

“...And they will consider themselves the last victims of the world war.” Anton Granatier and his plans for population exchange and (re)settlement of Slovakia after the Second World War

Tereza Richtáriková  |  tereza.richtarikova@gmail.com
Department of history, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech republic

Abstract | Introduction: While the wave of migrations after the Second World War remains among the more discussed topics of central-European historiography, certain questions still remain unaddressed. In the past, the practical matters of which groups were moved, and where and how they were moved, have been the subject of a great amount of attention from researchers. Now our focus is turned to additional matters, that are however no less important to our understanding of the processes that largely shaped today's ethnic composition of central Europe. Objectives: This article aims at shedding some light on how the people planning the population exchanges and movements thought about ethnicity and nationhood. So, what formed the policy-makers? We will try to give a partial answer to this question through the example of Anton Granatier, one of the prominent ethnic policy experts of the 1930s and 1940s Czechoslovakia. His life offers some interesting insights into the society and thinking of Slovak elites in Czechoslovakia. A legionnaire and a resistance fighter, in some aspects he embodies the ideal Czechoslovak of the first republic. His ideas on the place of Slovaks and ethnic minorities within Czechoslovakia often clashed with the official line and institutions in Prague, and therefore offer an interestingly multi-faceted picture of contemporary thinking. Conclusion: The opinions of Anton Granatier about the aspects of nationality offer a mix between an essentialist and constructivist approach to ethnicity. Like many of his time, he considered the existing Trianon border untenable and proposed changes to it. However, even in this his opinion often differed from the official line that allowed for no territorial concessions. His various conflicts with central institutions and colleagues alike offer a crystallisation of ideas that allows us to look into the thinking and re-thinking of nationhood and inter-ethnic relationships of post-war Czechoslovakia.

Keywords | Czechoslovakia, Hungary, minority policies, population exchange, re-emigration, resettlement

Introduction

The huge wave of migrations, both forced and voluntary, that followed the Second World War, shapes the ethnic composition of (chiefly) central Europe to this day. Czechoslovakia played its own, not insignificant role in this. The expulsion of Germans, which often overshadows the other migratory waves in the popular conscience, the population exchange with Hungary, and the many smaller waves of migrants coming to resettle the emptied land, all contributed to that huge movement that shifted lives and fates. On what principles were these movements planned? Who had to go and who had to come, and who made the decisions? These questions belong at this point to the mainstream of central European historiography, but white spots still remain, and are in places even frequent. In this article we shall look at one of these white spots. The question is not only who made the decisions, but, perhaps to a degree more importantly, how these decisions were formed. What formed the decision-makers? What did they believe in and on what grounds did they build their policy? These questions are, of course, too broad to answer in a single article, and we will therefore only chip the massive rock of uncertainty and have a look at only one man, Anton Granatier. Granatier played a short but crucial role in ethnic policy-making at the end of the Second World War and for a short time after. His life shows quite interestingly not only the twists and turns of the twentieth century fate, but also the paradoxes of the transformation from the multi-ethnic to the ethnically homogenous state, and the particularities of Slovak nationalism in Czechoslovakia. A former legionnaire, he was a staunch supporter of the Czechoslovak state, but on the grounds that it offered the best possible living for the Slovaks, and on the same grounds he attempted to deny the central government the authority in certain Slovak matters. He lost this particular fight, but the positions from which he waged it offer us an interesting look into the intellectual climate of certain Slovak circles in Czechoslovakia in the 1930s and 1940s.

For a man so interested in the history of his own ancestry (twenty years of his correspondence is strung through with genealogical efforts), Anton Granatier left precious little personal writing to help us reconstruct his life and thinking. Perhaps it is due to his sudden and early death that he left no memoirs or diaries, only a few pages on his childhood and education written in 1952, and several personal notes written bitterly in prison in the spring of 1939, when he might have thought his life was ending, and more hopefully in the bleak midwinter of 1944/1945, when he might have seen that it was not so. What we have to work with then is the personal fond in the Slovak National Archive in Bratislava, a collection of correspondence in the Literary Archive of the Slovak National Library in Martin, and a collection of photographs and a few personal letters that his widow donated to the Orava Museum in Oravský Podzámok in the 1970s. Further material can be found in various fonds of the institutions Anton Granatier worked for, namely the Slovak League (Slovenská Liga) and the Reslovakization Committee (Reslovakizačná komisia) in the Slovak National Archive. The archival material of the Settlement Office for Slovakia in the same archive, which could shed light on perhaps the most important part of his work, remains at this time uncatalogued and inaccessible, and thus leaves us somewhat in the dark.

