Introduction

On a winter afternoon in 1936 in the Polish city of Łódź, well over a thousand people gathered in the hall of the men's choral society on the city's main thoroughfare, Piotrkowska Street. They were there for a rally held by a German minority organization, the German People's Union (DVV). Among the attendees, however, were numerous members of a rival group, the Young German Party (JDP). When the local leader of the Young Germans entered the hall, someone called out the command "Achtung, Young Germans!" and the room thundered to the shouts of "Heil." When the youth leader for the German People's Union arrived in the crowded building, however, someone else from the balcony likewise called out "Achtung, Young Germans!" Several of the disoriented Young Germans, not knowing that they were cheering their opponent, began to applaud and yell "Heil." After realizing their error, the enraged Young German intruders attacked the balcony, cleared it of the troublesome members of the German People's Union, and occupied it. The meeting, which was a German People's Union event after all, went downhill from there.

The gathering came to order with great difficulty. The first speaker of the German People's Union emphasized that the Germans in Poland, as part of the greater national community of Germans led by Adolf Hitler, did not need a political party but sought unity in a national organization instead. This seemingly minor nuance angered the Young Germans, who were likewise supporters of Hitler but who wanted a unified political party for all Germans in Poland. Having taken up the front rows, the Young Germans attacked the stage and were only beaten back with great difficulty. Several fights broke out in the audience, and the catcalls and jeering by the Young Germans forced the first speaker to leave. The next speaker likewise complained about the goals of the Young German party. The Young Germans again felt provoked and had to be fought back once more.

The third speaker also criticized the idea of a German party in Poland, saying the Germans should work for the good of the national community instead. At this moment, the Young Germans rushed the stage, grabbed and ripped apart the host party's banner, and a melee ensued. The meeting's organizers from the German People's Union called the city police, and order was briefly restored after the arrest of three Young Germans. However, another wave of fighting led to the breakup of the meeting altogether, and the Polish police were needed once again to forcibly evacuate those stubborn Young Germans who still refused to leave.[1]

This example was just one in a long conflict among various German parties within interwar Poland. In this case, both of these German parties claimed to be National Socialist, and both espoused a similar rhetoric of unity, especially regarding the national community, or *Volksgemeinschaft*. Not only could they not agree on what this unity meant in practical terms, but they and other German nationalist groups fought rhetorically and physically in public spaces before Polish observers over its interpretation. Despite the widespread view of the Polish state as the primary enemy of the German minority, it was not unusual for Poles to mediate in this internecine German conflict. Indeed, German minority leaders often denounced one another to Polish authorities, who were themselves confused by how the idea of German national unity could cause these deep divisions. One Polish police official who tried to keep order at the rowdy meeting in Łódź shamed the Germans by reminding them that they were "civilized people" after all.[2]

Yet this strife between German rival parties also had a spatial dimension that can be traced to the aftermath of the virtually unexpected collapse of three Central European empires in 1918. The victorious Allied coalition hammered out a series of new states on the principle of national self-determination. These states, although having a titular nationality, were hardly nation-states in reality. Each state had significant ethnic minorities, many of which harbored bitter resentment against the loss of their right to national self-determination. Among these minorities were the Germans, who were found in settlements throughout East Central Europe. Owing to

1 Voivodeship of Łódź (Vice-Voivode A. Potocki) to Nationalities Department of the Interior Ministry in Warsaw, January 8, 1936, copy as attachment sent by Skarbek, Interior Ministry to Polish Foreign Ministry (Wydział Ustrojów Międzynarodowych), January 14, 1936, in AAN, MSZ, folder 2238, 1–3.

