

Forced migration flows in Czechoslovakia due to the building of military grounds in the periodical press

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Abstract | Introduction: The paper is divided into three chapters. In the first part, the author would like to introduce the topic and its research in the Czech Republic. The second part focuses on the forced displaced area in Bohemia due to the building of the biggest military area in the protectorate called “Waffen-SS Böhmen (Beneschau)”. After a short history, the author will show the response in the periodical press. The third focuses on the resettlement of the villages from the Dražansko Highlands and the reports on it in the press between 1945 and 1955. Between 1940 – 1945, some Czech areas including towns, villages and hamlets in Bohemia and Moravia (the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia at that time) had to be moved due to the building and expansion of military training grounds. The result of these migration flows resulted in over 123 villages and towns with more than 15,000 families, in total over 56,000, being people impacted by this building of militarised areas. In the war press, one can observe the announced orders, which were mostly positively received by the Czechoslovak public, in part, due to the bad experience with Western states, resulting from the Munich Agreement in 1938. The Nazi war policy and the reckless displacement of the above-mentioned localities in the protectorate only deepened and confirmed these ideas. It also guaranteed the approval of these plans on an international scale. Objectives: The author follows the clear lines of post-war Central European politics, an important pillar of which was the national revival and the expulsion of the three-million-strong German ethnic group from Czechoslovakia. Conclusion: Certain forms of propaganda of the new orders and parties could be followed in the post-war press. It was primarily the output body of individual political parties. There was no longer a pluralist democracy as it was before 1938. Publications published by banned political parties ceased to exist. As a result, citizens’ awareness was significantly distorted. The leading political group was the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which was supported by a large part of the Czechoslovak population. The emphasis was on a consistent resettlement campaign, of which one of the forms was the renaming of towns, villages, and other geographical areas. The most important and significant problems in the press were the catastrophic economic after-war conditions. According to the press, with the newly-settled municipalities returned from military districts, a successful solution to these problems was in the form of a unified agricultural cooperative in the municipalities of the Dražansko Highlands. It could therefore be said that collective farms had not been established in the Czechoslovak Republic after the February coup in 1948, but much earlier. Above all, the press was used to promote to farmers the joining to these units. In the conclusion, the author summarizes her research and draws four main conclusions from the previous chapters by focussing on the main question of how the printed press worked as a propaganda tool for the post-war establishment of Czechoslovakia.

Keywords | Czechoslovakia, forced migration, displacement, Nazi’s military area, post-war propaganda, press, Communist party, early agriculture cooperatives, 1940–1955

Introduction

The contribution is the basis of a separate study of a future dissertation thesis *“Social and economic aspects of forced internal migration in the Drahanisko highlands in Moravia and its impact 1940 – 1960”*. The paper is divided into three chapters. In the first one the author would like to introduce the topic and her research in the Czech Republic. The second chapter is focused on the forced resettlement area in Bohemia due to the building of the biggest military area in the protectorate called *“Waffen-SS Böhmen”*. After giving a short history in this field, the author will show the response to it in the printed press. The third chapter focuses on the resettlement of the villages from the Drahanisko Highlands, and its reports in the press between 1945 and 1955. In the conclusion the author will summarize research and draw some conclusions from the previous chapters. The focus answers the main questions: How did the periodical press work as a propaganda tool for the post-war establishment of Czechoslovakia? And how did the press reflect a public opinion about the situation?

To answer these questions it was necessary to make selective researches. In this study, the author focused - due to the theme of the conference - on studying the printed press as a propaganda tool. The author proceeded from a study of the periodicals, which were published during the war, in the period of the so-called Third Czechoslovak Republic (5/1945–2/1948) and the earlier period of Communist leadership from the February coup in 1948 until 1955. After the communist coup (by the emerging and consolidating power of the Communist Party) the increasing censorship saw the periodicals both being restricted in numbers and beginning to report in a uniform way. Most of the periodicals, which the author used in her study, are stored in the Moravian Land Library in Brno (MZK). The foreign periodicals dealing with the SS training ground are stored in the National Archives in Prague. Most of the information in the article comes from local periodicals in the after-war period, including the newspaper *Rovnost*, the magazines *Čin*, and *Národní obroda*. The texts from periodicals that the author use in the following text present a sample of discourse that was in the press at that time.

Another valuable source for the author’s research was provided by periodicals that are not very well known and are stored in the collections of the Moravian Land Museum (MZM). This was a foreign press outlet published by the Czechoslovak National Committee in the USA. The weekly, with the title *New Flash from Czechoslovakia under the Nazi Occupation*, was issued throughout the war, with the last issue being published in July 1945.[1] It was also a weekly in the English language for Czechoslovaks and their supporters in the USA. It reported, in brief, on the situation in Czechoslovakia at that time, and argued that the reports were uncensored and came from credible sources. In addition to the news, the weekly also contained many essays and supplements from representatives of the Czechoslovak foreign exiles. The topics of these articles were political. Unfortunately, regarding forced- migration in military areas. The author found only one short and vague piece. The discussions focused on the post-war political organization of Czechoslovakia and the resolutions with the German minority living in Czechoslovakia. Another periodical stored at the MZM is *Signal* – a popular German magazine published in Berlin.[2] This large-format magazine with reports, colour and black-and-white photographs, and drawings from World War II documents life in Nazi Germany on the home front, on the battlefields, in the air force and in the navy. Its mission was to propagate Nazi policies and glorify the German armed forces. Here we can find texts about the need to germanise the Eastern European area. Unfortunately, even here, after careful research, the author could not find relevant information about military training grounds in the Protectorate.

After studying these periodicals, which in most cases dealt with partial issues but did not reflect the military districts in the Czechoslovak Republic as such, the author summarized research with several examples from newspaper articles. The press used in the text is marked in the reference list in bold. Because the author worked with a large quantity of sources, the author decided to use the content-discursive analysis to evaluate and formulate several types of communicated texts, which quantitatively reached a large number, but with much repeated content. The interpretation of the individual articles presented was based on a study of a much larger number of periodicals than is actually stated in the list of used literature below the article. This is explained by the fact that the issue of displacement and resettlement of people from military zones never became a “mainstream topic” and had not been monitored - such as the issue of eviction of 3 million German people or the re-occupation of the border. At the end of the war, there was a disorganized, somewhat brutal expulsion of the German population and, in short, the situation in political circles focused on the transformation of the state system from a plural democracy to a one-party rule of the Soviet type. The author used the comparison in both cases of the displaced areas in Bohemia and Moravia too.