The matters of minority policies and nation-building have been, as we have previously mentioned, subjects of research for several decades now. Important groundwork in the topics of population exchange with Hungary in Slovak historiography was laid down by Štefan Šutaj.^[1] The treatment of the German minority by the Czechoslovak state has been documented by many Czech researchers, for example in the now classic work of Tomáš Staněk,^[2] or in further analysis of the partial aspects of the topic by Tomáš Dvořák.^[3] In Slovakia, these works were joined by those of Soňa Gabzdilová-Olejníková and Milan Olejník.^[4] The topic of resettlement of the lands emptied by expulsion or population exchange in Czechoslovakia is also well established by authors like Jana Nosková,^[5] Matěj Spurný^[6] or Jaroslav Vaculík.^[7] In Slovakia, these are mostly represented by several

collective works.^[8] The topic of resettlement of the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia to this day, however, misses a more complex approach in the form of a monograph. Anton Granatier, as an important actor in the changes to the structure of the population of Czechoslovakia, is surprisingly absent from most of the mentioned writing. At our disposal is a pair of studies concerning his work, one by Eduard Laincz^[9] and one by Kristína Eštera Szudová.^[10] The article by Laincz concentrates on Granatier's approach to the question of the Polish-Slovak border. The territorial disagreement with Poland has excited the Czechoslovak public since the Polish-Czechoslovak war of 1919, and the Slovak public in particular since the Javorina conflict, which peaked in the years 1918-1920 and 1938-1939.^[11] Granatier, however, despite being from Orava, and thus close to the Polish border, focussed the main part of his work on the southern border and on the more complicated Slovak-Hungarian questions. The study by Szudová concentrates on the partial description of the contents of the Personal Fond of Anton Granatier in the Slovak National Archive. It contains a brief biography, taken from the inventory of the fond, that does, however, in several places seem to contradict certain findings of this article. The main part of the Szudová's work consists of a descriptive presentation of certain documents that can be found in the fond, and a brief description of Granatier's relationship with the Slovak minority in Komlós. Given that Szudová's work is in certain aspects ground-breaking, it does not offer any further analysis of the presented writing. This is where we hope to expand on this work in our article.

Objectives

In this article, firstly, we will go over the material available to anyone who finds an interest in Anton Granatier and the questions of ethnic policies in the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia. Then we will have a quick look at the important moments of Anton Granatier's life. The main part of our writing will concern Granatier's thinking about the Slovak-Hungarian questions, the policies he formulated and tried to implement, and finally the problems he ran into in the said implementation.

A life in service

Anton Granatier was born on 20. March 1894 in Krušetnica, in Orava region. Coming from a poor family, he was nonetheless offered the opportunity for education. His plans to become a teacher were curtailed by the outbreak of the First World War, when in September 1914 he was conscripted into the 15. Honvéd Infantry Regiment, which was deployed to the Eastern Front. He was wounded and captured at Zaturčín on 24. June 1916.^[12] After two years as a prisoner of war, he joined the Czechoslovak legions on 17. October 1918 and was for a time a member of the so-called Czechoslovak Camp for Slovaks,^[13] later serving in the 12. Czechoslovak Rifle Regiment. As a legionnaire, he returned to the newly-established Czechoslovakia with his regiment in September 1920 and was demobilised in 1921.^[14] For a short time after his demobilisation he worked as a teacher in Hlohovec,^[15] but soon accepted the position of chief secretary of the Slovak branch of National Council of Czechoslovakia (Slovenská odbočka Národnej rady Československej). Contrary to the name, this was not a legislative body, rather a cultural-educational institution. He spent the interwar period working for this institution, where his main occupation soon came to be the questions of the Slovak-Hungarian language frontier and Slovak minorities abroad. He was also a member of the Slovak League (Slovenská liga), and often facilitated cooperation between the two institutions.^[16] During the whole inter-war period, he was a staunch supporter of the Czechoslovak Republic. He opposed the establishment of an independent Slovakia, and even wrote or co-signed several letters to the members of the Council of the Slovak Land (Snem Slovenskej Krajiny)^[17] he was acquainted with, warning them against the proclamation of the independent state on 14. March 1939, calling them to *"remember, that the brave Slovak nationalists fought and died together with the Czechs for the liberation of the Slovak nation."*^[18] The subsequent proclamation of the independent Slovak Republic brought Granatier several months in prison, which he spent in

the Ilava jail.^[19] The Slovak branch of the National Council of Czechoslovakia was disbanded during his imprisonment, its belongings handed over to the Scientific Society for Slovaks Abroad (Vedecká spoločnosť pre zahraničných slovákov), which was established to promote Slovak culture and carry out educational work among Slovak minorities abroad.^[20] Anton Granatier found employment in the Statistical Office, where the body of his work consisted of the demography of the territories relinquished to Hungary by the First Vienna Award. Remaining an opponent to the regime, despite keeping a not insignificant public office, he took part in the Slovak national uprising, likely remaining in Banská Bystrica until the surrender of the city. He spent a month in Donovaly, possibly recovering from a wound (his writings mention having an injured leg at this time) and in late November 1944 left for his native Orava, where he remained more or less in hiding until the collapse of the Slovak republic.^[21] May 1945 found him in Košice.^[22] The true peak of his career was just coming. Joining the Democratic Party, he soon attained the office of the vice-chair of the Slovak National Council (Slovenská národná rada). Other notable offices, perhaps more important to him personally, followed. Being regarded as one of the foremost experts in the demography of the Slovak-Hungarian borderlands and in minority policies, he was appointed to the Settlement Office for Slovakia (Osídľovací úrad pre Slovensko) and named the Chief reslovakization commissioner (Vrchný reslovakizačný komisár). His involvement in these institutions was short-lived, however, as his ideas clashed with those of several other parties, chiefly with the Communist Party of Slovakia (Komunistická strana Slovenska) on the question of the reslovakization, and with the central institutions in Prague on the questions of re-emigration and resettlement. He retreated to the Statistical Office and turned to private pursuits. This course was cemented by the coup in February 1948, which brought about, among other things, the prohibition of the Democratic Party of which he was a member. He avoided the fate of several high-ranking party members who were put on trial and became one of the founders of the Party of Slovak Revival (Strana slovenskej obrody), which was formed from the remnants of the DP. As a secretary of the PoSR he retained his seat as a vice-chair of the Slovak National Council until 1953^[23] and his seat in the assembly until his sudden death on 6 February 1954, shortly before his 60th birthday. He was buried, according to his wishes, in his native village Krušetnica.^[24]

