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**AN UNRECONCILED LOSS: DEPORTATION,
ASSIMILATION AND IDENTITY OF UKRAINIAN
MIGRANTS IN NORTHERN AND WESTERN POLAND
AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

The recent decade will likely go down in the history of Europe as the decade of the so called “migration crisis”. An influx of migrants from war ridden Syria, as well as from numerous African and Asian countries experiencing acute poverty became a large scale political crisis in the European Union. In Poland, however, the greatest number of migrants came from the east. War, political unrest and economic depression led more than a million of Ukrainians to resettle in Poland. These recent events make it worthwhile to look at another migration of Ukrainians in Poland, which was an aftermath of the Second World War. Although very different from the present day population movements it nevertheless provides an interesting point of reference for understanding the very phenomenon of migration.

The focus of this article is the forceful resettlement of Ukrainian population from the south east of Poland to its western and northern territories in 1947. First it analyses the reasons and the process of the resettlement itself. Then it describes difficulties encountered by the settlers during and after the migration

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and its psychological effects. Finally it attempts to evaluate the extent to which the migrants succeeded to integrate in their new homeland, looking at various aspects of this process: namely, the economic, cultural, religious and linguistic. The scope of analysis covers the first two decades after the resettlement, only occasionally venturing further in time.

A taboo under the communist regime in Poland, the resettlement of Ukrainians in northern and western Poland became a subject of numerous studies after 1989, most notably those of Igor Hałagida and Roman Drozd¹. These two authors, as well as Eugeniusz Misiło, have also published excellent collections of documents regarding this subject². This article thus benefits greatly from their work. It does not aim to present any new archival research on the subject, but rather to offer a synthesis of the current knowledge of the matter, and, above all else, to present it to an English language reader. Sadly, as often the case with themes in Polish and Central European history, studies concerning post war migrations of Ukrainians in Poland are limited to Polish and Ukrainian languages. This humble article hopes to redress this issue³.

1. Historical context

The territory of Western Ukraine was a scene of a long struggle between Poles and Ukrainians⁴. The first act of the twentieth century part of the tragedy began just after the First World War, when the decomposition of the Austro-Hungarian Empire gave way to the rise of Polish and Ukrainian nationalisms. After several battles, most symbolically those in L'viv, the Poles emerged triumphant, and in their newly reborn state subjected Ukrainians to some

1. Roman Drozd, 'Geneza i założenia organizacyjne akcji „Wisła”', *Słupskie Studia Historyczne*, 2 (1993), 113–136; Roman Drozd, *Droga na zachód: Osadnictwo ludności ukraińskiej na ziemiach zachodnich i północnych Polski w ramach akcji „Wisła”* (Warszawa: „Tyrsa”, 1997); Roman Drozd, *Polityka władz wobec ludności ukraińskiej w Polsce w latach 1944-1989* (Warszawa: „Tyrsa”, 2001); Roman Drozd and Bohdan Halczak, *Dzieje Ukraińców w Polsce w latach 1921-1989* (Słupsk: Wydawnictwo Majus, 2010); Igor Hałagida, *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski: 1947 - 1957* (Warszawa: Inst. Pamięci Narodowej, 2002), 1
2. Roman Drozd and Igor Hałagida, *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989: Walka o tożsamość dokumenty i materiały* (Warszawa: Burchard Edition, 1999); Eugeniusz Misiło, *Akcja „Wisła” dokumenty* (Warszawa: Archiwum Ukraińskie. Zakład Wydawniczy „Tyrsa”, 1993) A second, expanded edition: Eugeniusz Misiło, *Akcja „Wisła” 1947: Dokumenty i materiały*, [Wyd. 2. uzupełnione] (Warszawa: Archiwum Ukraińskie, 2013).
3. Besides its academic aim this article is also the author's personal tribute to the memory of his late grandparents, Józef Paszkiewicz, a Stalinist prisoner, and Maria Stereńczak-Paszkiewicz, both settlers from action “Wisła”.
4. All geographical locations are given according to post 1945 boundaries.

polonising policies. Ukrainians responded with passive resistance and occasional acts of terrorism⁵. The apogee of the conflict occurred during the Second World War, when, in 1943, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (the UPA), partly incited by German promises of independence, began an organised action of extermination of Polish inhabitants of Western Ukraine. Poles retaliated, and on both sides this war within a war abounded in acts of utmost atrocity in which at least 80,000 Poles and up to 20,000 Ukrainians lost their lives⁶. This war achieved nothing for both sides involved, but poisoned the already uneasy relations between Poles and Ukrainians.

To solve the problem of ethnic and national minorities, Polish politicians of all factions were determined to rebuild Poland as a mono-national state. Alfred Lampe, one of the authors of the political programme of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR – the communists), wrote that the “renewed Polish state will be a national state”⁷. Similar postulates were heard from the officials of the Polish government in exile, residing in London⁸. After the boundaries of Poland were shifted westward in 1944-45, the number of Ukrainians in Poland dropped sevenfold, to about 650,000-700,000⁹.

2. Reasons for deportation

The communist government decided to transfer Ukrainians from Poland to The Ukrainian Socialistic Soviet Republic. While the transfer was initially voluntary, after a reluctant response of the population, Ukrainians were forcibly deported by the army, which often used violence. By October 1946, 480,305 Ukrainians left Poland¹⁰. The Polish government believed that “the Ukrainian problem” had largely been solved. Few survivors from the UPA continued to

5. For a good summary of interwar Polish-Ukrainian relations, see: Grzegorz Motyka, *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji „Wisła” konflikt polsko-ukraiński 1943-1947* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2011), 11–40; see also: Drozd. *Polityka władz wobec ludności ukraińskiej w Polsce w latach 1944-1989*, 16–28; Drozd and Halczak. *Dzieje Ukraińców w Polsce w latach 1921-1989*, 15–30.

6. Drozd and Halczak. *Dzieje Ukraińców w Polsce w latach 1921-1989*, 69. Grzegorz Motyka estimated Polish losses between 1943-45 to be around 100,000, while Ukrainian casualties until 1947 did not exceed 15,000: Motyka. *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji „Wisła” konflikt polsko-ukraiński 1943-1947*, 447–8; also: Grzegorz Motyka, *Wołyń, 43 ludobójcza czystka fakty, analogie, polityka historyczna* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2016), 83; 120. The exact number of casualties of both remains a highly contested issue between Polish and Ukrainian historians.

7. Quoted in: Drozd. *Polityka władz wobec ludności ukraińskiej w Polsce w latach 1944-1989*, 28.

8. *Ibid.*, 25–7.

9. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 13.

