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# Mniejszość niemiecka na Pomorzu Gdańskim

Posłowiem opatrzył  
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Warszawa 2016

## Summary

# The German Minority in Gdańsk Pomerania

The cultural background and national identity of the German minority in Gdańsk Pomerania are important and little-recognized research problems. This book is the first historical and sociological monograph in the literature concerning this subject that examines these issues from a new perspective. It sits within the mainstream empirical studies conducted in the area of sociology of nation and contains an objective analysis of processes taking place within this social group. This work also makes an interesting contribution to the study of the German minority in Poland after 1945 and reflects on socio-cultural changes in the Western and Northern Territories of Poland.

The aim of this monograph is to present a multifaceted national (and ethnic) identity, the leaders of the German minority and their ethnic activity after 1989. The author presents a case study of German minority associations (institutions), taking account of their structures, functioning, internal and external relations, as well as group dynamics.

The national (ethnic) identity of the leaders, understood as a process, involves many components, which are analysed in the individual chapters of this book. These include: self-identification; a sense of internal and external distinctiveness/uniformity; the 'looking-glass self'- identity; the awareness of the group's origin and its cultural heritage; stereotypes about one's own group; discrimination and prejudice; language issues; the fostering and revival of culture; organizational commitment; identification with the homeland; and memory of the past. These components are described with regard to the situation in the borderland area under study, which is a region of transition that has been shaped by the historical mingling of cultures.

The first chapter presents ethnic relations in Gdańsk Pomerania, taking account of the specific, centuries-long characteristics of this area. Particular emphasis is placed on the facts that this area borders Germany, which results in a clash of two cultures – Polish and German – and that it has been permanently inhabited by the Kashubians.

The author indicates the most important socio-political and economic processes that have shaped the diverse identity of the inhabitants of Gdańsk Pomerania over the years. These include: the effects of the Hitlerite extermination of the Poles, Jews (and other nationalities) during the occupation and the ethnic policy of the Third Reich; the functioning of the German Nationality List; mass migrations; and the process of ethnic verification and rehabilitation in Gdańsk Pomerania.

At the end of the first chapter, the author describes the process of forming a new society in Gdańsk Pomerania between 1945 and 1989, as well as the complex situation of the German population and the so-called 'German optants'. She describes the specific features of the emigration of German and indigenous people during the so-called family reunification programme, which began in 1950.

The second chapter contains an analysis of the process of institutionalization of the German minority in northern Poland after 1989. The chapter shows both the formation of associations in northern Poland and the structures of the German minority in Poland. It also examines the socio-demographic situation, pointing to general trends prevailing within the group. New to sociological studies is the analysis of a specific group of German citizens of Gdańsk, who form the Danziger Club as part of the Association of the German Minority in Gdańsk.

Moreover, the author presents a sociological analysis of processes contributing to the current institutional shape of the German minority, emphasizing the important role of its supreme organization in Poland, i.e. the Union of German Social-Cultural Associations in Poland (ZNSSK, Ger. *Verband der deutschen sozial-kulturellen Gesellschaften in Polen, VdG*).

The third chapter presents the characteristics of social relations within German minority associations in Gdańsk Pomerania. The author distinguishes three main phases of the German minority's institutionalization, characterized by different levels of ethnic (social and cultural) activity, i.e. the development and acceleration of ethnic activity (1990s), the stabilization and stagnation of ethnic activity (2000–2004) and the decline of ethnic activity (from 2005 to the present).

Furthermore, the author reveals a network of institutional links, the main directions, priorities and specific nature of the associations, and the impact of in-group conflicts on the current institutional shape of the German minority.

The fourth chapter contains an analysis of national (and ethnic) self-identity of the German minority leaders, taking account of the subjective and objective components of their identity. The subjective components of this identity include the awareness of group distinctiveness/uniformity, a sense of group membership, a sense of social ties, a sense of distance within a group, a subjective sense of connection with the homeland and the 'looking-glass self' identity.

The objective dimension of the leaders' identity includes the genealogical (natal) aspect, appointment to and joining of German minority associations, the influence of 'core values' on the formation of the leaders' self-identification and the maintenance of group identification.

In her research, the author applied triangulation of methods, research techniques and data sources. She used the methods of field research and participant observation, in-depth interview (semi-structured), Focus Group Interview, content analysis and snowball sampling.

The extensive bibliography contains archival sources, including materials from German minority associations (statutes, records, reports, regulations, protocols, registration documents, letters, contracts, etc.), as well as private collections, VdG materials (minutes, reports on the activities of the board), printed sources, selected literature on the subject, legal acts, newspapers, newsletters and internet sources.

The book is addressed to the German minority, organizations and individuals it cooperates with, as well as to representatives of the scientific community dealing with issues of nationality, ethnicity and German studies. The analyses presented in this book may also be of interest to those involved in multicultural Gdańsk Pomerania, regional studies and borderland processes.