The local government authorities also provided newspaper articles, especially the Land National Committee in Brno, where archival material concerning the displaced areas in the Vyškov region is stored. The chronicles of individual displaced villages proved useful in studying individual villages, where newspaper clippings mentioned a particular village.

The author went through the press published by the Czechoslovaks. Even in the case of foreign newspapers, they were Czechoslovaks, even when only communicating in a foreign language. Examining the foreign press in 1945–1955 could be a reason to write another study. It would certainly aid a more a comprehensive viewpoint on the whole issue.

The displaced areas due to the creation of military districts from the Second World War was not just a unique event taking place in the then Czechoslovakia. There were German military training grounds in other occupied territories, especially in Poland (Debica, Tarnobrzeg) and Austria (Döllersheim, Allentsteig). In the following years, the author would like to research these areas too. They follow the process of forced migrations, which had a direct impact on the development of the Central European area in the second half of the 20th century. Its footprints can be traced today. We can find here many places of memory, which create the collective memory and influence our attitudes.

The literature and research about forced migrations is far from exhaustive and its complete list would deserve a separate study. The author will limit myself to only those works that were relevant to my research.

The forced migration of Czech people due to the building of the military zones has not hitherto been researched. For the last 20 years the research in the Czech Republic has been intensively studying the migration of non-Czech nationals – especially Germans and other minorities who lived in this space till 1945 (for example, Hungarians, so-called Moravian Croatians).

The migration of Czechs throughout the territory of Czechoslovakia has only just begun to be addressed in recent decades. Most attention has focused on the Waffen-SS military training ground in Central Bohemia. In regard to this - the largest and unique military area in the protectorate - many papers, monographies, articles, and student thesis continue to be published.[3]

The work on these migration processes is reflected not only in the works of historians, but also ethnographers, demographers, legal historians, and sociologists. The problems of population movements and transfers are addressed from different perspectives and different methodological

approaches. These sometimes result in interesting works, which, while in most cases do not deeply reflect the field, at least with their overview and factual content encourage new researchers to further research, including regional historians, who in many cases are amateurs with deep patriotic sentiments and professional historians who, due to their amateurish approach to sources and literature, do not respect these articles. In many cases, these works often contain notes and references, however, sometimes we could get interesting information or sources. Thanks to oral history or the own memory of the author, we can tell the story of everyone who has lived through the migration processes themselves.[4]

Interestingly and in opinion of the author very useful are the insights and findings from an economic perspective. The economic historiography was influenced by Marxist ideology before 1989, in the Czech Republic, but since then a turnaround has occurred with a new generation of scholars beginning to publish interesting and useful research that focuses on the economic aspect of population movements.[5]

Interesting works published in the last decade are, for example, those by Jana Kasíková on repatriates after the Second World War.[6] Of similar interest concerns forced migrations from an ethnographic perspective, which have been the focus of David Kovařík. In his summarizing article about population migrations due to military zones in 20th century in Czechoslovakia, he places them in a broader context and traces all the effects of migration waves due to the creation of military areas and their forms of collective memory for displaced persons.[7]

Also included are studies by leading Czech sociologists and demographers such as Pavel Nešpor,[8] Jiří Pešek,[9] and Zlatica Zudová-Lešková.[10] One of the leading experts on migration waves in Czechoslovakia is the historian Tomáš Dvořák.[11]

Among the foreign works that in some way reflect the study is a book published in international cooperation with leading European experts *People on the Move. Forced Population Movements in Europe in the Second World War and Its Aftermath*. [12] This mostly follows the research of the Polish-German migration waves. Bohemia is mentioned here marginally or in connection with the migrations of the German minority from the Czechoslovak borderlands. Other publications relevant to my research have been for example Pavel Polian's *Against Their Will*. [13] Another interesting book is *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*. [14] This compilation includes basic knowledge about forced migration during the 20th century and provides an overview about research on an international scale. Last but not least, knowledge can be acquired about this topic from monographs and proceedings of various international conferences. [15]

Forced migration flows in Czechoslovakia due to the building of military grounds

In the years 1940 - 1945, some Czech populations including towns and villages in Bohemia and Moravia (the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia at that time) had to be moved out due to the expansion or building of military training grounds.

The author chose this topic, because she would like to fill the gaps in research and to link partial regional research with a more national overview. The expulsions were a very specific example of long-term Nazi plans to Germanize the Bohemian and Moravian area, which had a major impact on the shape of the Czech lands in the second half of the 20th century.

In Table 1 we can see how many people were affected by these transfers.

Table 1: Number of people affected by these transfers (Source: BRANDES, Detlef. Germanizovat a vysídlit, 2015, pp. 193 – 227)