10. Hałagida. *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski*, 30; cf. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 13–29.

hide in forests, but they were consecutively eliminated by the Polish Army¹¹. The commander in charge of fights with the UPA, General Stefan Mossor, reported to the Minister of Defence on the 20th of February 1947 that only 20,306 Ukrainians still lived in Poland, and “it seems necessary to conduct the coming spring an energetic action of resettlement of those people as separate families in dispersion in the entire Regained Lands, where they will quickly assimilate”¹². By the end of March the political board of the PPR decided to “deport Ukrainians and mixed families to the Regained Lands (...) creating no compact groups and no closer than 100 km from the boundary”¹³.

Deportation of Ukrainians was to be executed together with the final extermination of the UPA troops. The government justified its action as a retaliation for the death of general Świerczewski, an old communist hero from the Spanish Civil War, who was killed on the 28th of March 1947 in an UPA ambush. An official journal of the government, “Dziennik Ludowy”, wrote on the 31st of March: “General Świerczewski laid the greatest sacrifice in the fight against fascism (...) The treacherous murderer came from the UPA (...), he was certainly trained and armed by a German instructor (...) and inspired to his criminal act by an agent of Hitler’s. (...) Death of general Świerczewski must be quickly avenged”¹⁴. Simultaneously with this propaganda of hatred, the government claimed that the deportation was necessary to protect Ukrainians from the UPA

11. See: „Plan działania nr 001 Wydziału Operacyjnego Sztabu 9 Dywizji Piechoty w okresie od 1 do 14 lutego 1947r.” in: Misilo. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 209–10 „Od szeregu tygodni bandy UPA zaprzestały działania dużymi grupami (...) Bandy te przeżywają kryzys wobec coraz bardziej dla nich jawnej beznadziejności”. See also: „Sprawozdanie Wydziału Wywiadowczego Sztabu 9 Dywizji Piechoty za okres od 1 do 10 lutego 1947r.” in: Misilo. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 221–2 „Działalność band na terenie woj. Rzeszowskiego, w porównaniu z poprzednimi dekadami wybitnie zmniejszyła się”.
12. „Sprawozdanie zastępcy szefa Sztabu Generalnego WP gen bryg. Stefana Mossora z inspekcji Wojewódzkich Komitetów Bezpieczeństwa w Katowicach, Krakowie, Rzeszowie i Lublinie dla przewodniczącego Państwowej Komisji Bezpieczeństwa marszałka Polski Michała Żymierskiego” in: Misilo. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 231–2: “wydaje się rzeczą konieczną, aby na wiosnę przeprowadzić energiczną akcję przesiedlenia tych ludzi pojedynczymi rodzinami w rozproszeniu na całych Ziemiach Odzyskanych”. The term „Ziemie Odzyskane” – “the Regained Lands”, had been commonly used by the communist regime. Although it is historically vastly inaccurate, it has been adopted in this work because of its widespread usage in documents and literature.
13. „Protokół nr 3 posiedzenia Biura Politycznego Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Partii Robotniczej” in: *ibid.*, 260 „Przesiedlić Ukraińców i rodziny mieszane na tereny odzyskane (...) nie tworząc zwartych grup i nie bliżej niż 100 km od granicy”.
14. „Kula ukraińskiego faszysty – komentarz „Dziennika Ludowego” w związku ze śmiercią gen. Broni Karola Świerczewskiego” in: *ibid.*, 276–7: „W walce z faszyzmem gen. Świerczewski złożył największą ofiarę. (...) Zdradziecki morderca pochodził z UPA. (...) Wyszkoilił zaś mordercę i uzbroił niewątpliwie instruktor niemiecki (...) a natchnął go do zbrodniczego czynu – agent hitlerowski. (...) Śmierć generała Świerczewskiego musi być co rychlej pomszczona”.

and that the migrants will receive all possible help in new places of settlement and be treated with respect¹⁵.

Roman Drozd, however, argues that the reasons presented by the official propaganda do not hold the ground¹⁶. The main incentive for the deportation was “the final solution of the Ukrainian problem by means of the polonisation of resettled Ukrainians”¹⁷. This opinion is supported by the fact that the deportation was planned long before general Świerczewski was killed. It is also confirmed by official secret documents, one of which informed: “The essential aim of the deportation of settlers from operation “W” is their assimilation in a new Polish environment (...) the term “Ukrainians” should not be employed to describe them (...) Any members of intelligentsia should be set apart, far from other settlers from operation “W””¹⁸. Therefore, the deportation of Ukrainians to the Regained Lands should be seen as one of the elements of nationalist policies of the communist government of Poland announced by Lampe.

3. The deportation and its psychological effects

The operation “Wisła” (also called operation “W”), as the deportation of Ukrainians was named by the authorities, began on the 28th of April and continued officially until the 15th of August 1947. Its scale greatly exceeded the government’s expectations, because the government’s idea about the number of Ukrainians remaining in Poland was wholly mistaken¹⁹. According to the governmental data, until the 15th of August 1947 140,577 people were resettled, but Drozd claims that by 1950 this number rose to approximately 150,000²⁰.

15. „Do miejscowej ludności – ulotka Grupy Operacyjnej ‘Wisła’” in: *ibid.*, 422: „Ludność ukraińska będzie otoczona opieką, zarówno w czasie transportu jak i w nowym miejscu zamieszkania”.
16. Drozd. *Polityka władz wobec ludności ukraińskiej w Polsce w latach 1944-1989*, 63–6 See also: Drozd and Halczak. *Dzieje Ukraińców w Polsce w latach 1921-1989*, 140–52 A useful outline of historical debates concerning the grounds of actions “Wisła” see: Jan Pisuliński, *Akcja specjalna „Wisła”* (Rzeszów: Libra PL, 2017), 119–27.
17. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 32–3 „ostateczne rozwiązanie problemu ukraińskiego przez polonizację Ukraińców w nowym miejscu osiedlenia”.
18. „Instrukcja MZO dotycząca zasad osiedlania rodzin ukraińskich” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 53: “Zasadniczym celem przesiedlenia osadników “W” jest ich asymilacja w nowym środowisku polskim (...) Nie używać w stosunku do nich określenia “Ukraińiec” (...) element inteligencji należy bezwzględnie umieszczać osobno i z dala od gromad”.
19. As cited above, the army estimated the number of Ukrainians left in Poland at the beginning of 1947 to be around 20,000. The real number was at least seven times higher. See: „Sprawozdanie zastępcy szefa Sztabu Generalnego WP gen bryg. Stefana Mossora z inspekcji Wojewódzkich Komitetów Bezpieczeństwa w Katowicach, Krakowie, Rzeszowie i Lublinie dla przewodniczącego Państwowej Komisji Bezpieczeństwa marszałka Polski Michała Żymierskiego” in: Misilo. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 231–2.
20. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 113–4.

