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978-1-107-59548-4 - Germans to Poles: Communism, Nationalism and Ethnic Cleansing
after the Second World War

Hugo Service

Excerpt

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Introduction

Strolling around Opole a few years ago, I came across a poster declaring in Polish to passing strangers, ‘Learn German!’ Seeing an advertisement for a German language course in a twenty-first-century Polish town should be completely unremarkable. Germany is an obvious destination for Polish citizens seeking to study or work abroad, and it is no surprise that German language courses are on offer there. And yet the existence of such a poster was remarkable. At the start of 1945, the vast majority of Opole’s inhabitants had spoken German as their first language. Around a year later it became a punishable offence to speak German in public there. This book does not seek to understand how the German language went from being forbidden in Opole after the end of the Second World War to being an attractive language for its residents to learn six decades later. Rather, it aims to understand the changes which took place in the first few years after the war that brought about this drastic turnaround in fortunes for the German language, in Opole and all other towns, cities and villages located in the territories which Poland gained from Germany in 1945. It seeks to understand the radical nationalist transformation which Poland’s Communist-controlled regime attempted to impose on these territories in the second half of the 1940s.

These events have penetrated public consciousness in the English-speaking world very little since the late 1940s. Insofar as they have, the focus has always been on one particular element: the mass expulsion of Germans at the end of the Second World War. During the Cold War there were two separate sets of writings about the forced migration of Germans from postwar Polish territory. On one side of the Iron Curtain, West German publications treated the topic as one episode in a larger event: the flight and expulsion of Germans from the whole of East-Central and Eastern Europe in the years 1944–9. West German works tended to conflate the deliberate expulsion of German citizens and ethnic Germans

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from the eastern half of Europe, which got underway after the ‘liberation’ by Soviet and Soviet-backed forces, with the panicked flight and evacuation of civilians from the approaching Red Army in late 1944 and early 1945. This fostered the false impression that the wartime experience of flight and expulsion – which was characterized throughout by chaos, suffering and violence – differed little from what German citizens and German-speakers experienced in Poland, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere once the war was over. These West German publications tended to be memoirs or collections of testimonies rather than historical studies, produced by individuals with a direct connection to the events rather than professional historians. Correspondingly, they were of questionable scholarly value. Yet this literature formed an important part of the way in which West German society tried to come to terms with Germany’s Nazi past in the first two and a half decades after the war. They helped to establish a firm consensus in West Germany in the 1950s and 1960s that Germans had been among the greatest victims of the Second World War and that these refugees and expellees from ‘the East’ had endured a fate in the years 1944–9 comparable to that of the Jews in the Holocaust.¹

The West German government actively encouraged this trend. With the aim of furnishing West Germany with material for negotiations at a future peace conference, Bonn sponsored the collection of German witness testimonies. A selection of them was published as the multivolume *Documentation of the Expulsion of Germans* between 1953 and 1961. Edited and compiled by a team of leading German historians and containing a very large number of valuable historical sources accompanied by scholarly introductions, this documentary collection was the only serious contribution to historical research on this subject in West Germany before the 1980s. Yet despite clear efforts made by a number of the historians involved in

¹ For discussions of West German collective memory of the flight and expulsion of Germans from East-Central and Eastern Europe and the West German victimhood narrative, see Gilad Margalit, *Guilt, Suffering and Memory: Germany Remembers Its Dead of World War II* (Bloomington, Indiana, 2010), especially pp. 200–20; Robert G. Moeller, ‘Remembering the War in a Nation of Victims’, in Hanna Schissler (ed.), *The Miracle Years. A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 83–109; Bernd Faulenbach, ‘Die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus den Gebieten jenseits von Oder und Neiße: Zur wissenschaftlichen und öffentlichen Diskussion in Deutschland’, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B51–2, 2002, pp. 44–54; Rainer Schulze, ‘Memory and Commemoration of Flight and Expulsion in Germany’, in Pertti Aho, Gustavo Corni, Jerzy Kochanowski, Rainer Schulze, Tamás Stark and Barbara Stelzl-Marx, *People on the Move: Forced Population Movements in Europe in the Second World War and Its Aftermath* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 145–51; Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, ‘Das Problem der Zwangsaussiedlung der Deutschen aus polnischer und deutscher Sicht in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart’, *Berichte und Forschungen: Jahrbuch des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa*, 10, 2002, pp. 8–13.

