Poland by joining the Soviet Union,[8] in the west powers compensated by joining originally German (where it was expelled and displaced at least 7.6 million Germans) areas. All these movements of states on the map accompanied ethnic movements, which had the greatest impact on the further development of the affected areas. All these forced movements were important in their impact on Bandera´s movement ("banderovci") – Bandera´s faction in the Organisation of Ukrainian nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA).[9]

To the development of this nationalist organization in the course of the Second World War should be noted that during Wehrmacht's advancement in Eastern Europe, German soldiers were initially welcomed as liberators in many places, but the expectations of the population were very quickly disappointed. In Ukraine and Poland, a tough regime has been established to terrorize the local population. The vision of a freer life was quickly replaced by another suffering, this time by the Nazi occupiers. Adolf Hitler and the other powerful did not intend to rely on the support of the Slavic population, which, according to their plans was equally intended only for liquidation, or slave labour for the Nazi Germany.[10]

The Bandera´s faction fought due to such negative developments completely against everyone, against the Nazi occupation administration, against other resistance forces units (for example WIN – *Wolność i Niepodległość*, NSZ – *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne* or AK – *Armia Krajowa*), especially the Communist, with the coming of the war front already met with the Red army and finally, after some elementary consolidation of the situation, with forces restored Polish state. Uncompromising attitude and defiance against everyone have long characterized this nationalist movement.[11]

During World War II in autumn 1942, a military branch of the OUN was established – Ukrainian Insurgent Army. The situation of the Bandera group was complicated; they relied only on the local Ukrainian population. This produced consequences for the Ukrainian population there. The weakness of the insurgent

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[8] For more information see Misiło, E. (2012). *Akcja „Wisła" 1947: dokumenty i materiały*. Varšava: Archiwum Ukraińskie, pp. 55–58.

[9] Snyder, T. (2013). *Krvavé země…*, p. 319.

[10] Milotová, J. (1999). „Česká otázka" a nacistické plány na její řešení. In Brandes, D., Ivaníčková, E., Pešek, J. (eds.), *Vynútený rozchod. Vyhnanie a vysídlenie z Československa 1938–1947 v porovnání s Poľskom, Maďarskom a Juhosláviou*. Bratislava: Veda, pp. 21–30.

[11] Řepa, T. (2019). *Banderovci. Politické souvislosti, následky zneužití komunistickou propagandou, návaznost na hybridní konflikt v současnosti*. Praha: Academia, p. 20.

structure became apparent in February 1944, when the Red Army advanced into Volhynia and reached the Lutsk-Rovno line.[12]

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army was the largest being of partisan groups in whole region. Fielding up to 200,000 men, for a few months in the autumn and winter 1943 it controlled most of north-west Ukraine, establishing a primitive administration and its own training camps and hospitals.[13]

During the German occupation, the nationality problem in Poland grew to a whole new dimension. The war definitively sparked conflicts between various nationalities and completed the dissolution of the Polish society based on a national principle. Ethnic antagonism was steadily growing during the pre-war years. The tragic fate of the Jews in Poland did not lead to deeper cooperation between them and the Poles, even though they were recognized as the only minority that did not collaborate with occupying regime. Bigger conflicts arose between the Poles and the other national minorities during the interwar period, especially in the case of Ukrainians, as a result of the escalating ethnic conflict in Volhynia in 1943, which culminated from the tension between Poland and the Ukraine in the previous period. The Polish government in exile and the leadership of Armija Krajowa understood that the Ukrainians, White Russians and Lithuanians were not on friendly terms with the Poles. Nevertheless, they were not able to create a program for conflict management and coexistence with national minorities in the post-war period. They concentrated only on very general presentations of possible laws for the protection of national minorities. The program of population transfer was largely organised and completed by Polish communists, who took power in Poland.[14]

Desperate fights all against all had escalated especially with the approaching end of World War II. The UPA and the OUN got used to harsh conditions. The accompanying phenomenon was the burning of villages of all parties involved. The partisan tactics prevailed - strike and then retreat to their rear. This way of fighting continued after the Second World War. Overall, the activities of the Ukrainian nationalists focused on the violent form of resistance and struggle for an independent Ukraine. However, it is necessary to mention that, in addition to the radical nationalists, many "ordinary" criminal elements also had joined into the ranks of these units. It is important to carefully assess who, and for what reasons, joined the ranks of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and how he subsequently behaved.[15]

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[12] Armstrong, J. (1963). *Ukrainian nationalism.* New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 156–157.