Over 90% of migrants were peasants. Ukrainian town-dwellers and intelligentsia were almost all deported to the Soviet Union. The three features, which distinguished the remaining Ukrainians from the Polish majority were: language, religion, and everyday culture. Ukrainian language was the most obvious distinguishing element, however, most Ukrainians were bilingual and often used Polish for everyday businesses. In many places, national identification was based on religious criteria²¹. The majority of Ukrainians belonged to the Greek Catholic Church, which used eastern, byzantine liturgy but acknowledged the authority of the bishop of Rome. Up to a quarter of Ukrainian settlers were Russian Orthodox, while only 5% were Roman Catholics (that is, of Latin rite)²². Finally, Ukrainians had their own everyday culture, with distinctive habits surrounding agricultural works and the rites of passage, such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. Also, they often had a distinct dress, different songs and culinary preferences. In villages with mixed population, however, the everyday culture was largely shared. Also, there were differences between Ukrainians themselves. Inhabitants of the highlands - Łemkos, Hutsuls and Boykos - were to a large extent isolated from others and had their own customs and traditions. Moreover, they spoke their own dialects and often could not understand literary Ukrainian. What was common to all Ukrainians was a strong sense of belonging to the land which they ploughed and on which they lived. For the vast majority of them, this association was much more important than the affinity with the Ukrainian nation as a whole. "For them, the real *patria* was the land, which for many generations belonged to their ancestors"²³.

The sense of affinity with their land, which most Ukrainians felt strongly, meant that the forceful deportation was a great mental suffering for them. Captain Domaradzki reported to his superiors on the 29th of April 1947: "A small proportion of the deported population was satisfied. The rest gloomily and with hostility fulfilled the obligation to leave. Elderly people departed from their old villages with lamentation and tears, while younger ones packed their things with an expression of stubbornness on their faces"²⁴.

21. Nadia Wisłocka, '[Wspomnienia]', in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 137–142.

22. Motyka. *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji „Wisła” konflikt polsko-ukraiński 1943-1947*, 17.

23. Misiło. *Akcja „Wisła” dokumenty*, II: "Dla nich realną Ojczyzną była ziemia stanowiąca od pokoleń ich ojcowiznę".

24. „Meldunek bojowy nr 005 sztabu 7 pułku piechoty dla dowódcy 7 Dywizji Piechoty płk. Jana Kobyłańskiego" in: Misiło. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 494–6: „Mały odsetek ludności był zadowolony z obecnej sytuacji, reszta ponuro i z wrogością wypełniała obowiązek wyprowadzki. Ludzie starsi z lamentem i płaczem wyjeżdżali ze swych wsi, młodszy z zaciętym wyrazem twarzy pakowali swoje rzeczy".

The first generation of migrants was never reconciled with the fact of the deportation. They never assimilated psychologically in the new land and always regarded themselves strangers in their new habitat. In all memoirs of migrants, the authors use pronouns my/our solely in reference to their old dwelling places²⁵. Semen Madzellan (born 1922) begun his memoirs with a song, which Łemkos sung in their exile:

“Sing mountains and brooks, oh! there in Łemko’s Land Sing forests, we hear you in our far land of exile”²⁶.

Roman Chomiak (born 1914) concluded his memoirs in a similarly nostalgic tone: “The communist government robbed us of all: our wealth, our culture, our happiness. Łemko children no longer sing about herding cattle on grazes in our mountains, in the Carpathians”²⁷.

The settlers from the first generation always desired to return to their homes. The government, however, instructed its local representatives that: “the freedom of movement of settlers from operation “W” is to be restricted. Especially, leaving the Regained Lands and returning to the former territories is unacceptable”²⁸. All who did so were arrested and sent to Jaworzno labour camp²⁹. When Stalinism fell in Poland in 1956 and the policies towards ethnic minorities were relaxed, virtually all Ukrainians applied for a permit to return, despite the fact that their property in the east was nationalised in 1949 and often devastated. Ultimately, only 20,000 were allowed to return³⁰.

The main reason for the lack of psychological assimilation among the first generation of settlers was the forceful character of migration, which which

25. Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), passim.

26. Semen Madzellan, ‘Spowiedź z niepopelnionych grzechów’, in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 99–115 „Szumtte werszky i potyczky, oj tam na Łemkowymi / Szumtte czeczte czujeme was na dalekij czużyni”, 99.

27. Roman Chomiak, ‘[Wspomnienia]’, in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 34–52 “Władza ludowa zrabowała nam wszystko, nasz majątek, naszą kulturę, naszą wesołość. Już nie śpiewają łemkowskie dzieci, jak pasały bydło na pastwiskach w naszych górach, na Podkarpaciu” 51.

28. „Instrukcja MZO dotycząca zasad osiedlania rodzin ukraińskich” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 54. „Swoboda ruchu osadników z akcji “W” zasadniczo ma być ograniczona. W szczególności niedopuszczalnym jest opuszczanie Ziemi Odzyskanych i powrót na dawne tereny”.

29. „Rozkaz nr 010 dowódcy Grupy Operacyjnej „Wisła” gen. Bryg. Stefana Mossora nakazujący aresztować i uwięzić w obozie koncentracyjnym w Jaworznie wszystkich Ukraińców powracających z wysiedlenia w rodzinne strony” in: Misiło. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 805.

30. See: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 15.

ingrained in the Ukrainians a strong sense of the injustice they had undergone. E. Misiło claimed that all of the Ukrainians who remained in Poland in 1947, “regardless of their political views, disclosed no will of acting against Poland; moreover, they expressed an intention of establishing correct relations with the new state, joining the police, security office, the army and the PPR”³¹. Just a small fraction of Ukrainians supported the UPA, which operated only in a few regions inhabited by Ukrainians and was completely absent from many other regions - for instance, from Łemko’s Land³². Most Ukrainians regarded themselves as loyal citizens of Poland, who had a full right to live in their traditional *patria*. In their memoirs, Roman Chomiak and Michał Skirpan emphasised Ukrainians’ loyal service in the Polish Army in 1939 and then in the Red Army in 1945-46, a service from which many of them never returned³³. Moreover, the process of deportation was very painful and humiliating to them, and many of them felt “like shit laying by a road that, by whoever wishes, can be stepped on”³⁴.

Ukrainians recalled the deportation as their way of the cross. The army, due to the underestimation of the number of Ukrainians remaining in Poland, had insufficient means to execute such an operation. Another reason was the aggressive anti-UPA propaganda, which often presented all Ukrainians as criminals. Ukrainians were usually allowed no more than two hours to pack all their belongings. In some cases, such as in the community of Fredropol, inhabitants were given only 20 minutes to pack³⁵. Moreover, most people were allowed to take only as much as they could load on their cart, while those who had no vehicle received one car for two families³⁶. The property left behind was,

31. Quoted in: Hałagida. *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski*, 24: „niezależnie od przekonań politycznych, nie zdradzali chęci wrogich wystąpień przeciwko Polsce; co więcej, wyrażali zamiar poprawnego ułożenia stosunków z nowym państwem, między innymi wstępując do służby w MO, UBP, wojsku, do PPR”.