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the project to ensure that the events it examined were understood in their proper context – which included of course the atrocities committed by the German occupiers of East-Central and Eastern Europe during the war – it too focused overwhelmingly on the suffering of Germans at the war's end. Indeed, it played a crucial role in establishing the German victimhood consensus in West German society during the 1950s and 1960s.²

This situation changed around the end of the 1960s, when social, generational and political changes brought to the fore voices calling for a reappraisal of the recent past within West German society. From that time onwards, organizations in the Federal Republic claiming to represent German and German-speaking refugees and expellees from East-Central and Eastern Europe were politically marginalized (see the Conclusion for more on the West German expellee movement). Books on the flight and expulsions continued to appear in the 1970s and 1980s, but they now struggled to find recognition in wider West German society.³ Academic scholarship on the fate of the refugees and expellees did emerge in the Federal Republic at this time, but it was concerned with the integration and assimilation of these people in postwar West Germany rather than with their displacement in the years 1944–9. It was not until the mid 1980s that professional historians in the Federal Republic finally started to take seriously the subject of the mass uprooting of Germans and German speakers from East-Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the war – and to do so in a way which directly challenged the German victimhood consensus which had taken firm root in the country in the intervening decades.⁴

² Theodor Schieder et al. (eds.), *Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa* (5 vols. Bonn, 1953–61). For details on the origins, production and objectives of this multivolume documentary collection, see Mathias Beer, 'Der »Neuanfang« der Zeitgeschichte nach 1945. Zum Verhältnis von nationalsozialistischer Umsiedlungs- und Vernichtungspolitik und der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ostmitteleuropa', in Winfried Schulze and Otto Gerhard Oerle (eds.), *Deutsche Historiker im Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999), p. 277; Beer, 'Im Spannungsfeld von Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Das Großforschungsprojekt "Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa"', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 46, 1998, pp. 363–5; Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2001), pp. 51–87.

³ The political and social changes of the late 1960s and 1970s also explain why a government-commissioned report on 'expulsion crimes' completed by the German Federal Archive in 1974 was not published until 1989. See *Vertreibung und Vertreibungsverbrechen 1945–1948. Bericht des Bundesarchivs vom 28. Mai 1974. Archivalien und ausgewählte Erlebnisberichte* (Bonn, 1989); Mathias Beer, "Ein der wissenschaftlichen Forschung sich aufdrängender historischer Zusammenhang". Von den deutschen Schwierigkeiten, "Flucht und Vertreibung" zu kontextualisieren', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 51, 1, 2003, pp. 61–2.

⁴ Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus dem Osten. Ursachen, Ereignisse, Folgen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1985). See also Gerd Becker, *Vertreibung und Aussiedlung der Deutschen aus Polen*

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The situation was very different in the other German state. As a potential source of friction between the German Democratic Republic and other members of the Communist bloc, the topic of the expulsion of Germans and ethnic Germans from East-Central and Eastern Europe was almost completely avoided by historians and writers during the four decades that East Germany existed. The subject was taboo in the GDR. Officially, both the displacement of these people and the loss of Germany's prewar eastern territories to Poland were a simple consequence of the crimes committed by the elites of the Nazi Party and the German military. They therefore did not need to be discussed.⁵ In Communist Poland, too, the expulsion of Germans was a highly sensitive subject. There was nothing in the way of public discussion. A letter written by Polish Catholic bishops to their counterparts in Germany in 1965 seeking reconciliation over events during and after the war was met with a wave of anti-Catholic propaganda and measures from the Communist authorities. This demonstrated very visibly to Polish society that no public discussion of this subject would be tolerated. On the other hand, academic study of the subject was allowed. In fact, it was in Communist Poland that serious historical scholarship got fully underway, largely unnoticed to the west of the Iron Curtain. Benefiting from access to Polish state archives, historians in Poland produced a number of important studies in the late 1960s and 1970s on the postwar expulsion of Germans from Poland. These works described in impressive detail particularly the more organized phase of the process from 1946 onwards. The works of Stefan Banasiak and Bronisław Pasierb deserve particular mention. Nevertheless, with the partial exception of Banasiak's unpublished study, censorship and self-censorship ensured that all Communist-era Polish studies presented a highly sanitized version of the events, skating over or omitting altogether those aspects which put the Polish authorities and Soviet military in a bad light.⁶