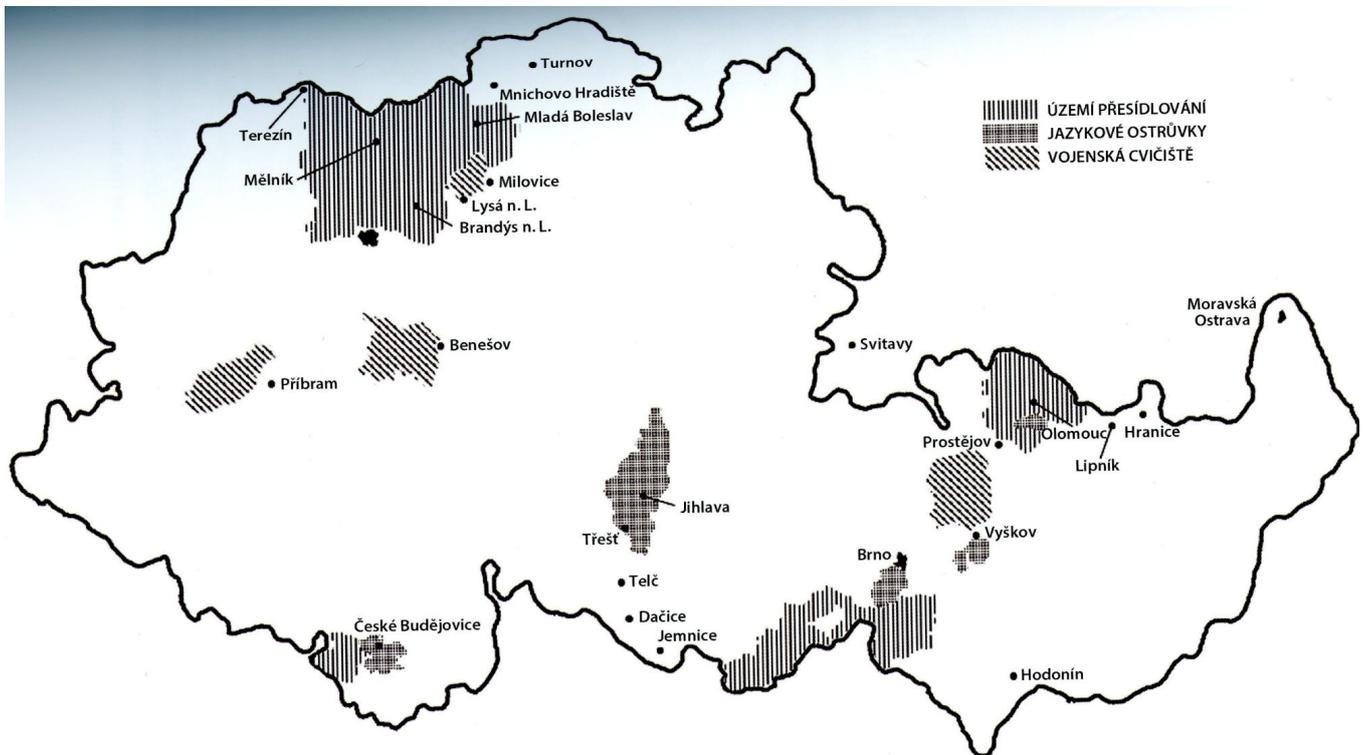
Name of the military area	Number of villages	Number of families	Total persons	Notes
Milovice	10	792	3011	Bohemia
Brdy	15	1039	3590	Bohemia
Březina (Vyškov)	33	4785	18 558	Moravia
Waffen-SS-Böhmen	65 (+144)	8519	30 986	Bohemia
Total	123	15 135	56 145	

The result of these migration flows was that over 123 villages and towns with 15,135 families and 56,145 people were affected by this plan.[16]

The whole situation is summed up by a quote from Alfred Karrasch, the Waffen-SS Böhmen Commander in 1939: *“The area of the military training ground thus represents a kind of heart of the Czech element, which the German element has not yet been able to penetrate during the centuries of fighting. Only now, with the displacement of the Czech population, will this hostile position be breached.”*^[17]

The Nazis advocated the need to evacuate the settlements due to the construction of the necessary military areas. Officially they propagated the need for the new fighting training grounds for modern war. It was based on the Czechoslovak law on seizure of land for the needs of the Armed Forces from 1935.[18] Transfers of the population took place in a very intensive manner. Property was bought for much lower amounts than market prices. In most cases, people had no choice. They either had to accept or they were in danger of having their property expropriated. Displaced persons were not allowed to move to neighbouring districts. They were also prevented from moving to the so-called German language enclaves that occurred within the protectorate.[19] Many maps, which confirmed the Nazi theory plans, survived from this period. One of them was a map from January 1943, which was created during the celebrations of Karl Hermann Frank’s 45th birthday. In this map the high-ranked Nazi officers wanted to show to their superior^[20] how far migration policy had progressed. The aim was to create so-called corridors to split individual territories and gradually assimilate the Czech population with the Germans. One of the means of these efforts was the evacuation and transfers of population from these areas. As map 1 shows, splitting Moravia was more practical than splitting Bohemia. Map 2 shows a proposal for the ethnic division of the Protectorate.

Map 1: Nazi social-ethnic settlement politic in Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia, 1943 (Sources: Nation Archives in Prague (hereinafter as NA), Büro Reichsprotector, dod. II, cart. 43; BRANDES, Detlef. *Germanizovat a vysídlit...*, p. 200–201)



Map 2: Plan of dividing the Protectorate in 1939 by leaders of NSDAP (Source: National Archive in Prague, fund Kancelář říšského protektora , sign. 114-3/14, cart.13)



These plans played a key role in the waves of migration after 1945, when the USA, United Kingdom and USSR approved the expulsion of the Germans from Czechoslovakia.

It is interesting to follow how the domestic and foreign press reacted during the war and post-war period. We could read between the lines how the press tried to explain specific events. The foreign press, without censorship, justified the Nazi plans as part of the Germanization of the Czech area and the creation of a corridor. The official protectorate's press and Nazi's press passed without comment. Thus, the acts took place under the highest secrecy so as not to anger the Czechs. The Nazis needed the Czechs, because their industry and agriculture played a key role during the war. The military grounds in the Protectorate were created with little resistance. Only a few politicians reacted to the displacement of villages and their inhabitants but with little effect on the public. This was until the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich which was followed by the burning of the village Lidice, many executions, and other cruel brutality inflicted on the civilians by the Germans.

The agenda of evicting the villages was delegated to a special office directly under the Ministry of the Interior. It was called the Resettlement Office (in Czech: Přebudovací úřad). It had its headquarters in Vyškov, Benešov and had other branches. It was to arrange for the peaceful phases of the evictions, to provide administrative work, the disbursement of property and, last but not least, to help the residents in various difficulties. The local gendarmes were used to ensure the correct operation of the transfers and were generally trusted and respected by the local population.

In the case of the Benešov training area, the territory was the property of the SS units, which were removed from the Protectorate and became a regular territory of the Third Reich where the laws

applied. This area therefore not only had different legal norms than other military areas in the territory of the Protectorate, but it was also subject to special consideration. On the one hand, it was the largest training ground for these strike units and, on the other hand, it was completed during the war, unlike the military area in Vyškov. Here, in Moravia, the process of transfer and eviction of villages ran slower. In addition, the inhabitants from the last phases of the evictions from Neveklov and Benešov were left on the territory of the training ground and were employed in the so-called “SS-hofs”. These were a kind of agricultural cooperative unit that was managed by the SS units themselves and where the displaced persons were employed. In the case of the Dražansko Highlands, these farms (here the so-called “Kommandatur”) were also set up in the displaced villages to supply the military units operating there, but not on such a massive scale as in Bohemia. A small number of lumberjacks were allowed to stay in the area to continue their work in the woods, which was the property of Wehrmacht.