[13] Reid, A. (2000). *Borderland: A Journey Through the History of Ukraine.* Boulder: Westview Press, p. 159.

[14] Šmigeľ, M. et al. (2015). "Ethnic Cleansings and a Concept of Ethnically Homogenous States in Europe (In the Context of Historical Experience and Memory)". In Zudová-Lešková, Z. (ed.), *Resettlement and extermination…*, p. 11.

[15] For more see Potychnyj, P. J. (2008). *My Journey,* part 1. Toronto and Lvov: Litopys UPA.

In the process of fighting against the Soviet system in the region, the leadership of the OUN and the UPA resorted to tactics so-called raids (promotional campaigns), when broadcasting specially prepared sections of the UPA to neighbouring territories, which were supposed to organize various forms of political-promotional work among the local population.[16] Slovakia, or its eastern part, adjacent to southeastern Poland and western Ukraine, where the UPA was most active in the first post-war years, naturally got into the OUN's perspective as part of the new anti-Soviet concept of active resistance. The UPA's military analysts, who analysed the internal political situation in Czechoslovakia, correctly anticipated Slovakia's power struggle between Slovak Communists and the Democratic Party of Slovakia.[17]

The reaction from Czechoslovakia, its security forces and the army, to the first the OUN and the UPA raids into the Slovak borderland was relatively lukewarm. Only at the beginning of September 1945 at the order of the Minister of National Defence sent the headquarters of the fourth military area in eastern Slovakia three battalions of infantry and reconnaissance platoon, previously reinforced by two companies of submachine guns from Moravia.[18] At the same time, cooperation was agreed with the Soviet border troops, on the basis of this agreement was moved to Kapušian 4th Regiment of the Red Army, which was to engage in actions against the UPA.[19]

The statement of the Polish historian Grzegorz Motyka, who has been dealing with the problems of UPA and OUN in the context of Central and Eastern Europe for a long time, is serious given the geopolitical direction of the whole region of Central and Eastern Europe. Motyka says that reports of the penetration of UPA units to Slovakia should have caused uneasiness even by head of the NKVD Lavrentij Berija.[20]

In 2007, Slovak historian Šmigeľ demonstrated that a special group of NKVD officials was also transported to the UPA area of action.[21] Šmigeľ specifically states the following findings:

[16] Szcześniak, A., Szota, W. (1973). *Droga do nikad. Działalność Organizacji Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów i jej likwidacja w Polsce.* Varšava: Wmon, p. 320.

[17] Šmigeľ, M. (2007). Banderovci na Slovensku (1945–1946): K problematike činnosti a propagačních antikomunistických aktivít oddielov Ukrajinskej povstaleckej armády. In Šmigeľ, M. (ed.), *Radikálný socializmus a komunismus na Slovensku (1918–1989). Spoločnosť medzi demokraciou a totalitou.* Banská Bystrica: Historický ústav Slovenské akademie věd, p. 140.

[18] Řepa, T. (2019). *Banderovci...*, p. 24.

[19] Štaigl, J. (2011). Spolupráca vojenských jednotiek ČSR, Poľska a ZSSR v akciách proti UPA na východnom Slovensku v rokoch 1945–1947. In *Vojenská história,* issue 2, pp. 77–78.

[20] Motyka, G. (2006). *Ukrajińska partyzantka 1942–1960. Dzialalność Organizaciji Ukrajińskich Nacjonalistów i Ukrajińskiej Powstańczej Armii.* Varšava: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, p. 592.