(Re)thinking the Slovak-Hungarian questions

As the life's work of Anton Granatier lay in the so-called *national-educational work* and minority policies and questions, the evolution of his thinking on these topics warrants a closer look. The archival sources, sadly, do not offer us a deeper look into his thinking in the 1920s. His correspondence and later personal writing inform us, at least, that he was getting used to the new circumstances in a newly established country, one that was much more sympathetic to his ideas of the world. Whether his nationalist feeling came from his northern home or was awakened in the Legion (although it is likely that he already had a reason to enter it), in his first teaching position in Hlohovec he found himself in sharp opposition to most local customs. "At each step I felt animosity, or at least aversion, to everything that was Slovak and Czechoslovak (namely to this second matter), and woe after Magyarország."^[25] he wrote of his time here later on. In response, he applied himself to the organisation of Czechoslovak culture in the town. This was likely what brought him to the attention of the Slovak branch of National Council of Czechoslovakia. Here he took interest in demography and slowly built his name as one of the experts in this field, especially where the southern regions of Slovakia and the Slovak-Hungarian borderland were concerned. His findings were made public in the book *Etnické rozhranie slovensko-maďarské* (Slovak-Hungarian Ethnic Border) in 1930, followed by several smaller articles.^[26] This was a sign of the direction his work was to take in the 1930s. Still working for the Slovak branch of National Council of Czechoslovakia, he was now at liberty to travel and establish contact with Slovak minorities abroad. The archival sources for his travel under the National Council are scarce, but there are

several photographs documenting his visits to Slovak minorities in Hungary and Romania.^[27] Better documented are two journeys to Bukovina he undertook in 1934 and 1936 with Ladislav Třešňák and Vojtech Ihriský. There, they established contact with a group of settlers that left the territory of Orava in the 1840s and spoke a Goral dialect. This group at the time of his arrival considered itself predominantly Polish, although it kept a partially separate self-identification. Certain members of the group were upon the arrival of the Czechoslovak "delegation", willing to proclaim themselves Slovak. The subsequent visit in 1936 brought a deepening of national sentiments and a split of the group into "Slovioki" and "Poľoki" ("Slovak" and "Polish", respectively, in dialect). Granatier described both of his visits to Bukovina in two articles in the *Nový Svet* (New World) magazine.^[28] Here we can see his insistence that ethnic identity is "given", although it can be "forgotten". He describes the members of this community in Bukovina as being inherently Slovak because their ancestors came from Slovak territory. They might have (says Granatier) forgotten this, but reminded of it by his visit, they "return to their true identity." In his article for *Nový Svet*, Granatier writes: *"Well, it was enough for us to appear among these descendants of Slovaks that moved here from the upper Trenčín (authors note: district), and the native blood made itself known! (...) The people have gathered, ones, a minority, remain with the Polish school, others (majority) exclaim for a Slovak school, Slovak prayer, and others still do not know where to join."*^[29] This statement is well worth remembering, as we will later see him espouse a much more pragmatic view on the matter.

Having established his credit as an expert on Slovak-Hungarian matters, and not having yet time to show himself an opponent of the incoming regime, he took part in the unsuccessful negotiations in Komárno that preceded the First Vienna Award.^[30] The result was a heavy blow to his work in southern Slovakia. His writings from the early 1940s suggest he thought his career over and his life's work wasted. The position in the Statistical Office later at least offered him a chance to return to work. He now considered demography of the "lost regions" to be exceedingly important, as the Slovak republic could not, in his opinion, rely on the Hungarian census to establish the true number of Slovaks in wartime Hungary. He also semi-officially worked on several plans for the revision of the First Vienna Award. Neither Slovakia nor Czechoslovakia gave up on the idea of recovering their lost territories, although Granatier himself did not believe such a thing was possible for an independent Slovakia under German influence. As he, however, took part in the resistance and did not expect an independent Slovakia to survive, he made plans for the future. He became convinced that the ethnic composition of central Europe was untenable and that either the borders, or the existence of ethnic minorities within states had to change. He did not plan for a complete return to the Trianon border in south Slovakia, instead advocating certain territorial concessions to Hungary, that should in his opinion be coupled with a population exchange.^[31]