und den ehemals deutschen Ostgebieten. Vorgeschichte, Ursachen und Abläufe (Doctoral dissertation, Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen, 1988).

⁵ For more on the suppression of public discussion and historical writing about this subject in the German Democratic Republic, see Michael Schwartz, 'Tabu und Erinnerung. Zur Vertriebenen-Problematik in Politik und literarischer Öffentlichkeit der DDR', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 2003, 1, pp. 85–101; Schwartz, 'Vertreibung und Vergangenheitspolitik: Ein Versuch über geteilte deutsche Nachkriegsidentitäten', *Deutschland Archiv: Zeitschrift für das vereinigte Deutschland*, 30, 2, 1997, pp. 182–95; Ruchniewicz, 'Zwangsassiedlung', pp. 13–16.

⁶ Stefan Banasiak, *Przesiedlenie Niemców z Polski w latach 1945–50* (unpublished manuscript, Uniwersytet Łódzki, 1968); Bronisław Pasierb, *Migracja ludności niemieckiej z Dolnego Śląska w latach 1944–1947* (Wrocław, Warsaw, Kraków, 1969); Zdzisław Łempiński, *Przesiedlenie ludności niemieckiej z województwa śląsko-dąbrowskiego w latach 1945–1950* (Katowice, 1979); Tadeusz Białecki, *Przesiedlenie ludności niemieckiej z Pomorza Zachodniego po II wojnie światowej* (Poznań, 1969); K. Skubiszewski,

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The subject did not gain wider public attention in Poland until the collapse of Communism in 1989. The path had been laid for this in the 1980s by Jan Józef Lipski's 1981 *samizdat* pamphlet 'Two Fatherlands – Two Patriotisms' and Adam Krzemiński's 1988 article 'I Forced Horst Bienek to Migrate' in the officially authorized magazine *Polityka*. Both acknowledged German suffering in Poland at the end of the Second World War.⁷ Then, as censorship disappeared and the political atmosphere was transformed by the end of Communist government, Polish historians and journalists began to write critical studies and articles at the start of the 1990s about the postwar Polish authorities' treatment of Germans. This stimulated a lively public debate on the topic. By the mid 1990s, a new generation of German historians also began to take up the subject, as they overcame fears of being accused of pursuing a German nationalist agenda and as they acquired the language skills necessary to make use of sources in suddenly accessible Polish state archives. These historians were at pains to distance themselves from the tendency of their West German forerunners to dwell on the misery of Germans.

Yet this did not cause the German victimhood narrative to disappear in the unified German state. In fact, around the turn of the millennium, this narrative experienced a powerful resurgence in the Federal Republic of Germany – with a wave of new novels, television documentaries, magazine articles, museum exhibitions and works of popular history giving it a prominent place in public discourse once more. Such activities can be understood as part of a public process of redefining German national identity in the wake of the unification of East and West Germany. The 'rediscovery' of the flight and expulsion of Germans from East-Central and Eastern Europe in the last fifteen years happened partly because it was an aspect of the recent past shared by both East and West Germans that could be understood as involving Germans as 'victims' rather than 'perpetrators'. The resurgence of German victimhood, however, also transformed the character of the public debate in Poland. It helped to steer it away from the more critically reflective stance taken in the early to

Wysiedlenie Niemców po II wojnie światowej (Warsaw, 1968); Stanisław Żyromski, *Przesiedlenie ludności niemieckiej z województwa olsztyńskiego poza granice Polski w latach 1945–1950* (Olsztyn, 1969).