[21] Šmigeľ, M. (2009). V boji s banderovci na Slovensku (1945–1947). Aktivity československých bezpečnostních složek proti UPA – spolupráce s Polskem a SSSR. In Volná, K. (ed.), *Aktivity NKVD/KGB a jejich spolupráce s tajnými službami střední a východní Evropy 1945–1989.* Praha: Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, pp. 217–226.

To Slovakia was sent from the USSR one motorized regiment from the 4th Armored Army and a special group[22] of the 9th Soviet Guards Army. The nervous reaction of the Soviets was based on nescience of the intentions and powers of the UPA units. Soviets did not even rule out an attempt to break through to Transcarpathia. A special group of functionaries of the Soviet NKVD was also transported to the area of attacking OUN and UPA groups. It is very interesting that the activities of the Soviet military section and NKVD agents in Czechoslovak contemporary documents is practically not mentioned.[23]

It should be mentioned, the Slovak population and especially Ruthenians related to Ukrainians were afraid to support UPA so that it would not have problems similar to those of the Ukrainian (and also ethnic group of the Lemkos and Bojkos) population in Poland. Especially if at that time in the north-eastern Slovakia were preparing options (voluntary transfers) and resettlement[24] of the population[25] to the Soviet Union and some rumours talked about the forced displacement of all Slovak Ruthenians from Czechoslovakia. However, this has never been realized also for political reasons.

The organised resistance of the Bandera group after the end of the Second World War moved primarily to today's south-eastern Poland, to Galicia.[26] The Ukrainian minority in the area provided Bandera's troops with a base and support for clashes with the Polish army and special units the Red Army and NKVD. This was particularly important for the sustainability of badly damaged units, which were also supported by food supplies and munitions.[27]

The war was over and the Soviets authorities tried to impose their rule on a recalcitrant region, particularly on occasions such as the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1946. The UPA called on the population to boycott the elections and the threatened those who participated in them. Moscow in turn mounted an operation called the "great blockade." Over 3,500 regular army units, NKVD troops, and punitive battalion soldiers were deployed in the western regions of soviet Ukraine between January and April 1946. They blocked off the insurgents´ access to villages during the winter months but failed to eradicate them. The UPA divided into

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[22] Military Historical Archive Prague (hereinafter known as MHA), fund Military Office of the President of the Republic, carton 1, reference number 4996/I a – secret news 1945. News from Eastern Slovakia dated 6 September 1945.

[23] Šmigeľ, M. (2007). *Banderovci na Slovensku (1945–1946): K problematike činnosti a propagačních antikomunistických aktivít oddielov Ukrajinskej povstaleckej armády…*, p. 143.

[24] For more see Šmigeľ, M., Kruško, Š. (2005). *Opcia. Proces opcie a presídlenia občanov ČSR do ZSSR na základe československo-sovietskej dohody z 10. júla 1946.* Prešov: Imprint, pp. 74–82.

[25] For exact statistics of migrants by Slovak regions see Gajdoš, M., Konečný S. (2014). Ukrajinská menšina na Slovensku ako objekt a subjekt politiky II (1945–1953). Prešov: Universum, p. 41.

[26] A map with location of Galicia after World War II see Magocsi, J. P. (2018). *Historical atlas…*, p. 186.

[27] Syrůček, M. (2008). *Banderovci – hrdinové nebo bandité?* Praha: Epocha, p. 117.

smaller groups and began to use ambushes as the main form of attack. The Soviet offensive was renewed during the period of elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR in 1947. Military and security service operations increased and over 77,000 people – "gang supporters" – were deported to remote regions of the USSR in 1947. In this period, the UPA exhausted its resources.[28]

Fighting in Poland continued in the Bieszczady mountains of south-eastern Poland until the spring of 1947, when the UPA was rounded up by the Polish army. Over the next months Ukrainian villages in the area were systematically demolished, and their inhabitants forcibly deported to the ex-German "recovered territories" in the north and west, or to the Soviet Union.[29]