Plans and practice

He originally in 1944 proposed three solutions for a border settlement with Hungary. One being a return to the Trianon border, and the other two being modifications to it. One of these modifications proposed a slight territorial expansion of Czechoslovakia towards the south, mostly for defensive reasons, as this option would gain the mountain ridges and their foregrounds. The other option advocated certain concessions on the grounds of ethnic composition of the territory. Granatier himself did not consider the first of these modifications advantageous and advocated for slight territorial concessions where they would not impact transportation or defence. In 1946, he wrote a memo about these options at the request of the Czechoslovak Foreign Office, using data from the war-time statistical office.^[32] Coupled with this proposition for certain territorial concessions were, in Anton Granatier's mind, the plan for the population exchange with Hungary and the plan for the settlement of Slovakia by the so-called re-emigrants, e. g., members of Slovak minorities abroad, who should be "brought back to the motherland." These plans fit within a wider

framework of European thought at the time that proposed homogenization of the ethnic composition of nation-states as a peaceful means of solving territorial disputes. Granatier's proposition for these changes, written sometime in 1945, warrants a closer look. The document, being an internal proposition not intended for publication, shows a level of pragmatism not otherwise seen in his writing, but it does not completely abandon his national idealism. He suggests that a population exchange is the only chance for a future peace and that it must be brought about despite the possible protests of those involved: *"We have to accept and bear the remonstrances of the afflicted generation in the interest of the descendants and of the longed-for peace."*^[33] That the "afflicted generation" will not understand and will not be particularly willing to abandon its current living spaces was in Granatier's view almost certain. He suggests motivating the move by economic incentive, stating that *"I am certain that for example the Bukovina Slovaks will gladly abandon their Polish garment, just so they would get here, to a better environment than where they now find themselves."*^[34] It is well worth noting that the centre of this community, mentioned previously, a village by the name Poiana Micului, was burned down in spring 1944 and the people lived in severe existential strife.^[35] Where ten years ago Granatier praised the "return to their true identity", there he now counts on pure pragmatism and necessity. No longer is the "native blood" calling out – now it will be a "polish garment" cast aside for a better living. Why, then, is it necessary for Czechoslovakia to go through the costly and complicated process of the population exchange? Here, the idea of the ethnic affiliation being a given, to a degree an objective matter, again rears its head. Granatier sees that Slovak communities abroad are "dying out", and *"nothing will save them from a certain national death, only returning to the bosom they have once left."*^[36] Besides, this "saving" of people he considers to be Slovak will also be beneficial to Czechoslovakia, or more particularly Slovakia: *"For our small nation the rescue of several hundred thousands of our people will mean a true national renaissance. We will be rewarded for all the injury we have suffered in the ages past. What the Hungarians should gain or lose, is their problem. Conceit that they, the Hungarians, are destined to rule between the Carpathians and the Adriatic only brought them misfortune. We will grant them to have their own nation-state, but only to the extent of their natural ethnicity, we will grant them cultural and economic expansion, but only in their own motherland. After all, we long for peace and friendly neighbourly coexistence, which prosperity can guarantee to both Slovaks and Hungarians."*^[37] His view of the matter can therefore be summarised thus: There are people abroad that are objectively Slovak, even if they themselves might be on the brink of forgetting this. These people are to be persuaded, by propaganda and economic incentive, to move to Czechoslovakia, to take the places of people who are not Slovak and who shall be sent to their own "motherlands". (These being chiefly Hungarians.) None of these people, neither those leaving nor those coming in, will be particularly pleased about it, but it must be done for future peace and for the survival of the nation.

Survival of the nation, however, brings with it the question that will set Anton Granatier against central Czechoslovak institutions and shape his further course. Which nation? This question points directly into the heart of the unresolved matters of re-established Czechoslovakia and before we open it, it is well worth looking at the public office Anton Granatier attained to pursue his policy. Shortly after the war, he became the chairman of the Slovak League, of which he was, as mentioned above, a member already in the 1920s. He maintained his position in the Slovak League until its dissolution in March 1948, when its agenda was taken over by the Matica Slovenská.^[38] As a chairman of the Slovak league he played a crucial role in the development of the concept of the so-called reslovakization. The idea suggested that a part of the inhabitants of the Slovak south that identify as Hungarian are in fact Slovak, but have lost their identity due to Hungarian ethnic and language policies either before the establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918, or during the wartime period after the First Vienna Award. We can once again observe the idea that ethnic identity is given, and that people whose ancestors were once Slovak are Slovak themselves and should be

