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Title	1945年1月から7月までの上シレジアにおけるドイツ系住民の移動と選別 : 「無法な追放」とその構造
Author(s)	衣笠, 太朗
Citation	境界研究, 15, 1-31
Issue Date	2025-03-31
DOI	https://doi.org/10.14943/jbr.15.1
Doc URL	https://hdl.handle.net/2115/95058
Type	departmental bulletin paper
File Information	15_01_Summary.pdf, 英文要旨



Summary

Migration and Screening of German Inhabitants in Upper Silesia from January to July 1945: The “Wild Expulsions” and Their Structure

KINUGASA Taro

This paper examines the structures and processes underpinning the flight and expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe at the end of World War II and in the immediate post-war period, with a specific focus on Upper Silesia from January to July 1945. By analyzing German testimonies and Polish published historical sources, the study offers a multifaceted perspective on the movement and national screening of individuals traditionally identified as “Germans.”

The expulsion process in Upper Silesia unfolded in three interconnected stages: flight, screening, and forced migration. Initially, the “flight” of the German population, while not explicitly “forced,” was heavily influenced by the fear and disarray provoked by the advancing Soviet army in early 1945. The invasion exacerbated the sense of crisis among local inhabitants, prompting some to flee while others remained due to circumstantial constraints.

During the subsequent phase of national screening, Polish authorities faced significant challenges in defining practical criteria for identifying national affiliation. The inhabitants of Upper Silesia exhibited a spectrum of sense of belonging, often detached from strict national categorizations of “Germans” or “Poles.” The criteria for identifying “Polish” individuals, ostensibly based on “Polish nationality” (*polska narodowość*), were nebulous and inconsistently applied, reflecting the region’s complex and ambiguous sense of belonging. Consequently, the screening process often relied on ad hoc judgments by local officials, who exercised considerable discretion in determining national affiliation.

Thirdly, the “wild expulsions” (*die wilden Vertreibungen*) are of particular significance. Beginning in the summer of 1944, the Polish Committee of National Liberation (*Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego*) deliberated on the deportation of German inhabitants, with a final decision reached by May 1945. By this time, the Polish government had consolidated control in Upper Silesia and

initiated systematic expulsions without international endorsement. These coercive measures allowed affected individuals to carry only minimal possessions, underscoring the forced and unilateral nature of the process. Historical records consistently portray these expulsions as highly oppressive, leaving no room for resistance.

Through detailed analysis, this paper elucidates the structural dynamics of screening and migration during the “wild expulsions” in Upper Silesia. In a region marked by blurred distinctions between “Germans” and “Poles,” Polish authorities and military personnel implemented migration policies under intense pressure to meet governmental objectives. The lack of clear criteria for defining “Polish nationality” compelled local authorities to adopt oversimplified standards, disregarding the nuanced sense of belonging and affiliations of the local population.

Based on the discussions in this paper, the following conclusions can be drawn: The screening and migration measures during the “wild expulsions” were a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by both the pressures to implement government policies and the improvised, case-by-case decisions made by local administrative bodies and personnel on the ground. These measures emerged as a result of local officials and personnel navigating the tension between the Polish government’s policies and the practical challenges of screening the inhabitants.

To Whom Does the Sea Belong? : Maritime Control by England and France before the Hundred Years’ War

HANAFUSA Shuichi

In Roman law, the sea was defined as “*res nullius*” (belonging to no one) or “*nullius territorium*” (no one’s territory). This means that the sea was exempt from claims of individual ownership, instead belonging to all as a public good. This status of the sea as a no-man’s-land was carried over into the Middle Ages. N.A.M. Rodger argued that in the Middle Ages, the sea was “a lawless zone beyond the boundaries of civilized society.”

However, in reality, as a result of the development of maritime trade that began around the 13th century and the centralization of royal power and regional power, various bodies began to claim sovereignty over the seas in the late Middle Ages, and disputes began to arise between these powers over control of the seas.