In 1947[30], the manner of the Ukrainian nationalists radically changed, because they were under the pressure of the Polish troops and special forces of the NKVD[31] and also due to the completion of the Vistula operation – the displacement of Ukrainian people from Southeast Poland. On 17 April 1947, the Polish State Committee, as the deciding authority, decided to set up the Vistula Task Force, which began operations on 14 June, as a tool for consolidating the situation and finally resolving the Ukrainian nationalist tendencies in the Polish state.[32] At the same time as the fight against the UPA, the Polish government carried out a transfer[33] of inhabitants in cooperation with the Soviet Union, where the main resettlement of the Ukrainian population – about 500,000 inhabitants was headed.[34] From the Ukrainian settlements in Poland, a minority of Ukrainians, about 150,000 inhabitants, were transported to the western regions of the country, which Poland acquired at the expense of Germany after the Second World War.[35]

Since the end of the war operations, between 1944 and 1946, both Poles and Ukrainians were relocated from post-war Poland to the Soviet Union.[36] It occurred therefore long before the realization of the resettlement operation Vistula. Not only

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[28] Marples, D. R. (2007). *Heroes and Villains. Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine.* Budapešť: Central European University Press, pp. 295–296.

[29] Reid, A. (2000). *Borderland…*, p. 160.

[30] Archive of Security Forces in Prague (hereinafter known as ASFP), fund 307 (Banderovci), inventory unit 307-103-1, fol. 1–4. 1 October 1947 was established for the purpose of judicial proceedings of the offenses of captured OUN and UPA members Commission for Investigation of the Crimes of Bandera group in Czechoslovakia.

[31] Motyka, G. (2014). *Na Białych Polaków obława. Wojska NKWD w walce z polskim podziemiem 1944–1953.* Krakov: Wydawnictwo Literackie, pp. 376–379.

[32] Řepa, T. (2019). *Banderovci…,* p. 81.

[33] A map with diagram and numbers of displaced population see Magocsi, J. P. (2018). *Historical atlas…,* p. 191.

[34] Štaigl, J. (2011). *Spolupráca vojenských jednotiek ČSR, Poľska a ZSSR v akciách proti UPA na východnom Slovensku v rokoch 1945–1947…,* pp. 72–101.

[35] Řepa, T. (2019). *Banderovci…,* p. 81.

[36] Veselý, L. (2010). „Proti fašistickým bandám UPA". Ukrajinci v propagandě lidového Polska. In: *Soudobé dějiny,* issue 4, pp. 667–701.

ethnicity was decisive for the displacement, but also belonging to the Orthodox or Greek Catholic Church. The inhabitants, which were not only Ukrainians, but also Ruthenians (Lemkos, Bojkos) and Poles from mixed families, could take only a minimum of property.[37]

The Bandera group fought for such a long time thanks to the support of a large part of the Ukrainian population living in Galicia and hiding in the forests of south-eastern post-war Poland. Two combat units (named Hromenko and Burlak) and gradually other individuals from another fragmented units, a total of just over three hundred members of the Bandera group, embarked on journey through Czechoslovakia towards Bavaria for their command. The more conciliatory attitude of non-communist parties (especially national socialists in the Czech lands and the Democratic Party in Slovakia) towards the UPA and OUN anabasis served the Communists to attack these parties and intimidate those who did not want to submit.[38]

For example, some records of Czechoslovak government meeting talks conclusively refer to the conflict between the Communists and other democratic parties, as well as more general issues of action Czechoslovak army and security forces against the OUN and UPA.[39] Later, some of these attitudes were the target of a fierce communist *Rudé právo* newspapers press campaign and were exploited propaganda even in subsequent trials against many democratic politicians who did not manage to escape the Communists from country.[40] In the autumn of 1947, an increasingly intense struggle between communist and non-communist political forces began in a country in which the Communist Party used every pretext to portray its political opponents as merely criminal and subversive elements. Against the background of these attacks was constantly emphasized the danger of the moving members the UPA and OUN.[41]

Life for the Bandera group between the relocation of the Ukrainian minority from Galicia and their final annihilation is captured within the review of the Czechoslovak National Security Corps (SNB) from 1947:

The activity of these units is best illustrated by the reports that the individual groups produced in the form of reports to the headquarters, which are partly in our hands, which clearly show that the units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army did not

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[37] Kabačij, R. (2012). *Wygnani na stepy: przesiedlenia ludności ukraińskiej z Polski na południe Ukrainy w latach 1944–1946*. Varšava: Związek Ukraińców w Polsce, pp. 278–281.