given the chance to return to their true identity. We will not get into the minutiae of the reslovakization problem here, as the process quickly became a political battleground and Anton Granatier was forced out of his position of the commissioner of the Reslovakization committee he founded. Most important for us, is his position in the Settlement Office for Slovakia. Separate settlement offices, one for the Czech lands and one for Slovakia, were established in the latter half of 1945 to coordinate the settlement of the territories emptied by the expulsion of Germans and the population exchange with Hungary in their respective parts of Czechoslovakia. Anton Granatier was appointed the head of the I.^[39] and II.^[40] departments of the Settlement Office for Slovakia. Within the competence of the I. department fell the repatriation of Slovaks from abroad - repatriation meaning the return of people who have left the territory of Slovakia during their life. The II. department, according to Granatier's appointing decree, was supposed to facilitate the re-emigration of Slovaks from abroad. Re-emigration in this case means the return of those who were born outside of the territory of Slovakia, but whose ancestors came from Slovakia and/or who proclaimed themselves to be Slovak. Here Granatier would run into a problem of unclear jurisdictions and different ideas of what it means to be a nation in Czechoslovakia. In his letter to the chairman of the Slovak National Council written on 2. May 1947, he explains his reasons for his resignation from his positions in the Settlement Office in April of the same year as follows: 1) his disagreement with the jurisdiction of the Czechoslovak Resettlement Committee (Československá přesídlovací komise) over the resettlement process of the Slovaks from abroad, 2) his disagreement with the settlement of Slovaks from abroad in the Czech lands and with the forced transfer of Hungarians from southern Slovakia to the Czech lands, 3) the particular example of the handling of resettlement of the Slovak community from Bukovina and 4) the delayed start of the reslovakization and the complete overhaul of the Reslovakization Committee, in which all of the original members, Granatier included, were replaced.^[41] We can see that the first and the second points are closely related, and a further investigation would also connect the third point as a particular example of the problem inherent in the first two points according to Granatier. He interpreted the role of the II. department of the Settlement Office as the exclusive jurisdiction over the entire re-emigration and settlement process of Slovaks from abroad to Slovakia and refused the oversight of the central institutions in Prague, namely the Czechoslovak Resettlement Committee of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Ministerstvo práce a sociální péče). Similarly, he was of the opinion that re-emigrating Slovaks are to be settled primarily in Slovakia, and only sent to the Czech borderlands if absolutely necessary. The settling of Slovaks in Czech lands, in his opinion, merely moved the ethnic problems around and in no way protected Slovaks from the aforementioned "national death." Prague, on the other hand, was of the opinion that Slovaks are Czechoslovaks and could be settled anywhere in Czechoslovakia under the same condition as Czechs.^[42] This difference in interpretation of nationhood and ethnicity is an interesting illustration of the different ways of approaching the re-established Czechoslovakia. While the Prague approach echoes the pre-war centralism and the ideas of one Czechoslovak nation, Granatier considers Slovakia to be a separate part of the bigger Czechoslovak state, a part with the exclusive right in the affairs of ethnicity. It is also important to note that he in no way opposed the existence of the Czechoslovak state. His wartime writing suggests that his aversion to the centralist handling of what he considered to be Slovak affairs might have stemmed from the heavy disappointment of the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1939, which he partially blamed on heavy-handed ethnic policies and overwrought centralism.^[43]

The summer of 1947 found Anton Granatier back in the Statistical Office where he returned after his resignation from the Settlement Office, and out of the Reslovakization Committee. March 1948 saw the end of his work in the Slovak League. He suffered the changing political climate less than many of his fellow Democratic Party members, having survived the February coup without repercussions and continuing his position on the Slovak National Council for the newly founded

Party of Slovak Revival, but he found himself increasingly without influence in the matters of ethnic policy important to him. Most of the plans he tried to implement between 1945 and 1947 were comparatively unsuccessful, running contrary to the creeping centralization and the interests of both of the states' communist parties. Today he remains largely unremarked on, which is surprising considering the amount of influence he at one point exerted over the ethnic policies and shaping of our post-war society. Even if most of his plans didn't go with his expectations and wishes, his role in starting the processes that shifted hundreds of thousands of people across central Europe remains undeniable. Many of his fears later came true – Slovaks settled in Czech lands did indeed mostly lose their Slovak identity.

Conclusion

The various population transfers after the Second World War did not only shape the lives of the people they directly affected but continue to shape our society to this day. The expelled, the exchanged and those who moved voluntarily all had their lives turned upside down and very often had to start their lives anew in an environment that did not understand them and often looked at them with suspicion. To this day, the ethnic composition of both parts of the former Czechoslovakia (and her neighbours too) is shaped by these movements. Our current state of historiography offers us a fair understanding of the processes by which these movements of populations happened. What is more seldom considered are the lives, motivations and value frameworks of the people who came up with and directed these processes. This article offers a brief look into the life and subsequent evolution of thinking of one such man.

The life of Anton Granatier in some ways exemplifies the twists and turns of 20th century fate. A poor boy from an underprivileged ethnic minority, a legionnaire, a representant of the newly confident intelligentsia of a new nation-state, a political prisoner, a partisan, and all the way to a vice-chair of a legislative body and a man in charge of planning a part of the biggest population transfer the region has seen, down to semi-obscurity and unfulfilled plans. While his life is interesting, his thinking is even more so, in some way a product of his time and in some ways quite ahead of it. His ideas of ethnic or national identity are a curious cross between essentialist and constructivist. Essentialist in the sense that he quite certainly considers ethnicity to be a given, as evidenced by his insistence that the members of Slovak communities abroad are unquestioningly Slovak, even if they themselves barely know it, and as such they belong in Slovakia, and can only thrive there. There is, however, a constructivist twist to this – not only does he admit that some of them are not holding on to their identity properly, thus causing the “dying out” of the communities abroad, but he also acknowledges that a voluntary change in one's ethnic identity is possible. This is evidenced mainly in his idea of reslovakization. This, however, also echoes a hidden essentialism – the identity can only be truly changed in what is innate. The people changing their identity to Slovak via reslovakization were always inherently Slovak in his eyes, and had merely been deceived, misled, or pressured into adopting a different identity.