New research has begun in this area and a more in-depth probe into individual villages is needed to obtain further data.[21]

Bohemia - “SS Truppenübungplatz Böhmen (Beneschau)”

The creation of a military training ground for the Nazi elite Waffen-SS units was undoubtedly one of the largest actions of the forced internal migration in the protectorate during the war period. It is the most well-known place in the Czechoslovak military areas during the WWII.

In the past, several monographies and articles were published about the Waffen SS military training ground.^[22] It covered more than three districts (Benešov, Neveklov, and Sedlčany, part of Prague-West), with a total area of 44 000 hectares. More than 65 villages, 3 towns and 144 hamlets had to be resettled in five phases during 1942–1944. The aim was to create so-called *Zielgebiete* (target places), barracks, school of engineers, estates for armed forces (the so-called SS Hof), and a few labour camps on the borders of the military area. Before the end of war these units (called “Wallenstein”) were ordered to quash the uprising in Prague. Their brutality during the last days of fighting was described by Pavel Kmoch in his book published last year.^[23]

According to the historian Michal Sejk, one of the main reasons for the creation of a large military area was the demonstration of German military force, which also strategically enabled the defence of Prague in the event of any threat to it. In a contrasting view, in the case of Vyškov in Moravia, the author of an unpublished diploma thesis believes that the main goal was not as clear as in the case of the Bohemian training ground and that there was a more practical reason for the Germanization of space. [24]

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the eviction itself was preceded by many complex steps, which showed some tensions between the various political and military leaders of the Nazi occupation. On the one hand, there was some reserve on the part of the acting Reich Protector towards the massive creation of military enclaves on the territory of the Protectorate, because agricultural supplies for the war economy would be severely damaged. On the other hand, there was a group of military and, above all, SS officials making demands for the creation of training grounds. These eventually led to the rapid approval and follow-up of the actual eviction process. This was delegated to a resettlement office reporting directly to the Minister of the Interior. It was tasked with financially compensating the affected residents, buying out their properties, and helping to find alternative living accommodation. In short, they had to administratively ensure the smooth running of the relocation.

The protectorate government, in their statement to the citizens of Sedlčany and Benešov, pointed exclusively to military reasons when establishing the training ground. The view of the

Czechoslovak government-in-exile was understandably different and they understood the establishment of the training ground only as a pretext for massive colonization. We can read about this in some foreign press reports which were printed in the USA. This is exemplified in two articles:

1. **The evacuation of Czech villages**

“According to a report from our own sources, it is announced that the Czech population is being systematically evacuated from the districts of Zbraslav, Mnichovice, Benešov and Mnišek. Barracks for SS units as well as warehouses and emergency airports are being built there.” [25]

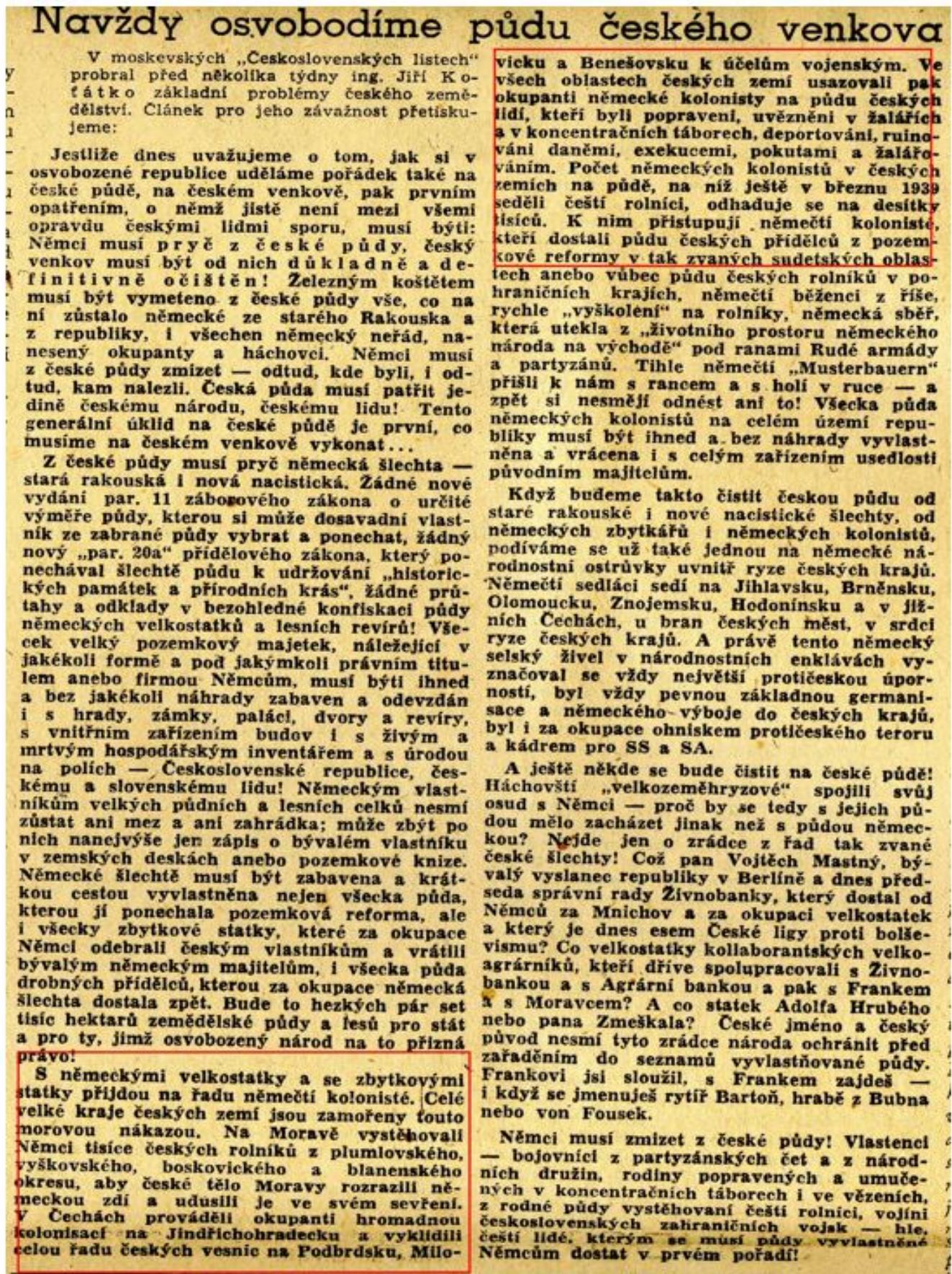
2. **Strikers in the Benešov region**

“The Germans have set up a large center for SS units in the heart of Bohemia near Benešov, called the ‘SS Training Camp.’ This camp is spread over large plots of land and is a bastion equipped with an airport. It is 20 miles long and 12 miles wide and borders the Vltava River to the west with the Sázava River to the north and important routes to the east and south. The Germans evacuated all Czech peasants, in total 35,000 people, who were scattered around. In this busy region, they left only 18,000 farm workers without land to serve SS members.” [26]

