

experiencing an ethnic revival and looking for their ethnic and family contacts with the old country. Therefore, the sentence written over 100 years ago by Heironim Jarosz Derdowski is still true: *"Nowhere in the world will you find a place without a token of us Kashubs."* (*Nigdzie ju no swiece nie nalezesz kątka, gdzë be po nos Kaszëbach nie bëła pamiątka*).

Where Do the Kashubs Live?

second excerpt from **The Kashubs Today, Culture-Language-Identity**
Cezary Obracht-Prondzynski

This question is as complicated as the estimation of the number of their population, since the area inhabited by the Kashubs has been shrinking its outer confines during the centuries of their presence in Pomerania as a result of both spontaneous and planned migration movements. That is why the position of the Kashubs in their own homeland deteriorated to such a degree that in some areas the Kashubian ethnos disappeared totally and elsewhere became a minority. This process has lasted since the Middle Ages and intensified under the Prussian partition of Poland. At the beginning of the XXth century, only small Kashubian enclaves still existed in Western Pomerania (districts of Słupsk/Stolp, Bytów/Bütow, Lębork/Lauenburg, Czluchów/Schlochau and Miastko/Rummelsburg), while the majority of the Kashubs inhabited Gdańsk (Eastern) Pomerania. But even there, as Jan Karnowski wrote: *"Kashubia is divided into tiny islets, separated by fiscal forests, domains, latifundia of German 'proprietors': and a strip of German settlements extends from near Skarszewy, through the county of Kościerzyna up to the Pomeranian border, dividing Kashubia forever and ever"* (Karnowski, Jan 1911. *Ludność kaszubska w ubiegłym stuleciu*. Kościerzyna.).

The XXth century brought crucial alterations to the territory inhabited by the Kashubs, the most important cause being the results of the Second World War, since at first Germans conducted operations of mass displacements of the Polish population from Pomerania, including the Kashubs (already in the Fall 1939), followed by the events of 1945, when the Germans, of their own will or forcibly, left the region.

This way, after a few hundred years, the German culture actually disappeared from Pomerania, and its only representatives are the sparse German minority.

Because of the after-War decisions establishing new state boundaries, the Kashubian area expanded considerably. Following immediately the moving front-line, the Kashubs set off to the borderland areas—counties of Bytów, Lębork, Czluchów, Miastko and Słupsk in the west, as well as the former Free City of Danzig/Gdańsk in the east. The year 1945 gave a chance of a historical revenge—the Kashubs returned to their ancient territories. During that first post-War period, as many as a few dozen thousand Kashubs moved to the areas situated just beyond the former borderline, even becoming a dominating group in some localities. Later, those migration processes did not stop, and it is the Pomeranian cities, mainly Gdynia, Gdańsk and Sopot, that became the most attractive settlement areas.

As a result of the 1998 administration reform, for the first time in history, the area of compact and close-knit Kashubian settlement was located in a single administrative unit—the province (*województwo*) of Pomerania.