2 Annotated accounts that minimized Young German criticisms and were skewed favorably toward the German People's Union include the following newspaper articles: "Kundgebungen des Deutschen Volksverbandes. Vormarsch der volksdeutschen Front gegen Terror und Haßpropaganda. Organisierter Überfall jungdeutscher Sprengtrupps auf die Redner. – Die wahre Art der jungdeutschen 'Erneuerung,'" *Freie Presse*, January 7, 1936, 1–2; "Brief an uns. Ein Unparteiischer über die Vorfälle," (letter by Gustav Schumann, dated January 10, 1936), in *Freie Presse*, January 12, 1936, 6.

the still powerful position of a defeated Germany, these German minorities had disproportionate influence on domestic and foreign affairs. Both Weimar and Nazi claims to take care of German compatriots abroad made the treatment of German minorities in Eastern Europe a flashpoint of international tensions, leading toward the Second World War. In the 1938 Munich Agreement, the European powers dismembered Czechoslovakia so that the Sudeten German minority could join its putative fatherland. In Poland, the situation proved to be more intractable. The instrumentalization of the German minority for foreign policy goals reached its apex in 1939, when reports of Polish abuses against Germans were used to legitimate Hitler's invasion of Poland. Although postwar Polish and German historians have disagreed over whether the German minority served as a fifth column, they do agree that Polish repression and National Socialism led to the minority's growing unity. Behind this façade of *völkisch* (ethnic) unity, however, lurked serious divisions that undercut the political cohesion of this minority. Despite the efforts of Reich officials and the National Socialist fervor of the German minority leaders, these Germans were never unified into a comprehensive party along the lines of Konrad Henlein's Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront. Rather, the Germans in Poland remained fractured among several regional organizations.

These divisions can be understood by examining the problems of national cohesion and regional particularism. Unlike Czechoslovakia, where a great majority of the Germans came from Austrian Bohemia, interwar Poland inherited Germans from all three shattered Central European empires. The Germans of Western Poland, living on lands formerly of the German Empire, had enjoyed political and social domination prior to 1918. The conversion from *Staatsvolk* – people of the state – to *Volksdeutsche* – ethnic Germans – was a particularly hard blow for them.[3] Most of these Germans found it difficult to come to terms with Polish rule, and Germany's claims on the ceded territories only reinforced their negative attitude toward Poland. The German speakers in Central and Eastern Poland, which included the former Congress Kingdom and other lands freed from Russian rule, had already experienced life in a state where Germans rarely belonged to the political elite and where German language had been increasingly suppressed. Many German activists here initially viewed the new Polish state with great hope, for they believed that the Poles would be more hospitable to their own national minorities than the former Russian masters. Likewise, German-speakers in the formerly Austrian lands of southeastern Poland were

3 *Staatsvolk* can also be translated here as "titular nationality."

accustomed to local rule by Poles. Especially the peasant populations in formerly Austrian Galicia and formerly Russian Volhynia were rarely preoccupied with issues concerning Germany or Germanness.

That these German-speaking groups had substantial historical differences is nothing new. Yet this book tells a different story from the standard narrative of these "three minorities" becoming one over time.[4] Throughout the interwar period, there were several attempts to forge these heterogeneous elements politically, but all these attempts at "minority building" failed.[5] Over time, in fact, the Germans in interwar Poland were increasingly splintered along regional lines. This book examines how German leaders in Poland proclaimed unity in word while undermining it in deed. In short, it focuses on the limits of national solidarity within the German minority in Poland.

THE HISTORIES OF THE GERMANS IN POLAND

The instrumentalization of the minority in the war's outbreak has meant that the literature devoted to the minority is fairly broad. Yet little attention has been paid to the question of cross-cutting loyalties within the minority itself. Rather, both Poles and Germans have emphasized the nationality struggle, or *Volkstumskampf*, between the minority and the Polish state. Much of the Polish and German literature consists of short contributions collected in edited volumes; monographs of book length make up only a small fraction. Many of the authors are part of the *Erlebnisgeneration* (those who experienced the events first hand), which often led to insufficient detachment and analysis: indeed, the majority of German works can be classified as sentimental memoirs or *Heimatliteratur* (homeland literature).[6] Especially the debates about whether the minority was a fifth column or who was to blame for the *Bromberger Blutsonntag* (the massacre of several hundred people in Bromberg on the first Sunday after the German invasion of Poland in 1939) has overshadowed the many fruitful questions that an

4 On the unification of the "three minorities," see Marian Wojciechowski, "Die deutsche Minderheit in Polen (1920–1939)," in *Deutsche und Polen zwischen den Kriegen. Minderheitenstatus und "Volkstumskampf" im Grenzgebiet. Amtliche Berichterstattung aus beiden Ländern, 1920–1939*, ed. Rudolf Jaworski et al., vol. 1, 1–26 (Munich: Sauer, 1997), here 4.