32. *Ibid.*, 25.

33. Chomiak, ‘[Wspomnienia]’, 34–7 Michał Skirpan, ‘[Wspomnienia]’, in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiątniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 123–131.

34. Chomiak, ‘[Wspomnienia]’, 38: „Jak to gówny przy drodze, kto tylko chce to na niego nadepnie”.

35. „Meldunek sytuacyjny nr 35 starosty przemyskiego dla Urzędu Wojewódzkiego w Rzeszowie” in: Misiło. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 517 „Akcją kieruje Wojsko Polskie, które daje rodzinom przeznaczonym do ewakuacji zaledwie 20 minut czasu do spakowania rzeczy”.

36. *Ibid.* „Ludność zabrała tylko tyle, ile mogła zabrać na furmanki, natomiast ci, którzy nie posiadali własnych środków przewozowych, zostali ewakuowani autami, po 2 rodziny na 1 auto. Ludność ta wskutek małej ilości furmanek i środków komunikacyjnych była zmuszona zostawić całe swe urządzenia, zboże, ziemniaki oraz środki żywnościowe, które wojsko wywozi do Przemysła”. Cf. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 63–4.

according to military reports, immediately pillaged by Polish neighbours, including members of local police. Former neighbours also jeered at Ukrainians awaiting their trains at stations³⁷. The journey itself usually lasted for two weeks, during which migrants often suffered from hunger and thirst³⁸. Transports were regrouped in Oświęcim, where all men were interrogated by agents of the Security Office (UB), because all Ukrainians were suspected of connections with the UPA. Many were beaten and whipped during the interrogations³⁹. 3,873 of them, mostly members of intelligentsia and clergy, were arrested and sent to Jaworzno labour camp, formerly a filial camp of Auschwitz⁴⁰.

Upon their arrival, the nightmare of suffering and humiliation continued. Ukrainians were often faced with hostility of Polish inhabitants in their land of settlement. Roman Chomiak's group was greeted by a Polish settler with a sneer: "So you are still alive! You should be chopped with an axe and burnt in a stove"⁴¹. Both Poles and immigrants feared each other, and for some nights after the arrival both groups kept a night watch armed with axes⁴². Ukrainian settlers were also under watch by the UB. Many were arrested as alleged members of the UPA, and some imprisoned. A settler from Wałcz *powiat* recalls: "They took me at night from my household and transported me to their office in Wałcz. There, I was interrogated at any time of the day or night for three months (...) they beat me (...) threatened me (...) and tortured me in such ways that I never disclosed even to my closest ones"⁴³. All these factors precluded any chance of psychological assimilation among the first generation of migrants.

37. „Meldunek bojowy nr 005 sztabu 7 pułku piechoty dla dowódcy 7 Dywizji Piechoty płk. Jana Kobylańskiego” in: Misiło. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 495: „Mnóstwo ludności polskiej i ORMO kręciło się po obozie robiąc z wysiedlonych widowisko i siejąc zamieszanie. Ludność polska wraz z ORMO zaczęła grabić wysiedlone wioski, albo też „rozpoznawać” niby zagrabione sztuki inwentarza, chcąc je teraz odebrać i mając na to świadków”. Cf. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 65–6.

38. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 66–71.

39. *Ibid.*, 75.

40. Kazimierz Miroszewski, *Centralny Obóz Pracy Jaworzno podobóz ukraiński (1947-1949)* (Katowice: „Śląsk”, 2001), 14–8; Łukasz Kamiński, ‘Obóz Jaworzno: ukraiński etap’, in Jan Pisuliński, ed., *Akcja „Wisła”*, t. 12 (Warszawa: IPN KŚZPNP, 2003), 174–186.

41. Chomiak, [‘Wspomnienia’], 45: „A wy jeszcze życie, was siekierą żarząć i w piecu spalić”.

42. See: Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 141.

43. *Ibid.*, 140: “Zabrano mnie nocą z majątku i przywieziono do UB w Wałczu. Tam przesłuchiowano mnie o każdej porze dnia i nocy przez trzy miesiące. (...) Bito mnie (...) straszono (...) były też takie, z których do dziś nie zwierzam się nawet bliskim”.

4. Economic aspects of assimilation

Even though Ukrainians never accepted the resettlement, they assimilated economically in the west. Such assimilation, however, was a lengthy process, which can be divided into three stages. During the first stage, lasting for about a year after the deportation, Ukrainians experienced extreme hardship, but at the same time they were reluctant to undertake any work, believing they would shortly return to the east. The second period, lasting until 1956, brought economic stabilisation, without however any investment, while the third one, starting from 1956 saw a full economic integration of the settlers in their new dwelling places.

One of the reasons for the initial poverty of the migrants was the wartime devastation of the Regained Lands. By the summer of 1947 all the best farms were already in the hands of Polish settlers, who colonised that area from 1945 onwards. Major M. Buda reported to his superiors on the 24th of July 1947 that in *województwo* of Szczecin there were 11,961 unoccupied farms available for arriving Ukrainians, of which only 1,542 required no renovation, while 6,985 were more than 25% destroyed. According to his data, elsewhere the situation was similar. Further, he reported, about one third of arriving Ukrainian families had no horses, and virtually none of them possessed sufficient food supplies to survive the winter, because they were forced to leave their supplies behind in the east, and arrived in the west when it was too late to grow anything⁴⁴. The government tried to improve the economic situation of migrants by issuing state loans for renovations, worth 450 million złoty, and supplied Ukrainians with building materials⁴⁵. According to Igor Hałagida, however, this was insufficient since the average Ukrainian family received a loan of about 10,000 złoty, while Polish settlers usually got between 100-200,000. Also, the aid came too late. Most families succeeded to renovate only a single room and a kitchen, just to survive the winter⁴⁶. Semen Madzela wrote: "It is better not to speak of conditions in which we survived that winter, for what is there to tell: instead of window panes - planks, instead of a stove - a miserable fireplace"⁴⁷.

44. „Meldunek bojowy nr 005sztabu 7 pułku piechoty dla dowódcy 7 Dywizji Piechoty płk. Jana Kobyłańskiego” in: Misilo. *Akcja „Wisła” 1947*, 495

45. „Uchwała Komitetu Ekonomicznego Rady Ministrów o przyznaniu kredytu ludności ukraińskiej osiedlonej w województwie gdańskim, olsztyńskim, szczecińskim i wrocławskim” in: *ibid.*, 947.

46. Hałagida. *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski*, 43–4.

47. Quoted in: *ibid.*, 44: „W jakich warunkach ją przeżyliśmy, lepiej nie wspominać, bo i o czym tu mówić, skoro w oknach zamiast szyb – deski, zamiast pieca – bądź jakie palenisko”.