⁷ For discussions of how the subject of the expulsion of Germans was approached in Communist-era Poland by the regime and by the country's historians, see Włodzimierz Borodziej, 'Historiografia Polska o "wypędzeniu" Niemców', *Studia i Materiały*, 2, 1996, pp. 249–69; Ruchniewicz, 'Zwangsaußsiedlung', pp. 16–20; Jerzy Kochanowski, 'Memory and Commemoration of Flight and Expulsion in Poland', in Ahonen et al., *People*, pp. 155–60. A published version of Jan Józef Lipski's essay 'Dwie ojczyzny – dwa patriotyzmy. Uwagi o megalomanii narodowej i ksenofobii Polaków' can be found in Lipski, *Powiedzieć sobie wszystko . . . Eseje o sąsiedztwie polsko-niemieckim* (Gliwice 1996), pp. 36–73.

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mid 1990s to a far more defensive one in the postmillennium years. On a number of occasions over the past decade, public memorialization of flight and expulsion in Germany has provoked strong condemnation from journalists and politicians in Poland. The controversy has at times been explosive. It has impacted significantly on diplomatic relations between Germany and Poland. The longest-lasting and most intense controversy has revolved around plans devised by Germany's expellee movement, led by the controversial conservative politician Erika Steinbach, to establish a so-called Centre against Expulsions in Berlin. Serious public opposition to this proposal in Poland and heavy criticism from left-leaning politicians in Germany managed to obstruct it for a number of years. But in 2008 the German federal government did approve an alternative plan to create an exhibition and documentary centre in Berlin concerned with flight and expulsion. At the time of writing, the centre had still not been opened.⁸

In the academic sphere things have looked very different. In the last two decades Polish, German and Anglo-American historians have together provided a critical reassessment of events in Poland's new territories at the end of the Second World War. The maltreatment, incarceration and forced migration of German citizens and ethnic Germans in Poland at the war's end has been subjected to a thorough reexamination in an important documentary collection compiled by Polish and German historians and edited by Włodzimierz Borodziej and Hans Lemberg. There have also been many excellent new studies by the Polish historians Bernadetta Nitschke, Edmund Nowak, Stanisław Jankowiak, Piotr Madajczyk, Danuta Berlińska, Jerzy Kochanowski, Leszek Olejnik, Witold Stankowski, Zenon Romanow, Beata Ociepka and, outside Poland,

⁸ For discussions of the recent resurgence of German victimhood discourse and the public memorialization of flight and expulsion in Germany, see Margalit, *Guilt*, especially pp. 221–88; Eva Hahn and Hans Henning, *Die Vertreibung im deutschen Erinnern: Legenden, Mythos, Geschichte* (Paderborn, 2010); Helmut Schmitz (ed.), *A Nation of Victims? Representations of German Wartime Suffering from 1945 to the Present* (Amsterdam and New York, 2007). For more on the 1990s public debate in Poland about the expulsions of Germans, see Klaus Bachmann and Jerzy Kranz (eds.), *Przeprosić za wypędzenie? O wysiedleniu Niemców po II wojnie światowej* (Kraków, 1997) and Włodzimierz Borodziej and Artur Hajnicz (eds.), *Kompleks wypędzenia* (Kraków, 1998). For the Polish response to the postmillennium renewal of German victimhood discourse, see Thomas Petersen, *Flucht und Vertreibung aus Sicht der deutschen, polnischen und tschechischen Bevölkerung* (Bonn, 2005); Kochanowski, 'Memory', p. 158. For opposition from German academic historians to the resurgence of German victimhood discourse, see Jürgen Danyel and Philipp Ther (eds.), *Flucht und Vertreibung in europäischer Perspektive*, special issue of *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 2003, 1. For the current situation regarding the exhibition and documentary centre to be established in Berlin, see <http://www.dhm.de/sfvv/presse.html> [last accessed 27.7.2012].