5 On minority building, see Ingo Eser, *"Volk, Staat, Gott!" Die deutsche Minderheit in Polen und ihr Schulwesen 1918–1939* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 34.

6 In one example, the German historian Sabine Bamberger-Stemmann notes that as much as 95% of the existing literature for Polish Upper Silesia can be labeled as "Heimatliteratur." Markus Krzoska, "Tagungsbericht: Die Erforschung der Geschichte der Deutschen in Polen. Stand und Zukunftsperspektiven," Conference of the Kommission für die Geschichte der Deutschen in Polen e.V. from May 29 to 31, 1999, in Mainz, report dated November 1, 1999, accessed August 10, 2006, http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/BEITRAG/TAGBER/polen.htm.

examination of the German minority in Poland poses. Moreover, the issue of the loyalty of the interwar German minority is intrinsically tied to the question of the expulsions of the Germans from the eastern territories lost after the Second World War. This emotionally laden topic of viewing the Germans and the German nation as victims of the Second World War was revived in the late 1990s and especially in discussions about establishing a Center Against Expulsions, planned by the Bund der Vertriebenen (BdV) with support from Christian Democrats and several Social Democrats. Many works are accusatory in nature, and even more scholarly (and lengthy) attempts to provide documentation of the other nation's crimes only reveal how politically charged this topic was and remains – despite the recent thaw in German-Polish relations. Nationalized positions have not necessarily declined after 1989 – indeed, they have often reinvented themselves.

By focusing on majority-minority conflict that is integral to the Volkstumskampf narrative, the scholarly literature has tended to attribute the same experience to *all* Germans living in the Polish state, thus underplaying the depth of political conflict within the minority. Instead, they reproduce a narrative in which the Germans in Poland slowly overcame the legacies of the partitions to become one national community. Indeed, the very vocabulary used to describe the minority suggests harmony among the Germans. As Rogers Brubaker notes, the word "national minority" connotes "internally unified, externally sharply bounded groups."[7] Although the word *Minderheit* (minority) was in common usage in the interwar period, many used the term *Volksgruppe* (ethnic or national group) instead. There is no equivalent for Volksgruppe in the English language, and it also has ambiguous meanings in German. In its narrow sense, the contemporary usage of Volksgruppe referred to specific regional settlements within a minority; thus a minority could be made up of several Volksgruppen. However, in its broader, more common usage, Volksgruppe referred to an entire minority community within a state.[8] Whereas Minderheit and Volksgruppe were often used interchangeably, the latter became increasingly loaded and politicized with a normative claim of ethnic cohesion. Not surprisingly, contemporary German nationalists preferred Volksgruppe precisely because it invoked the connection of the Reich with Germans living abroad.[9] The concept of

7 Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed. Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 62.

8 Valdis O. Lumans, *Himmler's Auxiliaries: The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and the German National Minorities of Europe, 1933–1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 22–23.

9 See Horand Horsa Schacht, *Du mußt volksdeutsch sein!* (Dortmund: Crüwell, 1935), 9. Max Hildebert Boehm, a Volkstum theorist, refused to use the word *Minderheit* (minority) because of its foreign nature and because it failed to express the diversity of German experience abroad. Moreover, he believed

Volksgruppe became a positivistic, teleological category that emphasized spiritual and biological unity while concealing the dissonance and power conflicts between the Germans in Poland. It implied not just growth and evolution but also a collective will toward unity.

This book refers to the master narrative of "Volksgruppe-in-becoming" as the "Volksgruppe paradigm."[10] Works by German and Polish historians have repeated the thesis that the uniform experience of repression, the struggle for minority rights, and a National Socialist renewal had transformed the loose and heterogeneous German minority into a tightly bound and homogeneous Volksgruppe.[11] Even if these works state that a Volksgruppe never fully evolved due to lack of time and other obstacles, they still maintain that the minority was on this trajectory of growing unity, hence confusing program with action.[12] Substantial differences are downplayed, and there is the danger of reifying the concept of Volksdeutsche by reaffirming the premises and wishful thinking of German nationalists. The fact that former German minority members dominated the scholarship on the Germans in interwar Poland into the 1980s only made the task of breaking this paradigm more difficult. Many German and Polish historians still fall into this Volksgruppe paradigm, even as they simultaneously argue for a more differentiated view of the minority.[13] One study, for example, called for using the term Volksgruppe as an analytical category that is different from simple minority status.[14] Yet as we have seen, the very concept of Volksgruppe is itself loaded, and its constructed nature needs to be analyzed.