During the second period, lasting from 1948 to 1956, the majority of settlers adjusted themselves to the economic reality of their new dwelling place and managed to overcome their initial poverty. Nonetheless, as the party decree reported: "A considerable proportion of Ukrainians does not care for raising the level of their farms, nor for buildings and equipment, while some of them undertake a conscious economic sabotage"⁴⁸. Although officials claimed that this was a result of the influence of Ukrainian fascists, it is much better explained by the lack of psychological assimilation and the experience of an all-prevailing feeling of temporariness. Most Ukrainians felt no connection with their new habitat and hence cherished hopes of returning to what they considered their home.

Nevertheless, Ukrainians adjusted gradually to their economic reality of the Regained Lands. Coming to the west they experienced what Józef Burszta called 'a civilisational shock'⁴⁹. Their traditional agricultural methods were very primitive in comparison with those used before the war by Germans. Burszta's research in the village of Mścice in *województwo* of Szczecin shows that initially Ukrainians sowed from hand, while for harvest they used scythes or even in some cases sickles. With some help from autochthones and Polish settlers from western and central Poland they learned to use machines for their fieldwork. Ukrainians, especially those from highland areas, also had to abandon some traditional crops such as millet, which did not grow well in lowland areas, and adopt new ones instead, such as turnips and rape. Also, sheep breeding did not function well in the west. Yet, many of Łemkos continued to breed horses with some remarkable achievements⁵⁰.

The third stage of the economic assimilation of Ukrainian migrants came with the fall of Stalinism in Poland in 1956. On the one hand, it brought disillusionment with the possibility of return, while on the other hand, it provided new opportunities for investment. The communist party, from 1948 called the United Polish Workers' Party (PZPR), trying to amend for the "mistakes and deviations" of the Stalinist era, produced substantial financial aid for Ukrainian settlers in the west. This enabled them to catch up with their Polish neighbours. A local party committee of Olsztyn reported in May 1961: "Within the years

48. „Uchwała Biura Politycznego KC PZPR w sprawie środków zmierzających do poprawy sytuacji gospodarczej ludności ukraińskiej w Polsce” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 65 “Znaczna jednak część tej ludności nie dba o podniesienie poziomu swej gospodarki, ani o budynki i inwentarz, a niektóre elementy posuwają się do świadomego sabotażu gospodarczego”.

49. Józef Burszta, ‘Zderzenie kultur na Ziemiach Zachodnich i Północnych w świetle materiałów ze wsi koszalińskich’, *Polska Sztuka Ludowa*, 16, 4 (1962), 197-220, 253-256.

50. Józef Burszta, ‘Tradycja i postęp w kulturze rolniczej’, in Józef Burszta, ed., *Stare i nowe w kulturze wsi koszalińskiej* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1964), 16-49.

1956-60, the Ukrainian population received 16,186,000 złoty of aid (...) for the purchase of equipment and building and renovation works. 1,212 farmers received this aid, amounting on average to 10-60,000 złoty per farmer”⁵¹.

Similar aid was provided in other regions. New investments, which usually also involved settlers’ own savings, bound them to their new homes⁵². According to Andrzej Kwilecki, with the help of the state, Ukrainians achieved full economic assimilation, often surpassing their Polish neighbours in wealth⁵³. In most cases, soil in western and northern Poland was much more fertile than in the Ukrainians’ former possessions, and emigration to the west was seen by many Ukrainians, especially young ones, as an economic improvement⁵⁴. “When we gathered the harvest, even the elders looked with appreciation (...) however bread from the new grain did not taste well to them”, recorded a Łemko from *województwo* of Wrocław in the late 1940s⁵⁵. Janina Kisielewicz (born 1946) praised the economic benefits of the deportation even more enthusiastically, writing in her memoir “May the Lord give good health to the men, who deported us from there”⁵⁶.

5. Cultural aspects of assimilation

The extent of cultural assimilation of migrants varied more considerably between different settlements. One of the factors determining it was the size of Ukrainian community in a given place. The authorities’ intention was to disperse Ukrainians among Poles, and the Ministry of the Regained Lands instructed local officials that: “3) Settlers from operation “W” cannot be settled in the land frontier zone of 50 km and sea and major cities zones of 30 km. 4)

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51. „Informacja KW PZPR w Olsztynie o pracy z ludnością ukraińską, 22.05.1961” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 148–9 „W latach 1956-60 wyłącznie tylko dla ludności ukraińskiej przyznano pożyczek bezwrotnych na sumę 16,181 miliona złotych (...) na zakup inwentarza, budowę i remonty zagród gospodarczych. Z pożyczek skorzystało 1,212 rolników w kwotach od 10 do 60 tysięcy złotych”.
 52. „Sprawozdanie opisowe PWRN w Olsztynie w zakresie integracji i asymilacji ludności ukraińskiej, styczeń 1966” in: *ibid.*, 180–1.
 53. Andrzej Kwilecki, *Łemkowie zagadnienia migracji i asymilacji* (Warszawa: Państw. Wydaw. Naukowe, 1974), 152–4.
 54. „Sprawozdanie opisowe PWRN w Olsztynie w zakresie integracji i asymilacji ludności ukraińskiej, styczeń 1966” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 182.
 55. Quoted in: Kazimierz Pudło, *Łemkowie proces wrastania w środowisko Dolnego Śląska 1947-1985* (Wrocław: PTL, 1987), 55.
 56. Janina Kisielewicz, [Wspomnienia], in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 92–96 : „żeby Pan Bóg dał temu zdrowie, kto nas stamtąd wysiedlił” 96.

the number of settlers from operation “W” cannot exceed 10% of an actual population in any given settlement”⁵⁷. The same ministry, however, also reported that “due to the expansion of the scale of operation “W” and intensification of its speed, it was impossible to fulfil the above order “⁵⁸. The highest proportion of Ukrainians inhabited *powiats* of Iława (41,2%) and Braniewo (35,2%). Among the rural population, the percentage of Ukrainians was even higher, in Braniewo *powiat* amounting to 55,7%⁵⁹. Some villages were inhabited solely by Ukrainians. At the same time, however, most Ukrainians found themselves to comprise a small minority in their places of settlement. The effects of dispersion were slightly reduced by the efforts of Ukrainians to regroup themselves. For example, out of 169 families deported from the village of Florynka, 53 changed their place of settlement in order to join their old neighbours⁶⁰.