Despite his legionnaire involvement and his opposition to an independent Slovakia, Anton Granatier was not a promoter of the idea of a Czechoslovak nation. As his post-war conflicts with central authorities in Prague show, he quite vehemently insisted on the distinctness of a separate Slovak identity that voluntarily finds its home in Czechoslovakia. His formulations of this idea, mainly in conflicts with the Czechoslovak Resettlement Committee, open a whole new field of questions for us. What, exactly, were the attitudes of various groups of Czechoslovak elites towards the question of Czecho-Slovak relations in their common state? How did these various approaches clash and where did they struggle to achieve understanding? The dictatorship of the Communist Party seemingly put an end to such discussions, but the misunderstandings were merely covered over, not resolved – we see them rear their heads again in 1968 and 1990, and

finally lead to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. To this day, we have not sufficiently approached the question of ethnic policies from a non-minority standpoint, asking after the relationships between groups, not after relationships between an arbitrarily defined majority and minority. From the standpoint of Anton Granatier, Slovaks were in some way both - a majority towards Hungarian communities, but a distinct minority towards Czechs, at the same time a nation constitutive of a nation-state and a group entitled to the protection of an ethnic minority. Such thinking stands outside of most established frameworks of considering the relationship between an ethnic group and a state, and offers up new angles for future consideration.

Acknowledgments

Preregistration and data sharing is not applicable to this article.

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

- [1] For example ŠUTAJ, Štefan. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku v rokoch 1945 - 1948*. Bratislava, 1993. Šutaj, Štefan. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku v 20. storočí*. Bratislava, 2012.
- [2] STANĚK, Tomáš. *Odsun Němců z Československa 1945 - 1947*. Praha, 1991.
- [3] DVORÁK, Tomáš. *Vnitřní odsun 1947 - 1953*. Brno, 2012.
- [4] GABZDILOVÁ-OLEJNÍKOVÁ, Soňa - OLEJNÍK, Milan. *Karpatskí Nemci na Slovensku od druhej svetovej vojny do roku 1953*. Bratislava, 2004.
- [5] NOSKOVÁ, Jana. *Reemigrace a usídlování volyňských Čechů v interpretacích aktérů a odborné literatury*. Brno, 2007.
- [6] SPURNÝ, Matěj. *Nejsou jako my: česká společnost a menšiny v pohraničí (1945 - 1960)*. Praha, 2011.
- [7] VACULÍK, Jaroslav. *Poválečná reemigrace a usídlování zahraničních krajanů*. Brno, 2002.
- [8] See for example ŠUTAJ, Štefan (Ed.). *Zmeny hraníc a pohyb obyvateľstva v Európe po druhej svetovej vojne*. Košice, 2020. Or DEMMEL, József - ŽILÁKOVÁ, Mária (Eds.). *„Mať volá?“ Výmena obyvateľstva medzi Československom a Maďarskom v rokoch 1946 - 1948*. Békešská Čaba, 2018. Or SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica - ŠUTAJ, Štefan (Eds.). *Povojujové migrácie a výmena obyvateľstva medzi Československom a Maďarskom*. Prešov, 2010.
- [9] LAINCZ, Eduard. Pohľad Antona Granatiera na problematiku určenia hraníc na severe Slovenska v kontexte československo-poľských vzťahov v prvej polovici 20. storočia. In *Nové historické rozhľady* 3, 2013, n. 2, pp. 141-152.
- [10] SZUDOVÁ, Kristína E. Písomnosti Antona Granatiera o problematike výmeny obyvateľstva medzi Československom a Maďarskom. In ŠUTAJ, Štefan (Ed.). *Zmeny hraníc a pohyb obyvateľstva v Európe po druhej svetovej vojne*. Košice, 2020, pp. 181-194.
- [11] See for example BORÁK, Mečislav - ŽÁČEK, Rudolf. *„Ukradené“ vesnice*. Český Těšín, 1993.
- [12] Military historical archive Prague, Personal file Anton Granatier 1894. Szudová claims that Granatier completed his education as a teacher in 1916, the information, however, does not have a source cited. She also claims that he was a "legionnaire officer" between 1916 and 1920. SZUDOVÁ, K. E. *Písomnosti Antona Granatiera...*, p. 183. This is unlikely, as according to his military records, he only joined the Legion in 1918, and was demobilized in 1921 with the rank of

"střelec", roughly equal to the rank of private, which is not an officer-grade rank.