that the use of the term would give recognition to Poland as a nation-state. See *Grenzdeutsch – Großdeutsch. Vortrag anläßlich der Hauptausschußtagung des V.D.A. im November 1924* (Dresden: Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland, 1925), 1–2; Max Hildebert Boehm, *Die deutschen Grenzlande* (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1925), 198–199.

10 On the "Volksgruppe paradigm," see Ingo Haar, "Vom 'Volksgruppen-Paradigma' bis zum 'Recht auf Heimat': Exklusion und Inklusion als Deutungsmuster in den Diskursen über Zwangsmigrationen vor und nach 1945," in *Die "Volksdeutschen" in Polen, Frankreich, Ungarn und der Tschechoslowakei. Mythos und Realität*, ed. Jerzy Kochanowski and Maike Sach, 17–39 (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2006).

11 One of the most notable proponents of the thesis that the German minority had transformed into a Volksgruppe was Richard Breyer, who grew up in Central Poland and became director of the Herder-Institut in Marburg. See Richard Breyer, *Das Deutsche Reich und Polen, 1932–1937. Außenpolitik und Volksgruppenfragen* (Würzburg: Holzner, 1955), especially 49–51, 227–236, 255–256. See also another work by a German from Central Poland: Theodor Bierschenk, *Die deutsche Volksgruppe in Polen, 1934–1939* (Würzburg: Holzner, 1954).

12 See Joachim Rogall, "Einheit in Vielfalt der Deutschen aus Polen," in *Archive und Sammlungen der Deutschen aus Polen. Erlebte Geschichte, bewahrtes Kulturgut*, ed. Peter E. Nasarski, 13–18 (Berlin/Bonn: Landsmannschaft Weichsel-Warthe, 1992); Wilfried Gerke, "Auf dem Wege zur Einheit. Die Deutschen in Polen zwischen den Weltkriegen," *Germano-Polonica. Mitteilung zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Polen und der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen* 2 (2002/2003): 10–17.

13 For recent examples, see Wojciechowski, "Die Deutsche Minderheit in Polen (1920–1939)," 4; Jörg K. Hoensch, *Geschichte Polens* (Stuttgart: Eugen Ulmer, 1998), 274–275.

14 Carsten Eichenberger, *Die Deutschen in Polen. Von der verleugneten Minderheit zur anerkannten Volksgruppe* (Augsburg: Bukowina-Institut, 1994), 18–22.

The remarkable resiliency of the Volksgruppe paradigm reveals not only how well this concept fit into German and Polish political agendas but also into broader conceptions of modernization that underplay the problem of regionality and regionalism. As the American historian Richard Blanke has noted, the postwar historiography has acknowledged regional differences within the minority, yet they have not made them into a "primary consideration."[15] The question of how regions are translated into political factors within the minority is ignored, and regionality is reduced to anecdotal and folkloric characterizations.[16] Indeed, this view of the region as somehow backward and even reactionary merely reinforces the Volksgruppe-in-becoming interpretation of nationalism as a positive, modernizing force. The stubbornness of this thesis is due in part to its ideological proximity to national grand narratives elsewhere, where the success of the national project is commensurate to the steady reduction of regionalism. Such normative language is not unique to the Germans in Poland, of course, but is apparent in many other narratives of national awakening and unity. It is comparable to the traditional Jewish historiography on the Jews in Poland, whereby two approaches have emerged: to reveal the anti-Semitic nature of Polish state and society on the one hand and the flourishing of Jewish cultural life and the vibrancy of the struggle against this anti-Semitism on the other. Other strands of Jewish life that do not fit this mold, such as the assimilationists, are often downplayed or criticized.[17]

The scholarly preoccupation with the Volkstumskampf in the formerly Prussian territories of Poznania/Great Poland (Poznań/Posen), Pomerelia (Pomorze/Pommerellen), and Upper Silesia has only strengthened the Volksgruppe narrative. By focusing on the heightened nationality conflict in these areas, such works have set not only the tone but also the terms of debate in examining the German minority in Poland. During the interwar period, the territories lost by Prussia became the subject of an incessant propaganda war between Germany and Poland. German spokesmen criticized Polish nationalist policies for the dramatic decline of the Germans in Western Poland after 1918.[18] Polish journalists and scholars refuted these

15 Richard Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles: The Germans in Western Poland, 1918–1939* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 3–4.