In places where Ukrainians constituted a substantial part of the population, they were able to cultivate their traditions and preserve their distinct identity. Jarosław Zwoliński wrote that in his village, inhabited by 85 Ukrainians, they organised an orthodox parish, conducted weddings according to Ukrainian customs and did not let others to “shout them down”⁶¹. Families, however, that lived in isolation usually tried to disassociate themselves from their ethnic origins. Painful experiences of deportation taught them to keep their nationality secret in order to avoid further sufferings. In 1952, the central committee of PZPR observed, in a report concerning Ukrainians, that “publically, the Ukrainian population uses the Polish language, but among themselves only Ukrainian is spoken. Fearing being accused of ‘nationalism’, they try to conceal it from authorities and the public environment”⁶². Nine years later, the local committee of PZPR in Olsztyn reported that: “In many villages members of

57. „Instrukcja MZO dotycząca zasad osiedlania rodzin ukraińskich” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 53 „3) Osadnicy z akcji “W” nie mogli być osiedleni w pasie nadgranicznym lądowym 50 km oraz morskim i miast wojewódzkich 30km. 4) Nieprzekraczanie dla osadników z akcji „W” 10% stanu ludności danej gromady”.

58. „Instrukcja MZO dotycząca zasad osiedlania rodzin ukraińskich” in: *ibid.* 53 “Rozszerzenie akcji “W” a zwłaszcza duże nasilenie tempa jej przeprowadzenia uniemożliwiło wykonanie powyższych zarządzeń”.

59. Drozd. *Droga na zachód*, 97–8.

60. Kwilecki. *Łemkowie zagadnienia migracji i asymilacji*, 137.

61. Jarosław Zwoliński, ‘Rapsodia dla Łemków. Część II’, in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 143–172: “zahukać się” 163.

62. „Uchwała Biura Politycznego KC PZPR w sprawie środków zmierzających do poprawy sytuacji gospodarczej ludności ukraińskiej w Polsce” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 65. “Otwarcie ludność ukraińska posługuje się językiem polskim, między sobą wyłącznie ukraińskim. Bojąc się narazić na zarzut nacjonalizmu stara się ukrywać to przed otoczeniem i władzami.”

the Ukrainian population do not admit to their nationality, perhaps because they fear discrimination (...) The Ukrainian Socio-Cultural Society (UTSK) was not aware of the existence of Ukrainians in some of these places until they applied for state's aid"⁶³.

Joanna Kisielewicz (born 1946) wrote in her memoirs that, while she was at school she carefully concealed her origins, and when she finally revealed them in the final year, she was socially ostracised by her peers⁶⁴. Denying Ukrainian origins was particularly widespread among Ukrainians from mixed families and among those baptised as Roman Catholics, because both had better chances to convince their neighbours that they were in fact Poles.

The second factor, which determined the extent and form of assimilation, was the composition of the society among which Ukrainians settled down. The Regained Lands, after the exodus of Germans at the end of the Second World War, were colonised by Poles from central Poland and immigrants from what had become Western Ukraine, Belorussia and Lithuania, who were known as *kresowiaczy*. Thus, the Polish community inhabiting the Regained Lands was far from homogeneous. This facilitated the integration of Ukrainians.

Ukrainians had the best rapport with the autochthones. They had no prejudices concerning Ukrainians and had a great sympathy for their fate. A governor of Węgorzewo *powiat* wrote in 1948: "It is still observed that both autochthones and German families (...) cooperate better with settlers from operation "W" than settlers from central Poland and repatriates [that is *kresowiaczy* – author]"⁶⁵.

Ukrainians received the worst reception from *kresowiaczy*, who had vivid memories of Polish-Ukrainian fights in the east⁶⁶. This was in some ways a paradox, since Ukrainians and *kresowiaczy* had culturally much in common. In the middle of the scale were immigrants from central Poland, who had no previous experience of Ukrainians, but who were much more prone than autochthones to believe in the communist propaganda. Semen Madzellan recalls that they had to move out from the first village where they had settled, because of the

63. „Informacja KW PZPR w Olsztynie o pracy z ludnością ukraińską, 22.05.1961” in: *ibid.*, 156 “w wielu miejscowościach ludność ukraińska nie chce przyznawać się do swojej narodowości, co być może wynika z obawy przed dyskryminacją (...) w niektórych miejscowościach UTSK nie wiedziało w ogóle o ludności ukraińskiej, a dowiedziało się dopiero przy okazji przyznawania kredytów umarzalnych, o które się zwracali”.

64. Kisielewicz, '[Wspomnienia]', 94.

65. Quoted in: Hałagida. *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski*, 69 „nadal obserwuje się fakt, że tak autochtoni jak i też niemieckie rodziny (...) lepiej układają sobie współpracę z przesiedleńcami z akcji "W" niż repatrianci osadnicy z centralnej Polski.”

66. *Ibid.*, 68.

hostility of *kresowiacy*. In the next one, inhabited by settlers from *województwo* of Kielce the atmosphere was much better⁶⁷.

The situation that occurred in the Regained Lands was called by an ethnologist Józef Burszta “a clash of cultures”⁶⁸. The result of it was an intensive cultural exchange, leading to an emergence of a new amalgamate culture. Ukrainians were one of the most distinctive groups in this process and also the most conservative one, which contributed the least to the process. Ukrainians differed from others, in almost all possible aspects, on account of their faith, their customs and material culture. Lubomira Binczarowska-Ciołka recalled: “our manner of dressing also caused unhealthy emotions, expressed with insulting epithets. (...) My father caused a real sensation, when he came to a town dressed in *kierpce* [traditional shoes worn by highlanders - author], jacket and trousers made from flux”⁶⁹.

Another object of derision were long hair of Łemko men. Under social pressure they promptly adjusted their external appearance to the standard of the majority⁷⁰. Also, Ukrainians abandoned their tradition of hanging icons at the top of walls⁷¹. More mutuality existed in culinary exchange, to which Ukrainians contributed for instance dumplings and Ukrainian borscht⁷². Besides, Ukrainians contributed on equal basis to the set of magical protective practices concerning especially pregnancy and birth⁷³. Most customs concerning the yearly cycle of life and rites of passage, however, survived only in places inhabited by a substantial number of Ukrainians. In all places, frequent everyday contacts with Poles in places of work, in schools, offices and pass-time activities promoted the integration of Ukrainians.

With the fall of Stalinism, the Ukrainian Socio-Cultural Association (the UTSK) was created, partly to cater for the cultural needs of Ukrainian settlers.

67. Madzela, ‘Spowiedź z niepopelnionych grzechów’, 106–7.

68. Burszta, ‘Zderzenie kultur na Ziemiach Zachodnich i Północnych w świetle materiałów ze wsi koszalińskich’, 197.

69. Lubomira Binczarowska-Ciołka, ‘Problemy Łemków po II Wojnie Światowej. Niektóre wybrane zagadnienia - formą wspomnień’, in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 27–33: „Nasz sposób ubierania się też budził niezdrowe emocje wyrażane obraźliwymi epitetami (...) prawdziwą sensację wzbudził mój ojciec ubrany w *kierpce*, suknią marynarkę i spodnie, gdy w takim stroju przybył do miasteczka” 31.