[38] Řepa, T. (2019). *Banderovci...*, pp. 109–110.

[39] National archive Prague (hereinafter as NA), fund Klement Gottwald (1938–1953) 100/24, archival unit 1494, carton 145. Records of the meeting of the 102nd meeting of the Czechoslovak Government of 16 September 1947.

[40] See Veber, V. (2015). Konec druhé světové války a sovětizace střední Evropy. In *Paměť a dějiny*, Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, issue 2, pp. 13–14.

[41] Řepa, T. (2019). *Banderovci...*, p. 111.

show any losses until the arrival of the Red Army or only very small, while after the Red Army's arrival suddenly these losses are very high. After the end of the war in 1945, the Bandera group continued their terrorist activities, both against the Red Army and against the armies of Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Red Army soon destroyed the band's activities in the Soviet Union just as the terrorist activity of the band in the territory of the Czechoslovak Republic was largely restricted, while the territory of Poland is still being maintained for the following reasons:

1. The Polish consolidation conditions are much more difficult than in the other countries mentioned.

2. On the Polish territory, there is the Ukrainian population who, because of the unhappy policy of the Polish pre-war government, hated everything Polish and saw its protectors in the Bandera group, and therefore encouraged them until they were convinced of the terrorist activities of the band.

3. The Polish government, troops and security authorities devoted themselves first of all to annihilating their own, Polish, terrorist bands.[42]

Mass strikes and demonstrations broke out in the arms factories of the Urals and Siberia in the autumn of 1945. The secret police registered more than half a million letters protesting against living conditions and poverty. The crop failure in 1945 and 1946 escalated the problems in agricultural production, which for many years lagged far behind pre-war values. Ukraine and other areas of the USSR were again hit by famine, which, according to some estimates, was killed by up to two million people. Around 100 million people in the Soviet Union suffered from malnutrition. From the point of view of Stalin and the Soviet leadership, the difficult situation had to be overcome if the Soviet state was to persevere, get up, and resume its defensive lines and capacities. All potential riots and rebellions and all conceivable signs of opposition had to be mercilessly suppressed and inhibited. A new wave of arrests, purges and demonstration processes reminiscent of the 1930s terror swept the Soviet Union and the associated Eastern and Central European states. The most frequent victims were former prisoners of war, suspects of dissent, intellectuals and members of national minorities (indeed many of them Ukrainians).[43]

In retrospective, developments in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Allied and Axis satellites) that came to the Soviet sphere of influence at the end of the war seem to be a process of gradually narrowing existing political alternatives from the limited pluralism of so-called popular democracy to dictatorship including post-war Czechoslovakia. The milestones of this process are different types of national fronts, a number of diverse, colourful interim governments, sooner or later held more or less free or manipulated elections, followed by the first coalition gov-

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[42]   ASFP, fund 300 (State Department of Security Prague), inv. u. 300-25-1, fol. 21.

[43]   Kershaw, I. (2017). *Do pekel a zpět: Evropa 1914–1949*. Praha: Argo, pp. 470–471.

ernments. Sooner or later, the liquidation of parties and groups opposed to the Communists and the emergence of a one-party political system, culminating in the usually merging of communist and social democratic or socialist parties, with the strict subjugation of other civil political parties (agrarian, Christian-democratic and liberal-civil) and after the establishment of this system also extensive cleansing in the Communist parties.[44]

The activities of OUN and UPA also had significant political consequences for the development of all states affected directly or marginally by their activities. In Czechoslovakia came a definitive turning point in the perception of the Bandera group after the communist putsch in February 1948, which was reflected in all events, of course this also involved the freedom of the media. Communist propaganda, however, abused this topic to intimidate political opponents even before that date. The Communist Party of creating a confrontational atmosphere hid intention to achieve a change in political forces on the Slovak scene as a prerequisite on the path to the establishment of a power monopoly throughout the whole state. In the summer of 1947, the Communists activated the resistance units from World War II, especially the Union of Slovak Partisans.[45]

