



Being and Becoming European in Poland

European Integration and Self-Identity

Marysia H. Galbraith

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An exploration of what it means to be Polish as its population 'becomes European' following Poland's entry into the European Union.

"Galbraith's innovative book is a must for anyone interested in postsocialist transformations. Through the author's deep understanding of Poles' cognitive categories, we see the EU as it is experienced in everyday life. Her insights will spark new debates in European studies." —Jaro Stacul, University of Alberta

"A wise and interesting book based on a fresh field of evidence which highlights issues important to individuals as well as societies." —Zofia Sokolewicz, Professor Emerita, Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Warsaw

Overthrowing communism in 1989 and joining the European Union in 2004, the Polish people hold loyalties to region, country and now continent – even as the definition of what it means to be 'European' remains unclear. Paying particular attention to those who came of age in the earliest years of the neoliberal and democratic transformations, this book uses the life-story narratives of rural and urban southern Poles to reveal how 'being European' is considered a fundamental component of 'being Polish' while participants are simultaneously 'becoming European'. Ultimately, this study demonstrates how the EU is regarded as both an idea and an instrument, and how ordinary citizens make choices that influence the shape of European identity and the legitimacy of its institutions.

Readership

This book will be of interest to students, academics and practitioners engaged in questions of European identity and societal change, the local impact of EU institutions, life stories in ethnographic research, as well as contemporary Polish culture and society.

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