The third article which the author present in this paper was reprinted from the Moscow “Czechoslovak Letters”, which was published before the end of the war. Its full version in Czech language was also published in the newspaper Rovnost (the official press of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) a few days after the German capitulation in May 1945. This is only a short passage from a long article titled “We will liberate the land of the Czech countryside forever:”

“...It solves a burning problem regarding the land, when the problem of residual estates arose here from 1918. He is doing his best to ensure that the Czechoslovak land is “cleansed” in a proper and thorough manner, and encourages the seizure of the property of the German population as well as the original, aristocratic and peasant estates. He defends his actions precisely by activities during the war, gives numerous examples of the occupation and resettlement of the inhabitants of Benešov and Inc. Moreover, how innocent people and their property were treated. Here you can clearly read the critique of the previous politics from 1918–1938...” [27]

Figure 1: Original article published in the newspaper of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia "Rovnost" in May 13, 1945



It can be noted that the style of these aggressive and hate-provoking texts can, paradoxically, resemble articles and the commentary style of Nazi propaganda.

Moravia - "Truppenübungsplatz Wischau"

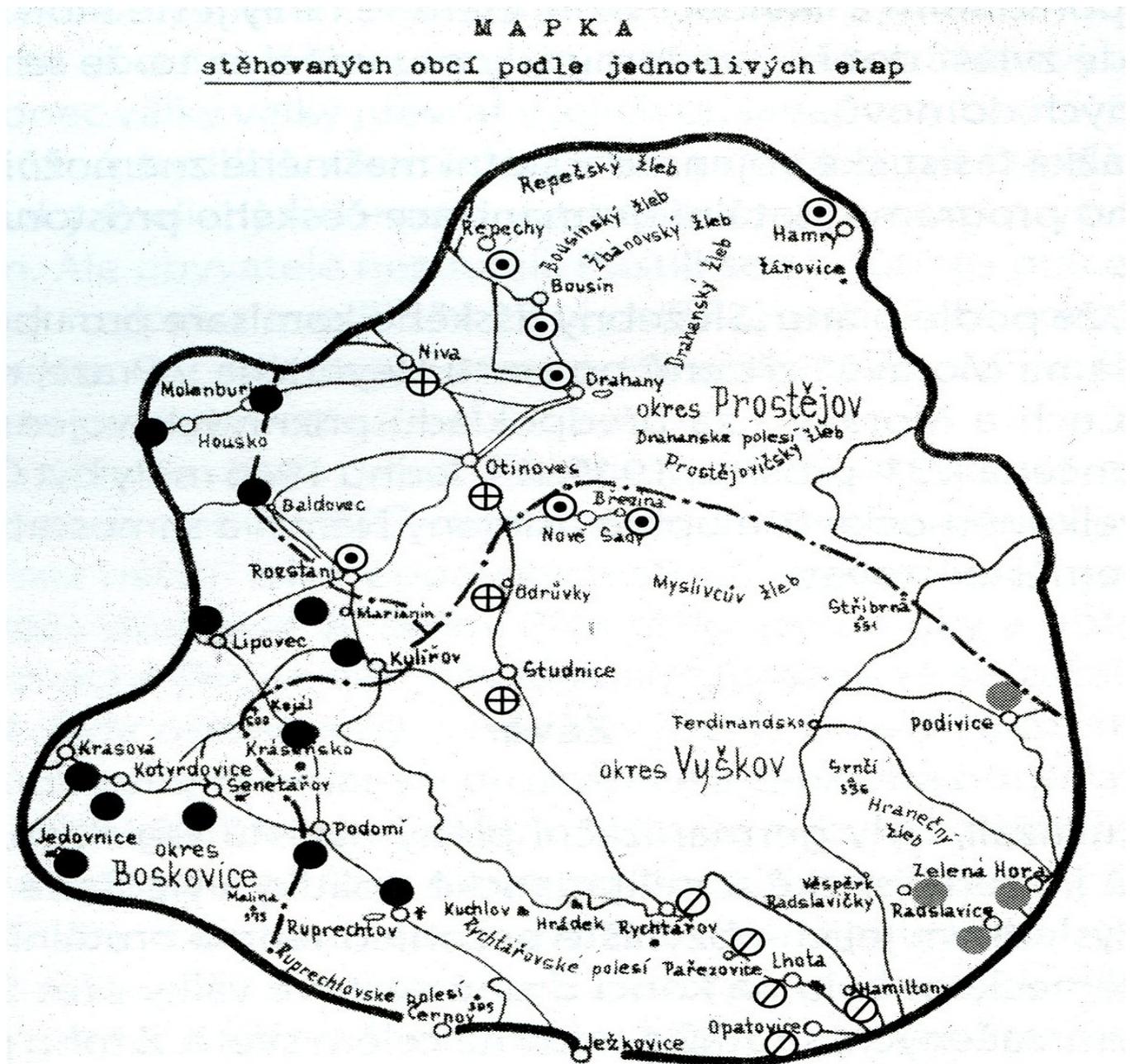
The military training ground in Moravia (in Czech called "Březina" according to village in the Dražansko Highlands) were built in 1935 as a part of the Czechoslovak defence strategy for a possible impending conflict. The main argument was a need for airport space and a modern military area. Immediately after the occupation of the territory after the 15th March 1939, the Germans began planning a significant expansion of the training area, which was to include 33 surrounding villages. These had to evacuate in several phases during 1941-1944.