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Sebastian Siebel-Achenbach.⁹ New light has similarly been shed on the fate of the German citizens in Poland's new territories who were designated by the postwar Polish authorities as 'indigenous Poles' (*autochtoni*) and therefore given the opportunity to avoid expulsion to Germany – in studies by the historians Bernard Linek, Piotr Madajczyk, Grzegorz Strauchold, Andrzej Sakson, Michał Lis, Zenon Romanow, Małgorzata Świder, Richard Blanke, Leszek Belzyt and Andreas Kossert.¹⁰ This has moved us far beyond the important but limited Communist-era studies of Jan Myszal, Zbigniew Kowalski and others.¹¹

Another subject addressed by the new studies is the mass influx of Polish settlers into Poland's new territories at the end of the war – studied alongside related topics by the Polish historians Stanisław Ciesielski, Dorota Sula,

⁹ Włodzimierz Borodziej and Hans Lemberg (eds.), *Niemcy w Polsce 1945–1950. Wybór Dokumentów* (4 vols., Warsaw, 2000–2001); Bernadetta Nitschke, *Wysiedlenie ludności niemieckiej z Polski w latach 1945–1949* (Zielona Góra, 1999); Edmund Nowak, *Cien Łąbinowic* (Opole, 1991); Edmund Nowak, *Obozy na Śląsku Opolskim w systemie powojennych obozów w Polsce (1945–1950). Historia i implikacja* (Opole, 2002); Stanisław Jankowiak, *Wysiedlenie i emigracja ludności niemieckiej w polityce władz polskich w latach 1945–1970* (Warsaw, 2005); Piotr Madajczyk and Danuta Berlińska, *Polska jako państwo narodowe. Historia i Pamięć* (Warsaw and Opole, 2008); Jerzy Kochanowski, *W polskiej niewoli. Niemieccy jeńcy wojenni w Polsce 1945–1950* (Warsaw, 2001); Leszek Olejnik, *Losy volksdeutsche w Polsce po II wojnie światowej* (Warsaw, 2006); Olejnik, *Polityka Narodowościowa Polski w latach 1944–1960* (Łódź, 2003); Witold Stankowski, *Obozy i inne miejsca odosobnienia dla niemieckiej ludności cywilnej w Polsce w latach 1945–1950* (Bydgoszcz, 2002); Zenon Romanow, *Ludność niemiecka na ziemiach zachodnich w latach 1945–1947* (Ślupsk, 1992); Beata Ociepa, *Deportacja, wysiedlenie, przesiedlenia – Powojenne migracje z Polski i do Polski* (Poznań, 2001); Sebastian Siebel-Achenbach, *Lower Silesia from Nazi Germany to Communist Poland* (Basingstoke and London, 1994).

¹⁰ Bernard Linek, *Polityka antyniemiecka na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1945–1950* (Opole, 2000); Piotr Madajczyk, *Przyłączenie Śląska Opolskiego do Polski 1945–1948* (Warsaw, 1996); Madajczyk, *Niemcy polscy 1944–1989* (Warsaw, 2001); Grzegorz Strauchold, *Autochtoni polscy, niemieccy czy... Od nacjonalizmu do komunizmu (1945–1999)* (Toruń, 2001) and *Mysł zachodnia i jej realizacja w Polsce Ludowej w latach 1945–1957* (Toruń, 2003); Andrzej Sakson, *Stosunki narodowościowe na Warmii i Mazurach 1945–1997* (Poznań, 1998); Michał Lis, *Ludność rodzima na Śląsku Opolskim po II wojnie światowej (1945–1993)* (Opole, 1993); Zenon Romanow, *Polityka władz polskich wobec ludności rozimie ziem zachodnich i północnych w latach 1945–1960* (Ślupsk, 1999); Małgorzata Świder, *Die sogenannte Entgermanisierung im Oppelner Schlesien in den Jahren 1945–1950* (Lauf a.d. Pegnitz, 2002); Richard Blanke, *Polish-Speaking Germans? Language and National Identity among the Masurians since 1871* (Köln, 2001); Leszek Belzyt, *Między Polską i Niemcami. Weryfikacja narodowościowa i jej następstwa na Warmii Mazurach i Powiślu w latach 1945–1960* (Toruń, 1996); Andreas Kossert, *Preußen, Deutsche oder Polen? Die Masuren im Spannungsfeld des ethnischen Nationalismus 1870–1956* (Wiesbaden, 2001).

