

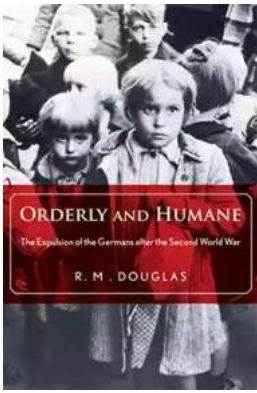
The Expulsion Of The Germans After The Second World War: A Forgotten Tragedy

The aftermath of the Second World War was marked by numerous devastations, but perhaps one of the lesser-known tragedies was the expulsion of millions of Germans from Eastern Europe. This expulsion, driven by revenge, political calculations, and ethnic cleansing, has often been overshadowed by other events of the war. However, the magnitude of this forced migration and its long-lasting consequences cannot be understated. In this article, we will delve into the historical context, the methods employed, and the human toll of the expulsion, shining a light on a forgotten chapter of history.

The Historical Context

As the war came to an end in 1945, the balance of power in Europe shifted drastically. The victorious Allies, including the Soviet Union, had to redraw the boundaries of the continent. This presented an opportunity for the Soviet Union, in particular, to reshape Eastern Europe in line with their political ambitions and vision of a communist bloc. The expulsion of Germans became a means to achieve this goal, as it would allow for the resettlement of ethnic groups more favorable to the Soviet Union.

The decision to expel Germans from Eastern Europe was not solely motivated by geopolitical considerations. Revenge and retribution played a significant role as well. The horrors of the war, including the atrocities committed by the Nazis, created an atmosphere of deep-seated resentment against the German population. This sentiment, coupled with the desire to establish homogenous nation-states, paved the way for the expulsion.



Orderly and Humane: The Expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War

by R. M. Douglas (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 18293 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 790 pages
Lending : Enabled



The Methods Employed

The expulsion of Germans was marked by brutality and chaos. The process involved massive forced migrations, with people being uprooted from their homes and belongings overnight. Families were separated, communities were ripped apart, and lives were left in ruins.

Initially, several German communities were subjected to acts of violence, encouraging mass panic and causing many to leave voluntarily. However, as the expulsions intensified, the brutality increased. Expelled Germans faced physical abuse, sexual violence, and even summary executions. They were forced to endure unimaginable suffering as they embarked on long and treacherous journeys to find refuge elsewhere.

The methods employed varied from region to region, but the outcome was consistent: an estimated 12 to 15 million Germans were expelled from countries

such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. The scale of this forced migration was unprecedented in European history.

The Human Toll

The expulsion of Germans after the Second World War resulted in immeasurable human suffering. The displaced population faced immense hardships as they sought to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of the war.

Many expelled Germans found themselves in makeshift camps, lacking basic necessities such as food, shelter, and medical care. The trauma endured during the expulsion and the deplorable conditions in these camps led to countless deaths, particularly among the most vulnerable, such as children and the elderly.

The expulsion also had long-lasting effects on the German population, both those expelled and those who remained. The shock of losing their homes and communities left psychological scars that would be felt for generations. Moreover, the process of rebuilding and integrating the displaced population strained the resources and social fabric of the receiving countries.

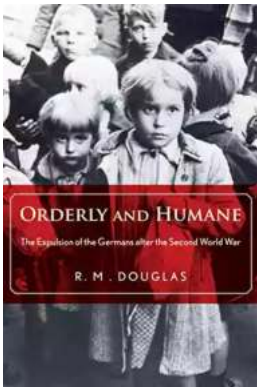
The Forgotten Tragedy

Despite the magnitude of this forced migration and the profound impact it had on the lives of millions, the expulsion of Germans after the Second World War has largely remained a forgotten tragedy. In the decades that followed, the focus shifted primarily towards the Holocaust, the Nuremberg trials, and the division of Germany during the Cold War. This overshadowed the expulsion, relegating it to the margins of history textbooks.

Remembering and acknowledging this forgotten tragedy is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the consequences of the Second World War. It

serves as a reminder of the complexities of war, the devastating human cost, and the importance of valuing and protecting the lives of all individuals, regardless of their nationality.

The expulsion of Germans after the Second World War stands as a testament to the darker side of history. It highlights the consequences of revenge, political calculations, and ethnic cleansing, leaving a lasting imprint on the lives of millions. By shedding light on this forgotten tragedy, we can strive to cultivate a more inclusive and compassionate world, where the lessons learned from the past guide our actions in the present and future.



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The award-winning history of 12 million German-speaking civilians in Europe who were driven from their homes after WWII: “a major achievement” (New Republic).

Immediately after the Second World War, the victorious Allies authorized the forced relocation of ethnic Germans from their homes across central and

southern Europe to Germany. The numbers were almost unimaginable: between 12 and 14 million civilians, most of them women and children. And the losses were horrifying: at least five hundred thousand people, and perhaps many more, died while detained in former concentration camps, locked in trains, or after arriving in Germany malnourished, and homeless.

In this authoritative and objective account, historian R.M. Douglas examines an aspect of European history that few have wished to confront, exploring how the forced migrations were conceived, planned, and executed, and how their legacy reverberates throughout central Europe today. The first comprehensive history of this immense manmade catastrophe, *Orderly and Humane* is an important study of the largest recorded episode of what we now call "ethnic cleansing." It may also be the most significant untold story of the World War II.



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