[13] Československý tábor pro Slováky, established in Irkutsk, was a training camp for Slovaks wishing to join the Czechoslovak Legion. One of the objectives of the Camp was to foster an understanding of common Czechoslovak policies and the pervading Czech culture of the Legion. It is possible Granatier was retained here in the capacity of a teacher and a cultural worker.

[14] Military historical archive Prague, Personal file Anton Granatier 1894.

[15] Slovak National Archive Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, carton n. 1, inventory number 119.

[16] LETZ, Róbert. *Dejiny Slovenskej ligy na Slovensku (1920 - 1948)*. Martin, 2000, p. 32.

[17] The predecessor body of the Council of the Slovak Republic (Snem Slovenskej republiky), established with the autonomy of Slovakia within Czechoslovakia on 6. November 1938.

[18] „...pamätajte: že statoční slovenskí národovci bojovali i umierali spolu s Čechmi za oslobodenie slovenského národa...“ from the letter of the legionnaires to the Council of the Slovak Land on 14. March 1939. The letter of the legionnaires was co-signed by ten other former members of the Czechoslovak Legion, including gen. Rudolf Viest and Jozef Gregor Tajovský. Granatier also wrote separate letters to several council members, notably to Pavol Florek, Tido Gašpar and Emil Boleslav Lukáč. Orava Museum in Oravský Podzámok, Personal Fund Anton Granatier.

[19] LETZ, R. *Dejiny Slovenskej ligy...*, p. 76. Granatier also references spending October 1939 in prison in personal writings, see for example SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 119. Szudová claims he was imprisoned on 13. September 1939, but does not offer the source of this date. SZUDOVÁ, K. E. *Písomnosti Antona Granatiera ...*, p. 184.

[20] Slovak National Archive Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 95.

[21] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 120.

[22] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 97. Confirmation of audience date with president Beneš on 4. 5. 1945.

[23] SZUDOVÁ, K. E.: *Písomnosti Antona Granatiera ...*, p. 187.

[24] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 117, Obituary notice.

[25] „Na každom kroku cítil som nepriateľstvo alebo aspoň averziu proti všetkému, čo je slovenské a československé (hlavne voči tomuto) a banovanie za Magyarországom.“ SNA Bratislava, Personal fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 119.

[26] For example *Štátna a etnická hranica slovensko-maďarská* (Slovak-Hungarian state and ethnic border), an article in *Prúdy* in 1932 or *Niekoľko problémov* (Several problems) in *Pero* in the same year. Both articles in SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 2, inv. n. 125 and SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 2, inv. n. 127.

[27] Collection of photographs can be found in Orava Museum in Oravský Podzámok, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, and in the Literary Archive of the Slovak National Library Martin, Personal Fond Anton Granatier.

[28] GRANATIER, Anton. Cesta k našim do Rumunska. In *Nový svet*, 11, 1936, n. 10, p. 13, and GRANATIER, Anton. Slovo dva o Slovákoch v Bukovine. In *Nový Svet*, 12, 1937, n. 2, p. 5.

[29] „No, stačilo sa nám objaviť medzi týmito potomkami Slovákov, ktorí asi pred 130 rokmi vystažovali sa sem z hornej Trenčianskej, ozvala sa rodná krv! (...) Lud sa sestrojil, jedni, menšina, sotrváva pri poľskej škole, druhí (väčšina) horlia o slovenskú školu, slovenské modlitby a tí tretí ešte nevedia, kam sa pripojiť.“ GRANATIER, A. *Slovo dva o Slovákoch...*, p. 5.

[30] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 4, inv. n. 163.

[31] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 4, inv. n. 163.

[32] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 2, inv. n. 135, Correction of the borders between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Austria, notes, 1946 - 1948.

[33] „Výčitky postihnutej generácie musíme prevziať a znášať v záujme potomstva a túženého mieru.“ SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 5, inv. n. 176. The quote used in the title of this article comes from the same paragraph. Granatier used it to describe the feelings of the people asked to resettle.

[34] „Som presvedčený, že napr. Slováci v Bukovine radi odhodia svoj poľský habit, len aby sa dostali k nám, do lepšieho prostredia, než v akom sa nachodia teraz.“ SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 5, inv. n. 176.

[35] ÚRADNÍK, Vendelín. *Slováci v Bukovine*. Martin, 2003, pp. 134-135.

[36] „Od istej národnej smrti ich nič neuchráni, leda prinavrátene do lona z ktorého kedysi vyšli.“ SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 5, inv. n. 176.

[37] „Pre náš početne malý národ záchrana niekoľko stotisíc našincov bude znamenať ozajstnú národnú renesanciu. Budeme odmenení za všetko príkorie, ktoré sme pretrpeli v dobách minulých. Čo získajú alebo stratia Maďari, je ich vecou. Namyslenosť, že oni, Maďari, sú predurčení vládnuť v priestranstve medzi Karpatami a Adriou, priniesla im iba nešťastie. My im dožičíme, aby mali svoj národný štát, ale len v rozsahu ich prirodzeného etnika; doprajeme im kultúrneho a hospodárskeho rozmachu, ale len vo vlastnej dedovizni. Konečne túžime po mieri a priateľskom susedskom (sic) nažívaní, ktoré môže zaistiť ľudsky dosažitelný blahobyť jak Slovákom, tak i Maďarom.“ SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 5, inv. n. 176.