¹¹ Jan Myszal, *Weryfikacja narodowościowa na Śląsku Opolskim 1945–1950* (Opole, 1984) and *Weryfikacja narodowościowa na Ziemiach Odzyskanych* (Warsaw, 1990); Zbigniew Kowalski, *Powrót Śląska Opolskiego do Polski. Organizacja władzy ludowej i regulacja problemów narodowościowych w latach 1945–1948* (Opole, 1983); Józef Lubojański, *Polska ludność rodzima na ziemiach zachodnich i północnych. Dzieje polskiej granicy zachodniej* (Warsaw, 1960); Edmund Wojnowski, *Warmia i Mazury w latach 1945–1947. Życie polityczne* (Olsztyn, 1970); Bohdan Jałowiecki and Jan Przewłocki (eds.), *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie. Integracja i rozwój ziem zachodnich i północnych* (Katowice, 1980); Anna Magierska, *Ziemie zachodnie i północne w 1945 roku. Kształtowanie się podstaw polityki integracyjnej państwa polskiego* (Warsaw, 1978).

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Czesław Osękowski and others.¹² This has allowed a more sophisticated idea of the Polish resettlement of these territories to emerge than could be provided in circumstances of censorship by the important Communist-era studies of Stefan Banasiak, Krystyna Kersten, Jan Czerniakiewicz, Tomasz Szarota and others.¹³ The influx of Polish settlers into the new territories is examined, together with the postwar expulsion of Germans and other important elements of the postwar transformation of Poland's new territories, in excellent studies by the German historians Philipp Ther, Andreas Hofmann, Gregor Thum and Michael G. Esch, by the American historians T. David Curp and Padraic Kenney, and by the British historian Michael Fleming.¹⁴ One of the most recent trends has been to look at these events by focusing on particular localities – as has been done in studies of cities and districts by Gregor Thum, Jan Musekamp, Piotr Madajczyk and Karol Jonca.¹⁵ Another particularly important contribution to the subject has been made by Marcin Zaremba in a study aimed at placing the treatment of perceived 'national minorities' in post-liberation Poland in a broader

¹² Stanisław Ciesielski (ed.), *Przesiedlenie ludności polskiej z kresów wschodnich do Polski 1944–1947* (Warsaw, 1999); Dorota Sula, *Działalność przesiedleńczo-repatriacyjna Państwowego Urzędu Repatriacyjnego w latach 1944–1951* (Lublin, 2002); Czesław Osękowski, *Spółczesność Polski zachodniej i północnej w latach 1945–1956. Procesy integracji i dezintegracji* (Zielona Góra, 1994); W. Geiszczyński, *Państwowy Urząd Repatriacyjny w osadnictwie na Warmii i Mazurach 1945–1950* (Olsztyn, 1999).