Summary of military events: against several hundreds (about 300) of members of the Bandera group was deployed up to 13,500 Czechoslovakian soldiers[46] and members of the National Security Corps. Even war veterans who knew the terrain on which they fought were summoned. In the fighting died 14 soldiers of the Czechoslovak army and six members of the SNB, and five members of the financial guard were killed.[47] Victims and wounded in combat were subject to government resolutions to provide them and their families.[48] Other soldiers were killed in traffic accidents and other incidents. For courage and bravery was awarded 115 members of the armed forces.[49]

The removal of the nations of Eastern Europe had irreversibly altered the ethnic circumstances of many states including Czechoslovakia. For the present form of Ukraine, it meant occupying territories that were always ethnically Polish. For example, the city of Lviv could hardly be called the Great Ukrainian City before

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[44] Vykoukal, J., Litera, B. a Tejchman, M. (2017). *Východ: vznik, vývoj a rozpad sovětského bloku 1944–1989*. Praha: Libri, p. 96.

[45] Vondrášek, V. (2004). Politická situace na Slovensku a její odraz v československé armádě dislokované na Slovensku v letech 1945–1947. In Hanzlík, F., Vondrášek, V. (eds.), *Armáda v zápase o politickou moc v Československu v letech 1945–1948 (Sborník podkladových studií)*. Brno: Univerzita obrany, p. 240.

[46] Bílek, J., Láník, J. a Šach, J. (2006). *Československá armáda v prvním poválečném desetiletí. Květen 1945–květen 1955*. Praha: Ministerstvo obrany České republiky, p. 74

[47] ASFP, fund 307 (Banderovci), inv. u. 307-102-3, fol. 6.

[48] ASFP, fund VI – D, inv. u. VI – D-2(42), fol. 21. Government Resolution on Providing Victims of Fighting to the Bandera group of 23 October 1947.

[49] Řepa, T. (2019). *Banderovci...*, p. 110.

the Second World War. On the contrary, for Poland, the transformation of borders meant greater national homogenization, but only at the cost of losing large tracts of land in the East and gaining other territories in the West, to which the Polish citizens had no relationship. From the Bandera movement's (OUN, UPA) point of view, the forced migration of Ukrainians in Eastern Europe was a definitive defeat. From this moment on, the struggle for an independent Ukraine, managed by any means, only further diminished. The persecution of the Ukrainians already in the Soviet Union was certainly not over. Historian Andrej Zubov in the History of Russia states that, between 1944 and 1952, 203,662 western Ukrainians were displaced, including 182,000 "nationalists", OUN activists and members of their families.[50]

Although the main removal actions in south-eastern Poland were completed in the summer of 1947, until 1950 there were minor military operations and displacement of the population. Resettlement actions such as the Vistula operation are considered controversial. On the one hand the sovereignty of Poland in the eastern regions was ensured after the creation of new borders, organizations such as the OUN and the UPA sought to create a Ukrainian state independent of Poland and the Soviet Union, on the other hand, there was an unfair displacement of the population with only minimal property and their deployment to new territories, often by breaking the original family and local ties. This was followed by a slow settlement of affected areas by the Polish population. The mistake in dealing with the Ukrainian population like in the Vistula operation was recognized by the Polish Ministry of the Interior as early as 1956, was condemned in 1990 by the Polish Sejm and in 2008 by the joint communiqué of the Presidents of Poland and Ukraine.

The synthesis of the post-war population movements in Central and Eastern Europe can also be useful with regard to the subsequent political events of the second half of the 20th century and even the current war in Europe. For example, the Poles and Ukrainians, who were most affected by these events, are now allies and the historical injustices of the past do not play a major role. This is also evident in the ongoing war in Ukraine.

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[50] Zubov, A. et al. (2015). *Dějiny Ruska 20. století,* vol. II, 1393-2007. Praha: Argo, p. 234.

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