70. Hałagida. *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski*, 70.

71. Marcelina Burszta and Eugenia Stachowiak, ‘Stare i nowe w gospodarstwie kobiecym’, in Józef Burszta, ed., *Stare i nowe w kulturze wsi koszalińskiej* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1964), 102–132.

72. *Ibid.*, 106–13.

73. Aleksandra Wojciechowska, ‘Obrzędowość rodzinna’, in Józef Burszta, ed., *Stare i nowe w kulturze wsi koszalińskiej* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1964), 170–207.

In 1961 the Party reported that “the UTSK has 27 cultural centres, 15 directly in the countryside (...) On the 1st of April, the UTSK has 62 registered artistic groups, including 27 choirs, 21 dramatic, 9 dancing and 5 music groups. Altogether, more than 1200 amateurs are involved in those groups”⁷⁴. Yet, as the evaluation further points out, the distribution of those groups is uneven, since in the Koszalin region there were only 5 groups, all in two *powiats* with the highest proportion of Ukrainians. Also, many groups were largely inactive, because they lacked access to an Ukrainian cultural repertoire. Development of the UTSK was further hindered by frequent attacks from the authorities, who accused the UTSK of nationalism⁷⁵.

The greatest factor in the assimilation of Ukrainians was the progress of modernity. Second and third generations of both Polish and Ukrainian settlers were fascinated by a modern, urban culture and aspired to imitate it, abandoning the rural customs of their fathers. This process is evident in all sources we have, official documents as well as memoirs, and is further confirmed by the ethnological and sociological research of J. Burszta and A. Kwilecki⁷⁶. There was no modern Ukrainian urban culture to rival the Polish one, hence Ukrainian youths fully assimilated culturally with their Polish peers. It was not the case that Ukrainian rural culture gave way to the Polish one, but both collapsed under the pressure of the modernisation of the country. Yet this modern, urban culture was solely Polish, with no Ukrainian equivalent. This failure was, to a large extent, a result of the lack of intelligentsia among Ukrainians. Thus, Ukrainian rural culture, even in those places where it survived, was generally an artificial creation, cultivated by artistic groups, but it no longer constituted the base of Ukrainian national self-identification.

74. „Ocena działalności UTSK, czerwiec 1961” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 163; „UTSK prowadzi samodzielnie 27 placówek kulturalnych, w tym 15 bezpośrednio na wsi (...) na dzień pierwszy kwietnia b.r. UTSK posiada zarejestrowanych 62 zespoły artystyczne, w tym 27 chórów, 21 dramatycznych, 9 tanecznych i 5 muzycznych. Ogółem w zespołach bierze udział przeszło 1200 amatorów”.

75. „Informacja z przebiegu wojewódzkich i powiatowych konferencji UTSK na krajowy zjazd UTSK w Warszawie” in: *ibid.*, 130.

76. Binczarowska-Ciołka, ‘Problemy Łemków po II Wojnie Światowej’, 33; Wisłocka, ‘[Wspomnienia]’, 141; „Sprawozdanie opisowe PWRN w Olsztynie w zakresie integracji i asymilacji ludności ukraińskiej, styczeń 1966” in Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 182; Burszta and Stachowiak, ‘Stare i nowe w gospodarstwie kobiecym’, 128; Kwilecki. *Łemkowie zagadnienia migracji i asymilacji*, 244–7.

6. Religious and linguistic aspects of assimilation

In some cases, Ukrainian identity was still upheld by religion. Deliberate actions of the government, however, ebbed the Greek Catholic Church, to which most of the Ukrainians belonged. Most of the Church's officials were deported to gulags, for example the bishop of Przemyśl, Josaphat Kotsylovsky⁷⁷. In March 1946 a government controlled pseudo-synod of the Greek Catholic Church in L'viv took a decision to unite with the Russian Orthodox Church. The synod was considered illegal by almost all clergymen, because no bishop was present in L'viv (as all of them had been arrested) and attending priests were intimidated to arrive at the decision desired by the government⁷⁸. Some of 130 Greek Catholic clergymen, who still remained in Poland, chose to become bi-ritual and act as Roman Catholic priests, awaiting better times, while others led clandestine services in people's private houses⁷⁹. In many places, Greek Catholics met to pray without a priest⁸⁰. Before 1956, Greek Catholic services were openly conducted only in Chrzanów, because the local priest, Mirosław Ripecki, defied all warnings from both secular and ecclesiastical authorities⁸¹.

In 1956 Ukrainians bombarded the authorities with petitions for the creation of Greek Catholic parishes, to which the government gave way, while at the same time refusing to legalise the Greek Church as such⁸². By 1958, 32 parishes were created, but after this date the government prevented new erections⁸³. All those parishes became centres of Ukrainian life, however their number was

77. Dariusz Iwanecznko, 'Wysiedlenia Ukraińców a Kościół grekokatolicki w Polsce (1944-1947)', in Jan Pisuliński, ed., *Akcja „Wisła”*, t. 12 (Warszawa: IPN KŚZPNP, 2003), 142–152 Bishop Kotsylovsky was beatified by John Paul II in 2001 as a martyr of the Catholic Church.

78. Drozd and Halczak. *Dzieje Ukraińców w Polsce w latach 1921-1989*, 81.

79. Igor Hałagida, 'Grekokatolicy na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach 1945-56', in Michał Siedziako, Zbigniew Stanuch and Grzegorz Wejman, eds., *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego na Pomorzu Zachodnim 1945-1956* (Szczecin: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej - Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu. Oddział, 2016), 211–219.

80. *Ibid.*, 216.

81. Igor Hałagida, 'Ks. Mirosław Ripeckij i jego placówka duszpasterska w Chrzanowie 1947-1974 przyczynek do roli domu duchownego w dziejach ukraińskich grekokatolików na Warmii i Mazurach', *Nowa Ukraina zeszyty historyczno-politologiczne.*, 1/2 (2007), 149–155.

82. Igor Hałagida, 'Grekokatolicy na Pomorzu Zachodnim i Środkowym w latach sześćdziesiątych XX w.', in Michał Siedziako, Zbigniew Stanuch and Grzegorz Wejman, eds., *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego na Pomorzu Zachodni praca zbiorowa. T. 2, 1956-1972: Centralny Projekt Badawczy IPN Władze Wobec Kościołów i Związków Wyznaniowych w Polsce 1944-1989* (Szczecin: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej - Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu. Oddział, 2017), 293–304.

83. Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 16; Drozd and Halczak. *Dzieje Ukraińców w Polsce w latach 1921-1989*, 173–4.

vastly inadequate to the needs of Greek Catholics⁸⁴. Consequently, most of them were deprived of religious services in their rite.