¹³ Stefan Banasiak, *Działalność osadnicza Państwowego Urzędu Repatriacyjnego na Ziemiach Odzyskanych w latach 1945–1947* (Poznań, 1963); Banasiak, *Osadnictwo na ziemiach zachodnich i północnych w latach 1945–1950* (Warsaw, 1965); Krystyna Kersten, *Repatriacja ludności polskiej po II wojnie światowej* (Warsaw, 1974); Jan Czerniakiewicz, *Repatriacja ludności polskiej z ZSRR 1944–1948* (Warsaw, 1987); Tomasz Szarota, *Osadnictwo miejskie na Dolnym Śląsku w latach 1945–1948* (Wrocław, 1969); Elżběta Kościak, *Osadnictwo wiejskie w południowych powiatach Dolnego Śląska w latach 1945–1949* (Wrocław, 1992); Henryk Dominiczak, *Proces zasiedlenia województwa zielonogórskiego w latach 1945–1950* (Zielona Góra, 1975); Sylwester Koczkowski, *Osadnictwo polskie w Szczecinie 1945–1950* (Poznań, 1963); Leszek Kosiński, *Procesy ludnościowe na Ziemiach Odzyskanych w latach 1945–1960* (Warsaw, 1963); Arkadiusz Ogrodowczyk, *Nad Odrą i Bałtykiem. Osadnictwo wojskowe na zachodnich i północnych ziemiach Polski po drugiej wojnie światowej* (Warsaw, 1979); Stanisław Łach, *Osadnictwo wiejskie na ziemiach zachodnich i północnych Polski w latach 1945–1950* (Ślępsk, 1983).

¹⁴ Philipp Ther, *Deutsche und polnische Vertriebene. Gesellschaft und Vertriebenenpolitik in der SBZ/DDR und in Polen 1945–1956* (Göttingen, 1998); Andreas R. Hofmann, *Die Nachkriegszeit in Schlesien. Gesellschafts- und Bevölkerungspolitik in den polnischen Siedlungsgebieten 1945–1948* (Köln, 2000); Gregor Thum, *Die fremde Stadt. Breslau 1945* (Berlin, 2003); Michael G. Esch, "Gesunde Verhältnisse": *Deutsche und polnische Bevölkerungspolitik in Ostmitteleuropa 1939–1950* (Marburg, 1998); T. David Curp, *A Clean Sweep? The Politics of Ethnic Cleansing in Western Poland, 1945–1960* (Rochester, New York, 2006); Padraic Kenney, *Rebuilding Poland: Workers and Communists, 1945–1950* (Ithaca, New York and London, 1997); Michael Fleming, *Communism, Nationalism and Ethnicity in Poland, 1944–1950* (Abingdon, 2010).

¹⁵ Thum, *Breslau*; Jan Musekamp, *Zwischen Stettin und Szczecin: Metamorphosen einer Stadt von 1945 bis 2005* (Wiesbaden, 2010); Piotr Madajczyk, 'Część Druga. Studium Przypadku: Powiat Kozielski 1945–1948', in Madajczyk and Berlińska, *Polska*, pp. 375–568; Karol Jonca (ed.), *Wyesiedlenie Niemców i osadnictwo ludności polskiej na obszarze Krzyżowa-Swidnica (Kreisau-Schweidnitz) w latach 1945–1948. Wybór dokumentów* (Wrocław, 1997).

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social and sociopsychological context.¹⁶ Finally, mention should be made of the role played in challenging Cold War era assumptions about early postwar events in Poland's new territories by historical literature about related events in neighbouring Czechoslovakia and in East-Central and Eastern Europe as a whole. Particularly important contributions have been made in this regard by Tomáš Staněk, Detlef Brandes, Andreas Wiedemann, Ray Douglas and Benjamin Frommer and by the valuable volume of essays edited by Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak.¹⁷

Taken together, the Polish, German and Anglo-American studies of the past two decades support two broad conclusions about the transformation of Poland's new territories at the end of the Second World War. The first is that the mass expulsion of Germans was neither a simple act of knee-jerk revenge for Nazi German atrocities, nor merely the result of implementing the decisions reached by Britain, America and the Soviet Union at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences in 1945. Both played a role in this very significant case of forced migration. But the expulsion of well over three million Germans from Poland's new territories in the aftermath of the war was, above all, a response to long-term Polish nationalist objectives. As will be outlined in Chapter 2, in the aftermath of the war the Polish Communists made use of part of the nationalist programme of Poland's interwar National Democratic movement in an attempt to win popular support for their fledgling regime. Attempting to achieve certain key objectives contained in this movement's nationalist ideology, the Polish Communists implemented a campaign of ethnic homogenization throughout Poland's postwar territories at the end of the war, which involved expelling the territories' large ethnic German and ethnic Ukrainian minorities. It must be emphasized here that the Polish Communists only embraced *part* of the nationalist programme of the National Democratic movement: the objective of removing perceived 'national minorities' and that of taking over new western and northern territories from Germany. A great many actions taken