16 See especially Gotthold Rhode, "Lodzer Deutsche – Posener Deutsche. Keine wissenschaftliche Untersuchung, sondern eine Plauderei," in *Suche die Meinung. Karl Dedecius, dem Übersetzer und Mittler zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Elvira Grözinger and Andreas Lawaty, 237–256 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986), here 254–256.

17 Ezra Mendelsohn, "Jewish Historiography on Polish Jewry," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 8 (1994): 3–13, here 4–6.

18 See especially Ernst Hansen, *Polens Drang nach dem Westen* (Berlin: Koehler, 1927); Hermann Rauschning, *Die Entdeutschung Westpreußens und Posens. Zehn Jahre polnischer Politik* (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1930); Richard Kammel [Gottfried Martin, pseud.], *"Brennende Wunden." Tatsachenbericht*

accusations by claiming that the emigration of Germans was tied to their overwhelming dependence on the state for civil service jobs and subsidies. To them, the Germans had illegitimately established their presence through an aggressive *Drang nach Osten* (drive to the east) and the historical crime of the Polish partitions.[19]

After the Second World War, national partisanship politicized the minority issue even more. Historians supporting Poland's right to westward expansion accused ethnic German Polish citizens (especially in Pomerelia and eastern Upper Silesia) of disloyalty to the Second Polish Republic, using this charge of treason to justify Poland's postwar expulsion of several million Germans from the so-called recovered territories. For Mirosław Cygański, a postwar Łódź historian, this annexation was an act of historical justice.[20] German historians, however, have emphasized the injustice done by Versailles as well as the loyalty of the German minority to the Polish state.[21] In their view, the behavior of the German minority was a reaction to Poland's repressive policies in the interwar period, thus making their postwar loss (and the expulsion of other German groups elsewhere) unwarranted. The

über die Notlage der evangelischen Deutschen in Polen (Berlin: Eckart, 1931); Richard Bahr, *Volk jenseits der Grenzen* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1933); Friedrich Heidelck, *Die deutschen Ansiedlungen in Westpreußen und Posen in den ersten zwölf Jahren der polnischen Herrschaft* (Breslau: Priebatsch, 1934); Viktor Kauder, *Das Deutschtum in Posen und Pommerellen*, vol. 3 of *Das Deutschtum in Polen. Ein Bildband*, edited by Viktor Kauder (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1937).

19 Karol Gostyński, "Zarys historii politycznej niemców w województwach zachodnich po wojnie," in "Problem niemiecki na Ziemiach Zachodnich," special issue, *Strażnica Zachodnia* 12, nos. 1–2 (1933): 45–81; Karol Gostyński, "Przewrót hitlerowski w Niemczech i Niemcy w Polsce (Część pierwsza)," *Sprawy Narodowościowe* 10, nos. 1–2 (1936): 22–39; Karol Gostyński, "Przewrót hitlerowski w Niemczech i Niemcy w Polsce (Dokończenie)," *Sprawy Narodowościowe* 10, no. 3 (1936): 197–222; Edmund Męclewski, *Walka graniczna trwa* (Poznań: Gospodarka Zachodnia, 1939); Józef Winiewicz, *Mobilizacja sił niemieckich w Polsce* (Warsaw: Polityka, 1939).