Most Ukrainian settlers, having no access to the Greek Catholic Church, frequented Russian Orthodox or Roman Catholic churches, or none at all. In orthodox parishes, where Ukrainians constituted majority, such parishes became often vehicles of their national identity. Most orthodox parishes, however, gathered believers of various ethnic origins: Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Russian. In some cases, the government tried to use the Orthodox Church to undermine the influence of Greek Catholics, for example in the abovementioned case of Chrzanów⁸⁵.

Another element of Ukrainian identity, which to an extent survived among the settlers, was their language. After the migration, Ukrainians used their tongue only among themselves⁸⁶. In 1952 the government agreed to introduce Ukrainian to schools as a foreign language in villages with a high proportion of Ukrainian settlers⁸⁷. In the 1952/53 school year, Ukrainian was taught in only 24 schools to 487 students⁸⁸. By 1961 the number of children taking lessons in Ukrainian rose to 2,800, yet later it began to decline⁸⁹. Reasons for a relatively small proportion of children taking lessons in the tongue of their fathers were the dispersion, which disabled many Ukrainians from having lessons, and the reluctance of many Ukrainians to admit to their origins. In 1966, government officials from *województwo* of Olsztyn reported that Ukrainian children and their parents in most cases were not interested in lessons of Ukrainian⁹⁰. Also, there were numerous problems with the lack of textbooks and qualified teaching staff.⁹¹ Many memoirs noted that children of authors did not speak Ukrainian, or did so only to a limited extent⁹². The Ukrainian language was a fortress of national identity only for the intelligentsia, however their number was low

84. „Ocena działalności UTSK, czerwiec 1961” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 161.

85. „Pismo Samodzielnego Referatu do Spraw Wyznań PWRN w Olsztynie do Wydziału Społeczno-Administracyjnego w miejscu” in: *ibid.*, 69.

86. „Uchwała Biura Politycznego KC PZPR w sprawie środków zmierzających do poprawy sytuacji gospodarczej ludności ukraińskiej w Polsce” in: *ibid.*, 65.

87. Roman Drozd, ‘Szkolnictwo ukraińskie w Polsce a latach 1944-1989 - próba periodyzacji’, *Rocznik Lubuski*, 30, cz. 1 (2004), 25–37; Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 67.

88. Hałagida. *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski*, 97; Drozd and Halczak. *Dzieje Ukraińców w Polsce w latach 1921-1989*, 170.

89. „Ocena działalności UTSK, czerwiec 1961” in: Drozd and Hałagida. *Ukraińcy w Polsce 1944-1989*, 165.

90. „Sprawozdanie opisowe PWRN w Olsztynie w zakresie integracji i asymilacji ludności ukraińskiej, styczeń 1966” in: *ibid.*, 183.

91. „Informacja KW PZPR w Olsztynie o pracy z ludnością ukraińską, 22.05.1961” in: *ibid.*, 152

92. Binczarowska-Ciołka, ‘Problemy Łemków po II Wojnie Światowej’, 33; Wisłocka, ‘[Wspomnienia]’, 141.

due to persecutions in the late 1940's. They were also in most cases separated from the bulk of the Ukrainian rural population. Nevertheless, underground cultural groups, created in cities like Szczecin and Gdańsk, had some impact on upholding Ukrainian identity among the descendants of migrants, who studied in those cities⁹³. For example, Andrzej Sokacz (born 1959), claimed that he had started to identify himself as a Ukrainian when he began his studies and met other members of Ukrainian intelligentsia in Poland⁹⁴. But, the number of Ukrainians who went for higher education was limited. Consequently with the general weakening of all three pillars of Ukrainian self-identification - culture, religion and language - their distinct identity blurred.

7. Conclusions

This short article attempted to present the issue of forced migration of Ukrainians in Poland after the Second World War and their assimilation in their new dwelling places. The migration arose from the context of a century long struggle between Poles and Ukrainians in West Ukraine, exacerbated by the Second World War. The deportation was presented by the communist Party as a necessary countermeasure against Ukrainian militancy, however it was inspired more by nationalist policies of Polish communists.

The deportation itself was a source of great suffering, both mental and physical, for all those subjected to it. Physical sufferings were partly caused by inadequate means employed by the army during the deportation, which resulted in deprivation of food, drink and shelter during the process, but were aggravated by the hostile attitude of many Poles, further embittered by the communist propaganda. Finally, many suffered directly from the secret security services, who interrogated, tortured and imprisoned numerous settlers and thus, directly or indirectly, contributed to the premature death of many. Brutality of the resettlement, combined with a strong sense of geographical belonging among Ukrainians, meant that the first generation of settlers never reconciled themselves with what they regarded as an unjust punishment.

Despite the lack of psychological assimilation in their new land, the settlers managed to overcome initial difficulties and adopt economically. In many cases the migration was economically beneficial to them. At the same time, as a result

93. Hałagida. *Ukraińcy na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski*, 82–4.

94. Andrzej Sokacz, '[Wspomnienia]', in Wojciech Sitek, ed., *Mniejszość w warunkach zagrożenia pamiętniki Łemków* (Wrocław: Wydaw. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996), 132–136.

of the intentional dispersion and the progress of modernity, they gradually lost much of their cultural, religious and linguistic distinctiveness.

Although the fate of settlers from the operation "Wisła" is but a fraction of the common history of Poles and Ukrainians, the author believes it deserves to be studied. Given the present European debates concerning migration, and the internal Polish and Ukrainian disputes about the painful past – e.g., the Wołyń atrocities of 1943, the Polish retaliation and so on – such studies can promote a better understanding of individual suffering and tragedy hidden behind every historical process. By no means this study intends to set some sufferings against others, as the communist propaganda did. Yet, the author hopes that the study of history can promote not only greater understanding but also deeper compassion and so lead to a more humane society in the future.

NIEPOJEDNANA STRATA: PRZESIEDLENIA, PRZYSTOSOWANIE SIĘ I TOŻSAMOŚĆ OSADNIKÓW UKRAIŃSKICH W ZACHODNIEJ I PÓŁNOCNEJ POLSCE PO DRUGIEJ WOJNIE ŚWIATOWEJ

Artykuł przedstawia doświadczenie przymusowego przesiedlenia Ukraińców z południowo-wschodniej Polski na dawne terytoria niemieckie po drugiej wojnie światowej. Wpierw przedstawia przyczyny i przebieg operacji przesiedleńczej, nazwanej przez władze kryptonimem „Wisła”. Następnie skupia się na trudnym procesie asymilacji w nowym środowisku, analizując ów proces z wili perspektyw: psychologicznej, ekonomicznej, kulturowej, religijnej i językowej.

Słowa kluczowe: operacja „Wisła”; mniejszości etniczne; migracje; Ukraińcy w Polsce, Polska powojenna

Key words: Operation „Wisła”; ethnic minorities; migration, Ukrainians in Poland, Post-war Poland

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