

The Ethnic Displacements of Ukrainians and Ruthenians in Eastern Europe after the End of the Second World War and Their Influence on the UPA and OUN Movements

Abstract:

After the Second World War, the ethnic situation in Eastern Europe was far from clear. Europe was exhausted, with the war just ended, and individual states had gained new boundaries, defined by the outcome of the war. The deployment of national minorities in Eastern Europe, however, caused further strife and bloodshed. In particular, Ukrainian nationalists from the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) had no intention of accepting the new borders and fought Poland and the Soviet Union for the creation of an independent Ukraine and their own state. Allied powers (especially the Soviet Union) and new Polish state found radical solutions to the ongoing conflicts and ethnic violence by the expeditious removal of ethnic minority Ukrainians, Poles and Ruthenians either to different parts of a country or out of a country completely. The relocation of hundreds of thousands of people affected large areas. This contribution focuses on the causes and course of such relocation and its impact on Ukrainian nationalist movements. The relocation of minority groups in Eastern Europe has irreversibly changed the ethnicity of many states. For present-day Ukraine, this meant occupying territories that had always been ethnically Polish. These issues were later reflected also in Czechoslovak post-war relations.

Keywords: *Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), Stepan Bandera, removals, minorities, Czechoslovakia.*