20 Mirosław Cygański: *Mniejszość niemiecka w Polsce centralnej w latach 1919–1939* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1962), 149–150. See also Andrzej Leśniewski, ed., *Irredentism and Provocation: A Contribution to the History of the German Minority in Poland* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Zachodnie, 1960); Karol Grünberg, *Niemcy i ich organizacje polityczne w Polsce międzywojennej* (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1970); Marian Drożdowski, "The National Minorities in Poland 1918–1939," *Acta Poloniae historica* 22 (1970): 226–251; Edward Wynot, "The Polish Germans, 1919–1939: National Minority in a Multinational State," *The Polish Review* 17, no. 1 (Winter 1972): 23–64.

21 See especially Friedrich Swart, *Diesseits und jenseits der Grenze. Das deutsche Genossenschaftswesen im Posener Land und das deutsch-polnische Verhältnis bis zum Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges* (Leer: Rautenberg & Möckel, 1954); Christian Höltje, *Die Weimarer Republik und das Ostlocarno-Problem, 1919–1934. Revision oder Garantie der deutschen Ostgrenze von 1919* (Würzburg: Holzner, 1958); Friedrich Swart and Richard Breyer, "Die deutsche Volksgruppe im polnischen Staat," in *Das östliche Deutschland. Ein Handbuch*, ed. Göttinger Arbeitskreis (Würzburg: Holzner, 1959), 477–526; Erich Keyser, "Der Deutschtumsverlust in Westpreußen 1918–1939," *Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft* 8 (1961): 63–79; Gotthold Rhode, "Das Deutschtum in Posen und Pommerellen in der Zeit der Weimarer Republik," in *Die deutschen Ostgebiete zur Zeit der Weimarer Republik*, ed. Erwin Hölzle, 88–132 (Cologne/Graz: Böhlau, 1966); Walther Threde and Peter E. Nasarski, eds., *Polen und sein preußischer Streifen, 1919–1939. Die deutsche Volksgruppe in Posen und Pommerellen* (Berlin/Bonn: Westkreuz, 1983); Hugo Rasmus, *Pommerellen-Westpreußen 1919–1939* (Munich: Herbig, 1989).

Polish mistreatment of the minority, especially in the first days of the war, and the expulsion of the Germans from Polish territory are legitimate topics of study, but they still tend to give disproportional weight to the minority's victimization and reproduce the terms of a Manichean Volkstumskampf. In contrast, the literature on the central and southeastern areas of Poland remains sparse.[22] By embedding the history of the Central and Eastern Polish Germans into the narrative of their Western Polish counterparts, these authors have downplayed the role of political particularisms within the minority; and willingly or not, they have historically constructed the Volksgruppe that did not exist in the interwar period.

Since 1989, several new developments in the historiography have become apparent. For example, improved relations between Germany and Poland have led to a presentist tendency. Some Polish historians have attempted to make good for overly nationalistic judgments in the past by reevaluating the myth of the German fifth column and overcoming the distortions of the Polish government both in the interwar and communist periods. Pleading for German-Polish reconciliation, these authors use the history of the interwar German minority as a lesson for neighborly coexistence in a post-national European Union and for the better treatment of the sizeable German/Upper Silesian minority in Poland today.[23] Other works attempt to contextualize the Germans in Poland in a broader East Central European perspective or in the analytic framework of borderlands. In *Orphans of Versailles*, for example, Richard Blanke examines the nationalism of a "fallen people," and Rogers Brubaker is interested in understanding the interaction of homeland, host state, and minority nationalisms.[24]

Several historians have also studied peripheral groups within the minority. Pia Nordblom's study of Eduard Pant's German Catholic Party and Petra Blachetta-Madajczyk's work on the German Socialists in Poland have given new recognition to anti-Nazi movements within the minority.[25] Several

22 Krzysztof Woźniak, "Forschungsstand und Forschungsdesiderata zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Mittelpolen," *Nordost-Archiv* 9, no. 2 (2000): 413–427.

23 See for example Dariusz Matelski, *Niemcy w Polsce w XX wieku* (Warsaw/Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1999), 343. Several Polish sociologists have examined post-communist Upper Silesia and the German and Silesian groups there. See Zbigniew Kurcz, *Mniejszość niemiecka w Polsce* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1995); Krzysztof Frysztacki, ed., *Polacy, Ślązacy, Niemcy. Studia nad stosunkami społeczno-kulturowymi na Śląsku Opolskim* (Cracow: Universitas, 1998); Maria Szmeja, *Niemcy? Polacy? Ślązacy! Rodzimi mieszkańcy Opolszczyzny w świetle analiz socjologicznych* (Cracow: Universitas, 2000).