Villages and towns were later used as the training ground as real targets for the Wehrmacht's combat training, for example during the battle of Stalingrad. The airport in Vyškov was used for Luftwaffe's training.^[28]

Table 2: Overview of displaced villages and inhabitants due to the spreading the military area in Dražansko Highlands (Source: STRYJOVÁ, Dagmar, ed. *Od okupace k vítězství: Vyškovsko 1939-1945. Vyškov : Okresní výbor Českého svazu bojovníků za svobodu, 2005, p. 142. ISBN 80-254-2265-8*)

Nr.	Date of Vacating	Phase	Displaced Families	Displaced Persons
1	Rychtářov	Ia	220	851
2	Lhota		153	571
3	Pařezovice		48	213
4	Opatovice		164	683
5	Hamiltony		114	569
	c e l k e m	Ia	699	2887
6	Radslavice	Ib	192	784
7	Radslavičky		65	255
8	Zelená Hora		139	521
9	Podivice		102	407
	T o t a l	Ib	498	1967
10	Odrůvky	II	62	205
11	Studnice		269	901
12	Hartmanice		259	965
13	Otinoves		318	1185
	T o t a l	II	908	3256
14	Březina	IIIa	45	204
15	Nové Sady		82	337
16	Bousín		82	379
17	Drahany		299	1050
18	Repechy		65	289
19	Hamry		98	317
20	Rozstání		286	1095
	T o t a l	IIIa	957	3671
21	Lipovec	IIIb	273	1228
22	Senetářov		168	708
23	Rogendorf		98	342
24	Molenburk		168	685
25	Marianín		30	143
26	Kulířov		154	646
27	Jedovnice		87	234
28	Housko		81	328
29	Kotvrdovice		259	1034
30	Baldovec		75	290
31	Krásensko		205	775
32	Podomí		74	226
33	Ruprechtov		51	136
	T o t a l	IIIb	1723	6775
	Total displaced		4785	18558

Map 3: The plan of evacuation of the military area in Moravia through phases (Source: MIKŠ, Josef - STRYJOVÁ, Dagmar. Ztracené domovy: Germanizační plány okupantů a jejich realizace na Vyškovsku v letech 1939-1945. Vyškov : Okresní výbor ČSPB, 1989, p. 152)



Legenda :	
Hranice oblasti stěhovaných obcí	—————
Hranice mezi okresy	- - - - -
Obce 1a etapy - do 31.3.1941	⊘
Obce 1b etapy - do 31.10.1941	●
Obce 2 etapy - do 30.11.1942	⊕
Obce 3a etapy - do 31.10.1943	⊙
Obce 3b etapy - do 30.4.- 20.12.1944	●

Many villages were completely destroyed. After the defeat of Nazi Germany, they began to return to their original form before 1941. The so-called “repatriations” had very difficult conditions back in their own land. During the impending years after the war a large amount of compensation was apportioned, for example help from the UNRRA. The restoration of this area took almost 10 years. Many original residents had already moved to other areas permanently. It is a mountainous, agricultural area. Many people from the area worked for the nearby Prostějov factory, especially in the textile industry.

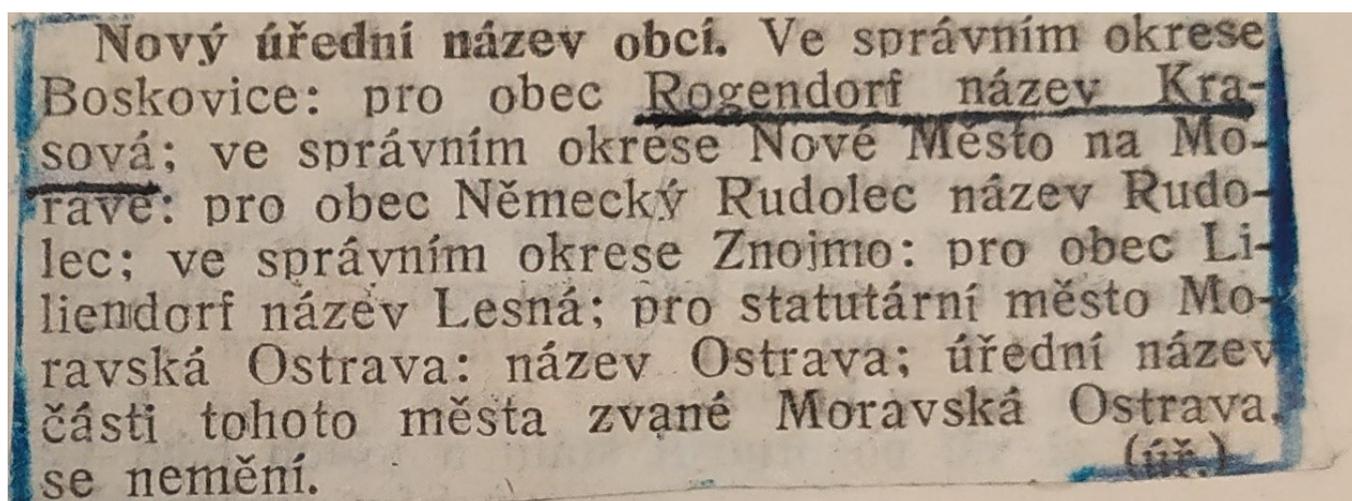
The newspaper articles the author will show in this paper were published during and after the war, with more emphasis on the post-war period. The press described the return of the so-called repatriates after 1945, the conditions of the homesteads and villages and how they would be compensated.

One of the characteristic tendencies in the press can be seen in the boundless effort to agree with the expulsion of the German population from the whole Czechoslovak territory and with the establishment of new orders in the form of National Action Committees. These organization’s constituents represented a completely new element of executive power in the Czechoslovak Republic from 1945 to the Velvet Revolution in November 1989.

One of the important ways of propagation in post-war migration flows in Czechoslovakia was also the renaming of towns, streets, villages, hamlets and geographical areas. Renaming from German names to Czech ones (usually the German name was altered, or a completely new name was used) was a common post-war practice in Czechoslovakia. It intended to support the migration policy of municipalities, regions and cities.

For example, the journal Čin – a provincial publication of Czechoslovak Social Democracy in Moravia – announced periodically the lists with renamed villages, towns, and areas. The village “Rogendorf” from the Dražansko Highlands was renamed as “Krasová”.^[29] These new names remain to this day.