[38] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 4, inv. n. 142. There is no established translation for Matica Slovenská. It is a cultural institution founded in the late 19th century. For more, see for example Sedlák, Imrich (Ed.). *Matica slovenská v národných dejinách. Zborník príspevkov z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie Matica slovenská v národných dejinách*, Martin, 2013.

[39] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 3.

[40] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 2.

[41] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 1, inv. n. 5.

[42] For a detailed description of the conflict see RICHTÁRIKOVÁ, Tereza. *Reemigrácia a osídlenie prvého reemigračného transportu Slovákov z Rumunska do Československa po druhej svetovej vojne*. Brno, 2019, Masters thesis. Masarykova univerzita, Filozofická fakulta, pp. 41-45.

[43] SNA Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier, cart. 4, inv. n. 163.

References:

Archival Sources

Literary Archive of the Slovak National Library Martin, Personal Fond Anton Granatier.

Military historical archive Prague, Personal file Anton Granatier 1894.

Orava Museum in Oravský podzámok, Personal Fund Anton Granatier.

Slovak National Archive Bratislava, Personal Fond Anton Granatier.

-

Periodicals

Nový svet 11, 1936, n. 10, p. 13. GRANATIER, Anton. Cesta k naším do Rumunska.

Nový Svet 12, 1937, n. 2, p. 5. GRANATIER, Anton. Slovo dva o Slovákoch v Bukovine.

Nové historické rozhľady 3, 2013, n. 2, p. 141-152. LAINCZ, Eduard. Pohľad Antona Granatiera na problematiku určenia hraníc na severe Slovenska v kontexte československo-poľských vzťahov v prvej polovici 20. storočia.

-

Bibliography

BORÁK, Mečislav – ŽÁČEK, Rudolf. *„Ukradené“ vesnice*. Český Těšín : Muzeum Těšínska, 1993.

DEMMELE, József – ŽILÁKOVÁ, Mária (Eds.). *„Mať volá?“ Výmena obyvateľstva medzi Československom a Maďarskom v rokoch 1946 – 1948*. Békešská Čaba : VÚSM, 2018.

DVOŘÁK, Tomáš. *Vnitřní odsun 1947-1953*. Brno : Matice moravská, 2012.

GABZDILOVÁ-OLEJNÍKOVÁ, Soňa – OLEJNÍK, Milan. *Karpatskí Nemci na Slovensku od druhej svetovej vojny do roku 1953*. Bratislava : Múzeum kultúry karpatských Nemcov, 2004.

LETZ, Róbert. *Dejiny Slovenskej ligy na Slovensku (1920 – 1948)*. Martin : Matica slovenská, 2000.

NOSKOVÁ, Jana. *Reemigrace a usídlování volyňských Čechů v interpretacích aktérů a odborné literatury*. Brno : Ústav evropské etnologie, 2007.

RICHTÁRIKOVÁ, Tereza. *Reemigrácia a osídlenie prvého reemigračného transportu Slovákov z Rumunska do Československa po druhej svetovej vojne*. Masters thesis. Brno : Filozofická fakulta, Masarykova univerzita, 2019.

SÁPOSOVÁ, Zlatica – ŠUTAĽ, Štefan (Eds.). *Povojnové migrácie a výmena obyvateľstva medzi Československom a Maďarskom*. Prešov : Universum, 2010.

SEDLÁK, Imrich (Ed.). *Matica slovenská v národných dejinách. Zborník príspevkov z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie Matica slovenská v národných dejinách*. Martin : Matica slovenská, 2013.

SPURNÝ, Matěj. *Nejsou jako my: česká společnost a menšiny v pohraničí (1945 – 1960)*. Praha : Antikomplex, 2011.

STANĚK, Tomáš. *Odsun Němců z Československa 1945 – 1947*. Praha : Academia, 1991.

SZUDOVÁ, Kristína E. *Písomnosti Antona Granatiera o problematike výmeny obyvateľstva medzi Československom a Maďarskom*. In: Šutaj, Štefan (Ed.). *Zmeny hraníc a pohyb obyvateľstva v Európe po druhej svetovej vojne*. Košice : Univerzita Pavla Jozefa Šafárika, 2020, pp. 181-194.

ŠUTAJ, Štefan. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku v 20. storočí*. Bratislava : Kalligram, 2012.

ŠUTAJ, Štefan. *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku v rokoch 1945 – 1948*. Bratislava : Veda, 1993.

ŠUTAJ, Štefan (Ed.). *Zmeny hraníc a pohyb obyvateľstva v Európe po druhej svetovej vojne*. Košice : Univerzita Pavla Jozefa Šafárika, 2020.

ÚRADNÍK, Vendelín. *Slováci v Bukovine*. Martin : Matica slovenská, 2003.

VACULÍK, Jaroslav. *Poválečná reemigrace a usídlování zahraničních krajanů*. Brno : Masarykova univerzita, 2002.