¹⁶ Marcin Zaremba, *Wielka Trwoga. Polska 1944–1947: Ludowa reakcja na kryzys* (Kraków, 2012).

¹⁷ Tomáš Staněk, *Odsun Němců z Československa 1945–1947* (Prague, 1991); Staněk, *Verfolgung 1945: Die Stellung der Deutschen in Böhmen, Mähren und Schlesien (außerhalb der Lager und Gefängnisse)* (Vienna, 2002); Detlef Brandes, *Der Weg zur Vertreibung 1938–1945: Pläne und Entscheidungen zum 'Transfer' der Deutschen aus der Tschechoslowakei und aus Polen* (Munich, 2001); Detlef Brandes and Václav Kural (eds.), *Der Weg in die Katastrophe: Deutsch-Tschechoslowakische Beziehungen 1938–1947* (Düsseldorf, 1994); Andreas Wiedemann, "Komm mit uns das Grenzland aufbauen!" *Ansiedlung und neue Strukturen in den ehemaligen Sudetengebieten 1945–1952* (Essen, 2007); R. M. Douglas, *Orderly and Humane. The Expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War* (New Haven, 2012); Benjamin Frommer, *National Cleansing: Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Cambridge, 2005); Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak (eds.), *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948* (Lanham, 2001).

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by the Communist-controlled regime at the end of the Second World War of course clashed in the most overt sense with the sentiments of all Polish nationalists – most strikingly, as we shall discuss in Chapter 2, their collaboration in the Soviet Union's annexation of the entirety of prewar eastern Poland and their acquiescence towards the Kremlin's direct interference in the internal affairs of the Polish state after 1944. Notwithstanding these crucial qualifications, the Communist-led government pursued a nationalist campaign across postwar Polish territory after 1944 aimed at transforming the country into a homogeneous nation-state. This campaign had particularly drastic consequences for the new northern and western territories taken over from Germany in 1945.

The second conclusion builds directly on the first: that in Poland's new territories the mass expulsion of Germans was not the only manifestation of this nationalist campaign of ethno-national homogenization. Other important elements were the campaign to repopulate the territories with millions of new Polish inhabitants; the drive to 'culturally cleanse' these territories of all signs, symbols, institutions and organizations (such as schools and churches) associated with German national culture and to replace them with Polish cultural equivalents; and the campaign of ethnic screening and pressured cultural assimilation aimed at demonstrating that a large proportion of the residents of Poland's new territories were 'indigenous Poles' rather than Germans. Precisely what each of these elements involved will be made clear in the chapters of this book.

What the new literature has not done is demonstrate the extent to which the process of expelling Germans from Poland's new territories was influenced and controlled by the other elements of the Soviet-backed regime's nationalist campaign of ethno-national homogenization. This book is an attempt to do precisely that. It has four broad objectives. First, it seeks to demonstrate that in areas of Poland's new territories which were inhabited by homogeneously German-speaking populations before 1945 and where large concentrations of Germans remained or returned once the war was over, the regime's policy of transporting huge numbers of Polish settlers into these territories played a critical and very practical role in the expulsion of Germans. Getting underway in spring 1945, this massive influx of millions of Polish settlers helped to instigate the expulsion of Germans in late spring and early summer 1945, enhanced the scope and speed of the expulsions for around a year and a half, and then, from around the start of 1947 until the end of the decade, set the pace at which Germans were expelled. The second objective of this book is to demonstrate that in areas of Poland's new territories where many local inhabitants spoke both Polish dialects