Figure 2: Original article with renamed towns and villages in Czechoslovakia (Source: Čin, July 20, 1946, No. 163, Nový úřední název obcí ...)



The next topic of the published press at that time focused on the economic help in this place. They made an appeal to establish other economic collective groups and for some parts of factory production from near Prostějov to move there. For example, the column published in the newspaper “Národní Obroda” in 1946 with the title “Help to Dražansko Highlands” (translated word for word from Czech to English): “In negotiations with representatives of the state planning

institute, the Moravian Economic Council succeeded in achieving that Dražansko was now considered an economically weak area, i.e. it should be given increased attention in the field of economic planning and construction. Dražansko was regionally conceived in the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands. This opens up new prospects for economic construction, as it will now be able to exercise the right of priority over manufacturing companies, especially if they are in connection with the Prostějov clothing industry, or this additional production has very favourable development prospects. E.g. it would be possible to transfer the production of gloves, which has not yet been concentrated in any area, to the region from the western border."^[30]

Here we can read between the lines the atmosphere of the time when offices had not yet been firmly anchored – in this case the disputes between the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Renewal Fund. There is a clear tendency to promote collective ownership and economy. In the example of a devastated area, as such, the author of the article proposes the establishment of a unified agricultural cooperative – far before the February communist coup of 1948 – in Czech, the so-called “Jednotné zemědělské družstvo, often used acronym JZD”. There is often a generally positive approach to founding different cooperatives. Municipalities that were completely destroyed had to be an example of a new way of economy based on planning and collective ownership. The Dražansko Highlands was offered directly as a “test experiment” of a new way of farming.

Sometimes in the post-war press we can find several reports of “good” Germans helping and not collaborating, so they were appealed. For example, the author reference the article published in 1946 with the title “A German as a survivor of the Czech nation”: *“The accused German dr. Ing. Zwoboda from Ždánice, former head of the department at the Confederation of Agriculture and Forestry in Brno, appeared in court as the biggest supporter and protector of the Czech nation, who in his interest even dared to oppose KH Frank himself, only to allegedly save 200 farmers from Vyškov families.”* ^[31]

In the 1950s the author found an interesting article about one of the most destroyed villages during the war in my researched area. Podivice was in ruin at the end of war because much combat training of artilleries occurred there. One of the oldest agricultural cooperatives in Moravia was created here at the end of 1940 because it was not alone possible to plough the fields and cultivate the farms. At first the cooperative of technical machines (for tractors, etc.), in Czech, the so-called “STS” was created. After that the JZD was founded. In 1956 the article titled “Farmers from Podivice in the top – village Podivice delivered corn to 109.8 %” was published. The title text of the issue proved that JZD Podivice had excellent economic results. It represented a good experience with socialist agriculture in the same of the Soviet Union agriculture cooperatives called “kolkhoz”. The article was aimed at convincing the rest of farmers and villages that had not joined JZD yet (the creation of the socialist agronomy in Czechoslovakia continued till 1960). Since Podivice created the JZD after 10 years “...excellent performances in the fulfillment of all delivery tasks must be highly appreciated by Podivický and it is only to wish that he will proceed with the same determination to build a socialist village, where the economic results may be even more significant.” ^[32]

Here you can see the pictures published with the text to compare the condition of this village. The first picture shows the view of the destroyed and abandoned village in May 1945. The next pictures include the view of happy cooperative members and their excellent work in 1955.

Figure 3: Ruins of the estate in Podivice in May 1945 (Source: SOkA Vyškov, Kronika obce Podivice, p. 7)



Figure 4: Happy cooperative members from Podivice who delivered corns to a record-high in that year plan (109,8 %), 1956. They presented a good example of collective work in the new agronomy system in Czechoslovakia in the same manner of the kolkhoz in the USSR. (Source: SOkA Vyškov, Kronika obce Podivice, p. 9)



Conclusion

In the war press one can observe the announced orders which were, mostly, positively received by the Czechoslovak public due to their bad experience with the Western states - a result of the Munich Agreement in 1938. We can follow the clear lines of post-war Central European politics, an important pillar of which was the national revival and the expulsion of the three-million-strong German ethnic group from Czechoslovakia. The Nazi war policy and the reckless displacement of the above-mentioned localities in the protectorate only deepened and confirmed these ideas. It also guaranteed the approval of these plans on an international scale.

Certain forms of propagation of new orders and parties can be traced in the post-war press, because the press was primarily the output body of individual political parties. There was no longer a pluralist democracy here, as it had been before 1938. Publications published by banned political parties ceased to exist. As a result, citizens' awareness was significantly distorted. The leading political group was the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, supported by a larger part of the Czechoslovak population.

The emphasis was on a consistent resettlement campaign. One of the forms was the renaming of towns, streets, villages and other geographical areas. This renaming survived to contemporary times. As a consequence, many people lost knowledge about the history of their own homes before 1945, especially when their ancestors came to such villages after 1945.

The most important and significant problems in the press were the catastrophic economic after-war conditions. According to the press, with the newly-settled municipalities returned from military districts, a successful solution to these problems was in the form of a unified agricultural cooperative in the municipalities of the Drahanisko Highlands. It could therefore be said that collective farms had not been established in the Czechoslovak Republic after the February coup in 1948, but much earlier. Above all, the press was used to promote to farmers the joining to these units.

This article should present only an introduction to the whole topic. Data collection and research in this direction will take place in the coming years. The author would like to map the German press and possibly other foreign press. The author would also like to monitor the process of the transformation of settlements and inhabitants as a result of these forced migrations and their impact today. Forced migrations due to the construction of military training grounds took place in Austria, Poland and other countries as well, which the author would like to map in the following years of her research and compare in which directions these processes were common to the Czechoslovak area and how they differed. These half-forgotten and overlooked chapters in our history hide, sometimes, unexpected conclusions and findings and deepen the knowledge about the history of people and places in Central Europe in the second half of the 20th century, the consequences of which we still face today.

Figure 5: The memorial of victims of forced migration 1940–1945, Rychtářov at Vyškov (Source: author's archive)



Acknowledgments

This study was published as part of the project MUNI/A/1504/2021.

Data sharing and preregistration is not applicable to this article.