24 Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, 4–5, Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, 58.

25 Petra Blachetta-Madajczyk, *Klassenkampf oder Nation? Deutsche Sozialdemokratie in Polen 1918–1939* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1997); Pia Nordblom, *Für Glaube und Volkstum. Die katholische Wochenzeitung "Der Deutsche in Polen" (1919–1939) in der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Nationalsozialismus* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2000).

works have used the German minority in Poland to examine the interwar minority treaties and Germany's foreign policy during the Weimar period.[26] In particular, Christian Raitz von Frentz has strongly criticized the Minorities Protection Treaty that had been mandated by the Treaty of Versailles, condemning the treaty's exacerbation of the nationality conflict.[27] The tendency to draw forgotten lessons from the German minority in Poland is due partially to the growing concern for the rights of ethnic minorities: the shocking brutalities in campaigns of ethnic cleansing and genocide that have occurred in the last two decades have shown that such problems can be as intractable now as they were at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Scholars from Germany have also followed the wider trend of everyday history (*Alltagsgeschichte*) and have used case studies to examine daily life "from below."[28] In localized contexts, nationality itself appears as only one of many competing loyalties, for both "Germans" and "Poles" were heterogeneous collectivities that were ridden with internal conflict.[29] As Mathias Niendorf suggests, a glance at the local sections of newspapers offers a very different view of ethnic relations than what is presented in the political section.[30] Putting nationality conflict in the background thus opens a window on daily inter-ethnic cooperation, which was – in light of the increasing nationalist claims – a variation of *Eigensinn* (having one's own mind), to use Alf Lüdtke's usage of the term.[31] Moreover, Alltagsgeschichte offers the possibility of comparative study of minorities along a common border as well as examinations that transcend conventional periodizations.

26 Helmut Pieper, *Die Minderheitenfrage und das Deutsche Reich 1919–1933/34* (Hamburg: Institut für Internationale Angelegenheiten der Universität Hamburg, 1974); John W. Hiden, "The Weimar Republic and the Problem of the Auslandsdeutsche," *Journal of Contemporary History* 12 (1977): 273–289; Bastiaan Schot, *Nation oder Staat? Deutschland und der Minderheitenschutz. Zur Völkerbundspolitik der Stresemann-Ära* (Marburg/Lahn: Johann-Gottfried-Herder-Institut, 1988); see also various works by Carole Fink: "Defender of Minorities: Germany in the League of Nations, 1926–1933," *Central European History* 5, no. 4 (1972): 330–357; "Stresemann's Minority Policies, 1924–29," *Journal of Contemporary History* 14, no. 3 (1979): 403–422; "The Weimar Republic and its Minderheitenpolitik: Challenge to a Democracy," *German Politics and Society* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 80–95.

27 Christian Raitz von Frentz, *A Lesson Forgotten. Minority Protection Under the League of Nations: The Case of the German Minority in Poland, 1920–1934* (New York: Lit, 1999).

28 Mathias Niendorf, "Deutsche und Polen in Pommerellen von 1920 bis 1945. Rollenerwartungen und Realität," *Nordost-Archiv* 6, no. 2 (1997): 687–728; Mathias Niendorf, *Minderheiten an der Grenze. Deutsche und Polen in den Kreisen Flatow (Złotów) und Zempelburg (Sępolno Krajeńskie) 1900–1939* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997); Torsten Lorenz, *Von Birnbaum nach Międzychód. Bürgergesellschaft und Nationalitätenkampf in Großpolen bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005).

29 Niendorf, "Deutsche und Polen in Pommerellen," 714.

30 Niendorf, "Deutsche und Polen in Pommerellen," 705–706.

31 See Alf Lüdtke, ed., *Alltagsgeschichte. Zur Rekonstruktion historischer Erfahrungen und Lebensweisen* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 1989); Alf Lüdtke, *Eigen-Sinn. Fabrikalltag, Arbeitererfahrungen und Politik vom Kaiserreich bis in den Faschismus* (Hamburg: Ergebnisse-Verlag, 1993).