In my paper, I would like to touch upon the moments of Polish-Ukrainian history where the actions of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), the USSR and the new Polish state played a central role in the context of mutual ethnic cleansing operations. A quick and brutal chain of events activated Polish-Ukrainian conflicts resting on differing notions of legitimacy. The first collisions between Poles and Ukrainians in Volyn were fixed in December 1942 whereby the military units of the Ukrainian UPA and the Polish AK took sides according to ethnicity. The 1944 Soviet-Polish "evacuation" agreement, as well as Poland’s post-war "Rzeszów" and "Wisla" operations directed against Ukrainians.

The self-portrayal resulting from these events played significant role in the formation of post-war and then post-Soviet identities both in Poland in Ukraine. These controversial events, constituting public narratives of the shared past, still have an influence on present Polish-Ukrainian relations. According to various surveys conducted in Poland, depiction of one's own nation as a sufferer and other (Ukrainian) as violator is still very significant in Poland, as it was also unofficially induced/propagated by the post-war Polish Communist regime. On the Ukrainian side the new Ukrainian state is still coming to terms with its history and interpretation thereof. The account of events in Ukraine is more diffuse and interest groups/national identity creators/sustainers more scattered.