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

[1] Moravian Land Museum (hereinafter MZM), Department of History, Inv. No B 14 557/1 – 14 557/214.

[2] MZM, Department of History, Inv. No R1/16.

[3] Many studies and monographies have been published about this topic. I note here only those relevant for my research: GROSSMANN, Jakub – JURAJDA, Štěpán a RÖSEL, Felix. *Forced migration, staying minorities, and new societies: Evidence from post-war Czechoslovakia*. Praha : CERGE-EI, 2021. Working paper series. ISBN 978-80-7343-490-8; BRANDES, Detlef – IVANIČKOVÁ, Edita – PEŠEK, Jiří. *Vynútený rozchod: vyhnanie a vysídlenie z Československa 1938-1947 v porovnaní s Poľskom, Maďarskom a Juhosláviou*. Bratislava : Veda, 1999. ISBN 80-224-0586-8; SEJK, Michal. *Germanizace českomoravského prostoru a vznik vojenských cvičišť na Benešovsku a na Vyškovsku*. [online] Brno : Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Diploma thesis, 2005, Supervisor DVOŘÁK, Tomáš. Available at: <https://is.muni.cz/th/jr9ng/> [cit. 2022-02-03].

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[5] Of all of them I would name the most recent bachelor's thesis by Martin Bitarovec dealing with the so-called “SS hof” BITAROVEC, Martin. *Výcvikový proctor Waffen-SS Čechy a jeho hospodářská správa*. Brno : Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Diploma thesis, 2022, Supervisor DVOŘÁK, Tomáš. It is not yet accessible at the time of the manuscript response.

[6] KASÍKOVÁ, Jana. *Ať mohou přijeti: Organizace poválečné repatriace a návratů 1942-1947*. Praha : Academia, 2017. ISBN 978-80-200-2818-1.

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[12] AHONEN, Pertti et al. *People on the Move. Forced Population Movements in Europe in the Second World War and Its Aftermath*. New York, Oxford : Berg, 2008. ISBN 978-1-84520-824-0.

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[14] FIDDIAN-QASMIYEH, Elena et al. *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0-19-965243-3.

[15] BEDNAŘÍK, Petr - NOSKOVÁ, Helena - MARŠÁLEK, Zdenko ed. *Nucené migrace v českých zemích ve 20. století*. Praha : Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 2018. ISBN 978-80-7285-207-9.

Another elder conference proceeding is: BRANDES, Detlef - IVANIČKOVÁ, Edita - PEŠEK, Jiří. *Vynútený rozchod...*

[16] The numbers disagree to a lesser extent in different sources. The data have selected from BRANDES, Detlef. *Germanizovat a vysídlit. Nacistická národnostní politika v českých zemích*. Praha : Prostor, 2015, p. 193-227.

[17] BRANDES, Detlef. *Germanizovat a vysídlit...* p. 193-227.

[18] It is a paradox that this law was adopted by the Czechoslovak state in order to protect the border with Germany, with which the Czechoslovak Republic had very bad relations since the second half of the 1930s. In practice, however, no villages were forced to be evicted before 1938, with the exception of the territory of Milovice, where one village, Mladá, with one hundred houses and more than 500 inhabitants, was evicted. KOVAŘÍK, David. *Vojenské újezdy jako dějiště nucených migrací v českých zemích a jejich komemorace...* p. 42.

[19] Until 1945, there were several German-speaking areas in the interior of Czechoslovakia. In the Moravian context, the language enclave of Vyškov and the language enclave of Konice in the Prostějov district.

[20] Karl Hermann Frank was the state secretary in Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren during 1939-1945. He came from Sudetenland from the Czechoslovak borders. After the war he was executed.

[21] The newest work in this field is the thesis: BITAROVEC, Martin. *Výcvikový proctor Waffen-SS Čechy a jeho hospodářská správa...* It is not yet accessible at the time of the manuscript response. It would be very interesting to compare these economic aspects in both areas.

[22] The author has limited only the studies and monographies to the last 15 years: ZOUZAL, Tomáš. *Zabráno pro SS: zřízení výcvikového prostoru Böhmen v letech 2. světové války*. Praha : Naše vojsko, 2016. ISBN 978-80-206-1631-9; KOS, Petr. *Cvičiště Benešov - vstup zakázán!!: SS-Truppenübungsplatz Beneschau/Böhmen 1939-1948: stručná historie výcvikového prostoru SS ve středních Čechách v letech druhé světové války a poválečná obnova území do roku 1948*. Postupice : Posázaví, 2011. ISBN 978-80-904655-4-1; ŠMERÁK, Václav at al. *Almanach...*; KOKOŠKA, Stanislav. *Cvičiště zbraní SS Böhmen 1942-1945. Sborník vlastivědných prací z Podblanicka*. Benešov : Okresní muzeum v Benešově ve Státním zemědělském nakladatelství v Praze, 1986, Vol. 27, pp. 271-298.

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- [25] New York Lists, December 30, 1943, „*Evacuation of Czech villages*,“ published in: KOS, Petr. *Cvičiště Benešov...* p. 31. The press is originally deposits in National archive in Prague (hereinafter as NA), fund (f.) Zahraniční tisk 1939–1945 (1076), sign. 542.
- [26] New York Daily, January 20, 1945 published in KOS, Petr. *Cvičiště Benešov...* p. 32. The press is originally deposited in NA, f. Zahraniční tisk 1939–1945 (1076), sign. 542.
- [27] *Rovnost*, May 13, 1945, *Osvobodíme českou zem navždy*.
- [28] About this topic only one study was issued from 1989: MIKŠ, Josef – STRYJOVÁ, Dagmar. *Ztracené domovy: germanizační plány okupantů a jejich realizace na Vyškovsku v letech 1939-1945* . Vyškov : Okresní výbor ČSPB, 1989. This publication has strong marxism-leninism historiography tendencies.
- [29] *Čin*, July 20, 1946, No. 163, *Nový úřední název obcí*.
- [30] *Národní Obroda*, November 29, 1946, *Pomoc Dražanské vrchovině*.
- [31] *Čin*, June 14, 1946, No. 134, *Němec v roli zachránce českého národa*.
- [32] *Nová vesnice: list pokrokových zemědělců Vyškovska*, August 22, 1956, *Soukromě hospodařící zemědělci z Podivic první v cíli! Obec Podivice splnila dodávky obilí na 109,8%*.

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